

*Scheme No. 4B.*

Number of contracts approved up to the 31st July, 1931, less those subsequently cancelled .. .. .	400
Number of men for whom employment provided by these contracts ..	1,004
Average number of men per contract .. .. .	2.51
Cost of subsidies approved .. .. .	£10,488

Some idea of the extent and usefulness of the work being done may be obtained from the following figures, compiled from particulars of contracts entered into under Scheme 4B since the scheme commenced operation :—

	Acres.		Acres.
Scrub-cutting .. .. .	7,930	Top-dressing .. .. .	300
Bushfelling .. .. .	6,882		Chains.
Stumping, grubbing, &c. .. ..	1,792	Fencing .. .. .	7,102
Sowing .. .. .	645	Draining .. .. .	6,120
Ploughing and harrowing .. ..	368	Roading .. .. .	360
Splitting posts, battens, and strainers ..	3,850 posts and strainers, 33,000 battens.		

Of the 400 subsidies approved, in 322 cases, or 80.5 per cent. of the total, the projected developmental work is estimated to make provision for the carrying of additional stock as follows : Sheep, 26,494 ; cattle, 5,012 ; pigs, 40.

*Native Trust Development Work.*—The Native Trustee has advised the Board that 471 men have been enrolled on the work at Aohanga and Motuweka Stations, and that these are sufficient to complete the available work by the end of July, when the funds provided by the Board would be exhausted. Although the total area of 6,600 acres was expected to be cleared by this date, the Native Trust Office was prepared to retain the men on other work until the 31st August, thus delaying their return to Wellington and other towns, providing additional funds are forthcoming. In response to this offer, the Board has suggested that the men be retained for the month of August under the conditions obtaining for Scheme 4A—viz., subsidies of 10s. per week for single men and £1 per week for married men, the Native Trust Department to provide accommodation and food.

*Prospecting.*—Towards the end of April the Under-Secretary for Mines advised the Board that some thirty parties, containing ninety-one married men, had been sent out prospecting under the grant of £2,000 made by the Board for that purpose, and that the grant was expended.

*Developmental Work for Natives.*—A matter which has recently occupied the attention of the Board is the difficulty of providing relief for unemployed Natives through the medium of its various schemes. Natives have continued to apply to the Board in considerable numbers for permission to become contributors to the fund, and the total number of applications approved to date is 4,219. It is not known how many of these are registered as unemployed, but the number is thought to be large.

On the 30th April the Board recommended to the Minister of Finance that a grant of £10,000 from the Unemployment Fund be made to the Native Department to supplement that Department's funds for the relief of unemployed Natives. Approval to this grant was notified on the 13th May, and a special representative of the Native Department was appointed to deal with the general question of unemployed Natives. The effect of this arrangement is that many Natives have been employed on useful developmental work in their own districts, and have not therefore been employed under the Board's main schemes.

In particular, the Rotorua, Te Puke, and Whakatane districts have been relieved of the necessity for employing nearly two hundred men under Scheme No. 5, while arrangements are in hand to relieve other localities where unemployment amongst Natives is acute. The Hon. Sir A. T. Ngata, Minister of Native Affairs, in a memorandum dated the 8th July, 1931, advised the Chairman of the Board that employment had been provided through the Native development schemes, and also through European farmers. An extract from this memorandum summarizes the position to that date, as follows :—

“ Briefly, the subsidies on contracts finally allocated to date amount to £8,683 3s. 4d. (inclusive of labour loans totalling £441 10s.) on an estimated labour cost to Native development schemes, Maori Land Boards, Native Trustee, and private employers of £27,767, providing employment for 970 men. While the average rate of subsidy is lower than under your Board's Scheme 4B, I have in the allocation followed no hard-and-fast rule, but endeavoured to meet the circumstances in each district both of the farmers and organizations offering employment and of the Maori communities. The rate of subsidy is a little under £9 a head per man employed, and most of the contracts are estimated to tide the majority of the men and their families or dependants over the winter. The low cost to your Board has been made possible by the finance available to Native development schemes ; by the low rate for bushfelling, scrub-cutting, fencing, and other operations ; by the fact that all equipment is otherwise provided for ; and, above all, by the recognition on the part of the Maori communities of the opportunity offered in the present depression of bringing their lands into production at a cost relative to the visible returns from farming.

“ Pending applications for assistance will absorb the balance of the grant, when I expect that the total number employed will reach 1,100. This does not include the normal workers on the various development schemes.

“ To enable me to deal with Maori unemployment in other districts, especially North Auckland and Aotea districts, I estimate that a further sum of £8,000 is required. As this will have to be used chiefly to subsidize private employers, I anticipate that the rate will be higher than the average up to date.”