

1946
NEW ZEALAND

NATIVE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st MARCH, 1946

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave

The UNDER-SECRETARY, NATIVE DEPARTMENT, to the Hon. the MINISTER OF
NATIVE AFFAIRS.

SIR,—

Native Department, Wellington, 1st June, 1946.

I have the honour to transmit to you the annual report upon the general activities of this Department for the year which ended on the 31st March last. Certain important aspects of the Department's administration—Native-land development, housing, rehabilitation, and so forth—are dealt with in a separate report from the Board of Native Affairs.

I have, &c.,

G. P. SHEPHERD,
Under-Secretary and Native Trustee.

The Hon. H. G. R. Mason, Minister of Native Affairs.

GENERAL

There has been a further expansion of the activities of the Department during the year covered by this report. One of the principal new measures introduced was the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act, 1945, which provides greater facilities for dealing with the general Maori welfare and for closer co-operation between the Department and the people. Another additional field of operations will result from the secondment of an engineer to the Department. The services of an experienced engineer were made available by the Public Works Department for several months during the year 1945-46 to carry out a survey of lime deposits with a view to obtaining lime urgently needed for development work, and arrangements are now being made for the permanent secondment of the engineer to this Department. This will fill a long-felt need for expert advice on such matters as laying off road-lines on scheme lands, bridging and culverting, drainage and water-supplies, river erosion and protective works, and many similar problems which frequently arise in the course of the Department's work.

Mr. D. G. B. Morison, LL.B., was appointed Chief Judge on the 1st September, 1945, in succession to Mr. G. P. Shepherd, who found the duties of the combined offices of Chief Judge, Under-Secretary, and Native Trustee more than it was possible to perform with justice to each office, and who had asked to be relieved of the position of Chief Judge for that reason. Mr. Morison, in the course of twenty-five years of practice as a barrister and solicitor at Wellington, has had a wide experience in matters connected with Maori land laws and has frequently represented Maoris in the Native Land Court and before the Maori Affairs Committee. His long experience in conveyancing and in the administration of trusts and estates will be of the greatest value in his judicial work in the Native Land Court.

A report on the Department's operations in connection with the development and settlement of Native lands, housing activities, rehabilitation of Maori servicemen, and horticultural work is contained in parliamentary paper G-10.

Staff

At the 31st March, 1946, the personnel of the Department, including the seven Judges of the Native Land Court, numbered 586, as compared with 564 at this time in 1945. Details are as follows, the corresponding figure for 1945 being shown in parentheses :—

Office staff—					Total.
Permanent	..	..	..	288 (233)	} 455 (449)
Temporary	..	..	..	167 (216)	
Field staff—					
Permanent	..	..	..	18 (18)	} 131 (115)
Temporary	..	..	..	113 (97)	

The number of officers serving in the Armed Forces has declined from 127 to 51. At the end of the year there were 52 permanent and 75 temporary Maori officers in the Department, making a total of 127, or approximately 22 per cent. of the staff.

During the year two of the senior members of the staff, Messrs. H. S. King and P. A. Stubbing, retired on superannuation. Mr. King joined the Department in 1902, and in 1914 he was appointed Registrar of the Native Land Court at Rotorua. In 1920 he became Registrar of the Ikaroa and South Island Districts, and two years later he was appointed Deputy Native Trustee, a position which he held until his retirement. Mr. King's thorough knowledge of the Maori language and his deep understanding of the people were a most valuable asset in his relations with the beneficiaries of the Native Trustee.

Mr. Stubbing was first appointed to the Department in 1914 as Clerk and Interpreter in the Gisborne office. He was one of the few Maoris of his time to be qualified as a public accountant, and in 1919 he was appointed Accountant of the Auckland office. He retained this position for twenty-seven years, during which time there was a very considerable expansion in the accounting work of the Department as a result of the widely extended sphere of activities.

The rapid growth of the Department's operations of late years, including development, housing, horticultural work, and more extensive Maori welfare work, has tended to throw more and more responsibility on the district offices. To enable the Registrars to cope more effectively with the increased work, provision was made in the Native Purposes Act, 1945, for the appointment of a Deputy Registrar in each district. Authority has also been given for the appointment of District Chief Clerks and District Solicitors. These appointments will also facilitate the decentralization of the Native Trust work, which is referred to under the heading of the Native Trustee.

MAORI WELFARE

As a result of the passing of the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act, 1945, Maori welfare operations will be greatly expanded in an endeavour to meet the needs of the Maori people in a changing world. The Act will be administered by the Native Minister, who will have the direction and control of all powers conferred by the Act as part of the Native Department's activities. Provision is made under that Act for the appointment of a Controller and such other Welfare Officers as may be necessary, who will be officers of the Native Department. The Act provides machinery for the proclamation of tribal districts, in each of which there will be a Tribal Executive Committee consisting of representatives of Tribal Committees, which are to be set up in the various parts of each tribal district, appointed by the Native Minister. The

functions of the Tribal Executive Committees are defined in section 12 of the Act and are generally concerned with all matters affecting the social, economic, educational, moral, and spiritual well-being of the Maori people. This organization will provide wider scope for the leaders of the people to play their part in the administration of matters of a domestic nature affecting their villages and personal conduct of their inhabitants than existed under the Maori Councils Act, 1900, which it has superseded.

