

1911.  
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LANDS IN THE NORTH ISLAND

(STATEMENT SHOWING THE POSITION OF).

*Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HON. THE NATIVE MINISTER.

THE POSITION OF NATIVE LANDS IN THE NORTH ISLAND.

TAKING the position of Native lands in 1891 as set out in parliamentary paper G.—10 for that year, it gives in detail the general position at that period, and allows a summary to be shown for the intervening period of twenty years. The return at that date gives:—

Total area of Native lands, 10,829,486 acres, held as follows:—

(a.) Lands the title to which had not been ascertained, otherwise papatupu or customary lands	Acres.	Acres.
...	...	2,777,209
(b.) Lands to which titles were ascertained and—		
(i.) Leased to Europeans	2,422,469	
(ii.) Held by owners	5,629,808	
		8,052,277
		10,829,486

The lands were distributed as follows, according to land districts:—

(a.) <i>Papatupu Lands.</i>		Acres.	Acres.
Auckland	...	1,897,567	
Taranaki	...	31,009	
Hawke's Bay	...	519,681	
Wellington	...	328,961	
			2,777,209
(b.) (i.) <i>Leased Lands.</i>			
Auckland	...	392,374	
Taranaki	...	64,718	
Hawke's Bay	...	1,285,557	
Wellington	...	679,820	
			2,422,469
(b.) (ii.) <i>Lands held by Maoris.</i>			
Auckland	...	3,387,107	
Taranaki	...	494,298	
Hawke's Bay	...	774,922	
Wellington	...	973,481	
			5,629,808
Total	...		10,829,486

If the total area in each land district of all classes of Native land is taken we have—

Auckland	...	Acres.
Taranaki	...	5,677,048
Hawke's Bay	...	590,016
Wellington	...	2,580,160
		1,982,262
Total	...	10,829,486

Then, as now, there were only two sources from which the Crown lands could be replenished—by the acquisition on the one hand of Native lands, and on the other of private (European) estates. To acquire the former, legislation was introduced, and the following Acts passed: Native Land Purchase Act, 1892; Maori Land Settlement Act, 1905; Native Land Act, 1909, Part XIX. To achieve the latter the Land for Settlements Acts were passed.

## NATIVE LAND PURCHASES, 1891–1911.

Period.	Return.	Area finally acquired. Acres.	Amount paid. £
1891–92	G.-4, 1892	179,618	42,830
1892–93	G.-4, 1893	132,357	16,670
1893–94	G.-3, 1894	345,850	123,569
1894–95	G.-2, 1895	124,751	32,627
1895–96	G.-3, 1896	467,689	70,131
1896–97	G.-3, 1897	315,490	100,432
1897–98	G.-3, 1898	360,238	83,994
1898–99	G.-3, 1899	402,578	92,005
1899–1900	G.-3, 1900	78,295	17,966
1900–01	G.-3, 1901	206,954	35,561
1901–02	G.-3, 1902	84,882	27,456
1902–03	G.-3, 1903	65,486	27,262
1903–04	G.-3, 1904	18,765	5,658
1904–05	G.-3, 1905	13,515	2,587
1905–06	G.-3, 1906	3,855	20,410
1906–07	G.-3, 1907	5,069	5,024
1907–08	{ G.-3, 1908 G.-3A, 1908 }	267,256	154,534
1908–09	{ Survey liens G.-3, 1909 }	21,791 6,935	5,974
1909–10	G.-3A, 1910	15,588	21,953
1910–11	...	75,437	123,437
		3,192,399	£1,010,080

During the same period (for the greater part of which the sale of Native land to private individuals was prohibited) the area sold to private persons amounted to 499,882 acres. So that during the period under review the Maori owners parted with the freehold of 3,692,281 acres, and all this is in the North Island.

## PAPATUPU LANDS.

In 1891 the area of these, lying virgin not only to the axe of the settlers but to the law, held by the aboriginal owners under their customs and usages, not according to any title recognized by the District Land Registration Offices, amounted to 2,777,209 acres.

