

212. *Mr. Ormond.*] Then if the amendments which you wish made are not inserted, what will be your opinion then about the Bill?—There may be some Natives in this room who would approve, but for myself I will not approve of this Bill if the amendments are not inserted.

213. I will ask you one more question. Suppose this Bill passes in its present form, and the whole of it is subject, as now, to the land going through the Native Land Court, and the Committee being appointed by the owners; would you prefer that rather than go back to a pre-emption arrangement with the Crown?—If the amendments which we propose to make are agreed to, and incorporated and become part of the Bill, then I would be prepared to hear a proposal as to the right of pre-emption.

214. But if they are not, what then?—I will not consent to this Bill.

215. Would you be prepared to discuss with your people this question of pre-emption with the Government, or would you advise your people to discuss it?—It is possible that we might come to an arrangement with the Government.

216. Are we to understand that you would be prepared to submit that to your people?—I would be prepared to discuss it with some of the people, not with all. I could not do so with all: different people have different ideas.

217. You have said that you would agree to the Bill if certain amendments were put in: do you mean the amendments that are printed by Wi Pere?—I am not clear what those proposed amendments are.

218. I understand you to go further than Wi Pere, and that you demand that always the control should be left still with the tribe?—Aye; that is my wish.

219. Do you add that condition on to Wi Pere's?—Aye; I think that that should be added to the amendments which are submitted by Wi Pere.

220. Do you insist upon that to secure your assent to the Bill?—Yes, then I will consent; but of course I approve of Wi Pere's amendments; only I wish this to be added to them.

*Mr. Ormond:* I have asked you these questions because I wish to have it plain before the Committee what was to be understood by your evidence.

221. *Hon. Mr. Bryce.*] I wish to put one or two more questions in continuation of this point of view. I should like to know from you, admitting the land to be in the hands of the tribe, and the tribe having elected the Committee to carry out the wishes of the tribe at the time, how long do you wish the control of the tribe to be kept up—that is, after the tribe has once given its directions to the Committee, how long do you wish the control to be kept up after that?—The control exercised by the owners is to be retained by them until perfectly satisfactory arrangements have been made.

222. Let me put the question another way. The land is in the hands of the tribe; the tribe elects the Committee; then the tribe says to the Committee, "You sell that particular piece of land." The Committee, according to this Bill, hands the land over to the Board then for sale. Do you think that the tribe should have the right to interfere after that stage has been reached?—No, no; I do not think that the Board should be interfered with; the functions of the owners have ceased when they have given explicit directions to the Committee, and the Committee's functions cease when they hand over the land to the Board.

223. *Mr. Hobbs.*] We are in the dark yet as to the amendments of yours which you speak of: we have not seen them?—We were drafting them when Mr. Butler came, and we gave them to Mr. Butler.

224. Where are they—given to Mr. Ballance?—They were not included in the first printed amendments that were sent to him.

*Hon. Mr. Ballance:* I have sent to the office to get the original and the translation of them.

*Mr. Hobbs:* What I want is a copy of the amendments that were handed to Mr. Butler. I understand that the Minister proposes to send for the original and the translation.

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FRIDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1885.

HIKAWERA examined.

225. *The Chairman.*] We will be glad to hear what you have to say on this Bill. First of all, where do you come from, and what tribe do you belong to?—I live in Wairarapa (near Greytown), and belong to the Ngatikahuhunu Tribe.

226. Have you a copy of this Bill?—Yes. I wish to speak about the amendments proposed by Wi Pere: we are all interested in that. We wish that those amendments should be incorporated with the Bill in their entirety, and that the objectionable parts should be taken out. We are the more anxious that this should be done, because this is the first Bill affecting the Natives that has been brought before the Native Affairs Committee and which the Natives have been allowed to take a part in considering. It is on account of this opportunity that the Native chiefs have assembled in Wellington and considered the matter very carefully, and drawn up amendments which they think will express their views. Speaking on behalf of the Wairarapa people (Natives), I am desirous that these amendments should be added to the Bill. We ask this Committee to accept these amendments.

227. *Mr. Hobbs.*] Have you read the Bill as brought down by the Government?—Myself and all the Natives in Wellington have read the Bill. These are the directions which we wish to make. I am well acquainted with the Bill.

228. Do you approve of that Bill?—I consider that some of the clauses are objectionable, and these clauses we meet by the proposed amendments.

229. Do you say this is the first Bill that has dealt with Native lands: do you mean after they have passed through the Court?—No; this is the first Bill.

231. Do you not think there should be one law for the Maori and one law for the European—that is, one law for all?—I can only consider about the law for the Natives.