

group numbers or letters) indicating to which group an owner should go. Disputes as to grouping were determined there and then. The individual names numbered 8,931. Aliases and duplications were thus revealed and noted, misspellings of names corrected, and the names of deceased owners to whom successors had not been appointed were marked off. This was a laborious proceeding, and occupied, off and on, the whole of our stay at Ruatoki.

The names of deceased owners having been ascertained, Mr. Carr, a Commissioner of the Native Land Court, assisted by Mr. Balneavis and Mr. Awarau, held an inquiry into the appointment of successors. There were over four hundred deceased owners, and the succession orders made numbered 1,081. Legislation is required to validate these as part of the consolidation scheme. We have anticipated this in our grouping of the non-sellers, and incorporated the proposed successors and the interests derived by succession in the proposed new title lists attached to this report.

The grouping was done in group-books provided for the purpose. The complete interests of each individual member of the group from whatever source derived were scheduled. There was continual shuffling and reshuffling of individuals composing a group, the relatives claiming inclusion in one group or the other according to the sources from which rights were derived. This may be accepted as the basis of any scheme for the consolidation of interests in Native land—namely, the formation of the group, the determination of the individuals composing the same, the scheduling of interests in all blocks affected by the scheme, and the location of their consolidated interests in one section, or in as few sections as possible. The appointment of successors to deceased owners should also precede the final and complete grouping and locating. As an instance, there was one deceased owner whose interests totalled £300 in value and whose successors were distributed among seven groups. The apportionment of value to each of these groups would, of course, affect the area of the section that each group would be entitled to receive. The final grouping was determined by the proposals for location. There were 150 groups (a subgroup being reckoned as a distinct group for the purpose). These appear in consecutive order in the Second Schedule hereto, together with the proposed location of each group or subgroup.

#### *Scope of Scheme.*

The Crown proposals sought at first to limit the scheme to the blocks actually under purchase, forty-four in all, and discouraged exchanges with any Crown lands outside the Urewera Native District Reserve as defined by statute. But during the progress of the negotiations it was deemed advisable to extend the scope of the scheme so as to include Waikaremoana Block and four reserves (known as the Urewera Reserves) on the south and south-west of Lake Waikaremoana, and also to permit of exchanges with portions of the Whirinaki Block (Crown land) and Hereheretau B 2 (Crown land in the Wairoa County). The Ruatoki Natives asked for the inclusion of Ruatoki 1, 2, and 3 Blocks, but it was found impracticable on account of the valuations. Finally the scheme excluded Ruatoki 1, 2, and 3, Whaitiripapa, Tapatahi, Manuoha, and Paharakeke, and added,—

	Acres.
Waikaremoana .. .. .	73,667
Urewera Reserves—	
Whareama .. .. .	300
Ngaputahi .. .. .	298
Kopani .. .. .	800
Heiotahoka .. .. .	1,100
	2,498

The scheme is set out in detail in the First Schedule to this report.

#### *Proposed Legislation.*

The present scheme has been formulated without jurisdiction, and with no authority other than the Ministerial instructions. The whole of the proceedings are therefore informal. Legislation is necessary to give effect thereto, and to determine by whom and the manner in which it shall be carried out. We recommend that the opportunity shall be taken of revising the existing legislation, and to that end place on record our views, viz. :—

1. That all existing legislation relating to the Urewera Native District Reserve be repealed. This means, *inter alia*—

- (a.) The abolition of the Local Committees and of the General Committee. There is now no need for these, and the majority of the Ureweras are opposed to their continuance.
- (b.) The repeal of the provision relating to the operation of the Mining Act and of any Proclamations issued thereunder.

2. That the consolidation scheme detailed in the First Schedule be confirmed, and that special officers be appointed charged with the duty of carrying the same into effect.

For the purposes of the scheme the Native ownership is determined by reference to the group-lists given in the Second Schedule. The special officers shall have power to amend these names and the shares set opposite them, or to transfer any name from one group to another, either for the whole or part of the interest shown opposite such name, or to amend the proposals for the location of the area that any group may be found entitled to, or to amend the proportion that may be awarded to the Crown. This precaution is necessary because in handling the huge mass of material of the Urewera titles errors or miscalculations may have crept in.

It is contemplated that differences may arise between the officers appointed to execute the consolidation scheme, or between them and the Natives concerned, prior to the making of an order