THE INCORPORATIONS OF THE EAST COAST -
ONE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF MAORI LANDS.

A thesis presented to
the University of Canterbury
in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Geography.

By
E.L. Davies
1964.
ACTIVE INCORPORATIONS IN TAIRAWHITI
MAORI LAND DISTRICT
1964.

Active Incorporations.
Land Leased to Incorporations.
County Boundaries.
Main Roads.

SCALE

1 2 4 8 12 miles.
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Chapter 1

Only recently have we recognised the fundamental and enduring importance of the cadaster, the individual land holding system, as a determinant of far reaching effects on agricultural practices, settlement and the whole economy of an area. Hartshorne. 1

It is the purpose of this study to describe the problems of Maori land tenure in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District on the East Coast of the North Island of New Zealand, and in particular to examine the results of the incorporation system of tenure in its attempt to create economic pastoral units.

The Thesis Outlined.

In considering progressive movements within the Maori race during the 20th century, it has been usual to turn first to experiments being conducted on the East Coast especially among the Ngati Porou tribe. It would seem that the peculiar circumstances of this tribe in relation to their contact with and reaction to civilisation, have enabled them to become adjusted more successfully to the changing physical, cultural and social demands of modern life.

This has been true especially in regard to attempts to overcome the problems of Maori land tenure, and to introduce modern efficient farming methods. In order to study the problems in detail the thesis has been divided into three distinct but closely inter-related sections.

1. The introductory section describes the human and physical background of the East Coast - one of the problem areas of New Zealand. It discusses the physical effects of erosion, reversion and deterioration to provide a necessary basis for the main core of the subject which is an investigation of the

Fig. 1 Location Map of the East Coast.
far-ranging human problems.

11. The second section analyses the problems of the social geography of the Tairawhiti Maori Land District. It is focussed on land tenure and the difficulty of obtaining not only an efficient tenure scheme but one which will also fulfill the wishes of the Maori people to whom the land belongs. The character of the numerous legal devices evolved to overcome both the tenure problem and the rigorous requirements of the Maori are outlined. Their apparent ineffectiveness contrasts strongly with the success of the practical application of the incorporation system. Yet, despite the latter's undoubted advantages, inherent weaknesses arising from human failings are evident.

111. In conclusion some observations are made on the necessity to overcome these human failings which are hindering an otherwise noteworthy attempt to provide an answer to the problem of Maori land tenure.

SCOPE

Within the area of study the factors affecting the development of the incorporations will be narrowed to two distinct but inter-related bases. The land factor of the physical and agricultural problems confronting pastoralism on the East Coast, and the human factor of the culture and character of the Maori people.

"Few relationships in life," states Barlowe, "are more fundamental and more significant than that between the land and the people." The natural resource environment is necessary for human survival and Maori problems and progress, especially, cannot be considered apart from the land, the 'life blood' of the people. However, vital as this factor may appear, man plays the dominant role in the relationship.

The very core of land tenure is the behaviour of people in respect to land as property, as a source of income,

and as a place for family life. Problems cannot be discussed without reference to this set of social values, and tenure conditions must be applied according to how well they meet these needs. Clearly 'people visualise certain goals towards which they strive and want the tenure system to help to get them there'.

It can be seen, therefore, that the association between man and land will be attempted largely from the cultural viewpoint rather than the physical. The nature of Maori culture and customs, it is considered, is of prime importance and has noticeably affected the tenure and use of tribal lands: the physical environment has been of secondary importance.

But although based dominantly on the human influence, a causal relationship with the land must be maintained. 'Geography can expect to compete for interest only if it recognises its distinct purpose to observe and analyse these interrelations of diverse elements with each other'. The physical environment has not been ignored or forgotten but has been treated as a basic resource to be utilised in harmony with the cultural and social identity of the Maori. If the dominance is placed on man the relationship between the land and the people still remains.

Method of Analysis.

With approximately 100 active incorporations spread widely throughout the District it was considered that not all could be fully covered and adequately analysed. Therefore, 14 blocks which had filed their accounts with the Maori Affairs Department each year in the period 1955 to 1963.


were initially selected and studied in detail.\textsuperscript{5}

These fourteen blocks were used as a base until they were finally narrowed to the six incorporated in this thesis, in an attempt to show the full gradation from good to very poor. The only area not fully covered was Mangatu Blocks 1, 3, and 4 which because of their size (100,000 acres) and the inter-related nature of the individual stations were not considered typical of the incorporations as a whole.

The greater percentage of material for the analysis has come from primary sources, including the viewpoints and ideas of a wide range of people connected both directly and indirectly with the incorporations. Individual cases of management and administration have also been considered where they have been clearly documented but only a relatively small amount of information has been obtained from this field. An attempt has been made to compress all these aspects into an integrated whole to form a complete geographical analysis.

What this thesis hopes to provide is an initial framework for a subject which is creating more and more interest among those connected with the Maori people and farming on the East Coast. It is by no means considered to be the final answer to the problem. No research can hope to make a complete investigation of all the diverse factors, and no sound conclusions can be drawn until the study is complete. Within the scope of a work of this size to include all the physical and agricultural aspects would be an impossible task.

One major problem for a European studying systems of Maori land tenure is the difficulty of comprehending the Maori viewpoint on the importance of land holding. However, from

\textsuperscript{5} The remainder had either commenced filing accounts later than 1955 or missed odd years. It was felt that unless each year was obtained comparisons could not be made of all aspects studied and thus the effect of the over-all pattern would be minimised.
a perusal of learned material, especially the writings of Ngata, and Firth an attempt has been made to portray the concept of land ownership as closely as is possible. If in places fundamental errors in the understanding of culture and society are obvious apologies are extended to the Maori people.

However, no apologies are offered for writing this thesis even if some feel directly affected. In all chapters an honest attempt has been made to do justice to those concerned. Incomplete as the end result may be it will have accomplished the purpose of increasing the knowledge of the incorporations and to the extent that the relationships between the existing factors are sound, it will have established a base from which later students may be able to advance. If this results the time involved in the preparation of this work will be more than adequately compensated.

6. The best known and most learned treatise on Maori culture is Firth R.M.: Economics of the New Zealand Maori, Wellington, 1959 (2nd edition)
Chapter 2.
The East Coast - a Problem Area.

The Land

The problems of land are beyond the scope of this thesis but as it has been intimated in the introductory chapter, they cannot be ignored as they directly affect the utilisation of the land. Any system devised to overcome the tenure problems will be of little benefit, unless schemes are simultaneously organised to counteract the effects of isolation, of erosion of land and of deterioration of pasture.

Isolation

The first and vital physical characteristic of the Tairawhiti Maori Land District is its isolation from the rest of the North Island. To the north-west the Raukumara Range, to the west the Ureweras and to the south the Whareratas hem in the Coast and make access a major problem. Harbours are few and difficult to work, with the main port at Gisborne still not approaching full requirements for overseas service.

As a result, all supplies, especially in the more northern townships, are considerably dearer than those in the main cities. Sugar is 10/- a bag more at Ruatoria than at Gisborne, petrol at Tikitiki and Te Araroa is over 5/- a gallon, and electricity is available to households only after the consumer has guaranteed to pay £50 a year, even though that amount may not be used.

Access to many of the stations is poor and the long distances between farm and market cause high transport costs, and render the application of fertiliser and the maintenance of fences and pastures very expensive items. As an example, the cost of manure application on a property some six miles from Ruatoria is increased by over 35 percent by cartage expenses, resulting in a total of £20.11.8 per ton, 1 a prohibitive

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cost of manure per ton</th>
<th>£10 2 6</th>
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<tr>
<td>Application costs</td>
<td>£4 5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway costs</td>
<td>2 £4 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartage costs</td>
<td>£4 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>£20 11.8</td>
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amount except for the more affluent stations.

Thus the isolation factor, with its associated cost disadvantages, has been a decided hindrance to continued pastoral development. From Table 1 it is readily apparent that the further one proceeds north from Gisborne, the higher are the transport costs, but it is in the northern counties of Matakoah and Waiapu that the majority of incorporations exist. For these incorporations transport becomes a major liability and the expenses of cartage may well serve to swing a station from the credit to the debit side of economic activity.

As well as providing a burdensome cost factor, the relative isolation of the Coast also affects the availability of good farm labour. Few experienced permanent hands can be induced to remain on an isolated property for more than a season or two and temporary labour is becoming almost non-existent. The difficulty of obtaining suitable contractors for scrub cutting, thistle eradication and pasture development has always been prevalent and becomes more acute as the lure of higher wages in the towns draws many of the unskilled workers away.

Isolation and its effects together constitute a problem not solely confined to the incorporations, but because of the generally more isolated position of the incorporations they are affected to a greater degree than any other tenure system.

Reversion, Deterioration and Erosion.