The personnel of the Welfare Branch of the Department was considerably enlarged during the year, and male Welfare Officers are now stationed at Te Kuiti and Paeroa in the Waikato-Maniapoto District, Opotiki in the Waiariki District, Ruatoria and Gisborne in the Tairāwhiti District, Wanganui in the Aotea District, and Christchurch in the South Island. Lady Welfare Officers are stationed in Auckland and Wellington cities. The majority of these officers were appointed towards the end of the year under review, but the work already accomplished has been a clear indication of the need for their services. A brief summary of welfare operations is included in each district report.

During the past twelve months, economic and social surveys were carried out at Opiki Market Gardens, comprising 61 families and 387 individuals, and at Porirua Pa, comprising 26 families and 217 individuals. These surveys are invaluable as a basis for planned social work such as housing, water-supplies, and health amenities such as drainage systems, also labour requirements and other matters of a similar nature.

The following table indicates the volume of work of a more individual nature performed by the Welfare staff at Wellington, at present attached to Head Office:—

	Females.	Males.	Total.
(1) Placed in employment	89	5	94
(2) Transfers arranged to more suitable employment . .	24	..	24
(3) Releases arranged from essential industries owing to ill health, maternity cases, &c.	22	..	22
(4) Delinquents (Borstal cases, &c.) placed in employment	61	..	61
(5) Indigent cases assisted	15	6	21
(6) General welfare work	165	18	183
	376	29	405

Under the heading of general welfare work are included such matters as arranging accommodation, liaison with other Government Departments, assistance in applying for social security benefits, and assisting and advising with applications for housing loans. The lady Welfare Officer also made a survey of the working-conditions of all Maori women and girls employed in industry in Wellington, thus gathering much useful information for future reference. It will be noted that the number of females passing under the care of the Division greatly exceeds that of the males. This is due in a large measure to the recent movement of Maori girls towards city employment opened up to them by war conditions.

Hostelries and Hostels

Hostelries have been established by the Department at various times over the last forty years to meet the accommodation needs of the travelling Maori public. Families and individuals passing through towns, or going to towns on shopping expeditions, or to visit sick relatives in hospitals make frequent use of these establishments. There are two in the South Island, at the Bluff and Nelson, and six in the

North Island, at New Plymouth, Tauranga, Frankton, Tuakau, Pukekohe, and Auckland. In the larger hostelries such as New Plymouth, Frankton, and Auckland, beds and bedding are available as well as facilities for cooking and washing. A nominal charge is levied for hire of beds and bedding. The smaller establishments are more in the nature of rest-rooms, although there is sufficient sleeping-space for those with their own bedding. No charge is made for the use of this type of accommodation. Residence is limited to a week. The hostelries are financed from trust funds administered by the Native Trustee, who is also responsible for their control and maintenance. A more modern type of hostelry incorporating Maori architecture is under consideration for Rotorua.

However useful and convenient these hostelries may be, they do not offer a solution to the accommodation problem of Maoris working in cities such as Auckland and Wellington. The Maori girls especially find it difficult to obtain suitable accommodation and many are more or less forced to room in undesirable localities. During the last five years, four hostels have been established for girls and one for boys who are either working in the City of Auckland or attending secondary schools, the teachers' training college, or the University. Two of these hostels were purchased by the Department, two were assisted financially, while one was established at their own expense by the members of United Maori Mission. The management of these hostels was undertaken by various Christian organizations: the United Maori Missions Society (3), the Women's Christian Temperance Union (1), and the Presbyterian Church (1). The Methodist Maori Mission has established a similar hostel in Hamilton, and the establishment of one in Wellington is under consideration by the Department when a suitable building is available and arrangements can be made for its management. A total of 104 girls and 28 boys are boarding in these hostels, which is a small percentage when, in addition to students, there are nearly 900 Maori girls and women employed in Auckland.

All hostels and hostelries are visited by the Chief Welfare Officer, and close co-operation is maintained between the Department and the organizations concerned.

FINANCE

The following table summarizes the financial transactions of the Department during the year:—

—	Total Payments.	Total Receipts.
Consolidated Fund—	£	£
Civil List (Native Purposes)	4,665	..
Special Acts (Arawa, Ngaitahu, and Taranaki)	21,000	..
Vote " Native "	310,745	35,401
Court fees .. .. .	..	5,892
Miscellaneous .. .. .	..	3,608
Land for Settlements Accounts—		
Native Land Settlement and Housing	929,027	840,886*
Native Trust and Maori Land Boards	722,350	802,056
	1,987,787	1,687,843

* Includes receipts from Native land development schemes, £707,920; grant from Consolidated Fund, £100,000; and receipts under the Native Housing Act, 1935, £29,890.

