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Hon. Mr. Ballance.

NATIVE EQUITABLE OWNERS.

ANALYSIS.

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| <p>Title.</p> <p>1. Short Title. Recital.</p> <p>2. Inquiry into existence of equitable rights.</p> <p>3. And ascertain who are equitable owners.</p> <p>4. Equitable owners to become legal owners.</p> | <p>5. Legal owners may apply for partition.</p> <p>6. Prior conveyances protected; also leases.
Rent to go to legal owners.</p> <p>7. Recital.</p> <p>8. Court may ascertain Natives entitled to benefit of engagements on "Ngaitahu deed."</p> |
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A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to confirm to Natives certain Equitable Rights, and to ascertain and determine who are the Natives beneficially entitled to certain Reserves in the South Island of New Zealand. Title.

5 BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. The Short Title of this Act is "The Native Equitable Owners Act, 1886." Short Title.

10 Whereas, under "The Native Lands Act, 1865," certificates of title to, and under that and other Acts Crown grants of, certain lands were made in favour of or to Natives nominally as absolute owners: And whereas, under various awards, agreements, and other Government sanctions, lands are now possessed by Natives who assume or assert their ownership to be for their own use only: And whereas in many cases such Natives are only entitled and were only intended to be clothed with title as trustees for themselves and others, members of their tribe or hapu or otherwise: Recital.

2. Be it enacted that, upon the application of any Native claiming to be beneficially interested in any such land as such *cestui que trust* as aforesaid, the Native Land Court of New Zealand may make inquiry into the nature of the title to such land, and into the existence of any intended or implied trust affecting the title thereto. Inquiry into existence of equitable rights.

3. According to the result of such inquiry the Court may declare that no such trust exists, or, if it finds that any such trust does or was intended to exist, then it may declare who are the persons beneficially entitled. And ascertain who are equitable owners.

Equitable owners
to become legal
owners.

4. The Court may thereupon make order that the persons so declared entitled to such beneficial ownership shall be owners as tenants in common of the land the subject of such trust, and they shall be deemed to be such owners, and the land so owned shall be deemed to be land or hereditaments, within the meaning of "The Native Land Division Act, 1882," and "The Native Land Succession Act, 1881," and any Act affecting the same. 5

Legal owners may
apply for partition.

5. Any such owner may thereafter apply to the Court for partition or determination of individual interest in accordance with the provisions of any Act for the time being in force. 10

Prior conveyances
protected ;

6. The foregoing enactments in favour of *cestuis que* trust shall not apply where the land the subject of such certificate or Crown grant as aforesaid, or the subject of such awards, agreements, or other sanctions has heretofore been sold and conveyed by such nominal owners or their successors ; and, where such land is subject to a lease for an unexpired term of years, any order made as aforesaid shall not prejudice the estate or term of the lessee, but the lessee after notice of such order shall pay any rent, to accrue due under his lease, to the Public Trustee, whose receipt shall be a good discharge for the same. 15

also leases.

Rent to go to legal
owners.

Such rent shall be paid out to and among the parties beneficially entitled in accordance with any partition or determination of interest as aforesaid. 20

Recital.

7. "The Native Land Division Act, 1882," shall be read and construed as if the word "not" had been omitted from the fourth line. 25

Whereas, in fulfilment of an engagement entered into by the Government of New Zealand with certain Natives, parties to the deed of purchase known as the "Ngaitahu deed," lands in the South Island of New Zealand were and still are appropriated to and for certain Natives, being the Natives aforesaid or their representatives : And whereas it is desirable that the names of such Natives should be ascertained and determined : 30

Court may ascertain
Natives entitled to
benefit of engage-
ments on "Ngaitahu
deed."

8. Be it further enacted that the said Court shall, for the purpose of ascertaining and determining who the Natives were to whom such lands were appropriated as aforesaid, have the like authority to deal with such lands as it would have if such lands were still lands over which the Native title had not been extinguished, and such lands shall be deemed to be Native land within "The Native Land Court Act, 1880 : " Provided that the right to ownership of such lands shall be confined to the Natives aforesaid and their representatives. 35 40