Deterioration and erosion of the land are by far the greatest physical problems facing the agricultural output of the incorporations and are becoming more apparent every year especially on the "harder" country.

This development is due principally to the geological history of the East Coast, for the land after a period of relative stability has been subject since the Pleistocene to a continual uplift of at least one foot per 1,000 years.²

### Table 1.

Cartage Costs to selected East Coast townships from Gisborne

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance from Gisborne (miles)</th>
<th>Tolaga Bay</th>
<th>Tokomaru Bay</th>
<th>Te Puia</th>
<th>Ruatoria</th>
<th>Tikitiki</th>
<th>Te Araroa</th>
<th>Hicks Bay</th>
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<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise (per ton)</td>
<td>2 12 6</td>
<td>3 19 0</td>
<td>4 3 0</td>
<td>4 16 0</td>
<td>5 5 0</td>
<td>5 13 6</td>
<td>6 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manure (per ton)</td>
<td>3 2 2</td>
<td>3 10 8</td>
<td>3 17 3</td>
<td>4 2 8</td>
<td>4 8 2</td>
<td>4 12 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posts and Strainers (per 100)</td>
<td>3 10 0</td>
<td>3 14 0</td>
<td>4 3 0</td>
<td>4 7 6</td>
<td>4 10 6</td>
<td>4 16 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum of Petrol (41-gallons)</td>
<td>14 0</td>
<td>14 10</td>
<td>16 7</td>
<td>17 5</td>
<td>18 4</td>
<td>19 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and return</td>
<td>1 9</td>
<td>1 9</td>
<td>2 7</td>
<td>3 0</td>
<td>3 6</td>
<td>3 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15 9</td>
<td>16 7</td>
<td>19 2</td>
<td>1 0 5</td>
<td>1 1 0</td>
<td>1 2 7</td>
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Source: Wards Transport Ltd., Gisborne
Each uplift increases the activity of streams for deepening their beds and widening the valleys, and this results in the repeated removal of the soil mantle by erosion. On the Coast many streams are still in the early stages of widening, and especially near the headwaters are vigorously deepening their channels. Consequently a large proportion of the District is composed of steep slopes with massive rock and skeletal soils.

The skeletal soils developed from fine grained rocks such as mudstone, argillite and basalt are moderately fertile and generally capable of supporting good pastures. The problem is not of fertility but of stability. Especially on the shaly mudstone and brittle argillites, soil erosion is serious because it is deep and continuous, plant cover does not have a chance to regenerate, and slips soon develop into large gullies.

Skeletal soils developed from coarse gravel rocks such as greywacke and sandstone are less fertile than the above, and cause serious problems for pastoral use. With under-stocking the pastures are quickly invaded by secondary growth, ferns and weeds; with over-grazing the amount of sheet and slip erosion is rapidly increased.

Many incorporations, especially in the Wairoa district, also have varying amounts of pumice soils. Although physically these are excellent for pastoral purposes, chemically many are poor and undeveloped especially in regard to trace elements, and so need continuous and heavy applications of fertiliser to maintain effective pastoral production.

Associated with the problems of soil are the influences of climate, especially precipitation. Annual rainfall varies from approximately 40 inches on the coast to over 130 inches on the inland stations of Watakaoa county where falls of up to 5 inches in twenty-four hours are not uncommon. Distribution

3. ibid. p. 12.
Plate 1. 'On the sandy mudstone... slips soon develop into large gullies'. A gully rapidly eroding the hill pasture and aggrading the valley on Poroporo Ah (Urushi Station).

P.B. Catchment Board.

Plate 2. A small stream vigorously deepening its channel - Mangahauini Station.

P.B. Catchment Board.
is uneven, often with drought conditions in summer followed by excess rain in winter and spring.

Thus summer drought, maldistribution and intensity of rainfall, and unstable soils all provide the basis for a widespread erosional problem. "An inspection of Gisborne/East Coast by air is far from a pleasure cruise; one is stunned by the magnitude and extent of earth movement and is depressed by a sense of frustration by the symptoms of impending disaster - the hills are slipping into the valleys and flowing seaward at an accelerating rate". 4

When slipping is shallow and the exposed material rapidly covered with vegetation, the greater amount of erosion does not seem serious. Yet a definite problem exists when slipping is deep and continuous around the edge of the first movements, a fairly common phenomenon on soils formed from brittle argillites in the Waipaoa, Waipu and Awatere Valleys in which many incorporations lie. 5

The People

In popular conception and especially in the eyes of the elders of the tribe, the Maori is still a rural people. The hold of the tribal land remains powerful and although development of this land is only a partial solution to Maori economic problems it is considered to be one of the greatest single factors in the successful acculturation of the people.

However, the development of the land is retarded not only by physical problems and isolation, but is hindered also by serious human problems. It would appear that before Maori incorporations in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District approach their true productivity, four basic problems must first be solved.

1. Amalgamation of uneconomic areas into economic units.


5. Gibbs: op. cit. p.16
Plate 3. 'skeletal soils developed from argillite.... a problem not of fertility but stability'. Tikitiki Station - heavily slumping land which even with increasing scrub reversion has failed to stabilise. Note, however, the recently constructed electric fence to aid grazing control.

Plate 4. A large earthflow indicative of unstable country - Waipiro A15,16 and 21 (Hakurenga Station).

F.E. Catchment Board.
It is evident that when land is subdivided or held in less than economic units the prospect of dynamic farming diminishes, yet informed opinion suggests that the "bulk of the Maori lands on the Coast are held in uneconomic blocks". As will be seen, the system of incorporated blocks has to some extent alleviated this problem. Yet, in 1964 only some 97 of the 221 incorporations are active in the sense that they are run and controlled by a committee of management.

From the following table, the size of an individual block appears as a major limiting factor for active incorporations even though size must obviously be considered in combination with land type and carrying capacity.

| Table 11. | 
| --- | --- |
| **Size of Incorporations in the Tairawhitia Maori Land District as at 1:1:64.** | 
| **Acres** | Number Active | Number Leased and Non-Active |
| 0 - 100 | 2 | 28 |
| 100 - 200 | 5 | 32 |
| 200 - 350 | 6 | 32 |
| 350 - 500 | 11 | 2 | 101 |
| 500 - 750 | 8 | 8 |
| 750 - 1,000 | 8 | 6 |
| 1,000 - 1,500 | 17 | 8 |
| 1,500 - 2,000 | 7 | 2 |
| 2,000 - 3,500 | 9 | 3 |
| 3,500 - 5,000 | 4 | 1 | 28 |
| 5,000 - 10,000 | 9 | 129 |
| 10,000 - 20,000 | 3 | |
| 20,000 plus | 3 = 92 | |
| Source: Adapted from Incorporation Register Maori Land Court, Gisborne. |

6. 'Coast Land Tenure Problems Examined': Gisborne Herald, October 25th 1963. p.6
It is manifest that even under the system of incorporation many units are impossibly small as farming enterprises.

2. Reduction of ownership in individual title and Avoidance of Fragmentation.

The reduction in the number of owners in individual titles and the avoidance of fragmentation are regarded as the most crucial problems of Maori land tenure on the East Coast. Many inherently productive areas are at present practically unuseable because of the unsatisfactory state of title or the small size of the individual's share, and little can be done to initiate improvement programmes until the title has been completely finalised. This problem is largely a consequence of the application of European individualistic land holding methods to formerly communal Maori lands.

Under the tribal system no individual Maori owned land as all land belonged to the tribe. However, as a result of the problems of purchase by European settlers and the occasional sale of whole tribal lands by one or two members of that tribe, a law was enacted in 1873 presenting a total change in the system of land holding. The aim of this law was to protect the rights of all Maoris who were hereditary owners in a block, by the establishment of individual interests. But to the Maori, while the land became registered in the names of certain people, it never belonged to these people entirely: they were solely trustees for the present and for the future.

"This Act having established the principle of individual title....the continued attempts to force upon the tribal ownership of Maori lands a more pronounced and exact system than ever before obtained under the feudal system among all English speaking peoples has been the evil of Native land holding in New Zealand." 8

Fragmentation of the first kind, multiple ownership, has issued from this cause as the product of continued succession orders. At first a block of land may have belonged to only a few individual owners but on their death the children succeeded to the shares and the process continued through the generations; with each generation there is obviously an increasing number of owners and a proportionately smaller area of land held by each. A few examples may serve to illustrate the difficulties. (Table 111).

A fourth incorporation as at 29/12/63 had a total of 16,540 shares and 1,857 owners, but perhaps the extreme example is shown in an incorporation of 1934 acres which was divided into 4,990,900 shares with ownership by individuals ranging from 396,955 to 875.