<i>Expenditure from Vote " Native "</i>	£	£
Salaries, general departmental administration, and purchase of equipment	194,970	
Less recoveries from Native Trustee, Maori Land Boards, and Miscellaneous	35,401*	
	<hr/>	159,569
Grants for Native purposes .. .. .	..	104,612
Protection of Native land .. .. .	..	11,163
		<hr/>
		275,344
		<hr/> <hr/>

* Includes Native Trustee's contribution for 1944-45, £12,200.

NATIVE TRUSTEE

For several years past the administration of the Native reserves vested in the Native Trustee under the Native Reserves Act, 1882, the Westland and Nelson Native Reserves Act, 1887, and the West Coast Settlement Reserves Act, 1892, has been almost completely carried out by the Wellington and Wanganui district offices, in which districts the majority of the beneficiaries reside. This decentralization was brought about to give the beneficiaries closer contact with those administering their affairs, and, with the same end in view, it is now proposed to delegate the greater part of the Native Trust operations to the district offices. Section 3 of the Native Purposes Act, 1945, enables the Native Trustee to delegate to any Registrar of the Native Land Court any of the powers, functions, and duties conferred or imposed upon him by any statute, deed, will, or other instrument. As a result of such delegation, estates and mortgages will be dealt with by officers who have a personal knowledge of the people and the lands affected.

Some 221 new estates of various types were accepted for administration during the year, and the amount held on behalf of beneficiaries at the end of the year was approximately £207,500.

Investments from the Common Fund of the Native Trustee amounted to approximately £735,000, but some difficulty is being experienced in finding other suitable investments at present.

The free services of the Department in the administration of the estates of deceased Maori servicemen have been widely made use of, and assistance is now being given in the matter of gratuities. A notice setting out the method of application was circulated to all next-of-kin, and as the applications are received from Base Records they are referred to the Native Land Court in the appropriate district. The Court inquires into the facts and merits of each application for the information and guidance of the Minister of Defence in deciding to whom the gratuity in respect of the service of the deceased soldier shall be paid.

Details of the year's activities on the Native Trust Stations are contained in parliamentary paper G-10.

NATIVE INTERPRETERS BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Eight students qualified for a first-grade interpreter's license last year, all candidates sitting the examination having passed. This is the largest number of passes recorded for many years. One candidate sat the examination whilst a prisoner of war in Germany. Of the eight who sat for the license, three were Europeans and five Maoris,

one of the latter being under twenty-one years of age at the time of the examination. It is pleasing to note the increased interest being taken in the study of the Maori language disclosed by the number of applications now being made for interpreters' licenses.

DISTRICT REPORTS

WAIKATO-MANIAPOTO AND TOKERAU DISTRICTS (AUCKLAND)

Native Land Court Activities

During the year there were twelve gazetted sittings of the Court in the Waikato-Maniapoto District and eighteen sittings in the Tokerau (North Auckland) District. A special sitting was held at Te Kao (Tokerau District) to deal with the Wairahi Claim and other matters affecting the people in the far North. Applications in all aspects of the Court's jurisdiction were brought forward for consideration and decision. There has been a marked increase in inquiries for the lease or purchase of Native land, particularly in the Waikato-Maniapoto area, but Maori owners are encouraged, as far as possible, to retain their lands for their own use or for occupation by other Maoris.

As a result of the war the work of the Court in hearing probate and succession claims has increased, and with the return of ex-servicemen rehabilitation matters are claiming more attention in clarifying and investigating title positions. The partition and vesting of house-sites as a preliminary to housing applications has also occupied much of the Court's time.

Maori Land Board Activities

Both Boards have under their control large areas of vested lands, including, in the Waikato-Maniapoto area, four Native townships, three of which are of considerable extent.

Apart from the renewal of existing leases, there has been very little dealing with lands vested in the Boards under the Native Land Act, the principal reason being that only short-term leases can now be given under existing statutory authority. The demand for Native township sections has been keen, and, in addition to renewals, a number of new leases have been issued.

Millable timber, both on vested and Maori-owned lands, has been in keen demand.

A large number of meetings of owners have been held during the year to consider not only the alienation of lands and timber, but also the question of the utilization of moneys for tribal and community purposes.

The Boards have during the year collected and distributed considerable sums in rents and royalties. Lessees have, on the whole, been prompt in payment of rents, and in other cases the necessary action has been taken to ensure payment.

A grant was made to the Maniapoto Tribal Committee for the purpose of assisting in the renovation, removal, and re-erection of the communal hall on the Te Kuiti Marae known as "Naumai."

Towards the end of the year Mr. P. A. Stubbing retired on superannuation after serving twenty-seven years as Accountant in the Auckland office. He was suitably farewelled at a large staff gathering.

