

In this district, where the land is of such good quality, and favours the principles of closer settlement, no renewals of leases of any Native lands should be granted. If any land is open to lease it should be advertised, and the leasehold sold by public auction.

There was brought before us an application for the removal of restrictions to enable a sale of a block of land called Mangatainoka K No. 2B No. 1, containing approximately 183 acres. The position is as follows: The matter was dealt with by the Ikaroa District Maori Land Board, and the Board recommended to His Excellency the Governor that the restrictions be removed provided that the purchase-money be not less than the Government valuation. The matter was, so we understand, held over by the Government until the Native Land Commission had reported on the Native lands in the district.

The Maori owners of the block, Erini Korou Nini and Ngawhiro Marakaia, appeared, and stated that they desired the contract for sale fulfilled, inasmuch as they were satisfied with the price, and as they had commenced farming operations on some of their other lands they wanted the money for the purpose of purchasing stock, &c.

The contract having been entered into prior to the Commission, and the proper tribunal having recommended the removal of restrictions, and, according to the evidence before us, the price payable, £12 per acre, being in excess of the Government valuation of £11 per acre; also taking into consideration the fact that the land is under lease—of which we understand fifteen years are still to run—to the proposed purchaser, Mr. Hart Udy; we recommend that the Ikaroa District Maori Land Board's recommendation be favourably considered by His Excellency the Governor in Council.

We are, however, still of the opinion that no system save open competition for Native land should, unless in very exceptional circumstances, be recognised.

A number of applications for removal of restrictions and for consent to leases were brought before our notice; but, as they are all matters in which the Maori Land Board have full jurisdiction, we do not think it proper to usurp its functions or in any way make a suggestion or recommendation as to how the applications should be dealt with.

We have the honour to be  
Your Excellency's most humble and obedient servants,

ROBERT STOUT,  
A. T. NGATA,  
Commissioners.

SCHEDULES.

LANDS LEASED OR UNDER NEGOTIATIONS.

Block.	Area.			Remarks.
	A.	R.	P.	
Matapihi No. 13 .. .. .	940	0	0	
Manaia, Section 107, Nos. 2, 4, and 5	131	3	7	
Mataikona, Nos. 2 and 3 (part) ..	8,912	2	12	
Mangatainoka K 2B 1 .. .. .	183	0	0	
Okurupatu B 1 .. .. .	50	0	0	
„ B 2 .. .. .	567	0	0	
„ B 3 .. .. .	296	0	0	
„ B 4 (part) .. .. .	930	0	0	
„ B 4 (part) .. .. .	1,197	0	0	
„ A 1 .. .. .	443	0	0	
„ A 2 .. .. .	232	0	0	
„ A 3 .. .. .	1,702	0	0	
	15,584	1	19	