Fragmentation of Maori land then becomes more serious as owners die and their interests are split among inheritors. Already many landed interests are so small that owners are ignorant of their location and even of the fact that they have a right to succeed. Many with knowledge of ownership do not consider it worth while to pay the fees necessary for possession, while others who have succeeded, prefer to have its trifling value in cash rather than maintain their minute shares.9 All this adds up to a new growing threat to the

### Table 111

**Increase in Ownership, and Number of Shares held by Owners in Selected Blocks.**

1. **Mangaheia 2D Block**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>7259 acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original Owners 1873</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owners as at 14/3/63</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of shares</td>
<td>9903.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of shares 1963</td>
<td>287.5 to 0.048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Ponpono A14 Block**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>1787 acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original Owners</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owners as at 12/12/60</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total shares</td>
<td>5014.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of shares</td>
<td>466.0 to 0.134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Mangapoke A Block**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>21,379 acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original Owners</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owners as at 1/11/60</td>
<td>867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owners as at 1/2/64</td>
<td>938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total shares</td>
<td>96,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of shares</td>
<td>2.071 to 0.0002.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Adapted from Incorporation Register, Maori Land Court, Gisborne.
retention of the relatively small amount of land now held by
the Maori people.

As well as drawbacks in the use, or in the expense of
leasing land in very small partitions there is a tremendous
strain thrown upon the Court, the Maori Affairs Department
and individual incorporations in keeping title records up to
date and in distributing dividends to the many owners. The work
involved in distribution is often out of all proportion to the
actual amount involved as can be seen from Table IV where
dividends paid out by the afore-mentioned incorporations have
been calculated.

| Table IV |
| Dividend Pay Out in Selected Incorporations 1955-63. |

1. **Mangapeia 2D**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Share</th>
<th>Range of Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>£35/17/6 to 1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td>£143/10/- to 5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>5/-</td>
<td>£71/15/- to 2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958/9</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td>£143/10/- to 5/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960/61</td>
<td>5/-</td>
<td>£71/15/- to 2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>£35/17/6 to 1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Poroporo Ahi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Share</th>
<th>Range of Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955/6</td>
<td>12/-</td>
<td>£279/- to 1/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>11/11</td>
<td>£277/15/- to 1/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958/9</td>
<td>8/8</td>
<td>£201/15/- to 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>8/8</td>
<td>£201/15/- to 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961/2</td>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>£255/- to 1/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>7/3</td>
<td>£160/16/- to 10d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Mangapoke A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Share</th>
<th>Range of Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955/6</td>
<td>399/16/-</td>
<td>£200/- to 9/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957/8</td>
<td>70/17/-</td>
<td>£160/- to 7/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959/60</td>
<td>359/19/-</td>
<td>£120/- to 5/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the annual audited accounts filed
in the Maori Affairs Department, Gisborne.

It has been stated that, "If fragmentation was indeed the
ancient Maori tribal system it would be easier to understand
whatever reluctance there may be to part with it; but in point of fact it is a European invention imposed upon them less than one hundred years ago".\textsuperscript{10} However, this viewpoint, as the Presbyterian Synod notes misses the vital factor that "land is much more to a Maori than utilitarian soil from which he can make a living. Not the small individual unit but the tribe is the basic unit of his society... and his inheritance the tribal land or turangawaewae, the place of standing for his feet. When you take away the last acre of a Maori's land you do him a psychological and spiritual injury."\textsuperscript{11} It becomes obvious therefore that the problem is not to be overcome by the sale of the fragmented interests but by their active use in an economic unit by the Maoris themselves.

3. Obtaining Capable Farming and Business Managers.

Pastoralism in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District requires a high level of management and business ability, especially on the large tracts of "hard" land at the foothills of the main ranges.

Although many Maori managers are controlling these tracts adequately, at present there are insufficient Maoris available with the necessary practical farming experience. A few have conclusively shown that they are incapable of working successfully under a long-term policy. There is an undeniable need for assistance, but many Maoris have not taken advantage of the aid available especially if it comes from the pakeha. This is a reflection of past antagonisms between the two races, but for the benefit of the land these antagonisms should not be allowed to continue.

The management problem has been further accentuated by the isolation of the district. As capable farm-managers are


offered higher wages in the hill country around Gisborne, few have the inclination to manage properties in the isolated Matakaoa and northern Waiapu counties where much Maori land remains and where, according to some observers, a definite anti-European policy exists among some communities. This problem has been aggravated by the nature of the managers' residences. Although a few are the equal of any on the Coast many are below standard, and north of Ruatoria at least four large incorporations of over 1,000 acres have either no manager's residence or one of inferior quality.

4. Obtaining Development Capital.

Although capital has been lent to some incorporations with excellent results, until the title system is fully rectified the incorporations are hopelessly placed in the field of development capital especially from private sources. The amount of capital necessary to halt reversion, let alone make any substantial increase in the productive capacity, cannot be found except by major State assistance in some form.

However, when the title has been adequately fixed the problem is not acute, as Banks are willing to lend money especially if the co-operation of the Maori Trustee can be also gained. This can be seen, for example, in relation to one large block close to Gisborne which had been allowed to revert badly under European leasehold. After negotiations, finance was eventually made available by a local bank and the Maori Trustee, with the security of mortgage over the land and stock. That this has had excellent results can be seen as follows (Table V).

Yet, although this does show what can be achieved, it is perhaps rather an isolated case as the block has benefitted especially from its proximity to Gisborne. For most incorporations, lack of adequate capital reserves to aid development remains a major problem.

Plate 5. 'a few are equal of any on the East Coast'. The manager's residence on Whangara B5 Station.

Plate 6. Manager's residence on Paremata 64A (Titirangi Station.)
### Table V

**Financial Position of Arai Matawai**  
**Incorporation 1955-63.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Mortgage Debt</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan from Bank</td>
<td>27500</td>
<td>27500</td>
<td>27500</td>
<td>27500</td>
<td>27500</td>
<td>25000</td>
<td>24000</td>
<td>23000</td>
<td>21000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan from Maori Trustee</td>
<td>29500</td>
<td>26500</td>
<td>21500</td>
<td>16500</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td>14000</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>11000</td>
<td>8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Loan</td>
<td>57000</td>
<td>54000</td>
<td>49000</td>
<td>44000</td>
<td>41500</td>
<td>39000</td>
<td>36000</td>
<td>34000</td>
<td>29000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less current Bank Account</td>
<td>18460</td>
<td>11890</td>
<td>12510</td>
<td>10300</td>
<td>14220</td>
<td>17760</td>
<td>18530</td>
<td>19340</td>
<td>20840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Deficiency</td>
<td>38540</td>
<td>42110</td>
<td>36490</td>
<td>33700</td>
<td>27280</td>
<td>21240</td>
<td>17470</td>
<td>14660</td>
<td>8160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Nett Profit</strong></td>
<td>-15490</td>
<td>-100</td>
<td>4560</td>
<td>3760</td>
<td>4920</td>
<td>7330</td>
<td>5180</td>
<td>5080</td>
<td>8430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Incorporation Accounts filed in the Maori Land Court, Gisborne.*
Chapter 3.

The Attempts to Overcome the Tenure Problem

In the main, the Native land legislation of the Dominion has centred around the fabric of a communal title without devising ways of circumventing or escaping from its toils. A method suggested by English experience was to subdivide the land among the individual owners. The indiscriminate pursuit of that method may be found at the root of many of the difficulties in the settlement of Native lands.

Sir Apirana Ngata.¹

It is impossible to effect a single cure for all the problems which have been discussed, and any measures proposed enabling improvements to be made are liable to meet with opposition from one source or another. Yet the land cannot remain idle, as this is detrimental, not only to the Coast, but also to New Zealand as a whole. From the national viewpoint, the frequently reiterated statement that the prime importance of land holding is to 'retain Maori lands for the Maori' carries little weight, unless the farming of these lands approaches full capacity.

As early as 1900 this was realised by the Young Maori Party when Ngata stated "only those lands which the Maoris themselves will usefully occupy will remain or will be allowed to remain with them",² yet throughout the early decades of the 20th century, successive governments refused to take the necessary steps to enable land to be farmed effectively by the Maoris.

It was not until 1929 that the Maori Affairs Department attempted by various means to overcome problems of Maori land

2. Quoted from the Humi Report; op.cit. p.46
inheritance and to clear away the stumbling blocks to land development. Many of these schemes have been classified or reiterated in the Hunn Report and these can be briefly studied to note both the aims of the proposals and their deficiencies.

**Land Development Schemes.**

The original Land Development Scheme initiated in 1929 has been called "the most important development which has taken place in the modern adjustment of the Maori". Stimulated by the enthusiasm and foresight of Ngata, the Government announced itself as willing to assume direct financial responsibility for development of the land.

At present under this method, the owners of a Block ask the Maori Affairs Department to accept their lands for development. If accepted, all individual ownership ceases for the period, with title reverting to its communal basis and the land operated as a whole on behalf of its tribal owners. When the block is ready for occupation, the owners have the right to nominate persons for individual holdings, but the final authority rests with the Maori Affairs Department whose duty it is to ensure that the land is let only to competent farmers.

