

REPORT

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CONFISCATED LANDS.

REPORT BROUGHT UP 14TH AUGUST, 1866, AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED.

WELLINGTON.

—
1866.

INTERIM REPORT.

THE Select Committee on Confiscated Lands to whom was referred the Bill entitled "An Act to validate certain contracts entered into with Aboriginal Natives entitled to compensation under "The New Zealand Settlements Act, 1863," and "The New Zealand Settlements Amendment and Continuance Act, 1865," have agreed to the following resolution which they report to the House:—"That the Committee are of opinion that the engagements entered into by H. Hanson Turton, on behalf of the Government with the friendly Natives interested in Confiscated Lands within the Province of Auckland require validation. They appear to the Committee so far as there is evidence to be of an equitable character, and such as should be carried out. They recommend that a Schedule of all the grants issued or proposed should be appended to the Bill.

July, 1866.

CROSBIE WARD,
Chairman.

REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CONFISCATED LANDS.

THE Committee to whom was referred the duty of inquiring into and reporting on the quantity and value of lands brought under the operation of the New Zealand Settlements Acts by the several Proclamations and Orders in Council issued under the said Acts, and upon the best mode of disposing of such as may be available for settlement, having carefully considered the subject referred to them, and taken evidence, have the honor to report as follows:—

Your Committee have found great difficulty in obtaining evidence of a full and reliable character as to the extent and value of the different districts and blocks of confiscated land. In some cases even the area is a matter of estimate; and in all cases the number of acres available for sale or settlement, and the value per acre, have been arrived at only as an approximation.

In the case of the confiscated lands lying within the Province of Taranaki, your Committee have been able to avail themselves of the evidence of Messrs. Parris and Carrington, who have supplied full and substantially accurate information respecting the land confiscated, and the various claims upon it. Owing to the comparative simplicity of these claims, the case of Taranaki has been the most easy of all to deal with; and yet the results obtained by your Committee may be relied on as substantially correct, although they cannot be considered precise or final in the following respects:—First, the total extent of land confiscated is estimated from a sketch map of the coast. Second, the extent of land which may be adjudged by the Compensation Court during its approaching sittings to be due to absentee or other claimants cannot be foretold. Thirdly, the area which it may be thought fitting by the Government to grant to rebels who may return and surrender is uncertain. And lastly, the extent of the land in the interior which may be available for settlement within a moderate period has been arrived at, in practical ignorance of the facts, by an approximate calculation. A rule has been followed in making the calculation, which is found not incorrect in other cases. Half the area of that part of the land which is yet unexplored, but known to be a broken and hilly country, has been taken to be of some value, and the rest to be wholly unsaleable.

In the case of the confiscated lands in the Waikato District in the Province of Auckland, your Committee have drawn the greater part of their information from the records of the Compensation Court, and from returns and written opinions furnished by Mr. C. Heaphy and Mr. J. Mackay. The computation of the extent and value of these lands has been exceedingly intricate and complex. The number of claims, both Native and European, on these lands, the variety of objects to which they must be appropriated, the diversity of dealings which have already taken place, and the uncertainty of future dealings, have rendered the task of your Committee extremely difficult. In this case, as in that of Taranaki, the extent of the land which may prove entirely unavailable for purposes of settlement can only be regarded as a probable conjecture; and, in addition, the area which it may be right to set apart from the most available lands for the residence of former owners who have been in rebellion but may hereafter profess allegiance to the Queen, cannot be estimated by your Committee on any certain basis of authority.

In the case of the Tauranga District, in the Province of Auckland, your Committee have taken the evidence of the Superintendent of the Province. Owing to the small extent of country taken by the Crown for European settlement, and the necessity which exists for devoting almost all the available portion to the use of the Militia, the extent which may be available for other purposes is merely nominal, and the final results cannot be very different from those set down by your Committee.

