

or the others present to tell us whether they think this document is what they believed they were signing, and whether they now stand by it.

TINIRAU stated, in reply to questions by Sir James Allen: I saw the document, and understood that it referred both to Estall and to the representation. We got up this petition at the request of others as a result of meetings with other Arikis. We drafted this—myself, Willie, Browne, Charlie Cowan, Tawi Napa, and Te Maurangi. After Willie Browne had typed it out I took it up to my place, and it was on my table that it was signed. I signed for my father, Makea. He told me to do so. The others signed there also.

Mr. C. T. COWAN stated that he signed Pa's name, at her request, to something referring to Estall only.

TEPURETU stated, in reply to a question, that he did not authorize any one to sign for him.

Mr. WITTY: Did Mr. Cowan know what he was signing when he signed for the lady?

Mr. COWAN: When the paper was brought back we had arranged what we should sign, and it was some protest against Estall. The paper was brought back, and I signed without reading it.

TAWI NAPA, in reply to questions, said he signed the document and knew what he signed. It was about Estall and the white member on the Council.

TE MAURANGI said he signed the document knowing fully what it was.

Mr. ANDERSON: I should like to know whether, when the New Zealand people asked the Rarotongans to come under the sway of New Zealand, the New Zealand Government promised in writing that they would maintain the old form of government and that the Arikis should have the nomination of the Council. Have you got that in writing, or is it simply a statement? If it is in writing and part of the agreement, then the New Zealand Government, to my mind, must carry it out. If, on the other hand, it is not in writing and there is only a supposition that it was made, there is no reason why there should not be European representation. Have we that document?

Hon. Sir JAMES ALLEN: That will be answered presently. We had better clear up the question first regarding this document. I want Mr. Browne or somebody to tell me who posted it to Mr. Massey.

Mr. BROWNE: I posted it.

Hon. Sir JAMES ALLEN: Did you see all the signatures signed to the document?

Mr. BROWNE: I think I did. It is such a long time ago that I have a doubt. Any way, the petition was placed before them to read after I had read it through.

Hon. Sir JAMES ALLEN: With regard to this document, you must understand, gentlemen, that the evidence discloses to us that what appears to be Pa Ariki's signature on this paper is not Pa's signature, but was signed for her by somebody else. Nor is Makea's signature his. He is not here, but Mr. Savage says it is not his signature. Karika Ariki is here. She says she did not sign. I have a specimen of her signature. This on the document, though like hers in some respects, is obviously different in others, and I cannot believe it to be hers. Tepuretu is here. The signature on the paper is nothing like his. I notice that in one column are the names of those who are Arikis and Mataiapos, and over the top there is, in the Maori language, what means, I presume, "Signed by the Arikis and Mataiapos." On the other side, in English, are the words "Members of the Island Council," and the only three names under that heading are those of W. P. Browne, C. T. Cowan, and T. Maurangi. It is very curious that there is this separation. I do not know why it is made. Mr. Browne evidently sent this to Mr. Massey. I suppose Mr. Massey has read it. No doubt he has the translation. It has been repudiated by the Arikis and Mataiapos; it was immediately repudiated as soon as they knew of it. I am astonished that any document should have been presented to Mr. Massey, purporting to be signed by three or four Arikis, that does not bear their signature, without an explanation being given. But whatever may have been the opinion of the Arikis and Mataiapos in 1918, and whether there could be any possibility of doubt as to their statements that they did not sign this but they signed another paper, I cannot see that it affects the question so far as we are concerned now to any great extent, because they have been here to-day, and they have all told us they are opposed to the representation of whites on the Island Council. I am not going to express any further opinion about the principle than I expressed this morning—that I should be very glad indeed if it were possible to arrange for a general roll of Europeans and Natives, and that they should have the right to elect three members to the Island Council, rather than that nomination should take place, as it now does, on the recommendation of the Arikis, after consultation with their people. That is a matter which will have to be decided later. I want to say to the whites that I sympathize with them in their difficulties. I said this morning that we were not in favour of taxation without representation. But they will realize that there are difficulties with regard to representation in view of the fact that when we took over the islands we entered into an obligation with the Arikis, which obligation we are bound to fulfil, unless we can get the Arikis to release us from the obligation. I hinted this morning that I thought it possible that the Arikis, on consideration, might release us from the promise that was made to them many years ago when the islands were taken over. The Hon. Mr. McGowan, the then Minister in Charge, in 1907—in reply, I suppose, to a similar representation made then—stated that "he sympathized very deeply with the desire of the British residents to acquire some share in the Government, but was not aware that they suffered under any special disabilities. When the Cook Group was ceded to Great Britain, one of the conditions was that the then existing Parliament should be abolished and should be replaced by a Council of Arikis. It must be evident that the introduction into the Council of a European representative would materially affect the conditions laid down at the time of the cession. For this and other reasons Mr. McGowan regretted that the Government was unable then to comply with the request of the petitioners." The Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, in speaking to the motion in the House of Representatives for annexation, said "the Natives had, and would have, a local