

tinct sources of revenue. Therefore I say that the law with regard to land and the law with regard to timber should be totally separate and distinct. Then, again, I have already given an illustration to the Committee: suppose the case of a block of bush land—picked bush—containing 50,000 acres consisting of matai, rimu, totara, and other descriptions of marketable timber—I am not talking about kauri now—and suppose that the value of that timber is £10 per acre. Let us suppose also that the timber is being leased for a period of fifty years; that will total £500,000. That £500,000 is the property of the Maoris who own the timber, and if the rights to the timber were not being interfered with in connection with the matter of the rights to the land, we should actually see at the present day that the owners of the timber had already received that £500,000. Another reply is this, that we see, in regard to our own timber lands which we sold to the Crown—take Waimarino and Taurewa Blocks—that land was bought by the Crown under the Crown's right of pre-emption, which shut out any private purchase. You all know what the value of timber on the Waimarino Block has been decided to be by the Government officer who ascertained and fixed that value. I have been told it is valued at £2,000,000, and I dare say that if the Taurewa timber was sold it would total another million. Therefore, I say that this bears me out in my contention that timber should not be treated as land, because I say that you people, the Government, have already got from us these millions of pounds which are really ours. Therefore I say, remove the restrictions from these remaining timber forests and let us get a million pounds too.

30. You have not answered my question. I want to know whether you want the Council to interfere in regard to the timber?—Well, I thought my reply was direct enough to the question, but I will explain. I say the timber should be kept out of the authority of the Council, but I say that when transactions are entered into with regard to timber, then it should be submitted to the Council to inquire into and satisfy itself that these transactions are either right or wrong, as the case may be. If right, then let the Council pass them.

31. Would you give the Council power to alter them?—Why ask that question?

32. Because that was proposed by the Government?—I have transacted business with certain timber companies, and those transactions were laid before this Committee, and one of the Europeans with whom I had made a deal appeared before the Committee, and the transaction was in accordance with the law in this way, that 640 acres was the limit allowed to be alienated to an individual. There was one piece of country that was dealt with in that way, and the name of the company was the Puketapu Timber Company. That deed has been laid before the Council, and the Council were unable to vary it—they could not reduce the amounts agreed upon and they could not increase them—the reason being that the whole thing was so right and proper; all that the Council could do was to pass the deed.

33. I may say that the Government wish to bring in a law saying that the Councils could vary it: would you approve of that?—Oh, no; that would not be right—that would be wrong if that were done.

34. Are the Maoris satisfied with the transactions with the pakehas with regard to timber, so far as you know?—My people are satisfied with what has been done there.

35. As far as you know, are the Maoris capable of transacting business about timber and looking after their own interests to their own advantage, without the Council?—Those that I am speaking of were all managed in that way, and I think they have been finished to the satisfaction of all concerned.

36. And there was no dissatisfaction?—None; they are delighted. What I say is that my people have been saved through their ability in dealing with their timber.

37. If they can manage timber, why cannot they manage the land business with the pakehas?—So they can. A Maori could work his land just the same as a pakeha if he had some means opened to him of getting money.

38. If he can manage to lease the timber, why cannot he manage to lease the land to the pakeha?—That is what I say.

39. And you do not want the Council at all?—I have already said that all the Council is to do is to uphold the mana of the law, and to administer such parts of the land as the Natives say they do not want to administer.

40. Then, you give free power to the owner of the land?—Well, that is really the same question that Mr. Kaihau asked me, and which I have replied to. I would like to say this: if the timber lands that my tribe and I own, and which we have dealt in with the pakeha companies, had been free from the restrictions imposed by the law, we should have got 3s. a hundred feet for the totara, and we should have got £20 an acre for every acre of land which had thirty totara-trees on it.

41. *The Chairman.*] That is, the timber with the land?—The timber without the land. And so I say that, the titles as they now are being bound up by the law and not free, the only price we have been able to get is 2s. 3d. a hundred feet for totara and £10 an acre for the totara bush if the trees are sold standing.

42. *Mr. Carroll.*] You admit that the way you have been carrying out your negotiations with the European people, leading right up to its completion, has not been free of difficulties and expense?—Very heavy expense.

43. And you say that had they better facilities they would have got better prices for their timber than they had to accept eventually?—Yes. We had a lengthy dispute with the pakeha, and he said, "If your title was clear I should be perfectly willing to give £20, and even more, per acre."

44. In that deed of agreement between yourselves and the company it required a large number of signatures to be obtained on account of the large number of owners interested, and whoever had charge of the deeds and the carrying-out and execution of the same no doubt had to travel to many districts and to many parts of the North Island?—Yes.