Consolidation

The principal consolidation schemes in the Tokerau District are the Hokianga, Mangonui, Kaipara, and Bay of Islands schemes, comprising a total area of 522,287 acres. These schemes embrace 6,583 blocks, which were owned, at the inception of consolidation, by 42,266 owners.

The principal work of the year in the four general schemes has been the final assembly of the interests of the respective owners preparatory to the issue of title-vesting orders. This work has now been completed in the following series of sub-schemes :—

Scheme.	Area.	Number of Owners.
	Acres.	
Hokianga A Series : Waima	22,069	8,343
Hokianga AA Series : Taheke	2,773	2,071
Hokianga B Series : Omanaia	4,736	4,351
Hokianga D Series : Otatau	7,990	1,147
Hokianga J Series : Panguru	9,357	2,500
Kaipara D Series : Pakiri	3,084	97
	50,009	18,509

The work of assembling the various interests is now in progress in the following series :—

Scheme.	Area.	Number of Owners.
	Acres.	
Kaipara F Series : Kaihu	4,219	1,054
Kaipara BA Series : Waihaua-Karakanui	1,323	1,583
Bay of Islands A Series : Orauta	8,109	2,784
Bay of Islands A Series : Pokapu	7,885	3,504
Bay of Islands A Series : Matawaia	6,188	703
Bay of Islands A Series : Otiria	1,151	570
Bay of Islands A Series : Marohapa	5,448	560
Bay of Islands A Series : Waiomio	8,105	825
Bay of Islands A Series : Motatau	13,425	1,005
Mangonui E Series : Ahipara	5,332	2,545
Mangonui A Series : Te Hapua - Te Kao	45,139	12,794
Hokianga F Series : Waimamaku	4,702	3,307
	111,026	31,234

In three of the sub-schemes referred to above the final proposals for subdivision of the land and allocation to specified owners were confirmed during the year ended 31st March, 1946. Title-vesting orders were made in respect of 24 holdings in the Pakiri area.

In addition to the four general schemes, a great deal of consolidation work has been effected by the Court by way of exchanges, combined partitions, and arranged successions under section 194 of the Native Land Act, 1931. In one such combined operation, lands previously owned in common by a number of owners have emerged as twelve separate holdings suitable for development and housing purposes. In another case the consolidation of 161 interests was effected by the making of 42 orders of exchange. These examples are typical of many which come before the Court in its ordinary jurisdiction. The simplifications of title achieved in this way are invaluable as a preliminary to housing and development operations.

Maori Welfare

The following is a summary of the operations of the Maori Welfare Officer at Paeroa from his appointment in September, 1945, to the 31st March, 1946 :—

Economic Surveys—

Te Moananui Flat, Paeroa, comprising 18 families and 103 individuals.

Tawatawa, Whangamata, comprising 9 families and 47 individuals.

General Welfare Work—

Inspection of houses and assisting with housing applications	..	26
Tribal meetings and meetings of assembled owners attended	..	6
Assisting applicants in Native Land Court matters	..	46
Adjustment of wages	.. .. .	1
General (interviews and advice)	.. .. .	77

In March, 1946, a lady Welfare Officer commenced duty in Auckland City, and the importance of her work in dealing with accommodation, employment problems, and delinquency has already become apparent.

The Welfare Officer stationed at Te Kuiti has carried out housing surveys and inspections at Te Kuiti, Puketepapa, Pukaki, and Waahi. Arrangements were also made for the distribution of surplus Army blankets, which were made available for sale to Maori families suffering from an acute shortage of bedding. Assistance was given to numerous families applying for housing advances, to applicants for social security benefits, and to Maoris seeking employment or adjustment of wages.

WAIARIKI (ROTORUA) DISTRICT

Native Land Court

Applications to the Court have shown a decided increase both in number and variety. There were twenty-one gazetted sittings at the five main centres of Rotorua, Tauranga, Whakatane, Opotiki, and Taupo, with adjournments to Te Kaha and Ruatoki. These adjournments were necessitated mainly by the large number of applications by the Board of Native Affairs for recommendations regarding the occupation of scheme lands in those districts.

During the absence of Judge Harvey in Rarotonga, where he was engaged for two months on special work, sittings of the Court were held by Chief Judge Morison, Judges Carr and Prichard, and Mr. Commissioner Thompson.

Consolidation

During the war years this important branch of the Department's activities has been delayed for lack of trained staff, but with the return from overseas service of an officer with some experience in consolidation, operations have now commenced on the Koutu Consolidation Scheme.

The Koutu Blocks lie just outside the boundary of the Borough of Rotorua, mainly between the railway-line and the lake. There is little European land in this area, and it is very favourably situated for the establishment of a heavily built up Maori residential area. The existing titles, however, are a patchwork of small and oddly shaped sections, and lack of road access has precluded the full use of the land.