In 1909 this had been reduced to 490,752 acres, distributed as follows:—

Auckland Land District—	Acres.	Acres.
Opotiki County	140,000	
Rotorua County	6,716	
Kawhia County	45,170	
North Auckland	127,581	
Miscellaneous	22,000	
		341,467
Hawke's Bay Land District—		
Waiapu County		149,285
		490,752

At the 31st March, 1911, this area had been further reduced to 190,792 acres, of which the bulk is in the Auckland Land District.

The bare figures to those unacquainted with Native land matters may not be eloquent. But to those who know and understand the process of converting customary into freehold lands, held by registrable titles, the figures are exceedingly interesting. To illustrate:—

(a.) In 1891 the King-country, or Aotea-Rohe Potae, containing 1,844,780 acres, was closed to settlement, and was just being touched by the Native Land Court. The whole of what is now Waitomo County was then Native land. The area of that county is roughly 658,560 acres. The County Council recently make the statement: "The total area of rateable Native lands in Waitomo County on the roll is 262,553 acres, of which 195,000 acres have been leased or sold to Europeans, and the balance of 67,553 acres is in the name of nominated Native owners."

(b.) The Urewera County, containing approximately 650,000 acres, was until 1896 deliberately closed by the tribal policy against surveys, Land Courts, and even the Queen's writ. There the old régime made its last stand. In that year legislation was passed to enable the title to this large area to be ascertained. In 1907 the preliminary work of investigation was, with the exception of one block of 1,000 acres, completed, subject to adjustments of minor errors, and the next step, that of the settlement of the country, undertaken. The Crown is in treaty for the purchase of 100,000 acres, of which it has completed 37,000.

(c.) In 1891 there was a large area of papatupu land—extending from Torere, near Opotiki, via Cape Runaway, to the mouth of the Waiapu River, south of East Cape—amounting to about 480,000 acres. Of this area there now remains less than 90,000 acres papatupu, and less than one-half in Maori ownership unoccupied.

These three districts comprise (with the exception of Taupo and portions of North Auckland) the most backward and the least accessible at the beginning of 1891. In two years it is estimated there will not be any block of value remaining in the category of “customary” or “papatupu” land.

#### THE POSITION IN 1911.

The Native lands in the North Island were reduced by sales to the Crown and to private individuals to 7,137,205 acres at the 31st March, 1911. The Lands Department Return, C.-1, 1911 (page 37), gives the following:—

Land District.	Acres.
Auckland	3,882,893
Taranaki	341,362
Hawke's Bay	1,480,974
Wellington	1,531,481
	<hr/> 7,236,710

But that return did not take into consideration sales approved by the various Maori Land Boards and completed before the 31st March of this year, but not registered at that date. For purposes of reference it may be taken as correct that at the 31st March, 1911, the area of Native lands in the North Island, owned by the Maoris, or held for them by Boards and trustees, was 7,137,205 acres.

#### Area profitably occupied.

The area estimated to be profitably occupied as at the 31st March, 1911, was as follows:—

(1.) Lands leased direct by Native owners—	Acres.
(a.) Confirmed by Native Land Court	1,500,000
(b.) Approved by Maori Land Boards	1,291,686
(2.) Lands leased on behalf of Maori owners—	
(a.) Through the Maori Land Boards	294,873
(b.) By the East Coast Trust Land Commissioner (including area farmed by Maoris and the Commissioner)	95,050
(c.) Under the Mangatu No. 1 Empowering Act	51,295
(d.) By the Public Trustee	163,665
(3.) Area subject to timber agreements validated by Parliament on the recommendation of the Native Land Commission	135,000
(4.) Area subject to Tutira and Waimarama leases validated by Parliament on the recommendation of the Commission	24,773
(5.) Area estimated to be in profitable occupation by the Maori owners	500,000
	<hr/> 4,056,342

As to the area held under lease, the leases vary in character from the leases with perpetual right of renewal in Taranaki to leases, chiefly in the Wellington and Hawke's Bay Land Districts, which are on the point of expiring. The latter, after providing for the needs of the Maori owners, are supplying near populated centres suitable areas of improved land for closer settlement as ordinary Crown lands. These lands are producing a return to their owners; on them local taxation is paid, and on them also land-tax is paid by the Native owners through the lessees, who deduct from rent payable land-tax paid by them on account of the Native owners. It is true that large areas are unimproved, having been recently taken up, but so is the case with Crown lands recently settled. Private alienation is taking place on a large scale in respect of these lands within the limitations imposed by the Native Land Act, 1909, and the Crown is also engaged in the purchase of areas of such lands close to centres of population.

