

have been shipping on consignment and selling to the storekeepers here. Taking my average return for several years, I find there is no advantage in my shipping direct. I would do just as well by selling to the traders. In a report by the Resident Commissioner which appeared in the *Otago Times*, I believe it was stated that the traders do not supply any cases to the Natives. I say that is not a fact. So long as the Native deals fairly with the traders he can always get cases and can ship his fruit where he likes. It is true that the price of fruit has gone up. This has been because of the influenza in Sydney last year, which prevented oranges being got across to New Zealand, and a shipping strike which prevented bananas being sent from Fiji. There was a shortage, and because of that shortage we got good prices—not through any act of the Resident Commissioner. With regard to the Council, when it was first started the members were elected by the people. I was one of the elected members, with two others. That went on until the Act was passed by the New Zealand Parliament under which members have to be nominated. I was a nominated member from 1915. The danger is this: once you become a nominated member you cannot say too much in the Council room. I started to say something which did not quite accord with the view of the Resident Commissioner, or perhaps of the Native Arikis. It was something good: I never brought up anything bad. I brought a motion forward, with the consent of the Arikis at the meeting, that one or two white members should be on the Island Council. It was all agreed that I was to bring the motion forward, and the Arikis were to put their hands up and agree. After this was all arranged nicely I got my papers up, thinking everything was all right. In the meantime the Resident Commissioner called a private meeting of the Arikis. I was not present at this meeting and do not know what took place. But when I brought the motion forward the Resident Commissioner was the first to say “No; no European on the Council,” and he was supported by the Arikis. There were a few other things I brought forward—nothing bad at all; but what was the result? I got kicked out of the Council. You members of Parliament have been elected by the people. Why should we be nominated? Why should the Governor-General, or Resident Commissioner, or the Arikis have the say over the whole of the people? I know that a lot of my people do not agree, but they dare not say anything. They want to elect their own members on the Council. We want a good, strong Council that will have the support and respect of both Maoris and Europeans. What I propose is that the Island Council should consist of the Resident Commissioner, the five Arikis, six Native elected members, and two Europeans. One more point: We are paying a big price for flour, not through the act of the traders, but through the New Zealand Government or somebody responsible. We are now charged £2 17s. 6d. extra duty on flour imported from New Zealand. It is not right.

TINIRAU (native planter) stated: Under section 60 of the Cook Islands Act the Resident Commissioner has the right to nominate members for appointment to the Council. That law has been some time in force, but it is only lately that we who cannot read English have been able to read it. This year the Resident Commissioner has, of his own power, nominated two new members to the Council.

Hon. Sir JAMES ALLEN: On what authority do you make that statement?

TINIRAU: We had a wireless message from Wellington saying that two new members had been chosen. Previously every man had a right to vote for a member. Now one man can nominate a member. Is that a fair law? I recommend that that provision in the law be altered to allow of every man taking part in the election of members.

KAINUKU ARIKI, a member of the Council, stated: I would like to reply to the remarks made by Tinirau. The members and Arikis did not tell Willie Browne to jump on a sinking ship—to alienate himself from them. We never asked him to get out; he went himself.

Mr. W. P. BROWNE: Who did, then? I have my notice in my hand. [Document shown to members of party.]

Hon. Sir JAMES ALLEN: Te Ariki Maurangi wishes to speak. He is another member of the Council whose time was up and who has not been reappointed.

TE ARIKI MAURANGI stated: With reference to the resolution that was brought by Willie Browne before the Council for the inclusion of some white members, what Willie Browne stated is quite true. We agreed to that. I was appointed by general vote of the settlement of Arorangi as member representing Arorangi on the Island Council, and now I am out. I was a pupil of the school and gained knowledge there. Therefore I did not see eye to eye in certain things, and perhaps that is why I was put out of the Council. What is the good of our being educated if we cannot try to make use of our education in the Council? I, who am trying to do what I can for the benefit of the place, am put out and ignorant men are put in.

Mr. F. W. PLATTS (Resident Commissioner): Why Mr. Browne and Te Ariki Maurangi were put out of the Council I do not know. Their own people put them out. They had been in for two periods, for five years. The time came for the renomination of all Councils in the Group, and the people of the island were asked, through their Arikis, to supply to the Government the names of the members they wished to be nominated. The Arikis, to my own knowledge, had meetings amongst their own people in the different settlements, and they sent in to the office a list of persons they wished to have nominated. There is a member of the old Council here to-day, Mr. Cowan. His people renominated him. Regarding the district of Avarua which Mr. Willie Browne represented, his people would not nominate him again, but nominated another. The people that Te Ariki Maurangi represented for many years did not nominate him again, but nominated another man whom I do not even know. These nominations were endorsed by the Administration here. Why Willie Browne's people did not nominate him I do not know. That is for him to settle with them. And the same with Te Ariki. We interfere in no way with the election of Arikis or the nomination of members for the Council. In regard to the statement that Mr. Browne made about flour, that they were all called upon to pay a tax of £2 17s. 6d., the