

283. As to session of 1891, a consolidating Act was introduced?—Yes. I believed the Bill a bad Bill. I approved the Bill going to a Committee—a Joint Committee. [*Hansard*, vol. lxxiii., p. 84.] The Bill went to a Committee, of which I was a member. The Committee received deputations from Natives against this Bill. I did not, that I remember, take any part in the discussion of the Natives during the sitting of the Committee. The resolution of the Natives submitted to the Committee I had nothing to do with. I moved the resolution in the Committee. I cannot tell whether Mr. Smith voted with me on these resolutions. It seems he did; but Mr. Cadman opposed. [Lists of members: Stout refers to the second of the votings: two Natives for; two against; Cadman against.] On Mr. Taiaroa's motion for postponement I voted for postponement. Cadman and Smith voted against postponement. We voted against that legislation. Report must have come up. This is a Committee set up to deal with past transactions. I was Chairman. We reported that Native Trusts should be postponed till next session—that is, same as Equitable Owners. Committee prepared a Bill to deal with past transactions. There was a difference as to the method of dealing with past transactions. I considered the Native Land Court was not proper, as it had made the mistake. I wished a special Commission. Mr. Cadman introduced a Bill and it went before Committee of whole House. Test division was to be taken. Mr. Cadman did not try and get that Bill passed. He moved it, but it was evident that W. C. Smith was working against it secretly. [Mr. Cadman's speech, page 973.] The Bill was not pressed by Government; they ought to have made it a Ministerial question. Sir George Grey objected to illegal transactions being validated. I never saw the Validation Bill before it was brought in giving the power to the Native Land Court. [Rees's speech.] The Bill was to have given power to the Court. Very likely I voted for section 4; better that than nothing. I believe I and Cadman urged that the Bill should be passed. It seemed to me that there was no desire to pass it.

284. Why did you not accuse Mr. Cadman of insincerity?—I said to him: "I do not think I did so in *Hansard*." I did not want to break with the party. [Transfer of last share, 12th September, 1892. Bill brought down, 16th September, 1892.] If the Committee Bill had passed that would not have interfered with the sale of Umutaoroa. It would have if introduced in 1891. Our report was in 'by end of May, and full report 27th June. [Only four shares left when Rees's Bill introduced.] Equitable Owners Bill would not effect any interest legally sold. I say it could. Umutaoroa Block at June, 1891. In my resolutions before the Committee I used the Maori resolutions. The illegal purchase is notice of a trust. The Bill then, in 1892, introduced by Mr. Cadman I gave a qualified support to. It was simply for Land Court to report. I thought Mr. Cadman did the best to get that Bill passed. Court was only to report; that would be no harm. It was something to get the cases reported on. I believe Sir George Grey was opposed to the Bill, though I think he withdrew opposition when it was only to report. I did not attend before the Native Land Court, and contend that the Court had no powers to report at all. I argued that a particular case before Baxter, J., was not within the Act of 1892. There was a Bill dealing with purchase from Natives by Crown and the validation past transactions. No Bill for Native Committee or Equitable Owners; these were from Mr. Carroll. Mr. Carroll had them to deal with. It was not mentioned that I should be member of the Board. I did not suggest it. I do not recollect that I suggested to Cadman that Wi Pere would make a good colleague to me. I did not see Mr. Cadman about my being appointed. I spoke to Mr. Ballance. Mr. Fisher may have been mentioned. I do not recollect that Mr. Tole was mentioned. Sir P. Buckley said the Committee clauses and the Central Board should be put in the Bill. When I saw the Chairman of the Board he said it would not work. I did not read the note prefixed to the Bill. No one ever told me that the whole matter of the recommendations of the Commission could be dealt with in the Bill. The Board in Part XV. is not the Board recommended by the Commission: it is not elective; powers not the same. Maoris were not represented on the Board. Board ought to have had powers to deal with trusts. The main point was that the Board was not elective.

285. *Re-examined by Mr. Lusk.*] Mr. Cadman got the second Validation of Titles Bill passed. He wished it passed, and it was passed. All the Native members were against Mr. Cadman's general Bill. I did go across and speak to Mr. Cadman and other Ministers, and implored Mr. Cadman and them to prepare the thing. They would not interfere with Mr. Cadman. Government could have passed that Bill. It was a good Bill, very useful, and could have done no harm. If Mr. Cadman had wished to pass it, they could whip up.

286. Mr. HORACE BAKER, examined by Mr. Rees.] Between 1892 and 1895 I was Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands. I think at that time both offices combined. I know the Umutaoroa Native reserve. As Chief Surveyor, the Transfer Office were in the habit of sending to me for valuations of blocks. I have a recollection of the Umutaoroa Block. I have seen Mr. Bamford's evidence. I think there is no doubt it was my valuation. I surveyed the blocks bought by the Government. If I did not survey them, I had a good deal to do with them. In my opinion, beginning of last year, and the present value is about £3 or £4 all through. The timber is pretty well off.

287. Do you know the land sold by the Crown in the original Umutaoroa?—Yes. The Native land reserve was much the most valuable part. I know the value of land in Hawke's Bay. I put what I considered to be fair value of the property.

288. The special settlement, at what price sold?—They were not sold in open market; they were given to the people who took them up.

289. *Cross-examined by Sir R. Stout.*] I should say the roading cost a good deal; between £2,000 and £3,000 spent on the main road dividing the two blocks. I should think the two blocks would be 5,000 acres. I do not think it was so large as Umutaoroa Block. It would be 10s. an acre spent on roads. I know the Piripiri Block; it takes in a great deal of mountainous country.

290. I mean the lower part of the Piripiri Block, not in the special settlement?—The part in the Danevirke? I should think that part, without a road, is £1 10s. to £2 an acre. Tamaki has a lot of useless land in it.