In the case of the Bay of Plenty, or Opotiki District, the utmost uncertainty prevails. Your Committee have been unable to obtain any definite evidence whatever as to areas; and the deductions to be made by way of compensation to friendly Natives, and grants to returning rebels, are as yet wholly undetermined. In their attempt to form an approximate calculation, your Committee have assumed, from such opinions as have been laid before them, that there may be in the district 100,000 acres of useful land; that as about one-half the original Native owners have been friendly or neutral, one-half of the whole land must be restored to them; that of the other half, or 50,000 acres, 25,000 acres will be required for military settlement; and that the remaining 25,000 acres will be available for any other purpose.

The block of confiscated lands within the Province of Wellington will be, as your Committee are informed, handed back to the loyal Native owners.

You Committee have prepared a tabulated statement, which they append to this Report, showing the gross area of each district, the deductions made or to be made under the various heads of appropriation, and the approximate extent of the remaining available land. To this they have attached such values as, on the evidence given, have seemed most nearly to approach a true estimate.

Your Committee have carefully considered that part of the order of reference which directs them to report upon the best mode of disposing of such lands as may be available for settlement. They find that the lands in Waikato and Tauranga have already been disposed of to the Province of Auckland on certain terms, and are therefore withdrawn from their consideration. No such arrangement has yet been completed as regards the Bay of Plenty District, or the confiscated lands in the Province of Taranaki, nor has any proposal on the subject been submitted for the consideration of your Committee. They hold the belief that it was not in the intention of the House of Representatives that your Committee should themselves initiate a plan for disposing of these lands, and they refrain from themselves assuming so large a responsibility.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON CONFISCATED LANDS.

SCHEDULE showing the disposal of the CONFISCATED LANDS, and the estimated extent and value of the Lands still available for Sale.

Name of Block.	Total Area Confiscated.	Compensation and Reserves for Friendly Natives.	Estimated extent for returning Rebels.	Missionary and other Claims.	Provincial purchased Lands.	Military Settlements.	Immigrants' Allotments.	Sold Lands.	Mountain and Swamp.	Saleable Lands.		Rate per Acre.	Estimated Value	Total Value.
										£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
PROVINCE OF TARANAKI—														
Ngatiawa Coast ...	492,800	...	...	...	...	17,048	...	...	226,852	10,000	230,000	0 10 0	5,000 0 0	60,000 0 0
Waikare, South ...	23,300	9,575	...	...	...	12,260	...	...	...	2,765	2,765	...	...	26,000 0 0
Oakura ...	30,200	10,470	...	...	...	(b) 15,980	...	...	65,000	...	...	2 0 0	242,400 0 0	...
Ngairuanui Coast ...	598,000	45,000	75,000	...	...	50,000	...	...	...	121,200	120,000	0 10 0	60,000 0 0	...
Total ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	121,800	363,000	0 5 0	30,450 0 0	382,850 0 0
PROVINCE OF WELLINGTON—														
Total ...	200,000	200,000	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	418,850 0 0
PROVINCE OF AUCKLAND—														
Waikato ...	1,217,437	224,080	50,000	4,227	5,471	150,000	26,436	6,971	303,274	278,422	...	0 5 0	69,605 0 0	...
Tauranga ...	214,000	2,000	164,000	...	...	25,000	...	...	11,000	168,556	446,978	0 10 0	84,278 0 0	153,883 0 0
Opotiki ...	480,000	100,000	...	...	...	25,000	...	...	(c)	10,000	...	0 5 0	2,500 0 0	4,500 0 0
Total ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,000	12,000	1 0 0	2,000 0 0	25,000 0 0
Deduct Liabilities in Money, viz.—														
Compensation to Natives	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,056 0 0
" to Settlers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60,000 0 0
Expense of Survey, &c., of Military Settlements	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15,000 0 0
Net value—Province of Auckland														
...														
...														
...														
£88,327 0 0														

(a) Township of Waikare, exclusive of sections granted to Natives. (b) Reserves included in this area have been handed back to the Natives; acreage unknown. (c) No reliable information.