This scheme would appear to overcome the problems of tenancy but two major defects are inherent. Firstly, in the 1929 plan the aim was not only to develop the land but to advance the Maori people through effective and self supporting farming. However, although Maori leadership was used to give the scheme backing, many at present are expressing dissatisfaction with the amount of European supervision and feel that their place in the administration has been suppressed.

Secondly, the Department continues to be confronted with large areas of land which are either lying idle or are only

partially farmed and have not been submitted for development. The reason for these problems lies in two factors already discussed: the fragmentation of ownership and unsatisfactory state of title.

How then can the basic problem of fragmentation be overcome?

Another method also initiated by Ngata among the Ngati Porou is consolidation, a system of exchange of shares to enable one who owns a number of small interests in individual blocks, to gather them together in one block so as to provide an economic unit. It is a long and laborious process and as shown by the Hunn Report⁴ the effort is endless, for as soon as consolidation is established, ownership begins to proliferate again by death and succession so that the process is never completed.

Land development schemes and consolidation, therefore, have not succeeded in solving the problems of Maori land tenure. In an attempt to provide the complete answer, various measures were introduced in the Maori Affairs Act 1953 and in later amendments, to overcome what is considered by the Hunn Report to be the first of the two basic problems: the prevention of title from further disintegration.

**Primogeniture.**

The system of primogeniture would certainly solve the title problem but can hardly be recommended, as the whole basis was abolished in 1879 and is unlikely to be resurrected. Further, the idea completely transgresses all values of Maori land inheritance.

**Administration Act, and Nomination.**

The basic aim of both these schemes is to ensure that the number of owners in each block does not increase beyond the present figure. Under the implementation of the

⁴ Hunn Report: op. cit. p.55
Administration Act no new inheritors are to be added to those already existing on the title, and by Nomination, the ownership is to be transmitted on death to a sole nominated successor. Consequently both schemes would prevent title from further disintegration but neither is likely to be accepted, as not only do they contradict the concept of communal ownership, but would eventually destroy the special protection at present enjoyed by Maori land.

£10 Rule

This rule was initiated in 1957 to enable the Court to vest the whole of the interests of a deceased person in one or more beneficiaries, provided that the share of those excluded does not exceed £10. The main difficulty of this law is that the Maori Land Court is able to explain its authority for exclusion only to those who actually attend in Court. As a result, many of the excluded beneficiaries, often misunderstanding the procedure, consider they have been disinherited for no good reason. This leads to the blame being placed on the applicant and so the corollary is that many have become wary of presenting applications for succession.5

£50 Rule

A prohibition against succession and partition orders can also be considered unless the annual capital value exceeds £50 per share. Funds would have to be made available to the Maori Trustee to enable him to buy all uneconomic interests up to a value of £50, and when sufficient interests had been collected they could be amalgamated or exchanged for an economic unit to be farmed under the incorporation system.6

In effect, therefore, this would act in much the same way as the £16 rule, but by the higher value it can be expected that it would well-nigh stop fragmentation altogether.

However, all these schemes have the basic weakness that they solely prevent the title from further disintergration and do not provide a complete cure. "It is not enough," states the Hunn Report, "that the list of owners shall be merely contained: it must be reduced to a sole owner if at all possible!" 7

This factor, the reduction of title to sole ownership, is the second of the two problems considered to be the basis of Maori land tenure.

Two major methods of obtaining sole ownership were suggested by the Hunn Report but both have met with considerable opposition from the Maori people.

The first is conversion which provides that uneconomic interests (less than £25 unimproved value) are to be bought by the Maori Trustee and offered for sale to another Maori or to an incorporation. Conversion is a form of consolidation but is a much simpler and quicker scheme although it is achieved at the expense of rendering many Maoris landless owners.

The only other major control is live buying: the authority given to the Maori Trustee to buy individual interests by ordinary consent. Although stated to offer the greatest scope of all for simplification of title "it appears to be of no over-all value unless incorporated into some major scheme as yet unformulated". 8

Therefore, as can be deduced, all of the schemes considered have had some, but not a very intensive impact on the problems of multiple ownership and fragmentation. This is because the

concept of 'turangawaewae' which can be applied to all schemes, has received scant attention. It has been stated that this concept is no longer valid among the younger generations, yet it is believed on the Coast that most of the old people and at least a majority of the Maoris still believe in 'the tie of the land' and the wishes of the majority should at least be respected.

Any measures which violate the principles of Maori land inheritance (primogeniture, Administration Act, Nomination) or totally exclude a Maori from the lands of his tribe (£10, £50 rule, live buying) are condemned by the Maori people. The apparent failure of many investigators to see beyond a particular system to the social reality of the community is clearly seen in this case. Thus it becomes increasingly evident that some other system is necessary for the full development of Maori land if, to use Ngata's slogan, "only those lands which the Maoris themselves will usefully occupy will remain or be allowed to remain with them".

9. Refer to glossary.
10. Maori Synod of the Presbyterian Church: op. cit. p.26
Chapter 4

The System of Incorporation: its Past and Present.

Individualisation of title in the sense of allocating to each owner his individual area is hopeless and absurd.... The Maoris are a communal people and any system which preserves a community of interests may be the best means of improving the industrial life amongst a communal people.

Sir Apirana Ngata.¹

In the previous chapter on the problems of land tenure, it was noted that by 1873 the Government had introduced a scheme to determine the ownership of Maori lands, and at the same time attempted to protect the owners from unscrupulous purchasers and their own lack of business acumen. As a result the widespread sale of Maori land was slowed down but it was not sufficient that the land be merely held by the Maoris: it must of necessity be gainfully used.

Much earlier than the Government sponsored Land Development Schemes to settle the Maori on his own land, a system of communal farming had been initiated by Ngata among the Ngati Porou tribe. There were many expedients, later introduced by Parliament, to legalise this purpose including the Native Land Court Act 1894 'by which on order of the Court a numerous body of owners could be incorporated and a committee of management appointed with powers of alienation on behalf of the owners.'²

This Act, however, although introducing the idea of the incorporations achieved little in practice. The real origin did not come until 1905 when a few blocks, anxious to commence sheepfarming on Maori lands, held a series of meetings which resulted in the formation of the Ngati Porou Farmers Union.

1. A.J.H.R. (G-1) 1908 p.3.
2. A.J.H.R. (G-1c) 1907 p.4.
Their aims and ideals were set out in the journal 'Pipiwharauroa' March 1906 and reaffirmed by the Stout/Ngata Commission 1907 when one of their many recommendations in the commission was to 'declare the owners of any land incorporated in order that the land may be farmed under a committee selected by the owners'.3 Finally in 1908 a Maori Laws Amendment Act permitted the establishment of communal farms which could be administered under a co-operative body, and in 1909 the Maori Land Act constituted incorporations as legal bodies.

The fact that the scheme had originated among the Ngati Porou is of vital importance in considering the location of the incorporations today. An examination of the map of Maori land holdings 1929 (fig.2) and of the Incorporations 1964, shows a distinct cleavage between location in the Ngati Porou land in the Mataakaoa, Waipu and Uawa counties to the north; and the Rongawhakaata and Ngati Kahungunu in the Cook and Wairoa countries to the south. In the south the incorporations are few and large, scattered mostly in the back country, but in the north they dominate especially on the more fertile coastal strip. Although since 1953 all blocks have been controlled under the one system, until that date the northern and southern areas had a widely divergent history, and for a full comprehension of the development of the incorporations this cleavage between north and south must first be studied.

A. NORTHERN EXPERIMENTS

In the north the Ngati Porou tribe through their isolation and decision not to rebel during the East Coast Wars, had retained not only their lands but also a persisting efficient tribal leadership and a spirit of enterprise. Thus as early as the 1870s, spurred by the pressure of survey costs, attempts at communal sheep farming had been undertaken using the available native grasses.4

Fig. 2 Area Remaining in Maori Land in the Matakaoa, Waipu, Uawa and Cook Counties 1929.
Plate 7. The historic Maori church, and memorial to Sir Apirana Ngata (rear)—Tikitiki. Ngata not only sponsored Maori arts and craft but also provided inspiration for many systems of Maori land development including the idea of incorporations.
By pakeha standards, this Maori farming, at least until the end of the century was of an inferior nature with rotten fences, no woolshed, open air shearing and perhaps several flocks running together, but 'although there were no extensive improvements, small beginnings were made on many different blocks and the pastoral industry grew slowly'.

However, the beginning of the 20th century evidenced new factors entering into the farming of Maori land. These included the influence of the first generation of educated young Maoris who having seen the haphazard methods employed in the early communal farming realised the possibilities of improvement. Impatient of the older methods their first reaction was to attempt individual freehold farming, or to pick individuals to lease communal land.