#### Unoccupied Lands.

After deducting the area estimated as above to be in profitable occupation, there remains a balance unoccupied of 3,080,863 acres. Of this area a proportion must be deducted as unfit for settlement. This is difficult to arrive at correctly. The Lands Department (C.-1, 1911, page 37) estimates the area occupied by roads, rivers, and lakes in the North Island at 1,000,882 acres. It is safe to estimate that one-fifth of this area is on Native land, and of such one-fifth a little under one-half is on unoccupied Native lands.

The bulk of the unoccupied lands are in the Urewera country (both within and without the area known as the Urewera District Native Reserve), Taupo, Thermal Springs District, Inland Poverty Bay, Cape Runaway and East Cape, Upper Wanganui, Inland Patea near the Ruahine Range, and North Auckland. They are mainly, therefore, in those portions of the North Island that are difficult of access.

The distribution of the bulk of the unoccupied Native land is as follows:—

(1.) The Urewera District Native Reserve contains in one compact area the largest extent of unoccupied lands. Its total area is 650,000 acres. After deducting 37,000 acres purchased by the

Crown, and, say, 13,000 acres in occupation and under cultivation, the balance is 600,000 acres. Though this district has not been properly explored, those familiar with it know that the bulk of it is very rough, and suitable only for pastoral purposes in large areas; requiring the expenditure of much capital, while a considerable area should also be permanently reserved for scenic effects and the protection of the existing lakes. On the north of this territory and to the west of it are the following large blocks unoccupied: Matahina, 42,448 acres; Tuararangaia, 6,490 acres; Pokohu and Putauki, 26,485 acres; Whirinaki, 10,010 acres; Heruiwi, 2,484 and 6,290 acres: total, 94,207 acres. These lands are described as "pumice country, fit for small grazing-runs or pastoral runs only, suitable for settlement in large areas only." Some land adjoining, owned by the Crown, purchased from the Native owners about twenty years ago, remain to this day unoccupied for want of access and because of the uninviting nature of the country.

(2.) In the East Taupo, portion of West Taupo, and Rotorua Counties are many large blocks unsuitable for settlement, except in large areas, as small grazing-runs or pastoral runs. These comprise the pumice areas of the central North Island district. So far the demand for settlement even of areas readily available for that purpose has not been keen or insistent. The farming of pumice lands of the nature of those lying to the north, east, and south of Lake Taupo may after much experimenting be found profitable, but for present purposes these areas may be classed as pastoral runs. The following are the large or unoccupied blocks:—

East Taupo County—

Name of Block.	Area. Acres.	Acres.
Runanga	8,630	
Te Hautu	99,300	
Tapuioruahine	20,000	
Kaimanawa	40,000	
Waipapa	10,400	
Ohuanga	5,986	
Whakamaru-Mangaiti	3,737	
Parts Pouakani, Tihoi, and Tauri	47,395	
Tatua East	12,900	
Tahorakuri	36,085	
Tutukau East and West	7,794	
Pauhara North, Middle, and South	49,324	
Tauranga-Taupo 1, 2, and 3	21,040	
Parts of Paeroa South and Rotomahana-Parekarangi	18,986	
Rangipo North	31,236	
Rangipo-Waiu	28,682	
Parts Rangiwaea and Murimotu	15,564	
		457,059

Part West Taupo County—

Part Tihoi	55,583	
Pukekura	3,423	
Taurewa	28,860	
Part Okahukura 8 Block (approximate)	19,000	
		106,866

Part Rotorua County—

Parts Rotomahana-Parekarangi	56,018	
Part Pokohu A, B, and C	13,922	
Part Paeroa E	11,264	
Ruawahia 2	4,164	
		85,368

Kiwitea and Rangitikei Counties—

Awarua Blocks	21,896	
Pohokura	10,657	
Utumore	10,000	
		42,553

Part Waimarino County—

Urewera Block	12,429	
Tawhai North	3,000	
Tongariro	13,927	
Ruapehu	15,488	
Papatupu lands	4,474	
		49,318

