

If the committee, on the other hand, does not consider this block suitable, then the offer is made of 600 acres in Tihiotonga, and 500 acres to be selected by the said committee in any of the following blocks: Waiteti No. 2, Rotohokahoka, Kaitao, Wharenui, Puketawhero, Owhatiura South, Okoheriki No. 1, Whakapoungakau-Pukepoto Nos. 8 and 14. We have no doubt that such a compact block as Tihiotonga, readily accessible, and having the main characteristics of the Rotorua lands, will on the whole be considered most suitable for the purpose of a communal farm under the management of competent instructors.

The details of this scheme have yet to be arranged. We are given to understand that the scheme is undenominational. As we have stated, the Anglican community at Rotorua welcomed this movement on the part of the Presbyterian Church as a means of doing great service to the Maori people for whom they minister. One of the leading chiefs, who belongs to the Catholic Church, cordially approved of the proposal, and, in fact, made the proposal before us on behalf of the Ngati-Whakaue. We understand also that, after payment of expenses, if there are any profits realised from the farm these would go to the owners according to their relative interests.

The offer of the Ngati-Whakaue is most generous. In fact, this hapu has shown great willingness to adopt measures for their benefit, and in a progressive direction. We believe, however, that the other hapus will emulate their example, and provide instruction for their youth on communal farms managed as the Tihiotonga farm is proposed to be managed. The Ngati-Whakaue are willing that cadets should be received from other Arawa hapus if there should be any openings.

We recommend that we be authorised to enter into negotiation with the Presbyterian Church Maori Mission Committee with a view to arranging the details of the scheme, in time, if possible, for Parliament to deal with it in a practicable form this session.

We ask Your Excellency to note that under this scheme the State will be relieved of the cost of the necessary buildings for and the salaries of the instructors and managers, as well as of their maintenance. The State may be required to advance money on the security of the freehold of the land for ordinary farming purposes. It will be an additional security to the Department making the advance that the management is in competent and careful hands.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The area included in this report is 68,823 acres. Of this we dealt in former reports with 6,643 acres, and now submit amended recommendations. The new area dealt with is therefore 62,180 acres, of which 44,720 acres are offered for general settlement.

There is still left a fairly large area to be dealt with, consisting of the Mangorewa-Kaharoa and Rotomahana-Parekarangi No. 6A 2 No. 5B Blocks now being partitioned by the Native Land Court, and lands at the southern end of the county owned chiefly by Maoris living at Taupo. The latter should be investigated in conjunction with the East Taupo lands, which we hope to deal with soon after the ensuing session of Parliament. There are also 6,716 acres of papatupu lands, which cannot be dealt with.

So far as the Arawa lands proper are concerned, a very small area remains to be investigated.

We have the honour to be

Your Excellency's obedient servants,

ROBERT STOUT,

A. T. NGATA,

Commissioners.