

71. You do not think that if the Natives had the value of these lands that it would be of as much service to them as the lands themselves?—No, I do not.

72. Suppose the money was invested for their benefit?—No; I would not like that.

73. *Mr. Wi Pere.*] Did you hear what the Public Trustee stated yesterday, that you had only a life interest in the land, and that when you died the land would revert to the Public Trustee—

*Mr. Poynton:* It goes to her descendants.

74. *Mr. Willis.*] I have just one question I would like to ask the petitioner. The land you occupy yourself is about 40 acres, is it not?—Yes.

75. And you have stated, I think, that you pay 7½ per cent. on the rent of that land to the Public Trustee?—Yes.

76. Well, the Public Trustee in his report states that that is not so. He says in his report, “No commission whatever is charged for collecting rent from the petitioner from the land she holds under the lease above mentioned.” Is that statement not correct?—He deducts £16 from my rents due on lands under his management.

77. I am asking, is Mr. Poynton’s statement correct or not?—[No answer.]

*The Chairman:* I understand that from the account she has had furnished to her she imagines that she is charged this 7½ per cent. on the £16 rent. The Public Trustee, however, says not.

78. *Mr. A. L. D. Fraser.*] If this land was leased to a European, he could sublease it to another European?—Yes.

79. He could lease it to any European he liked?—Yes.

80. But when your own land is leased to you, you cannot lease to anybody else—to a pakeha?—No.

81. Although it is your own land leased to you, you cannot lease it to a European as a European can with Native land?—No.

82. *Mr. Willis.*] With regard to the amounts which are being paid at the present time by way of commission, supposing that land was exempt from the 7½ per cent., would you be satisfied in that case?—I would still be dissatisfied in regard to that, and more especially in regard to the other land.

83. Are there many other Natives like yourself, who are educated and able to manage their own land—are there many in similar circumstances to yourself?—Yes, there are a good many of us.

84. And, as a matter of fact, are they all in accord with yourself? Do they all express the same wish?—In this petition I am asking on my own behalf. I have no authority to ask on behalf of others, but they are all dissatisfied.

85. *Mr. Kaihau.*] This petition that you have presented to the House is to ask to be allowed to manage your own affairs?—I ask to be allowed to manage all my lands—not the 40 acres only—but all my lands that are in the hands of the Public Trustee.

86. And you say in your petition that you will be able to manage your own land yourself?—Yes.

87. And perhaps there are other Natives besides yourself who are equally able to manage their lands in the same way?—My reply is that I sent in a petition on my own behalf. Let the others speak for themselves.

88. Well, is the land given to your tribe?—Yes, this land was returned to my tribe.

89. These are lands which were returned to your tribe—they were confiscated lands?—Yes.

90. They were returned to your people for their occupation and residence?—Yes.

91. Then, when the Act of 1892 was passed they were handed over to the Public Trustee to manage?—Yes.

92. Did the tribes of the West Coast agree to this Act being passed and their lands handed over to the Public Trustee?—No. They did not give their consent to it. They sent in a petition at the time protesting against the passing of the Act. This is a paper on the Act of 1892. [Pamphlet “West Coast Settlement Act, 1892,” handed in.]

93. And you say that you object to the manner in which you receive your rents, and the way in which you receive your accounts from the Public Trustee?—Yes. I object to the large amount of deductions. If I had the land myself the deductions would not be so great.

94. In connection with this lease of 40 acres, you say that you are paying rent for your own land—the land which was returned to you?—Yes.

95. What is the rent you pay?—£16 4s. per annum.

96. You say that you ought not to be asked to pay rent for your own land—that is what you mean?—Yes.

97. And you wish to have the land under your own control?—What I mean is this, that instead of being a tenant or lessee I should have a grant, and I should occupy the land as a freeholder.

98. You say that as the land is your own you should not have to pay rent to the Public Trustee for it?—Yes.

99. This land was leased to you by the Public Trustee, and you are put upon it to manage it like a European?—Yes, I am now farming the land. I manage everything in connection with it. I also manage other lands which I have bought.

100. And do you think that many of your tribe would be able like yourself to manage their own land?—Yes, some of them are farmers.