

The best means of dealing with these lands should be the subject of experiments, the cost of which should, we consider, be borne by the Crown.

The provisions for dealing with the surface of the land covered by the descriptions in the First, Second, and Third Schedules to the Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877, are by section 44 of the Mining Act, 1908, vested in the Warden, but suitable regulations have not been issued. We are of opinion that all powers to deal with the surface of these lands for purposes other than mining should be vested in the Land Board, subject to the provisions of section 110 of the Coal-mines Act, 1908.

As to—

- (5.) *To what extent, if any, it is desirable to amend the said tenures, having due regard to mining and other interests.*

We would recommend—

- (a.) That the restrictions as to dealing with lands in these mining districts imposed by section 133 of the Land Act, 1908, be removed.
- (b.) That the restrictions as to dealing with land within the national-endowment area imposed by section 259 of the Land Act, 1908, be removed.
- (c.) That the right of exchange provided in section 193 of the Land Act, 1908, be extended to provide for the acquisition of an occupation-with-the-right-of-purchase license.
- (d.) That such lands as it may be deemed desirable to withhold from permanent alienation for mining purposes be set apart from time to time under section 18 of the Mining Act, 1908, such lands to be dealt with only subject to the consent of the Warden on license under special provisions as set out in our proposals for an amendment of the statutes under clause 6 hereof.
- (e.) That the land described in the First, Second, and Third Schedules to the Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Act, 1877, should be administered by the Land Board.
- (f.) That licenses under the Regulations for the Occupation of Pastoral Lands in Karamea and Westland Mining Districts, and also leases under Part VIII of the Land Act, 1908, amended in accordance with our recommendations under clause 6 hereof, be included in the authorized securities of the State-guaranteed Advances Department.
- (g.) That the holders of licenses under the Regulations for the Occupation of Pastoral Lands in Karamea and Westland Mining District, and of residence-sites and business-sites, and also the holders of leases under Part VIII of the Land Act, 1908, be given the right to acquire the fee-simple.
- (h.) That the mining districts land occupation lease tenure be abolished.

As to—

- (6.) *To what extent the provisions of and the regulations under the Mining Act, 1908, the Land Act, 1908, or any other enactment of the General Assembly relating to the disposal of timber and occupation of land within such mining districts should be amended.*

To give effect to our recommendations as set out above we submit the following proposals for amendment of the existing statutes and regulations so far as the districts covered by the order of reference are concerned:—

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 of the order of reference—

The Mining Act, 1908.

Section 4: That the words “a timber-cutting right” be deleted from the definition of a “mining privilege.”

Section 18: That the words “including the cutting of timber for mining purposes” be inserted after the word “exclusively” in the second line of subsection (a), and that the word “unoccupied” in the same line be deleted.