

recognising their responsibilities for the maintenance and construction of public works. We are assured that with the settlement of the titles of the papatupu areas a very great increase in the realisable assets of the local body will result, and that within a short space of time no land under Maori occupation will escape its proper liability for local rates.

General Remarks.

A large area of the Native lands now leased to Europeans will revert to the Maori owners in six or seven years. We are of opinion that, with regard to the bulk of the lands included in the Tuparoa and Waipiro leaseholds, an opportunity should be given to the owners to consolidate at least the family holdings. We have made representations on the matter to the Hon. the Native Minister, and a copy of our letter to him of the 6th instant will be found in the Appendix hereto. The area affected is over 50,000 acres of excellent pastoral country. There are more than five hundred owners in the larger blocks. We are confident that, with the assistance of an officer of the Native Department and an officer of either the Valuation or the Lands and Survey Department, the owners will be able to arrange the details of exchanges and the consolidation of their family holdings. Legislation will be necessary to carry out the proposals; but if the consolidation is effected the settlement of this large area will be greatly facilitated when the leases expire.

Though the average quality of the land in this county is excellent and the bush lands reported to be extraordinarily rich, the broken nature of it, the predominance of the papa formation, and its tendency to slip, and the difficulties of land and sea communications will always stand in the way of close settlement. The pastoral areas should no doubt be cut up into smaller areas than are now held. But the lands that will be available for general settlement within the next two years must be disposed of in fairly large areas in order to attract settlement.

Our recommendations are set forth in detail in the various schedules.

We have the honour to be

Your Excellency's humble and obedient servants,

ROBERT STOUT,

A. T. NGATA,

Commissioners.

SCHEDULE 1.

LANDS UNDER LEASE TO EUROPEANS.

Name of Block.	Owners.	Area.			Total.			Unexpired Term.
		A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.	
Matakaoa	63				2,780	0	0	8 or 9 years.
Whakaangiangi 5B 2B 2	18	290	2	1				
„ 2B 3	1	27	0	0				
„ 2B 4	5	40	0	0				
„ 4B 2	25	262	0	0				
„ 4B 3	5	40	0	0				
					659	2	1	
Marachara B	214				1,067	1	0	7 or 8 years.
Pohautea	1				445	0	0	7 years.
Waiorongomai	428				13,595	3	0	35 years.
Takamore	26	750	0	0				
„ No. 1	19	250	0	0				
					1,000	0	0	