

5. Have you paid rates to the local body?—My tenant has paid those rates. When I leased my farm and homestead I reduced my rent accordingly, so that he would be able to pay the rates and tax demands of the district—

6. With reference to this particular piece of land you are speaking about, does the tenant pay the rates on that land or do you?—The tenant pays in this way: Of course, when I leased this I had no idea that I was being encompassed with a network round me by the Public Trustee. I leased this 54 acres, including my homestead, at 7s. an acre right through. At first I think it was 8s. an acre, but we reduced it because this particular piece of land was nothing but a mass of furze, and we allowed him so much to clear it—

7. But does he pay the rates?—Yes, he pays the rates and taxes to the local body.

8. Is there anything further?—I would like to show the Committee the position of this piece of land. This plan here seems to me to make the whole thing quite distinct and clear. [Plan handed in.]

9. Was that confiscated land?—Well, it would be brought under the Confiscation Act, I suppose.

10. So that it all came under the West Coast Settlement Reserves Act?—Yes, because it was during Sir William Fox's time that this land was awarded. These awards had been hanging on ever since 1865, having never been defined or located until the Royal Commission defined and located them. And the Royal Commission was as careful as it could possibly be with regard to these five loyal hapus. They did not take any part in the fight at all. When the Commission made these allocations they said distinctly that the parties interested were to be allowed to subdivide their land as they pleased without Government interference. That is my point with regard to this particular piece of land. The land is ours absolutely. Major Parris is still alive, and he says that is correct. His evidence will be found here in this book. [Report of Royal Commission on "The Confiscated Lands Inquiry and Maori Prisoners' Trials Act, 1879, 1880," produced.]

11. Was not some of this West Coast land awarded to Natives who had been in rebellion, as well as to those who did not take part in the war?—Yes, that is so. But when these awards were granted it was distinctly stated by Sir William Fox in his report that the awards were given on the distinct understanding that they were to be free from Government interference. The report says, "These lands will hereafter be laid off in such blocks as may be convenient. The division of them will rest with the people to whom they are given. It will not be for the Government to settle the subdivision, but for the persons interested." And now we are to be brought under these cruel arbitrary laws—that is what we get for our loyalty—

12. *Sir W. R. Russell.* That is the report of the West Coast Commissioner?—Yes, Sir. And here is a copy of the title to this particular piece of land. [Document produced.] There is, of course, nothing there as regards the Public Trustee. The land is restricted, and we do not want to remove the restrictions. What my relatives and myself wish is to have this land for ourselves. There are only a few of us left, and I want them to feel that it is their own land, and that they should have the right to live upon it according to their ancestral rights as promised during their forefathers' time. Why bring this irritation upon the few remaining of my people? It is an irritation to them. The name of the Public Trustee is something terrible to them—

13. How long has this been going on?—Well, with regard to us, it has only been going on since 1902. It was when we found out that we were under the control of the Public Trustee that we petitioned the House. We had no idea before 1902 that we were under the control of the Public Trustee. I went to Major Parris on the matter, and he said it was wrong. He said the Public Trustee had no business to have anything to do with this particular piece of land at all. It was Major Parris who told me the whole of the history, which has been corroborated by my own people.

14. *The Chairman.* Did you know that this piece of land which you lay a claim to was included under the West Coast Settlement Reserves Act?—Yes; but of course I did not know for certain, because here are the two titles. [Documents produced.] These titles say that the land is to be for our people and their descendants hereafter, with the exception of the restriction of their not being allowed to sell. That I consider is quite enough restriction, without the irritation of being told you must do this or you must do that by the Public Trustee. There is a great deal of ill feeling existing over this very irritating administration. They feel that they are being bound hand and foot. This makes every Native careless. They say, "What is the good of trying to be better?" Then there is another thing. The Public Trustee—or rather Mr. Fisher—goes round to some of my people, and he will say that he wants certain land cut off. He has told some, "You have got quite enough land." He considers 20 or 25 acres as enough for a man with six or seven children. If it was good rich land it might be so, but where it is poor land it might not feed a rabbit in the winter-time. Well, the Public Trustee will have the assurance to tell him he has quite enough to live upon. The rest he wants to lease, of course, as a source of income. I have relations well able and willing to work the land, yet they are deprived of their land in this manner, because it is the law. The Public Trustee does just as he likes. They have got the land in their hands and they do simply as they like. I have brought up my family as pakehas. They do not know one word of Maori. I will give you an instance, showing what a farce the administration of the law is. My daughter does not understand a word of Maori. She only speaks English, and she had a cottage of her own which she was offered a very good price for. I advised her to sell it. But because she had Maori blood in her veins she had to go under the indignity of having the document translated into Maori and read over to her, because otherwise it would not be legal. She had to have that Maori document read over to her, although she did not understand a word of it, and then she had to go before a Justice of the Peace to swear that she understood that Maori document—

15. And she did not understand a word of Maori?—Not a word. That shows what a farce some of this legislation is. Then there is another matter I suggested to Mr. Poynton. I told Mr. Poynton that my people would like to survey their own respective pieces of land according to their Maori custom as recommended in the report of the Commission. I told him I was prepared to pay £50 out of my