

for mining purposes. The Local Committees and General Committee may exercise other powers and functions that the Governor in Council may prescribe.

In order, therefore, that the lands in this district may be made available for settlement, it is necessary to constitute the Local Committees, so that the General Committee may be elected to exercise the functions and powers provided by statute. We understand that provisional Local Committees have been appointed, and these hold office until the election of permanent Local Committees at such time and in such manner as the Governor may prescribe. No regulations have yet been framed prescribing the mode of election. The settlement of these preliminaries, the convening and holding of meetings of owners of each block, would occupy so much time that the appointment of permanent Local Committees would be seriously delayed. We have therefore suggested to the Hon. the Native Minister that the provisional Committees should be convened for the purpose of electing a General Committee, and that the election should be validated by Parliament. We made this suggestion because the Tuhoes have offered an area of about 28,000 acres near Ruatoki and Te Whaiti for settlement by way of lease, and it is therefore advisable to set in motion the machinery of the Act as soon as possible. We have received a reply from the Native Department that arrangements have been made to hold a meeting of the provisional Committees at Ruatoki towards the end of this month. An officer of the Native Department and one from the Lands and Survey Department will attend, and after the provisional General Committee is elected the areas for settlement will be defined and surveyed.

In this way we are of opinion that the area offered to us for settlement, amounting to 28,000 acres, and hereafter specified, might be made available for settlement this year. The lands offered were,—

	Acres.
Part of Te Purenga	1,000
" Tarapounamu-Matawhero	3,000
" Ruatoki No. 2	2,000
" Ruatoki No. 3	2,000
" Waipotiki	2,000
" Parekohe	10,000
" Otare	2,000
" Paraoanui North	1,000
" " South	1,000
" Hikurangi-Horomanga	4,000
	28,000

We believe that greater areas can be obtained for settlement, and will be offered later on. The Tuhoe Tribe recognises its liability for survey and other charges, amounting to over £7,000, and was influenced by that consideration when offering the above area for settlement.

We have, &c.,

ROBERT STOUT, }
A. T. NGATA, } Commissioners.

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