This act of an enlightened youth certainly improved the farming methods but the big danger, especially to the older Maoris, was that the increasing individualisation was destroying too suddenly the communal effort basic to Maori life. Some system of legalizing the communal organisation was therefore sought and it was as a result that the incorporation system of land tenure was evolved.

With the provision of a legal title the full utilisation of the land was the next important step and the early decades of the 20th century saw wide tracts in the Waiapu Valley and along the coast cleared of bush, sown and stocked. This development was undertaken by communal effort under the incorporation system with such finance as was needed coming from the kaumatua or the philanthropy of such people as the Williams family.

5. A.J.M.R (G-1) 1908.
8. ibid. p.17
At the same time the need for an efficient financial system led to the establishment of the Waiapu Farmers Trading Corporation in 1913 as an integral part of, but not officially connected to, the incorporations.

From this initial beginning the incorporations in the north slowly developed in the succeeding years maintaining the traditional communal background but gradually assuming a European financial form.

E. SOUTHERN EXPERIMENTS.

South of Tolaga Bay the land belongs not to the Ngati Porou but to the Rongowhakaata and Te Aitanga-a-Mahaki tribes on the Gisborne Plain, and the northern hatus of the Ngati Kahungunu tribe in the Wharerata, Nuhaka and Wairoa districts. Rongowhakaata, the tribe most affected by land sales, had leaders of strong character but unlike the Ngati Porou they were little versed in land dealing. As a result in a very short period the most desirable areas on the coast and alluvial plains had been alienated or leased.9

In an effort to retain the remaining land many of the Maoris were induced to become shareholders in a company floated in Gisborne called the 'New Zealand Land Settlement Company'. However, the financing of this concern was a costly failure and by 1901 the Bank, which had initially provided the backing, was compelled to take steps to foreclose and advertise several blocks for sale.10 The Maoris, threatened with no other gain than gilt-edged script, appealed to Parliament for postponement of sale.11 It is noticeable that as early as 1891 the Native Affairs Committee had felt justified in expressing the opinion that it was 'absolutely necessary that the Government should step in and assist with relief' but nothing was done until 1902,

10. A.J.H.R. (G-iII) 1908 p.2
11. A.J.H.R. (I 3) 1891. p.28
when the day before the proposed mortgagees' sale, the East Coast Native Trust Lands Bill was passed inaugurating the statutory Trust which lasted until 1953. 12

This Trust, under the control of the East Coast Commissioner, aimed to free all the land from debt and place it in a sound financial position. It was because it undertook to develop each individual block to a state of economic activity and return none to the owners until this was achieved that the work of the Trust took a much longer period than could be expected. 13 It was not until July 1954, some twenty years after the debt incurred had been paid off, that the lands and assets of the Trust were handed over to the management committees of twenty-four new bodies corporate who commenced to direct the farming of them. 14 (fig.3)

Early Attempts at Incorporation.

Not all Maori lands in the south, however, were controlled by the East Coast Trust during the entirety of this earlier period. Two early attempts were made by the Maoris to farm their lands under the system of incorporation.

(a) Mangatu Blocks 1, 3 and 4.

Comprising together over 100,000 acres these blocks are by far the largest in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District. They were first administered by an incorporated committee appointed in 1893 but hampered by lack of knowledge and capital this committee achieved little and was soon replaced by two Trustees. The latter also experienced serious financial difficulties and finally in 1917 the whole area was combined under the control of the East Coast


14. However, the Mangatu Blocks which had never shared the debts of the old Settlement Company lands had been returned to the Maoris in 1947-
Fig. 3 East Coast Maori Trust Lands legalised as Incorporations under the Maori Affairs Act 1953.
Thus the initial attempt by the owners to administer the land through the system of incorporation was a failure, but nevertheless it did show that given further experience and greater finance the scheme could be beneficial to the Maoris.

(b) Whangara Blocks.

The leases of seven blocks in the Whangara district expired in and about 1916, and instead of selling to the Crown the Maoris decided to have the lands farmed for themselves under the supervision of a European to whom the land was mortgaged. Each block from 1916 had its incorporated owners with the supervisor aided in his administration by a committee on each block. This system of incorporation has been continued to the present day although the European supervisor has been disposed with and the mortgage repaid.

1953 Maori Affairs Act

As well as providing for the return of solvent and economic blocks formerly under the East Coast Trust to the Maoris, Part 22 of this Act tightened many of the provisions of the incorporations.

The Act provides firstly for incorporation of Maori land when the beneficiaries in the estate number more than three, and not less than half agree to incorporation. An application must then be lodged with the Maori Land Court to grant the incorporation and state the purposes for which it is formed.

Once formed, shareholders in the body corporate are collective owners in the land. It is clear that the Act safeguards their interests as any distribution of fees or profits is only possible when authorised by vote at a general meeting. Voting on all matters is by shares not heads. Proxy voting is
allowed but no proxy member can be elected to a committee. Thus under this system shareholders who make the decisions concerning any distribution of profits, have a different function from those of a joint stock company.

Secondly, the Act outlines the powers of the body corporate and especially sets out how revenue is to be applied after dividends have been approved to shareholders; and administration costs, rates, taxes, repayment on loans and any other requirements have been paid. Money can be invested and loans granted but the former only in Government securities, debentured or local authorities, and the latter only by mortgage in any real property. No loans are to be granted to owners or members of the committee of management.

The committee of management, an integral part of each incorporation, is to be composed of not less than three and not more than eleven persons, to hold office for three years, with one third elected every year. Members of these committees need not be beneficiary owners within the block. Reasonable travelling expenses are allowed but any fees paid to the committee must be authorised by a general meeting.

Finally, the Act notes that the Maori Trustee may buy uneconomic interests (less than £25 in value) but is bound to first offer them to the body corporate as a whole. If the body corporate does not wish to purchase them they are then offered to an individual in the corporation but not to an outsider. This serves to maintain Maori control within the incorporation. 17

This then is the scheme as it exists to-day which the Maoris believe is the most beneficial for the full development of the land, and the removal of the title and ownership problem.

17. These regulations for the Incorporations adapted from:
and
Matiu Te Hau: 'Incorporations', Te Ao Hau, No 30, 1960, pp. 16-17.
Would it not be better to have individual Maoris on individual farms instead of several score absentee owners drawing the dividends of a block run by a Management Committee? From a purely productive point of view this may be true but many have attempted to show how the system comes closest to meeting the communal aspect of the Maori race and at the same time provide for development of the land.

Ngata in 1940 stated that, 'the system known as incorporation is in effect an adaptation of the tribal system, the hierarchy of chiefs being replaced by the Committee of Management...... Evolved by the Maoris to suit Maori needs the development and training of human talent has been especially emphasised'. 18 Maori Youth Conferences in the last three years at Rotorua, Ruatoria and Auckland have considered incorporations as the most likely method of overcoming the Maori land problem. Finally, the Maori Synod of the Presbyterian Church notes that the 'basis of incorporation provides for proper utilisation of all usable Maori land, promotes the welfare of every Maori community, provides for community needs especially education and secures the permanent identification of every Maori with his tribe through the heritage of his tribal lands by perpetuating Maori ownership of Maori land'. 19

That the incorporations have the basis for fulfilling these hopes and becoming an important agricultural feature on the East Coast is shown by the table on land tenure (Table VI). 20

"If," says Ward, "the East Coast Commission was for many years the most important farming concern on the East Coast the incorporations can retain a similar position'. 21 But are

19. Maori Synod of the Presbyterian Church: op. cit. p.27.
20. Also refer to Fig 4. Land Tenure on the East Coast.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE V1</th>
<th>Land Tenure in the Five East Coast Counties as at June 1950.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matakapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Area of Land</td>
<td>188,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Area of European Land</td>
<td>61,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Area of Maori Land</td>
<td>127,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Area of Maori Land Leased to Europeans</td>
<td>14,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Area of Maori Land Leased to Maoris (Excluding Development Land)</td>
<td>41,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Area of Maori Land subject to development under the Maoris Affairs Dept</td>
<td>11,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Area of Maori Land farmed by Maoris or unoccupied</td>
<td>35,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Incorporations</td>
<td>24,068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 'Coast Land Tenure Problems Examined' Gisborne Herald, 24.10.53.
Lands and Survey Department, Gisborne.

Scale.

10  5  0  10  20 miles

- Maori Land (incl. Lease).
- Crown Leasehold.
- State Forest.
- Reserves
- Freehold
- Crown Land.

Fig. 4 Land Tenure in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District.
the people who took on the Trust lands capable of maintaining and improving on the work achieved by the Commissioner? Are the Maoris as a whole capable of handling the big business involved in running a farm under the system of incorporation? A few of the answers to these queries will be seen in the next chapter.
Chapter 5

Success and Failure in Farming Activities - a Study of Selected Blocks.

