

differences of opinion were expressed. In many cases there was a scepticism bordering on hostility towards any comprehensive scheme of development on the lines followed at Horohoro and elsewhere. The majority favoured the system of loans to individual settlers, which had been inaugurated by the Maori Land Board and the Native Trustee. The latter system, however, was already breaking down for want of funds.

In the autumn of 1930 it was decided to undertake development schemes at Mahoenui in the Mokau-Awakino district, and at Waimiha, near the Main Trunk Railway, some twenty-five miles north of Taumarunui. The former is low undulating land, covered with light bush, manuka, and fern, lying between the main Te Kuiti—New Plymouth Highway and the Mokau River; while small areas of good river flats lie to the north-west of that road. There are already the nucleus of a farming community, a good school, and ample frontage to a highway. The Waimiha Block is situated on the east bank of the Ongarue River, close to the Waimiha Railway-station. There is a fair-sized Native village and a school at the railway-station. The land consists of pumice river terraces covered with light manuka, being swampy in parts. The majority of the Native owners of these two blocks were willing to subject their lands to the new scheme. It was apparent that the reports of the good work carried out by Te Puea at Waiuku and of the support given by Te Rata and his family, together with the earnest recommendations of the consolidation and development officers, had influenced the Mahoenui and Waimiha communities.

The lands so far brought under development schemes in the King-country are as follow :—

2. *Maniapoto.—Summary of Lands under Development.*

Scheme.	Area.			Expenditure to 31st March, 1931.			Expenditure to 31st March, 1932.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
(1) Financed by the Native Land Settlement Account—									
Kawhia	4,241	2	18·2				1,379	16	1
Oparure	369	2	28·8				82	1	2
Mahoenui	5,325	3	28·6	1,148	11	4	7,057	8	0
Waimiha	7,872	0	32	3,664	10	11	8,749	13	0
	17,809	1	27·6	4,813	2	3	17,268	18	3
(2) Financed by the Maori Land Board—									
Te Kuiti Base Farm (Somerville's)	617	3	23·7	188	0	0	1,883	0	0
Value at which taken over under mortgage				7,920	0	0	7,920	0	0
Totals	18,427	1	11·3	12,921	2	3	27,071	18	3

The following comments may be made on each scheme :—

(a) *Kawhia.*

Projected in 1930, development was not actively undertaken until the beginning of the financial year 1931–32. Much difficulty was experienced in the initial stages. The following may be quoted from the *Kawhia Settler* of the 13th August, 1932, as a fair statement of what may be termed the psychological factors involved :—

“The Maoris of these parts are suspicious of any movement, however attractive it may be superficially, that has emanated from a pakeha Government, which has been regarded as an institution to deprive them of their land. This suspicion has not been allayed by the circumstances surrounding the confiscation policy which succeeded the Waikato War, and suggestions of an ulterior motive are bound to fall on receptive ears.”

The article goes on to say,—

“It is extremely fortunate that quite a number of officials and advisers in connection with the project are men in whom the Maoris are prepared to place entire confidence, and it is most gratifying to note the altered viewpoint of the Natives as the scheme has developed. They appear ready to accept the assurances of their friends that the sole object of the Government is to assist in rendering their waste lands productive, and so ensure a livelihood for themselves and their descendants.”

In this connection it may be said that the personal influence of Te Rata Mahuta and one of his brothers was exerted in support of the scheme. It is well known that the Maoris occupying the Kawhia, Taharoa, and Aotea areas are among the staunchest of the supporters of the Maori King. At meetings held at various places in the Kawhia district in the middle of March, 1932, Te Rata advised his people that he was heartily in favour of their working under the schemes, which were good so long as the men did not lay in their blankets. He personally would be very glad to see the schemes go on, so that the people would have regular jobs and a source of decent living. He expected that the Waikatos would now be flocking to get into the schemes, but he was sorry that there was now not enough money. He had not pressed the Native Minister in regard to finance, as he did not wish to embarrass him during the present shortage of funds.

The scheme was slow to come into operation, and its organization dragged more or less owing to trouble with some of the owners. Labour could not be readily recruited, and in the end had to be brought from outside for clearing the Mangaora bush.