

61. Did the Natives then refuse to sell?—Yes. The old man who attended here the other day—

62. But at the time that Andrew Eketone spoke about it, did the Natives refuse to entertain a proposal to sell, or were there some for it and some against?—I was the only one who spoke on the matter then, and that was because Anaru Eketone had stated that the mortgage had bitten so deeply into the land that the land would pass away under the mortgage in the long-run. Te Oro and all the others refused to agree to the proposal to sell.

63. When your wife received the money, was there any deduction made for expenses?—No.

64. Do you know anything about an agreement that £2,500 was to be deducted from the sale price?—Yes, I know of that.

65. Your wife did not agree to the proposal of the £2,500 being deducted?—No.

66. Have you been paid any of your expenses incurred in being a member of the committee?—No, I have received no payment.

67. Have you got any claim for expenses?—If matters had been carried out as Tuiti Macdonald said they were to be carried out—that is, that the company would pay all expenses—then I should have made a claim for payment of my expenses; but as it has been placed on the owners of the land themselves to pay the expenses, I make no claim.

68. *Hon. Mr. Ngata.*] You received advances, did you not, for your expenses?—There was some money given to me by Mr. Hardy, but I asked for that because I had not a shilling. It was not in any way in connection with the land.

69. *Mr. Herries.*] Tuiti Macdonald gave you clearly to understand that the company, besides paying £25,000 and giving 2,500 shares, was to pay all expenses?—Yes.

70. Did Tuiti tell that to all the Natives, or was it only to the committee?—He did not say the thing privately: he said it publicly, and there were others besides us who heard it.

71. Did the people who were then at Mokau all give authority to the people at Te Kuiti to represent them?—Yes.

72. When the committee decided to change their attitude and sell to the company, were the people at Mokau informed of the change at that time?—No.

73. What do you think of the value of the land, per acre?—In my opinion it would be worth more than £1 an acre—say £1 15s.—if there were no lease.

74. Do you think the price the Natives accepted was a good one?—No, I do not think it was.

75. Are the Native owners of the block that you know about satisfied or dissatisfied?—They are objecting. This is the objection.

76. Then, when Tuiti Macdonald said they made the best of a bad job in selling, that about expresses the opinion of the Natives, does it not?—No, I cannot say that, because those who spoke English—Tuiti and Mr. Hardy—were the people who advised and persuaded us, and we eventually agreed to the sale.

77. Were you satisfied with the conduct of Mr. Hardy and Tuiti Macdonald?—Tuiti and I were not very good friends: we were at enmity, because I declined to fall in with his view and agree to the sale. When we had been appointed as representatives of the old people, well, I could not prevent him from saying what he said, but the personal enmity between us continued.

78. *The Chairman.*] Is your wife a Te Whiti-ite?—No.

79. You know that Te Oro is a Whiti-ite?—Yes.

80. Do you know this: that if Te Oro or the Te Whiti-ites who had interests in the blocks were offered £100 per acre for the land they would not sell?—I cannot answer that.

81. *Mr. Massey.*] With regard to that meeting at Mokau, at which you attended—the meeting convened to consider the proposal to sell: can you give us any idea of the number of Natives who were present?—There were more people present than there are in this room now. There was a tangi taking place there over a deceased person at the time.

82. Of the people who were there, were a majority opposed to the sale or in favour of it?—They opposed the sale. That was the occasion when Andrew Pepene laid the proposal to sell before them, and said that half a loaf was better than no bread.

83. They opposed the sale?—Yes.

84. Nearly all of them?—All.

85. There were young people there, I presume, as well as old people—young people also opposed to the sale?—They did not stand up and say anything at all. I was the person who understood it and replied to Andrew Eketone's proposal.

86. The result of the meeting, we are given to understand, was that you and three others were sent to Te Kuiti to represent the people at Mokau in connection with the proposed sale?—Yes; that was afterwards.

87. Do you know anything about any written proxies being given to any representatives of the Natives, to be used for or against the sale?—I know of it.

88. Were there many of these proxies—voting-papers?—Yes.

89. Do you know how many?—I cannot say how many there were altogether. I can tell you how many I had.

90. How many?—Six. That is all I can remember.

91. I am speaking not only of the proxies given to you, but of the proxies generally that were sent from Mokau; and what I want to know is whether they were intended to be used against the proposal to sell or for it?—All the proxies that were signed and sent over into our hands were for the purpose of opposing the sale.

92. Were any proxies given to Mr. Hardy or Tuiti Macdonald?—I did not see any given to them. What I heard them say was that each owner was entitled to a proxy paper.

93. Were the proxies used at the meeting of assembled owners?—Yes, they were handed to the Board.