

separate register, but let them at the same time inform the European Registrar what steps they are taking, so that their two records may agree, then it will not be any longer competent for the Maori people to dispute or cavil at any of the records that may be made, because the two separate records will bear one another out; and probably the Government will appoint some person to be a member of the Maori Council, or to officiate in some other capacity, to direct and instruct the members of the Maori Council in regard to matters of this kind.

13. I understood him to say that there was to be some Court in connection with this Maori Council in which all cases, except such serious crimes as murders, &c., should be dealt with: does he mean a Court of justice apart from the ordinary Courts of the colony, or what?—Yes; I say that if the Maori Council is constituted they should be given a Court, and empowered to deal with matters that take place within their own districts and affect Maoris. They should be given policemen and other officials, and should be allowed to deal with such matters as it may be deemed right they should have power to deal with.

14. Then, there would be no appeal as at present from the lower Court to the higher Court?—No doubt if it was such a crime as murder there would be an appeal.

15. A civil dispute for instance?—Perhaps if it was a matter of very serious trouble that grievously affected a large section of the people—a hapu or something of that kind—it would perhaps be right that an appeal should be made to the Supreme Court, and the Maori Council should state the circumstances of the case as it knew them to the Supreme Court.

16. *Hon. J. Carroll.*] In their desire to have a Council to manage their land affairs in their district, how does he propose that that Council should be constituted: partly European and partly Maori?—I think that with regard to matters relating to their lands—there are matters that immediately affect the Maori people alone—it would be much better that Europeans should be kept out of it. What would be the object of bringing in a pakeha that did not understand the position, and giving him an opportunity to hamper and get in the way of what the Maoris would like to do. Then, of course, looking at the matter from another point of view, if the House could not agree to all the members of this Council being Maoris through fear of their acting in a way that would be contrary to law, I say no—I do not think there is any likelihood of their doing that, because they would have been constituted by this House and given the power they ask for by this Council.

17. He understands, if Parliament gives them the power they ask for, Parliament is responsible to the general public for the manner in which that power would be exercised in the general interests of the hapu?—Yes; I think the same remark applies with equal truth to every law that is passed by this House. It recoils back on the head of the Government if it does not act in a proper direction. But I say that every year when Parliament opens the proceedings of the Maori Council should be submitted to Parliament—laid before Parliament—and let Parliament satisfy itself whether they are acting rightly or wrongly.

18. The work of that Council would be to administer their lands, lease their lands, control the surveys, cut up the land, and promote settlement wherever necessary and induce occupation?—Yes.

19. And also the functions at present performed by the Native Land Court would be taken over?—I think that all the power that it will be necessary to vest in the Maori Council will be simply the power to deal with their lands as they consider they ought to be dealt with.

20. For the official performance of that work, will it not be necessary to have strict and accurate records kept by the Council in dealing with records of other people?—Oh, yes; of course it would never do that anything should be done outside of what the law allowed to be done.

21. In carrying out the surveys on different blocks of land. Of course, I presume he is aware that under the system of our surveys we have to connect the whole survey system of the colony—I mean a survey is of no use or benefit if it is merely to cut out Native lands or cultivations, and if it is left disconnected?—Yes.

22. Now, in undertaking the leasing of Native lands, supposing they get the power they ask for. It would be necessary to have regulations fixing, possibly, an area-limit—if they make it necessary to restrict the area leased to any single individual?—All such regulations as may be necessary, such as that, and any other regulations necessary, should be embodied in the Act empowering the Maori Council Constitution, and they should be on no account permitted to go outside the Act and the provisions of the Act which may be passed. If they depart from the provisions that will at once be an infringement of the law.

23. The administration of an Act such as they require would involve the cutting-up, marking off reserves, surveying them, and other things, and the settlement of disputes between themselves as to the ownership of land?—Yes, everything.

24. Now, the witness has had a lot of experience on the Native side, and on the European side he has had experience of farming himself; does he say that it is possible for any Council composed wholly of Maoris to carry out all the duties that must be necessary under a system of that kind?—Oh, yes; I think if they were given the power to do this that they would be entirely competent to do it. They would be like children sent to school to learn. A child goes to school and by degrees attains to the utmost pinnacle of knowledge. This is very much easier than actual school-work. There is no difficulty at all. Where does the difficulty come in? How can a difficulty possibly arise in land questions? The hapus having decided upon what is the proper position of the case, all they will have to do is to give effect to it. Then, again, with regard to leases, supposing a Maori owner wants to lease, and the Council inquires into the ins and outs of the matter and satisfies itself that it would be for the benefit of the owner, his family and children, and descendants after him, that this should be sanctioned by the Council, of course, then, it would be for the Council to satisfy itself of that and give effect to it.

25. Who would draw up the lease? The Council would. Say we leased 10,000 acres and you