The intention of the scheme is to divide the area into individual building-sites, provided with full road access laid out on the most modern lines by Mr. J. W. Mawson, Town Planning Officer of the Internal Affairs Department, and with provision for reserves. Considerable progress has been made, and houses are already being built under the Native Housing Act on some portions of the area upon which agreement regarding locations has been reached. As yet, some portions cannot be dealt with as there is no registered surveyor available to carry out the necessary surveys.

Maori Land Board

The farming activities of the Board are limited to the station property at Waikawa, and the question of the future policy to be adopted on this property is under consideration by the Board of Native Affairs.

In an endeavour to promote the interest of the Maori people in fruit-production, an unimproved area adjoining Lake Rotoiti and the scenic reserve at Hongi's Track has been burnt off, drained, and ploughed. Some 150 fruit-trees have been established, and further planting of fruit-trees and small fruits is contemplated this coming year. If materials are available, a tea-room to cater for the visiting public is to be established.

Maize-production activities and the growing of kumaras by the Maoris of Tauranga, Motiti, and Matakana Island have been continued. The dry spell, which so disastrously affected the northern half of the North Island in one of the worst droughts experienced in the Bay of Plenty for many years, had an adverse effect on the maize crops at Matakana, with the result that production was reduced considerably. An active campaign for the cultivation of 2,000 acres of maize is being launched during the coming year.

The Board of Native Affairs has approved of the Board's proposals for the establishment of an agricultural contracting account, limited to a capital outlay of £4,000, for the express purpose of entering into contracts with Maori land-owners for bringing into cultivation areas of land now lying idle which are not within the sphere of Native land development activities. Opportunity will be taken by the Native Land Development Branch to avail themselves of the Board's contracting machinery for the purpose of cultivation of scheme areas where labour is in short supply.

During the year the Board of Native Affairs has paid the following sums to the Maori Land Board on account of advances made prior to the inclusion of the lands in development schemes: Tihiotonga, £4,445 6s. 4d.; Okere and Taheke, £6,695 0s. 2d.

Maori Welfare

In September, 1945, a Welfare Officer was established at Opotiki. The following is a summary of his operations to the 31st March, 1946:—

Trade apprenticeships, employment arranged, &c.	..	..	38
Rehabilitation cases investigated	..	..	184
Cases of indigence investigated	..	..	5
Delinquent cases	..	..	4
New housing applications arranged	..	..	13
General interviews and advice	..	..	400
			644

A housing survey was also carried out at Ruatoki.

The Taiporutu Club of Rotorua is to be congratulated on its voluntary welfare work for hospital patients. During the year 100 garments were made for children in the hospital and all Maori patients were regularly visited each week.

TAIRAWHITI DISTRICT (GISBORNE)

There were twenty-eight sittings of the Court during 1945-46, as compared with twenty-two in the previous year, and over 3,000 cases were notified for hearing. The Native Appellate Court held two sittings in this district and a total of 11 appeals were considered. Six of these appeals were disposed of, and the judgment of the Court is awaited in the remaining five cases.

Pursuant to section 14 of the Native Purposes Act, 1938, a Native Land Court Commission of three Judges sat at Te Araroa to hear claims concerning the ownership of the Wharekahika Block, and the decision of the Commission was delivered in respect

of the Marangairoa 1D (Kautuku) Block pursuant to section 12 of the said Act. These are two of the largest blocks in the Northern Waiaapu Consolidation Scheme, the completion of which has had to be delayed until the final disposal of claims affecting the titles.

A most pleasing feature of the year's operations was the high percentage of alienations confirmed in favour of Maori alienees. Sales of land to Europeans comprised 50 acres only, while 433 acres were sold to Maori purchasers. More than one-half of the land comprised in new leases was leased to Maoris.

Maori Land Board

The increased activities of the Board are reflected in the annual cash turnover, which exceeded that of the previous year by more than £87,000. In response to the call for the final war effort, a further sum of £10,000 was invested in war loans.

Grants totalling £550 were made to the Maori Purposes Fund Board for the following purposes: welcome home to Maori soldiers, £100; Uruahi River control, £50; Whakarua Park Hall, £300; and Ariuru water-supply, £100.

Maori Welfare

A comprehensive survey of the housing and general living conditions in eight Maori communities in the northern part of the Tairāwhiti District was made during the year under review. A total of 173 dwellings were inspected and reported upon, the number of residents being 1,124. This survey reveals a number of matters requiring attention, such as the need for more adequate water-supplies and the installation of proper cooking, washing, and sanitary amenities. Arrangements have been made for the installation of a water-supply at Ariuru Village, the funds having been provided by the residents and the Maori Land Board, with a subsidy from the Health Department, and investigations are being made as to a suitable supply at Anaura.

The Welfare Officer in this area has accompanied the District Health Officer and the representative of the Social Security Department on visits to the various settlements.