In 1929, Keesing, at the end of his study on 'Maori Progress on the East Coast' \(^1\) posed a question which has had continued significance in the pastoral development of the Tairawhiti Maori Land District. "Will these people", he asked, "ever be able to farm their lands, now held in trust, adequately by themselves?". Thirty five years later we can exchange 'incorporation' for 'trust' and ask the same question. That these lands are being farmed under the incorporations cannot be denied; that they are being farmed adequately, however, is open to conjecture.

Before commencing a study of the incorporations to ascertain the standards of farm management and production it must be noted that in many cases the Maoris were faced with serious physical problems before they assumed full control of the land. Soil erosion, pasture reversion and deterioration, and aggradation had become evident on numerous properties as a direct result of the lease system of tenancy.

In the past large tracts of land had been leased to European farmers but the terms of most of these leases included no provision for compensation for improvements.\(^2\) As the present policy of the Maori tribal organisations has been to resume occupancy of all blocks as leases expire it has been inevitable that at the end of the tenure period many tenants have 'mined' the land by serious over-stockage. In such an exhausted condition the land quickly reverts and as a result


2. It should be noted that lack of sufficient funds prevented many Maori owners from paying compensation even when terms for compensation had been made. Further they feared paying for improvements which would benefit them little.
blocks have been handed back to the Maoris with increasing problems of pasture depletion, erosion and loss of soil fertility.

An example of these problems can be seen in the Arai-Matawai station which was returned to the Maoris after having been farmed by Europeans under an extended lease. Before even a nominal profit could be made the question of sufficient finance had first to be overcome as fences and buildings had been neglected and needed extensive renovation; and large areas of pasture had reverted to scrub and thistles. Although claims of £54,50 against the former lessee for breach of lease were received it is obvious that a station in such a condition faces great problems in the initial stages of re-development. This can be evidenced in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table VII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure in the First Three Years of Operation under Incorporation - Arai Matawai Block.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrub and Thistle control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manure and seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New buildings, repairs and furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yards, roads and dam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from annual accounts of the Incorporation 1955-57.

3. Tables and figures in this chapter unless otherwise stated have been adapted from the annual audited accounts filed in the Maori Affairs Department, Gisborne, or from reports from the Valuation Department, Gisborne.
late

Plate 8. 'large areas of pasture had reverted to scrub'. Heavy scrub reversion at the back of Arai Matai Station.

Plate 9. Fencing material in preparation for a new fence line at the back of Arai Matai Station, - a result of neglect under European lease.
Plate 10. 'fences and buildings had been neglected and needed extensive renovations'.
New woolshed, shearers' quarters and yards constructed in 1958 - these all had to be built at the end of the leasehold period.
In addition it must be remembered that most of this country was farmed for the first thirty years or so on the wave of the original forest fertility and that deterioration would have been inevitable anyway unless topdressing and oversewing had begun.

Problems of inefficient farming, therefore, can arise even before the Maoris attempt to control their own properties. Yet, from succeeding chapters it will become obvious that not all problems have arisen from the 'mining' of the land. Too often one hears on the Coast statements that 'the Maori is an inefficient farmer and land under Maori control is continually reverting... there is little future in the economic development of the Coast' 4 to realise that other factor have also affected the management of the incorporations.

The same article notes that 'the last thirty-five years four freezing works have closed—two at Gisborne, one at Tokomaru Bay and one at Hicks Bay—and the one remaining plant in Gisborne is not working at full capacity. Admittedly, there has been a change in type production with the Coast now producing sheep for the Waikato/Bay of Plenty regions but the implications are that a higher ratio of fat stock is capable of being produced and that total output has noticeably declined.

The question posed at this stage is whether the system of incorporated blocks has succeeded as an efficient farming method and aided in the increased pastoral output so often stressed to be necessary for New Zealand's continued development.

From a close perusal of the accounts of the six selected incorporations since 1953 some idea of progress can be ascertained. Such items as total revenue and final nett profit, although affected by external factors including price

changes and market conditions beyond the control of the Incorporations, give an indication of the variations in output and production. Utilised in combination with stock losses, lambing and calving percentages, and wool production (Figs. 11 - 16) a reasonably complete picture of farming operations in the selected incorporations, since 1954, has resulted.

Incorporation 1.
(Pakarae Station)

Situated in the Uawa County this is an example of an efficiently managed incorporation resulting each year with a healthy net profit and adequate reserves of capital. The accompanying figures show that total revenue and farming expenditure (fig. 5) and wool output (fig 16), have remained at a consistently high level, the variations in profit having been affected principally by changing prices for wool. A scheme of annual fence maintenance and renewal has been calculated which has resulted not only in high quality fences but has also proved an invaluable aid in maintaining high lambing and calving percentages. Good fences are also a necessary basis for the provision of good pastures as there is a need to have a definite control over grazing activities. The 650 acres of flats have been systematically grazed and topdressed resulting in high grade clover/rye pastures and the easier hill country is covered by good native grasses with some English. Only on the 500 acres of steep southern slopes have poor native grasses invaded the original sowings of English varities.

Thus high quality pastures aided by topdressing and soil conservation, and good fences have been the basis for a consistently high output. With a sound management policy this incorporation shows that incorporations in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District are fully capable of being run efficiently and well.
Fig. 5 Farming Operations in Pakarae Station 1955-63.
Although the Pakarae station may be considered as consisting of 'easy' country by Coast standards Uruahi demonstrates that much more difficult land can also be farmed at a high standard. The difficulty of management is shown by the physical nature of the property: of the 1763 acres some 1,000 are composed of strong clay papa of easy aspect but slumping very badly with another 550 acres of shaly clay and loam over brittle shale and papa. As a result practically the whole property is affected by erosion with earthflows a constant menace, and most of the side gullies eating back into the established pasture and aggrading the stream beds.

To counteract this problem a concerted programme of erosion control has been undertaken. Between 1955 and 1962 two nurseries involving the planting of 3500 cuttings were established; a twelve acre area of very badly eroded country was fenced off; 1600 poles and 22 brush dams were established along the water courses; and open planting of some 3500 poles was made over 40 acres of badly slumping country. The total claim from the Catchment Board by the station was £1,500.

However, even with these large scale conservation efforts, it was noted last year that erosion was steadily decreasing the area in grass rendering several divisional fences useless, and that the pastures on the shale were declining in production despite intensive topdressing. When it is realised that fencing in this area can cost over £1,000 a mile and manure over £20 a ton, the difficulties become increasingly obvious.

Yet, the station has made progress. Except for the years 1960 to 1962 at least 50 tons of super-phosphate have been applied each year. Lambing percentages have remained

Fig. 6  Farming Operations in Poroporo A14 (Uruahi Station) 1955-63.
Plate 11. 'side gullies eating back into the established pastures and aggrading the stream beds'.
Large scale erosion on Uruahi Station.

Plate 12. A typical view down one of the large gullies - Poroporo A14 (Uruahi Station).
P.B. Catchment Board.
consistently higher than on any other station studied, a good achievement on such difficult country (Fig. 12) and losses have been correspondingly lower than most (Fig. 13). Wool production in 1963 reached its highest return since 1956 (Fig. 16) owing mainly to increased weight of wool per sheep, a reflection of sound management policy. It can be seen, therefore that efficient farming and management is possible on even the isolated and more difficult properties.

**Incorporation 3**

*(Part Mangapoke A and 2B - Paparatu Station)*

One of the largest on the East Coast, this station also demonstrates that farming under the incorporation system can be successful on the hard foothill country. Not only has the property some 5400 acres of papa very prone to erosion but also 6400 acres of poor quality clay on pumice with its associated problems of erosion and nutrient deficiencies, 5000 acres of pumice loam needing heavy topdressing for pasture growth, and over 1300 acres of cliffs and rocky faces. In fact over 1600 acres are virtually useless for grazing and another sixty percent is cold, rough, hard, steep country with much scrub and fern reversion.

Access to the upper parts of the property is difficult, and to enable economic stock handling a very expensively blasted and bulldozed road had to be constructed. Completed in 1961 after several year's work it still required extensive metalling in 1963 at a cost of £4050 giving some idea of the heavy outlay involved.

However, with buildings in first class order and a sound stock policy the station has now undertaken a comprehensive long term programme of maintenance and development with emphasis on fern crushing, fence renewal, and continued oversowing and topdressing. An air strip able to serve a radius of five miles has been well established and from this strip between 1954 and 1963 over 1,250 tons of cobaltised
super phosphate were applied to counter-act the nutrient deficiencies. In 1963 with an outlay of £920 on pastures, £1,060 on roading and £2,790 on fencing it is obvious that money is being put back into the farm.

