

speak about just now—lands that are under any disabilities such as mortgages, or which are indebted in any other way, should not be brought under the operation of the Board, because these lands are already encumbered under existing laws, and therefore it would not be competent for the Board to deal with them. Wait until the encumbrances upon such lands are first removed, and then bring them under the operation of the Board; but in the case of lands which are under lease to Europeans at the present time, the provisions of the new Act prohibiting the sale should be made to apply to them, and also the present European lessees should have no further power to renew the existing leases—any subsequent lease that he may wish to take up such European will be compelled to do under the new law. I think that is all I have to say.

2. *Mr. Kaihau.*] I understand you to say that you wish this Bill passed with regard to the East Coast alone?—Yes, that is the desire with which I came from home down here—to ask that that Bill should be passed; but now when I come here I find that it is proposed to bring down a new Bill in substitution for that.

3. Well, you say that you do not wish the Bill to apply to any other place but the East Coast?—Yes, with regard to the Board only, not with regard to the stopping of other purchases of land—that is to apply to the whole Island. Of course, if you want a Board or Committee, you should ask for it to be established in your district. Of course that is for you to advocate.

4. You say that all sales or purchase are to be absolutely stopped?—Yes.

5. Well, sales to whom? Purchases by whom?—By the Government and by private purchasers.

6. Are private European purchasers buying Native land now?—Yes, they are buying small areas under existing European laws.

7. And do you mean to say that small areas of land, the property of only one owner, should be prohibited from being sold or purchased?—Yes. As to persons owners of such lands to which it may be found right that the provisions of this proposed Act with regard to purchase should not apply—let the Government or the Board decide who those people are—people who have become to all intents and purposes pakehas. For example, there is one woman in our district—I refer to Airini (Mrs. G. P. Donnelly)—she is to all intents and purposes a pakeha, and she may wish that the provisions of this Bill should not affect her land.

8. You mean to say that people who hold lands in fee-simple under European law at the present time should be debarred from the privilege of selling those lands even if they wish to do so?—Yes, all; and the reason that I say so is that this system of selling and buying Maori lands is the thing that makes us cry out as we continually do. A man sells all his land and then comes crying to the Government to give him some more. Why, there are some old Maoris in the Waikato who at the present time have actually sold their land—divested themselves of their interest in their land—so that it will be competent for them to become applicants for old-age pensions under the Act. Those are the kind of people whose actions annoy me very much.

9. If you are the owner of a block of land which you hold under Crown grant or other description of title, under which you have the right to lease or mortgage or otherwise deal with that land, do you say that that power should be taken away from you and the land virtually restricted in all directions?—Do you mean if it had been already leased or sold?

10. Supposing that it had never been sold or leased, but that under the Crown grant title under which you hold the land you had a right to do these things?—Oh, yes, I say if such land had never been dealt with. I say that, the provisions of this new Act should be made to apply to all such lands where powers to lease, mortgage, sell, or otherwise alienate existed in the title but had never been exercised. The provisions of this Act should not apply to where an owner has sold, leased, or mortgaged any land upon which up to the present time there had been no restriction—the new Act should not operate on such lands, because they are encumbered under the existing law. I will give you an illustration now in reply to your question. I myself am an owner of a block of land of 20,000 acres. Now, this particular 20,000 acres I have placed in the hands of my trustee—the person whose duty it is to look after all my property—and I have given this trustee my permission to mortgage part of that land for the purpose of paying any liabilities hanging over other lands of mine, and I have authorised him to lease other parts of this land for the same purpose. Now, I say that land such as that should not come under the operation of this new Act, but lands that are still the property of Maoris, and absolutely unencumbered, should be brought under the operation of the Act. In the case of lands, part of which have been purchased, the purchased portion should be cut off from the unpurchased portion, and the unpurchased portion should be brought under the operation of the Act. If there is only one owner remaining in a block of land which has been partly purchased, and he wishes to complete that purchase and sell his interest, let it be for the Board to say whether he shall do so or not. I say, if such owner was to go to the Board and say, “Well, I am the only remaining owner—all the others have sold, and there is no object in my continuing to hold my interest,” then it will be for the Board to inquire into and ascertain whether this man has other lands sufficient for his support, and if they are satisfied that he has, well, let him sell.

11. Well, then, what I understand you to mean is this: in your case you hold land which is under certain encumbrances, which you say should not come under the operation of the Board, and in the other case which you suggest the man owns land which is unencumbered in any way and he is desirous of selling. You are exempted from the provisions of the Act; he is not. How do you reconcile the two positions?—What I say is, the Board should be given authority to furnish money to persons whose lands are encumbered, so that it would be open to owners of lands to go to the Board and ask for advances to pay off encumbrances which may be on their lands.

12. Yes, yes, but do not you see that, according to the illustration you have given us, your land does not come under the operation of the Board—some one else is to find the money to pay