The following is a summary of general welfare work in the northern part of the district:—

Interviews on employment and placements	18
Rehabilitation—interviews and reports	51
Assistance <i>re</i> social security benefits	47
Housing assistance with applications and interviews	102

In the Gisborne area a housing and economic survey was carried out at Muriwai. General welfare work in this part of the district is summarized as follows:—

Placement cases	3
Rehabilitation applications investigated	61
Assistance with pensions and social security benefits	143
Delinquent cases	2
Indigent cases	2
General (including assistance with Native Land Court matters, education, wage adjustments, &c.)	111

AOTEA (WANGANUI) DISTRICT

Thirteen sittings of the Court were held in the District during the year—six in Wanganui, three in New Plymouth, two in Hawera, and two in Tokaanu and Taumarunui. Notwithstanding the reduced number of sittings, there has been a marked increase in the business transacted, there being 72 partitions, 955 succession orders, and 523 other orders. Fees received amounted to £1,145 1s., as compared with £928 10s. received during the previous twelve months.

There has been a noticeable increase in applications affecting lands subject to Part I of the Native Land Amendment Act, 1936. The expansion of the housing programme has also resulted in the making of several partition and vesting orders for dwelling-sites.

Rates on Native Lands

This question continues to take up a great deal of the Court's time. Of the 2,253 cases notified for hearing, 908 were in connection with rates. The Rangitikei County Council is one of the local bodies in this district which makes application regularly to this Court for orders under the Rating Act, 1925. In the area controlled by that county is a large tract of unoccupied Native land situated in the vicinity of the Kaimanawa Ranges. This area is wind-swept, non-revenue producing, and is not likely to be farmed. For the reasons shown, the county has had applications made under section 104 of the Rating Act, 1925, and at the last sitting of the Court at Tokaanu on the 12th March recommendations were made for the release of twenty-one blocks from the payment of rates.

Exchanges of bush areas and open country in the Tokaanu area are still being made between the Crown and the Maori owners, thus making available to the Maoris for farming purposes large areas hitherto unoccupied. One aspect of these exchanges which is of the utmost importance to the work of development in this locality is the question of rabbit control. With the bringing-in of large tracts of unoccupied Crown lands infested with rabbits, better measures can be devised for the control and ultimate extermination of this pest.

Alienations

Confirmation of alienations, with due regard to the protection of the interests of the Maori owners, continues to be an important phase of the work of the Native Land Court. Confirmation of leases forms the bulk of this branch of the work of the Court, and it is pleasing to record that a number of such leases were in favour of Maori lessees. Confirmation of transfers are not, in the main, encouraged by the Department, but where a sale is confirmed it is usual for the proceeds to be paid to the Maori Land Board for administration under section 281 of the Native Land Act, 1931. It is pleasing, also, to record the close co-operation that exists between the State Forest Service and the Native Land Court in connection with confirmation of timber grants, thus affording the fullest protection to the Maori owners.

Maori Land Board

The Maori Land Board has again endeavoured to ensure that the proceeds of sales of Native land received by it under section 281 of the Native Land Act, 1931, are utilized, with the approval of the Court, to the best possible advantage, either in the purchase of some tangible asset on behalf of the beneficiaries concerned or in assisting them with their housing or farming projects. During the year several leases were executed by the Board under the provisions of Part XVIII of the Native Land Act, 1931. Meetings of the owners of the Morikau Farm were also held under Part XVIII of the Native Land Act, 1931, to consider proposals to set aside amounts totalling £9,000 for the reconstruction, repair, and renovation of the pias on the Wanganui River and as a contribution to the Ngarimu Scholarship Fund. All such proposals were approved by the owners. The owners of the Morikau Farm are to be commended for their liberality and foresight. In the interest of the Maori owners, the Board is taking full advantage of the provisions of section 4 of the Native Purposes Act, 1943, in ensuring that the lessees of Native land are complying with the covenants of their leases. For this purpose, periodical inspections of leased lands are made by the Board's Supervisors, and, where necessary, action is taken to enforce the covenants of a lease or to recover damages for breach of covenant.

During the year advances on mortgage to an amount of £3,150 were made to four Maoris for farming and other miscellaneous purposes. Grants for Maori purposes totalled £200.

Maori Welfare

The appointment of a Maori Welfare Officer during the year gives practical effect to a policy which has for long been advocated. His duties include, among others, the surveying of localities of the domestic and economic state of the Maori communities, collaboration with other Departments engaged in social work amongst the Maori people, general welfare work, supervision in certain cases of the application of social security benefits, and assisting in the rehabilitation of Maori servicemen and servicewomen.

