

kept up, but not in Niue. They desired to return to the previous state of things. The islanders also considered that the Niue men should be exempt from the payment of trading licenses: it should apply only to outsiders and to Europeans. Every islander who went away from Niue had to pay a tax of £1 a head. Uea asked that this tax should be repealed. The position with regard to the boundaries of the mission properties on the island was unsatisfactory. The land was not sold to the Church—it was given; but it had not belonged to the people who gave it. Then, the island of Niue was very much isolated from the rest of the world. The people desired a very much improved steamer service. They also wanted more schools in order to give the children a better education.

The Hon. Sir JAMES ALLEN asked what promises Lord Ranfurly and the late Mr. Seddon had made that had not been fulfilled.

UEA said the matters he referred to were set out in the deeds of annexation. The islanders had not got a say in anything: their authority had been taken away.

The Minister pressed for a definite reply to his question.

UEA replied that the Niueans were promised equal authority in making the laws, and also the power of making direct taxation themselves. Now they had got to pay a poll-tax, duties were levied on all goods, and these duties were imposed on the Natives by the Europeans.

The Minister again asked for a definite reply to his question, requesting Uea to state specifically the promises he referred to that had not been carried out, but Uea finally admitted that he was unable to do so.

Sir JAMES ALLEN, in reply, thanked them all for the kind welcome that had been extended to the visitors. The object of the visit was to enable the members of Parliament to see the island for themselves, to learn the difficulties of the people, and to help them as far as possible. At the same time they wished the islanders to understand that they must, like the Europeans, help themselves in the matter of work. With regard to the expenditure of money, it had to be remembered that New Zealand had to keep its own country going, but at the same time the Dominion recognized its responsibility towards the island of Niue in some things and would help them; they must, however, help themselves to a certain extent. As for the complaints as to taxation, Customs duties, &c., we had taxation in New Zealand also; it was necessary in order to carry on public works and to meet general expenditure. The same kind of things were wanted in Niue, principally education, and in order to secure these benefits there must be taxation. The Island Council had certain powers in this direction, and it was for themselves as well as New Zealand to see that the taxation was equitably imposed. It was incorrect to say that there were Customs duties on all imports. A great deal had been done for education on the island, and an experienced Inspector of the New Zealand Education Department had come with the visitors to look into matters and advise what further should be done. It had been said that promises made by Lord Ranfurly and by Mr. Seddon had not been fulfilled. He would be very sorry indeed to learn that this was really so. One of the Councillors had stated it was understood they were to have some say in making the laws of the island. The Council had very considerable powers in making laws. They had said a promise was made that there should be no direct taxation. He did not know of any direct taxation imposed by New Zealand, but the Council had imposed some direct taxation itself. If they had imposed it he concluded they could remove it. He had made very careful inquiry from the speakers, but he could not learn that any promise made by Lord Ranfurly or Mr. Seddon had not been kept. He was glad to hear that the two great promises made to them had been kept—namely, that no land should be allowed to be sold except to the Government, and that liquor was not allowed to be introduced. With regard to the willing of land, there were two sides to this question. If the present law were done away with and the people allowed to will their lands without any restrictions whatever some Natives might leave their children without any land at all. He had, however, already promised the people of Rarotonga to consider this clause in the Act upon his return to New Zealand, and if it could be amended with sufficient safeguards this would be done. As to the payment of trading licenses, this was necessary in order to keep up the revenue and thus meet expenditure. It only seemed fair to treat all alike in this matter. He had heard previously of the emigration charge of £1 per head on every Native who left the island, and would consult with the Resident Commissioner on the subject. It was an Island Ordinance, and appeared to have been enacted for the good of the island. Several of the islands in the Pacific looked to Niue to provide labour for them, but she must keep sufficient labour for her own work. As to the boundaries of the mission properties, a new missionary was coming, and the question would be settled then. The Government sympathized with the Niueans in their isolation, and would help them as far as possible. Just before he had left New Zealand a tender had been accepted for an auxiliary schooner service from Auckland to Niue, which he hoped would prove satisfactory to them. The question of improving the landing-place was receiving attention, and also the possibility of establishing wireless communication with the island. A Public Works Engineer and a Telegraph Engineer, both of whom were accompanying the party, were looking into these matters during the visit. During his visit Lord Liverpool had promised them a hospital. Towards this object £1,000 had been handed over by His Excellency from the Red Cross funds, and he understood the Administration had a sum of money in hand to supplement this amount. He understood also that the foundation-stone had been laid, and that Dr. Chesson and the Public Works Engineer had inspected the site to see whether it was suitable. A doctor had been sent down to Niue comparatively recently, and it had been hoped to bring a nurse down with the Parliamentary Party, but, unfortunately, at the last moment she had been unable to leave New Zealand just now. Niue was not forgotten in New Zealand, and the Dominion would continue to help them: the visit of the members of the Parliamentary Party that day was an assurance of this fact.