

126. What is the general work of the Boards, so far as the observance of residential conditions is concerned, in regard to Maori leases?—Do you mean Board lands or ordinary lands.

127. Both?—The Boards have no power as far as ordinary Native lands are concerned. With regard to vested lands, they have the right under Part XIV of the Act to enforce conditions—that is, in respect of land vested in them in fee-simple.

128. Have you any knowledge as to what the attitude of the Boards is in regard to making the holders of leases observe the residential conditions?—With open land, residence has to be taken up within two years, and with bush land in four years. The Boards have hardly had time to see how they are going to enforce residential conditions. As far as I understand, they intend to do so. With land sold for cash, the Board would have to report if they were to extend the term over the two or four years: they would have to refer to the Minister; they have not sole right to dispense with residential clause.

TUESDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1911.

JOSHUA JONES, in attendance. (No. 23.)

*The Chairman:* Mr. Jones, your last letter has been received by the Committee, and the Committee adheres to its former decision which has already been conveyed to you—that your statement must be confined to matters that have cropped up in this inquiry and pertain to this paper that is before the Committee. If you have any other ideas, the Committee would suggest that you petition Parliament; but this Committee cannot deal with the matter as indicated in your letter.

*Mr. Jones:* I thank you, sir; but you have been dealing with this matter *ab initio* all through the inquiry here, and I do not know how you can obliterate a portion upon which I wish to be heard, and not the remainder.

*Mr. Herries:* I think we start from Mr. Herrman Lewis's purchase.

*Mr. Jones:* No. What I was going to say was that you have had before you, and have now, I think—for you have been basing a lot of your inquiries upon it—the Stout-Palmer Commission's report.

*The Chairman:* No; that has come in incidentally, but it has been ruled out as having no bearing on the paper which forms the subject-matter of this inquiry.

*Mr. Jones:* You have placed me in a difficult position, sir. I am not prepared to finish to-day in any case. I had prepared a short synopsis of this case, respectfully drawn, covering the period from 1876 to the decision of the Court in 1908—20th July, 1908—and the suggestion of the Prime Minister that I should petition Parliament, with his assurance that he would see anything carried out that Parliament recommended. Now, so far I have only got to that. I humbly submit to you that it will not be time wasted to hear what I have to say up to that time. It will assist you, and will save me the further trouble of petitioning, and—which I am more reluctant to do—making my ideas known through the Press. I am determined to bring them out in some form. I thought that if I came here in a respectful manner and read out what I have to say you would not object to any portion of it. That would bring me up to the time I have mentioned. Then I proposed asking you to give me one day's grace in order to finish, covering the time from the decision of the Judges here in 1908 up to the present day; this would not take me long. I make that respectful application to you.

*The Chairman:* You will understand that in this matter of ruling I am the mouthpiece of the Committee. The Committee have given your request every consideration. It has been discussed on three different occasions, and on each occasion the Committee have unanimously decided that what you say must be confined strictly to the paper that has formed the subject of the inquiry. Whatever my own view may be, I am now expressing the Committee's.

*Mr. Jones:* But they have not heard the application I have just made, nor have you had time to consider it, sir.

*Hon. Mr. Ngata:* You should understand the position of the Committee, I think, Mr. Jones. The inquiry is not so much into your grievance as into the statements made by Mr. Massey and the answering statement of the Native Minister.

*Mr. Jones:* I thank you for the correction; but in the Committee of last year—

*Hon. Mr. Ngata:* That is a different matter. If you want a status so far as that matter is concerned, then your position is quite clear: you should present a petition to the House.

*Mr. Jones:* There is no time for a petition this year. What I was going to say is this: during the hearing of the petition of last year a status was given to the Natives and to a gentleman named Herrman Lewis. Both appeared by counsel, in the middle of the hearing of my petition, on a matter foreign to my petition—in fact, hostile. They were allowed that indulgence.

*The Chairman:* I do not want to interrupt you, Mr. Jones, but we have nothing whatever to do with the Committee's proceedings of last year. If you think you did not get justice from that Committee, then I and this Committee suggest to you that you petition Parliament again. We cannot traverse the findings of another Committee of this House.

*Mr. Jones:* Very well, sir, as you have given your ruling. But I suggest to you that that only keeps the ball rolling everlastingly. That Committee treated me shamefully, although they reported in my favour. Considering the way in which I was treated, I think that what I am asking now is only a small concession: to state—as I think I am entitled to do, but was not allowed to do there—what has taken place from 1876 up to the present day. I have prepared a short memorandum setting forth what occurred up to the decision of the Judges here. It is only right that there should be carried out whatever any Committee recommended, but that was not done for me.