Yet some disturbing influences are apparent. Grants to maraes, meeting houses and religious trusts amounted to £6042 in 1962 and £8570 in 1963 and this, combined with £5787 in dividends each year, resulted in over £26,000 outgoing in two years which appears an excessive amount even for an incorporation of this size. Calving percentages have dropped to a very low level in the last few years (Fig.14) and cattle losses have risen appreciably (Fig.15). With 1434 beasts unaccounted for in 1963 not only are fewer cattle available for crushing but a great source of revenue has been lost.

If deficiencies in management have been noted in incorporations which are otherwise farming the land at a relatively high standard, it is apparent that even more disturbing influences are to appear in those which are not operating at such a level. To illustrate this hypothesis three examples have been selected to show that stations of a proven economic size are failing because of management problems. None of these stations are comprised of difficult country which affected farming output in the earlier examples. In fact, two consist of easy to steep but strong hill country with no great problems of erosion and the third is composed of over 80 percent high producing flats and easy rolling slopes.

**Incorporation 4**

*(Anaura Station)*

The first example, a large unit of 7,500 acres, pointedly shows the deficiencies that can and have arisen in some of the incorporations. This station was handed back from the Maori Trustee in 1956 and it is interesting to note the progress
made in the last few years.

A casual examination of the items of total revenue and farm expenditure (Fig. 7) would give the impression that the former has remained stable and that extra money is being ploughed back into the farm, but it is apparent from Fig. 8 that this is not the true picture. Extra money has certainly been spent on farm expenditure but only indirectly: there has been a marked increase in truck and tractor expenses, and wages, but such items as fence repairs, scrub cutting, and manure application have declined appreciably and in fact total maintenance has been cut to a bare minimum. A comparison of expenditure between the last year under the Maori Trustee (1956) and 1963 clearly outlines these factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1955/6 Maori Trustee</th>
<th>1963 Incorporation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fence maintenance</td>
<td>£ 3,090</td>
<td>£ 440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture</td>
<td>2,680</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truck and Tractor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>2,930</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except for token application in the last three years no topdressing has been undertaken. How long pastures will retain stock of high quality without the application of manure is not known but the lack of it is beginning to show in the poorer quality and lighter yields of wool, and also in the lower prices received from the sale of store sheep. 6

With many miles of existing fences a regular programme of maintenance is essential but Figure 8 clearly shows that the outlay on fencing is declining. The poor state of the fences has been a... factor in the low lambing and calving percentages, both of which are very low for this type of

6. This can be outlines as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>£2.11.9 per sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>£1.19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>£1.13.0 per sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>£1.8.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. This decline is clearly shown in Fig.12 and Fig.14 respectively.
Fig. 7 Farming Operations in Anaura Station 1954-63.
Fig. 8 Farm Expenditure in Anaura Station 1954-63.
country and reflect grave defects in management. Sheep losses, however, are of graver concern because to take 1963 as an example, even considering the low prices received, the total number lost and unaccounted for -634- represents a total loss in revenue of around £350 as well as the loss of wool.

From this study it is manifest that the main farming objectives of the Incorporation have not been fulfilled.

**Incorporation 5**

(Kopuaatuaki Station).

The second example, a property of 1590 acres in the Cook County also highlights the deficiencies that have arisen in some incorporations. This is not all easy country but on the other hand it is not difficult: some 550 acres of easy to steep papa covered by good clay loam, 800 acres of light clay loam over sandstone with light erosion, and 240 acres of pumice tops and faces.

A comparison of total revenue for £1954 and 1963 demonstrates just how much the station has deteriorated (Table V111). In 1959, for example, a total gross income of only £7190 and a nett loss of £1600 was recorded, yet over £2390 was spent on administration costs including legal fees, committee expenses, and donations and £1496 was paid out in dividends. Thus 34 percent of the total income was spent on administration alone and this, when dividends are added, resulted in 53 percent of the revenue outgoing from the property.

Yet, in 1960 there was a greater nett loss of £2640 owing predominantly to a further drop in income to the extremely small sum of £3790: a gross return of just over £2 per acre. At the same time administration costs maintained the excessive figure of £2390 or over 60 percent of the total gross revenue; lambing percentages reached their lowest ebb
Fig. 9. Farming Operations in Kopuaatuaki Station 1955-63.
with only a 53.3 percent return (Fig. 12) and sheep losses rose to over 15 percent (Fig. 13).

Table VI11.

A Comparison of Revenue Received in Komuatagaki
Incorporation in the years 1954 and 1963.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>1963</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>£2,500</td>
<td>£1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>5,660</td>
<td>2,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£10,080</strong></td>
<td><strong>£5,650</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Annual Audited Reports.

Individually these factors show inadequate management but collectively they amounted to almost a complete lack of control. As a result by 1961 the station was in a neglected state and it is gratifying to note that in the last three years under new management the property has shown a definite improvement. The boundary fences have been improved, stock yards replaced and a beginning made with scrub clearance and manure application after several years of complete neglect. Lambing percentages have increased (Fig. 12) and sheep deficiencies lowered (Fig. 13) but at the same time the comparison of revenue between 1954 and 1963 clearly demonstrates the problems that have arisen on some incorporations. These factors ultimately affect the whole productivity of the land.

Incorporation 6.

(Ohuia Station)

Ohuia consists of some of the easiest hill country and most fertile flats of all incorporations and thus no problems can possibly arise from the physical deterioration of the land. Yet this station made a profit of only £360 in 1959, ran at a loss in the next three years, and in 1963
Plate 13. 'some of the easiest hill country and most fertile flats of all incorporations'. Part of the Ohuia Station, Wairoa: one of the incorporations that has suffered heavy sheep losses.
a profit was achieved only as a result of heavy stock sales. These continued financial losses have resulted not from expenditure being withheld from the farm but from the effects of the extremely large numbers of sheep lost and unaccounted for since 1954. These losses have been detailed in Table IX.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>4,180</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>1,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,940</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1960 1,100 hoggetts pasturing on a run-off property were reported to have died during the year and to quote a statement made by a Maori in relation to another block 'py korry these sheep losses, she the serious disease'.

It is clear, however, that management is far from successful when such large numbers die each year. Losses such as these reflect not only inefficient management but equally serious is the consequent decline in revenue because there are fewer ewes from which to breed, fewer old ewes and lambs can be sold and the wool clip is considerably lowered. Between 1961 and 1963 there was a drop of over 500 lambs and 20 bales of wool each year representing a total loss of revenue to the station of at least £1,000. Finally in 1962-1963 the cost of buying replacement ewes amounted to £2,640, an expense which should never have arisen.
Fig. 10 Farming Operations in Ohuia Station 1954-63.
From these examples it is apparent that serious problems do exist on some corporations, stock losses in particular being far too heavy. In connection with even a reasonably efficient station the District Field Officer noted 'that extensive areas of rush cover much of the Block. Over 2900 acres are composed of third class pasture, one quarter of which shows definite signs of manuka reversion where pasture has run out. The combination of climate, good soil and easy contour make this a most attractive property yet it has potential for double the present carrying capacity...'. Finally when in relation to another block it is noted that 'it is an unattractive station, poorly managed, showing a definite increase in scrub reversion and erosion, fences in places lying flat on the ground, some of the discable country not manured for years and stock figures being difficult but lambing approximating only 50 percent' it becomes increasingly obvious that all is not as it should be with the incorporations. 8

From this point we return to our original question, "Will these people ever be able to farm their lands adequately by themselves?". It has been seen that some stations, even on the most difficult country, are being managed efficiently but it is equally apparent, that many are experiencing great problems of management, farming and control. The great variance in administration costs and dividends paid out in twelve incorporations clearly highlights these differing degrees of management.

8. This decline is clearly seen in fig. 11.
Fig. 11 Waipiro A15, 16 and 21 (Hakurenga Station) 1955-63.
Table X

Percentage of Total Revenue Paid Out in Administration Costs and Dividends in the Selected Incorporations 1955-63. 9

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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from the annual audited accounts.

Why have these problems arisen?
In the next chapter an attempt will be made to show the drawbacks of the scheme, which have resulted from the shortcomings in the structure of the incorporated system, from the defects in management and from the inherent communal nature of the Maori.

9. Two of the fourteen incorporations have been omitted. The first because no dividends have been paid out during the entire period; the second because only the administration costs of the total incorporation are available, and not the individual stations within the incorporation.
Fig. 12 Lambing Percentages in Selected Incorporations 1954-63.
Fig. 13 Percentage of Sheep Lost and Unaccounted in Selected Incorporations, 1954-63.
Fig. 14 Calving Percentages in Selected Incorporations 1954-63.
Fig. 15 Percentage of Cattle Lost and Unaccounted for in Selected Incorporations 1955-63.
Fig. 16  Wool Production in Selected Incorporations 1955-63.
Chapter 6

The Weaknesses of the Incorporation System -

a Commentary on Human Failings

The Maori cannot help bringing into any matters with which he deals his traditional characteristics and cannot be expected to completely abandon them because he is dealing with concerns which are of a European kind. Even with his one hundred years of contact with the European the Maori finds it difficult to appreciate the full meaning of trust and his sense of generosity and tribal fellowship make it difficult for him to resist the demands of his fellows. Even in meetings to deal with business affairs he cannot altogether get away from his traditional customs appertaining to ceremonial occasions.

