

in other huts. My hapu wish to toil to keep their land and to make use of it; but owing to the powers, I might say, given to the Public Trustee he debars us from keeping it, or he only gives my hapu what he thinks proper. As I have said in my petition here, my relatives are not allowed to keep their lands without a license issued by the Public Trustee, or a lease granted by him to occupy the land and pay him rent for the same as though they were not owners, charging $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for collecting and paying it back to them, when they should occupy that land themselves and till it, whereby it would enhance their lives and better them. All these laws debar them from that, and there is no encouragement given to them. I handed in a telegram to the Committee yesterday to show how the Agent does the work or administers the law amongst the people. That is why I have petitioned this House and prayed that these disabilities may be removed from my people and my family. As I have said here in paragraph 7, these are most cruel and unjust laws that we are subjected to under the great power given to the Public Trustee. Our independence and our liberty is taken away from us entirely, and we are made to feel that we are mere serfs in the eyes of the world, and that, of course, grates very much upon my own nerves and upon the others. What safety or security have we got from the Public Trustee? If the control of the Public Trustee was removed from this particular bit of land, in the course of a few years we would work it in earnest. Under the present system my people are being debarred, and the Public Trustee's agent goes there and says, "You must clear the noxious weeds off this land; you grantees must go and do it, and, if not, I will take possession, and lease it to pakehas." My people do not get the benefit of this, and the rent goes away to those who do not occupy the land. As I said yesterday, we are made to pay for the idlers, which is an injustice to my people and to my family. This constant irritation under this administration of the Public Trustee's Department makes them idle and careless. They go away to Parihaka, and they say, "There we do not get irritated, and the Public Trustee does not annoy us." They also say, "What is the good of going back to the land that does not belong to us?" The reserves which I ask the Committee to recommend are, Tupara Reserve, 110 acres; a small reserve at Wairoa, 40 acres; and the present reserve that I have now petitioned the House about, that is 787 acres, I think, but I am not quite sure. These are practically my own family's reserves. Three parts of the grantees who are in the grant are not morally owners at all; they were placed there illegally, and these are the people that the Public Trustee's Department wishes to bring against these legitimate owners of the soil. That is why I wish to press upon the Committee that I feel sore that my family are being brought under the indignity of being made to feel that they were serfs instead of the occupiers of the land. I have children and I have grandchildren. I am educating my grandchildren because they are fatherless, and yet because they have Maori blood in them the British laws debar them. There are two generations, and not one of them understands a word of Maori. I would ask the Committee to allow me to show them that I have paid income-tax, to show them that I have been a ratepayer and income-tax-payer, together with my family, and I will hand in to the Committee all my receipts which I produced yesterday. I would earnestly ask the Committee to recommend that some legislation in the direction which I have here proposed be introduced. [Mrs. Brown then handed in to the Committee her papers in connection with the petition.]

3. *The Chairman.*] Have you anything further to add, Mrs. Brown?—No.

4. Have you got those deeds you had with you yesterday?—Here are my office receipts.

5. *Mr. Wi Pere.*] I want to know from you, Mrs. Brown, exactly what it is you desire. You desire to have those persons whom you say have no right to be put in the grant struck out from the grant?—That is one of my applications.

6. And that each of these people respectively be sent back to their own place?—Yes; that was my request to Judge Edgar. That was in 1902, when the Public Trustee applied to define the relative interests.

7. Well, there is no occasion for me to question you about your wish that this land should pass back to the control of yourself and grandchildren. I quite understand all about that. Now, my second question to you is this: Supposing that the authority of the Public Trustee is done away with, are you willing that the restriction against sale by yourself, your children, or your grandchildren should still continue? All that you want is to get rid of the Public Trustee, but you do not ask that restrictions on the land be removed?—My reply to that is this: I wish the restrictions to remain upon the title as far as my hapus are concerned. But with regard to myself and my family, who are pakehas, I say remove them, because we are quite capable, and my family are quite as capable as myself, to look after their affairs without any control whatever.

8. But you want to get rid of the Public Trustee?—I do, absolutely; and to return that back to us in the same manner as was promised to us according to these five hapus that were recommended by the West Coast Commissioner.

9. *Mr. Parata.*] Yesterday I asked you whether they were in the same position; whether they wished to occupy their land purely and simply without the control of any one?—My own relations, my mother's first cousin's children, that have children, and grown up, went and asked Mr. Fisher to allow them to subdivide and occupy. Mr. Fisher said, "You already have sufficient land."

10. Even outside of your own family; Maoris and pakehas?—Yes.

11. With families?—Yes. Grown-up sons that are willing to milk and work in order to make a start; but the name of the Public Trustee grates upon their nerves to such a degree as to affect them as I have already stated; but once remove that irritation and give them a fair chance, and things would be different.

12. And you think in your own mind they would go into it wholly and solely and cultivate the land?—Yes, I do. Those that are able to go and willing to work will go, and it will be an example to the others; but where those that are willing to occupy the land and live like the Europeans are not allowed to do so, the others will say, "Oh, what is the good?" I say, give them a chance. These people now go in for recreation; they frequent hotels and receive a few rents: but give them an incentive to work; it would do away with this cry of the Maori laziness and all this sort of thing. When the law debars me as a pakeha, why is it to be wondered at? We hear the cry, "Give us the relief." There