The following matters have been dealt with since the appointment was made: housing surveys of the area contiguous to Wanganui have been made, and these disclose that a number of the Maori dwellings are in a condition ranging from merely fair to faulty. The surveys were carried out at Putiki, Turakina, Whangaehu, Parewanui, and Matahiwi. Maori clubs and other voluntary Maori welfare organizations have been assisted and encouraged in the work they are doing. There has been close co-operation with District Nurses and Child Welfare Officers, and, where necessary, emphasis has been placed on the responsibilities of parents to their children. In several instances arrangements have been made for the welfare officer to handle social security benefits in conjunction with the District Nurse or other official advisers. The isolated cases of irregular school attendance have been investigated and advice given. It is considered that the keen demand and good pay for relatively unskilled labour has some bearing on the small number of Maori ex-servicemen seeking assistance under the various rehabilitation schemes, but two men have been established on farms of their own and several others placed in various jobs. Several men are training as carpenters.

IKAROA (WELLINGTON) AND SOUTH ISLAND DISTRICTS

Native Land Court

During the year there were twenty-one sittings of the Court in the Ikaroa District and twelve in the South Island. The number of applications dealt with was 3,456, and fees collected amounted to £1,053 17s., as compared with £852 for the previous year. A total of 106 alienations of various types were confirmed by the Court.

Consolidation

Towards the end of the year application was made to the Court to prepare a scheme of consolidation affecting valuable areas of farm land in the Horowhenua district. The projected scheme comprises nineteen blocks of a total area of 1,925 acres, and it is proposed to allocate compact areas to each family group to enable the owners to undertake farming activities themselves instead of leasing to European farmers as heretofore.

Maori Land Boards

During the year the two Boards invested a further sum of £10,000 in war-loan stock. The sum of £5,000 held on behalf of the owners of the Whakapuaka Block was paid out to the Committee of Management thereof to enable farming operations to be undertaken. The Boards have continued to administer on behalf of the Native Trustee the various Native reserves in Westland, Nelson, Wellington, Palmerston North, &c.

Maori Welfare

Welfare work in the Wellington area is being carried on by the Welfare staff at present attached to Head Office. Towards the end of the year a Maori Welfare Officer was established in Christchurch, thus giving the Department its first resident officer in the South Island.

TABLE A.—SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL POSITION OF NATIVE TRUSTEE AND DISTRICT MAORI LAND BOARDS
AS AT 31ST MARCH, 1946

	Tokerau.	Waikato- Maniapoto.	Wairariki.	Tairāwhiti.	Aotearoa.	Ikarooa.	South Island.	Sub-total (including Native Trust Branches).	Native Trust (Head Office).	Grand Total.
Total receipts	53,072	51,648	79,057	143,832	145,549	56,023	11,783	540,964	261,092	802,056
Total payments	51,622	47,657	62,078	145,871	118,219	63,861	15,416	504,724	217,626	722,350
Cash balances (including Special Housing Fund)	4,868	6,310	2,834	2,106	4,670	2,409	1,222	24,419	87,535	111,954
Investments—										
On deposit with Native Trustee	15,401	44,173	58,714	22,386	86,294	46,912	7,052	280,932	..	280,932
Government securities	22,865	26,291	47,065	97,768	81,055	29,485	9,707	314,236	246,930	561,166
Mortgages	17,925	18,756	21,721	86,923	66,932	26,784	4,972	242,273	358,615	600,888
Farming properties and primary production	..	11,707	46,376	58,948	1,954	..	..	118,985	58,929	177,914
Liability to Maori beneficiaries	51,910	90,671	109,755	116,320	175,445	99,137	20,572	663,810	219,776	883,586
Reserves—										
Assurance and reserve fund .. .. .	..	8,473	2,469	6,624	50,859	5,909	1,578	75,912	129,933	205,845
Special .. .. .	..	24,583	60,828	62,421	24,491	3,226	1,416	176,965	8,578	185,543

TABLE B.—RETURN OF ALIENATIONS CONFIRMED FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1946

Court District.	Leases.						Sales.									
	New Leases.			Renewals.			Timber-cutting Rights.			Sales.			Mortgages.			
	To Europeans.		To Maoris.	To Europeans.		To Maoris.	To Europeans.		To Maoris.	To Europeans.		To Maoris.	To Europeans.		To Maoris.	
	No.	Area.	Acres.	No.	Area.	Acres.	No.	Area.	Acres.	No.	Area.	Acres.	No.	Area.	Acres.	
Tokerau	37	1,446	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Waikato-Maniapoto	37	4,570	6	332	1	109	8	10,809	18	1,410	8	483	1	308	1	
Wairariki	25	1,259	24	1,387	7	858	11	490	4	27	5	308	1	1,587	1	
Tairāwhiti	64	3,217	6	176	9	1,070	..	..	11	1,636	6	80	1	671	..
Aotearoa	57	3,798	12	2,689	..	..	..	..	19	1,636	6	80	1	671	..
Ikarooa .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	157	9	79	..	..	..
South Island	15	1,199	2	170	..	..	..	654	..	..	3	27	..	..	..
Totals	235	15,489	51	4,404	19	2,463	12	498	21	12,042	66	3,320	49	1,617	3	2,259

