

so that while barely maintaining the Maori farmers, to whom loans had already been advanced, it could not assist any new units. Native communities everywhere asked for assistance under the legislation of 1929, and this demand was supported by the directorates of dairy companies and by local bodies.

A survey of the position made early in May, 1930, revealed that group development as understood and adopted in other districts on schemes such as Horohoro, Mohaka, Wainiha, and Ruatoki was not practicable at the commencement as applied to North Auckland conditions, except in areas such as Whakarapa in Northern Hokianga, where the Maori Land Board was already assisting Maori settlers by small loans. The holdings of partially developed fair to good land were small, fragmentary, and scattered, so that the organization of a development scheme, based on contiguity and connection between units in compact areas was not possible. It was decided to adapt the organization to the conditions prevailing, and to create supervision areas, which would eventually become co-extensive with the districts into which the consolidation schemes had been subdivided. Supervision of development and farming was linked to the plan for reorganization of titles, and Farm Supervisors and Consolidation Officers were required to exercise the closest co-operation in their work, the former to examine and report upon all properties submitted for assistance, and the latter to consider them with respect to the titles and to the arrangements for occupation made among the owners, and, above all, in relation to the personal qualifications of applicants. The co-ordination and co-operation between the two sections of the field staff, and between them and the central office, the office of the Maori Land Board at Auckland, have grown and improved in the last two years. Land-development has materially assisted to break down difficulties in the way of the consolidation of titles by hastening decisions among members of families as to exchange and occupation of their respective holdings. Consolidation has, on the other hand, acted as a brake upon the too-rapid extension of development, and restricted assistance to selected areas over which an effective charge could be made to secure the funds of the Native Land Settlement Account.

*Application of Section 23, Native Land Act, 1929 (now Section 522, 1931 Act).*

To prepare the way for the examination of development proposals, and for extending assistance to such settlers as might be favourably recommended by the Farm Supervisors and Consolidation Officers, all Native-owned lands in the Tokerau District, other than lands leased to Europeans or mortgaged, were eventually arranged in districts to correspond with the divisions of the consolidation schemes. At the 31st day of March, 1931, the areas notified under section 23 of the Native Land Act, 1929, were as follow :—

Scheme.						Area notified (approximate).	Estimated Area developable.
						Acres.	Acres.
Mangonui	..	..	..	..	..	127,500	150,000*
Hokianga	..	..	..	..	..	99,000	
Bay of Islands	..	..	..	..	..	177,000	
Kaipara..	..	..	..	..	..	32,207	
Motatau Base Farm	..	..	..	..	..	770	
Total	..	..	..	..	..	436,477	150,000

\* This estimate takes in lands at present inaccessible, except by sea, most of which are suitable for sheep only. The lands suitable for dairying should be between 35,000 and 40,000 acres.

Between May and August, 1930, the field officers covered as much as possible of this extensive territory and made recommendations on which allocations were approved by Cabinet from the Native Land Settlement Account. It was thought advisable to establish partially developed farms on a productive and paying basis, and to require other applicants to use their own labour, free of cost to the development funds in the preparation of areas, so that the call upon those funds should be limited to seed, material, manure, stock, dairy utensils, implements, and in some cases to the discharge of liabilities, so that the Native Land Settlement Account might have a hundred per cent. security over land and chattels. Units which were financed by the Maori Land Board or the Native Trustee or any other State lending Department were excluded, but consideration was given to those which were not too seriously involved with dairy companies or stock and station agents.

*Self-help as a Factor in Development.*

A feature of Native land settlement and development throughout the North Auckland region may be emphasized here as of prime importance in any consideration of the present and future prospects of Maori farming there, and of the risks to loan funds involved. That feature is self-help to an extent beyond what obtains in any other district among any other Native community. Until the winter of 1931, when it was feared that the depression would compel many settlers to neglect their farms and to seek sustenance for themselves and their families on relief works, the development account was not called upon to provide wages in connection with any development work. The assistance was confined to the supply of seed, wire, and staples, fertilizers, dairy cattle and utensils, building materials, and the discharge of liabilities secured on stock or equipment. The northern tribesmen cleared the bush or scrub, ploughed and cultivated, split posts and battens, erected new fences or repaired existing fences, sowed the seed and applied fertilizers, and built their own cottages or cow-sheds with their own labour. Most of them were fortunate in the possession of timber suitable for fencing. Nowhere was there so much co-operation among individuals and families ; so great a determination to reduce to a minimum the call on outside capital, or to suffer the inconvenience of poor housing or indifferent equipment. The northern tribes describe this characteristic by saying that they work for one meal a day and themselves provide even that.