Hawke's Bay County (Part)—

Omahaki	15,710	
Te Koau	10,300	
Timahanga	21,900	
		47,910

789,074

These do not comprise the whole of the lands surrounding Lake Taupo. Lands that are partly occupied, such as Oruamatua-Kaimanawa (82,000 acres) and Owhaoko (167,000 acres), are not included in the above list; nor are the lands lying to the west, north-west, and south-west of Lake

Taupo covered by agreements with timber-milling companies. The latter include the following lands:—

Waihaha 3, 42,915 acres; Mauhungaroa, 55,398 acres; Waituhi-Kuratau, 16,234 acres; Puketapu and Hohotaha, Whangaipeke, Ruamata, Pukepoto and Waione, 61,250 acres: total, 175,797 acres.

It will be seen, therefore, that in the Urewera country and adjoining districts and in the Taupo district are the largest areas of Native lands, amounting approximately to 1,908,078 acres, or nearly two million acres.

Those, therefore, that speak of the huge areas of unoccupied Native lands will do well to remember that of these unoccupied lands nearly two-thirds are massed in a part of the North Island generally regarded as unfit for settlement, except in large areas, as small grazing-runs or pastoral runs.

(3.) North of Auckland the total area of Native lands is 771,939 acres. Of this area, the total under lease at the 31st March, 1911 (including lands leased for milling purposes), was 181,275 acres 1 rood 12 perches, including 73,271 acres 3 roods 16 perches of vested lands leased by the Maori Land Board. Allowing an area of 85,000 acres to be in profitable occupation of the Native owners, the balance of unoccupied lands is 505,664 acres 1 rood 22 perches. Of this, it is estimated that the area unfit for settlement is between 60,000 and 70,000 acres, leaving approximately 435,664 acres unoccupied and fit for settlement. Of this latter area, 44,278 acres are still unclothed with title. Much of the land is reported to be broken, and fit only for settlement in large areas; while, however, there are many tracts of first-class land, particularly in the neighbourhood of Kaikohe and in the Mangakahia Valley.

(4.) The East Cape to Opotiki territory is the only other than requires special mention here. Part of this extends into the Hawke's Bay Land District. Taking the Waiapu River on the east, and the Opape Reserve, near Opotiki, on the south-west of this territory, the area of Native land stretching along the coast in one almost unbroken block is approximately 477,800 acres. Until six years ago there were nearly 300,000 acres of this area that had not passed the Native Land Court. This has since been surveyed into tribal subdivisions, and, with the exception of about 90,000 acres, has passed the Native Land Court. The settlement of the occupied portion of the territory is recent. The present position is:—

	Acres.	Acres.
Area leased	141,607	
Area under negotiation for lease with approval of Board (approximately)	22,000	
Area profitably occupied by Maori owners (approximately)	67,628	
		231,235
Unoccupied—		
Unsuitable for settlement (estimated)	25,000	
Suitable for settlement (including areas to be reserved for Native owners and areas that have not passed the Native Land Court)	221,565	
		246,565
		477,800

*How the Unoccupied Lands are held.*

The following figures will show how the unoccupied lands were held at the 31st March, 1911:—

	Acres.	Acres.
(1.) Held by trustees for settlement—		
(a.) Public Trustee	37,612	
(b.) East Coast Trust Lands Commissioner	93,855	
(c.) Vested in Trustees under the Native Land Laws Amendment Act, 1897	66,166	
(d.) Vested in Maori Land Boards and undisposed of	673,962	
		871,595
(2.) Under negotiation direct or by meeting of assembled owners for purchase by the Crown		430,560
(3.) Subject to Urewera District Native Reserve Act (balance)		600,000
(4.) Uninvestigated papatupu lands		190,792
(5.) Other lands		987,916
		3,080,863

This sets out the position as far as can be ascertained of Native lands.

As to the working of the Native Land Courts and Maori Land Boards for the past year, this will be found in the report of the 25th May last, dealing with administration generally.

Native Department, 24th October, 1911.

THOS. W. FISHER,  
Under-Secretary.

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