

have called him indolent, and if that is proved I think that the policeman ought to be changed, but I will have to refer the matter to Wi Keepa, who is the Assessor under whom the policeman is placed, and if the report from Wi Keepa is that the policeman is not performing his duty, we will have to change him. With regard to the chief that you have referred to, I will take that matter into consideration and make inquiry. You say he is very old?

The Natives said that he must be nearly a thousand years old.

*Mr. Ballance* : A man of the age of Methuselah is entitled to some consideration. I will make inquiry into the matter; but why do not the people support him? I think the people should support the old man. There is one thing said about the Maoris that they do not sufficiently consider the old people, and I think that is a grave fault. It shows, however, that you have some regard for him when you brought the matter to my notice.

*Wi Keepa Rangipuaawhe* : I uphold what Makai has said with regard to the policeman. This policeman does not fulfil his duties or carry out his instructions. He is always engaged in other pursuits. I quite indorse the complaint that Mita has made.

*Karoro*, who belongs to Ngatirangitihi, and lives at Tarawera, said that he was deputed by his tribe to lay their grievances before the Minister. He read an address as follows: Friend, the Native Minister. Salutations to you. We are very glad on account of your coming amongst us. You have come to do away with the evil which gives us trouble. We ask that you will authorize the making of the Haihainga road—that is, extending from Richmond on the sea coast up to Tapuaeharuru and the Tarawera Lake. That road is sometimes used by travellers. We ask that this matter may be considered. Secondly, we ask that you will make an arrangement to this effect: that the Tuhourangi boats conveying passengers start from Te Wairoa and proceed along the lake till they come to Moera, and then hand over the passengers to us for us to take them up to Rotomahana. We make this request because at present Tuhourangi have it all their own way; we get nothing out of it. We only wish to have the carrying of the Europeans for a short distance. The small piece over which we wish to carry the Europeans has been awarded to Ngatirangitihi. Thirdly, we ask that a township may be made at Tapahahoro. Fourthly, we ask that a plough and cart and horses may be given to us, the Ngatirangitihi.

*Mr. Ballance* : With regard to the road, that is a matter that I shall bring before the Minister for Public Works, if you will write me a letter on the subject. Now, as to the passengers, I would like to say this: that from what I have heard they are perfectly safe in the hands of the Tuhourangi people. I do not want the tourists torn in pieces between the contending tribes. They complain now that the charges are too high, but what would it be if another tribe came in and imposed charges for themselves? I thought you could not claim the water of the lake as well as the land; but, if there is any difficulty there I recommend you to settle it with the Tuhourangi people. Discuss that matter amongst yourselves and come to a conclusion, but do not interfere with the tourists. Now, with regard to the township, I do not know that I can give you an answer upon that point now, but I will make inquiries. I would like to ask this question: suppose a township is made, would any people live in it?

*Wi Keepa Rangipuaawhe* : Not a cabbage could grow there.

*Mr. Ballance* : Then, how are people to live, and what is the use of a township without people? With regard to the plough and cart and horses, I would like to say this: that this Government has thought it better for the Maoris themselves that they should not receive gifts and presents. It would be much better for yourselves that you should be independent in these respects. The people that are always asking for alms and gifts are generally a degraded people. You will all be a very rich people if your lands are properly administered. That is the object on which the attention of the Maoris should be fixed, to save their lands for themselves, and have the rents coming in from them, or, where they sell their lands, to have a portion put in the bank, so that, when the occasion requires, they may be able to provide themselves with money. At present when they sell land they generally spend the money next day, and then they offer another block for sale, and, of course, when all the land is sold they will be paupers; that is a position I do not desire to see, and I am prepared to assist the Maoris to administer their own lands for their own benefit, and to save them from the destructive operations of the land grabber. My desire is to see the people thoroughly independent, and not to be dependent upon alms or doles from any one.

*Karoro* : The reason I want the arm of the lake fenced off is that that part of the lake belongs to Ngatirangitihi.

*Mr. Ballance* said that there must be no toll-gates on the water. The Government have abolished all toll-gates on land, and they will not allow them on the water.

*Tamati Paora* said that the Native Committee would have charge of this. He wished to reply to the Minister's speech about the charges. The Committee have had a meeting and agreed to the charge suggested by Mr. Ballance, and they ask that the Government alone will bear the cost of making the bridge. They hope that the Government will assist them in carrying out their work. The question of charges for people making sketches was not quite settled.

*Mr. Ballance* : I am very pleased to hear of the decision at which the Committee has arrived, and I return, on behalf of this community, my sincere thanks. I think that they have arrived at a very wise conclusion, and my firm belief is that they will get as much revenue as they got before. The Government will bear the whole cost of the bridge, and push it on as rapidly as possible to completion. With regard to the sketches, I sincerely hope that you will not make any charge for that. I shall ask you to confer this favour upon me and abolish all charges for making sketches. The Government Agent will be instructed to assist the Committee, as I have said before, in every possible way.

*Tamati Paora* said that they would make no charges, provided they (the Maoris) appeared in the sketches.