

7. *Mr. Carroll.*] Chiefly for potato-cultivation, and so on?—I would like to explain this, that there are a number of the older generation of Maoris now alive, who, if they had their reserves to work on, could not do anything beyond growing potatoes, and so on; they could not farm the land, or anything like that. With regard to the young people, if the papakainga reserve is made for them, they could do nothing but grow potatoes and food-crops on the land; so that I am sure the Committee will agree with me in saying that this particular request contained in that paragraph of the petition is a right and proper one. Now, clause 7 of the petition asks that in the appointment of successors to the interests of deceased persons in lands which have been handed over to the administration of the Council, such appointment of successors should be made in accordance with Maori custom; but I dare say that members of the Committee will not look upon this as being a matter of such importance as I hold it to be. What we ask is that our interests in all lands which we own should descend to the persons whom we say should succeed us in those lands, because if you get a piece of land the title to which is Crown grant everything is upset. In lands the title to which is Crown grant succession comes under the New Zealand laws.

8. Is not the next-of-kin the Maori custom in regard to succession?—Yes, that is so; but under the European law what constitutes the next-of-kin differs from the Maori idea. That is why we ask that the Maori rights should be recognised and established. We do not want the law to come in and interfere with them.

9. Do you mean, for instance, that Maori lands should not be permitted to be willed away to Europeans or to outside Maoris?—That is another matter, and it is a matter that should be duly taken into consideration. However, it is not referred to in our petition. What we say is this, that there may be a case of a Maori woman marrying a European husband and leaving her lands to him. The willing of Maori lands to Europeans should be put a stop to by Parliament. Well, now, clause 9 asks that the Council shall have power to reserve burial-places and lands leased, and have the right to take up the dead buried on the lands and remove them. Now, I do not think that is a matter that probably will trouble the minds of the Committee very much, but, still, it is looked upon by the Maoris as a very important matter. The reason that it has been referred to in the petition is this, that Maoris who have lands to lease want to have the right when leasing such lands to go and remove their dead who are buried there and take them away to the general burial-place. They want to have power to do these things rightly and properly. I think I have now dealt with all the principal points.

10. *Mr. Hone Heke.*] You have said, I think, that the Ngatimaniapoto people have no objection to the general principle of the Maori Lands Administration Act?—Yes.

11. One of the principal things which I understand you say you agree to in that Act is this: the absolute stopping of further purchase of Native lands by the Crown?—Yes; we realise that if this Act had not come in to stop it, the purchase by the Crown of Native lands would have been proceeded with, and all our lands would have been purchased by this time.

12. And now that the lands by this Act have been retained, what you desire is that no further right of sale should be permitted in any direction?—Yes, that is what we want.

13. Well, I understand you to say that the Ngatimaniapoto mean this, that they are opposed to the right of sale, generally speaking, but that they ask that exception should be made in regard to certain lands of such a character that the best thing would be to sell them?—That is so; that is what we are asking. We are asking that such parts of the Act as are, in our opinion, unsatisfactory should be amended in the direction in which we ask, and that we should be given power to sell the lands which are of no use to us in any way but to sell them.

14. What about the pakehas who are crying out for land year in and year out—what is the opinion of Ngatimaniapoto in regard to that?—We are asking for machinery in the first place, and then we shall know whether we can meet the desires of the pakehas, or Europeans, afterwards. As far as we are concerned, we are quite ready to let them come and occupy the land—we do not want to keep the pakehas out. But what we do say is that the law as it stands now is not satisfactory, and it cannot be done unless amended as we ask.

15. After the desires of the owners of the lands have been satisfied, first of all in providing them with papakaingas and in providing them with land sufficient for working and cultivation by the Natives, are the Ngatimaniapoto willing that the balance be handed over to pakehas who are clamouring for land year after year?—Ngatimaniapoto would want to. If you say, hand it over to the Council upon lease, then I say Yes.

16. I am not asking you to give them for nothing—you said you did not want to sell?—We desire to throw these lands open upon lease to satisfy those people who are asking for land—we do not care whether they are Europeans or Maoris, or whatever they may be.

17. You said that the colony should pay the cost of the administration of the Council. I understand you to say that the Crown, having no longer to borrow money for the purpose of purchasing Native lands, the colony therefore no longer has to bear the burden of loans for that purpose?—We have considered all those phases of the question, and we say, of course, that if the Crown had gone on with its purchase it would have had to lay out hundreds of thousands of pounds of money in this direction before it would have got the lands into its own hands and been able to throw them open, and, of course, would also have to bear the further cost of surveying, cutting up, and so on.

18. You ask that rates and taxes should not be imposed upon papakaingas. I understand that Ngatimaniapoto is asking this, that in regard to Maoris who desire to farm and work their own land they should be given monetary assistance the same as is offered by the Government Departments to European settlers?—That is a thing that is urgently desired by all the people—not by one or two—by all the people who desire to work the lands.

19. Do I understand you to mean this, that Maoris having had experience of the trouble arising through mortgaging, you ask that these papakaingas should be exempt from rates and taxes, and should be absolutely restricted from the powers of mortgage, and so on, because they