TABLE C.—RETURN OF NATIVE LAND COURT BUSINESS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1946

	Totals.		Tokerau.	Waikato- Maniapoto.	Wairariki.	Tairāwhiti.	Aotea.	Ikaroa.	South Island.
	1944-45.	1945-46.							
<i>Native Land Court</i>									
Number of sittings ..	115	126	19	12	21	28	13	21	12
Number of cases notified ..	13,919	14,941	2,205	1,514	2,436	3,077	2,253	2,700	756
Number of cases for which orders made	4,845	4,567	492	495	571	1,127	904	648	330
Number of cases dismissed ..	1,095	926	100	142	234	232	114	74	30
Number of cases adjourned <i>sine die</i>	7,960	9,394	1,613	877	1,631	1,664	1,235	1,978	396
Number of partitions made	576	564	178	53	106	141	72	9	5
Area affected (acres) ..	61,841	102,758	7,047	9,169	9,604	9,038	63,493	714	3,702
Number of investigations .. of title (including confirmations)	1	32	..	1	31	..	..	..	..
Area affected (acres) ..	20	919	..	10	909	..	..	..	..
Number of succession orders made	5,267	5,165	1,014	336	825	1,462	955	408	225
Number of other orders made ..	3,505	3,336	713	105	286	1,378	523	231	100
<i>Native Appellate Court</i>									
Number of sittings ..	3	4	1	1	..	2	..	..	..
Number of cases notified ..	3	19	3	5	..	11	..	..	..
Native Land Court decisions varied	..	4	1	2	..	1	..	..	..
Native Land Court decisions affirmed	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Native Land Court decisions referred back to Native Land Court	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Native Land Court decisions annulled	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Appeals dismissed or withdrawn ..	..	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	..
Appeals adjourned <i>sine die</i> ..	..	5	1	2	..	2	..	..	..
Applications under section 257/31 ordered	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Applications under section 257/31 dismissed	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Orders made under section 363 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Orders and Board fees collected ..	£ 5,301	£ 5,658	£ 768	£ 876	£ 904	£ 912	£ 1,145	£ 793	£ 260

TABLE D.—NATIVE LAND PURCHASE OPERATIONS FROM 1ST APRIL, 1939,
TO 31ST MARCH, 1946: BLOCKS PROCLAIMED CROWN LAND

Block.	Area.		Gazette.
	A.	R. P.	
Ahomatariki 2B	95	0 0	26/2/42
„ 3B	531	0 0	„
Hautu 1B 1B 2B 5A	1,156	0 26	20/12/39
„ 4B 2B 2B, No. 1	1,150	0 0	8/5/41
„ 5B 2B 1	900	0 0	18/12/41
Kawhia S 2A (part)	2	3 22	20/12/39
Moana - Kapiti Huhuraumati D 4B	1	1 0	16/5/40
Okahukura 2B 1	910	3 5	19/2/42
„ 4B 1	756	1 32	„
„ 5B	1,440	1 29	„
„ 6B	1,771	2 31	„
Pukeamaru 2	455	0 29	26/2/42
„ 6B	186	0 0	„
Rangitoto-Tuhua 77D 1B	220	0 13	18/12/41
Rimuroa 5A	1	0 15	3/2/44
Ruatoki A, Section 26	5	2 7	20/12/39
„ A 9	0	1 0	21/10/43
„ C 48	1,118	1 15	„
„ C 61	973	1 0	„
Taumataomanu 2B	618	0 0	26/2/42
Taurewa 4, West A 4C	333	0 0	25/6/42
„ E 2B 3A 2	303	0 8	„
„ E 2B 3C 2	189	3 21	„
Tikitiki A 21	0	0 13·21	30/11/44
„ C 5	0	2 30	26/2/42
Waihou Lower A 38	105	0 26	23/11/39
„ A 39	470	0 28	„
„ A 40 (part)	273	1 30	„
„ A 40 (part)	247	0 13	„
„ 41	439	2 10	„
„ 42	1,433	3 8	„
„ 43	49	1 24	„
Waikare 14B 2A	1,977	0 0	4/6/42
Waituhi-Kuratau 4B 2B	2,621	0 0	11/10/45
Waiohau B 9	2,073	1 32	21/10/43
„ C 25	44	1 24	„
Lot 57, Parish of Waipa	23	0 25	30/11/44
Whakarapa 61A	11	0 39	23/11/39
Whangaparaoa 2E 1	439	3 20	26/2/42
Wharekahika 18G 2	1,045	0 34	„
Wharepuhunga 18B	200	0 0	11/7/40

NOTE.—As this return was omitted during the war, the foregoing table covers a period of seven years. The majority of the Proclamations relate to areas in which interests were purchased many years ago, but which have been defined by partition in recent years.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (678 copies), £37 10s.)

By Authority: E. V. PAUL, Government Printer, Wellington.—1946.