Judgement of Maori Appellate Court. 1954.

The problems which have arisen in the incorporations in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District are a direct reflection of human failings. Although the land has been affected to some extent by erosion, reversion and isolation, these factors are applicable to all lands on the East Coast. Other farms operating under different tenure systems are producing at a high level even with these physical problems clearly evident. Many incorporations, however, have shown little or no improvement and often a steadily declining revenue. This decline appears to be a result of human weaknesses: the core of the problem lies with the Maoris themselves.

It has been seen that lack of capital, uneconomic size of units and fragmentation of ownership have hindered the development of the land and these must be taken into consideration. However, other problems which affect the incorporations have also arisen, not as a consequence of fragmentation of ownership or uneconomic size of units, but solely as a result of inadequate management and control. The defects, which exist in the incorporations, are a product of failings by the people not from deterioration or erosion of the land, and the five main expressions of these human failings have been selected to show just where the main problems of the
MANAGEMENT

The Maori as a race lack the historical background as farmers of large units of pastoral land. By their very inheritance they are accustomed to working in small blocks and have been unable as yet to fully assimilate the skills and difficulties involved in working a large property efficiently. As a result many incorporations are suffering from a lack of skilled management, but it must be admitted that most efficient farmers, Maori or pakeha, are unlikely to manage a property on which their activities can be altered or curtailed by a committee possessing only a rudimentary knowledge of farming activities.

Further, as has been so often stressed the Maori is a communal person, and although this has been beneficial in some respects it has been a decided disadvantage to land development. Particularly has it affected the position of manager. The ties of tribe or hapu are still of great importance to the Maori with the result that many owners have preferred to select one of their own people irrespective of his knowledge and experience. In one incorporation drawn-out litigation and continued friction over the position of manager between the three main family groups has resulted in sub-standard control of farming operations but little has been done to rectify the position.¹

Despite these problems there has been more comment from owners in the last few years on the advantage of employing Europeans or experienced Maoris but these owners are still usually a silent minority at crucial committee meetings. Tradition will die hard on this subject.

COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT

The concept of the committee of management is considered by most who have worked with the incorporations

Plate 14. Land formerly under fair pasture now covered by heavy manuka on the hills and rushes on the flats. Anaura Station.

Plate 15. Land which has been allowed to revert because of sub-standard management. Heavy scrub reversion on easy slopes - Marangaiora A22 Station.
to be sound and practical, fully capable of developing blocks of an economic size. Yet, sound as the concept may be, in practice many difficulties have arisen, especially in relation to some of the more important incorporations of the District.

It must be remembered that the Committee are the agents of the Incorporation to exercise on its behalf all of its powers and functions and as such stand in a position of trust. However, from a perusal of audited reports and Minute Books of Maori Land Court proceedings it becomes evident that on occasions committees have not administered the land to the best advantage and have deviated from the powers placed in them.

One subject upon which the owners show a great deal of interest is the rewards and fees that may be drawn by the committee, chairman and executive officers. According to the powers of the incorporation the owners are required to fix the amount of these fees and nothing is more likely to cause suspicion and distrust of the committee than payments drawn above the stated amount. Yet too often in the past this has happened with ensuing litigation and heavy legal costs.

Two incorporations in the Gisborne district have been noticeably affected by dissension in committee, both culminating in lengthy legal proceedings in 1960. These may be considered as examples of what may ensue if a committee acts in any way liable to harm the efficient management of the incorporation in question.

The first, during the ten years the block has been handed back from the Maori Trustee, has been subject to constant ill-feeling among the committee. This is a result of a division of interest among the main hapus who have never been able to work harmoniously together and who have succeeded in dividing the owners into two distinct groups.

The ensuing dissension has had a two-fold effect. Firstly, it has resulted in high legal and election costs.

3. ibid. p. 209.
(Table X1), and secondly it has been to the detriment of the individual properties as with much time and effort involved in court cases too little has been directed to the actual physical management and control of the land.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Legal</th>
<th>Election</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>£285</td>
<td>£1740</td>
<td>£2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>1017</td>
<td>1577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>1097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual audited reports.

This problem was solved by providing for equal representation of the two main groups plus the appointment of an independent but thoroughly respected Maori as chairman who could take part in discussions unrestricted by tribal or hapu influence.

Considering this incorporation is a very profitable organisation, despite the long and involved problems, it may be stated that with increased efficiency from the committee most defects will be solved. In the second example, however, not only has dissension resulted in heavy legal costs but more disastrous has allowed an economic and attractive property to almost reach bankruptcy.

In 1960 these problems culminated in Court proceedings with charges of misappropriation of funds; allowing payments not authorised by law; and a feature to be later discussed - the excessive percentage of revenue directed to administration.

4. Gisborne Minute Book No.85 in re Mangatu Blocks p.212
Strong endeavours were made to justify certain payments or advances upon moral grounds and these may be excused having regard to traditional customs and outlook of the Maori, but other payments including the honorarium to the chairman, bonus to the secretary, and advances for the benefit of owners, were made either contrary to the law or in anticipation of authority. The last point of dividends being declared in anticipation of profits which failed to materialise was prevalent in the mid fifties, but the practice had been rectified by most incorporations by 1960. However, in this case the problem had again arisen with the incorporations acting more or less as banker for some of the owners.

It must not be thought that all incorporations face these problems. The majority of committees have acted in harmony solely for the benefit of the property but in those blocks where the financial position is not strong, declining revenue has all too often resulted from inefficiency or dissension among the committee members.

Thus in relation to one Gisborne incorporation which applied for consent to payment of fees and travelling allowances above the normal rate it was noted by the Court that for the size of the block, costs were far too high and the appeal was disallowed. When a committee has three meetings in fourteen months and asks for a payment of £50 each meeting, it is obvious that its real value of a contribution of knowledge and sound farming management is being replaced by a demand for monetary benefits.

How can these problems be solved?

Until 1960 the Maori Land Court was given complete control over the personnel serving on a committee and could "on

7. Judgements of Maori Appellate Court, in re Waihirere Blocks pp. 7–8.
6. Note should be taken of the quote at the beginning of the chapter.
sufficient cause being shown refuse to appoint any member, either ordering a new election or appointing another person suitably fit". Provisions were available for elections by the owners but in fact these amounted to no more than nominations of those they wished to have appointed.

This power of the Court is now lost, as an Amendment Act in 1961 made it no longer obligatory for the incorporations to present the list of the committee for inspection after each election. The influence of this amendment has been received with mixed feelings. The majority feel that "the object of the Court was to ensure as far as possible that the committee was composed of persons who would administer the land to the best advantage" and therefore argue that more power should be granted to ensure sound management and to curtail the lengthy litigation proceedings.

A minority, however, have expressed the view that with the power of the Court to view proceedings every three years many owners have taken the opportunity to air grievances often not of great importance and occasionally completely invalid. It is believed that with this over-riding control now lessened the committee must hammer out their problems 'in committee' and thereby learn from experience rather than by leaning on the Court in times of trouble.

The Court, however, still has the power to intervene if an owner appeals directly for intervention, and it is felt that the appeal is justified. In 1962 the conduct of a Tolaga Bay incorporation was examined when it was noted that it was a "good farm which should be attracting commendation for its condition and general conduct of the farming objectives thereof but such is not the case". Carrying capacity could have been

10. Judgement of Maori Appellate Court in re Waihirere Blocks p.3.
11. ibid. p.3.
12 Tolaga Bay Minute Book No. 4, in re Paremata Block p.42.
substantially increased with proper attention to fencing and pasture improvement, and the financial position taken from the annual accounts indicated a lack of effective management control. The committee was too large and insufficient value had been received for the money paid out in committee expenses.

From the statutes it is noted that "the Court is required to appoint a committee of management of not less than three and not more than eleven persons". Usually depending on the size of the incorporation the numbers range from seven to ten. Many believe that this is too large as with a committee greater than seven it is felt that disharmony must inevitably arise. As a result of the defects in the above case an important innovation was made when it was decided to replace the former somewhat apathetic group of nine by a new committee of five for a period of three years. This committee, comprising three men representing the owners plus two successful European farmers, was selected in the hope that it would result in a higher standard of stock management and general farming operations. To date the innovation appears to have been a success with the Incorporation recently beginning a concerted programme to overcome the problems of rushes, reversion and general stagnation experienced under the former committee.

It is an oft-stated fact on the Coast, however, that Europeans are unwilling to serve on a committee when they are likely to be solely 'a voice in the wilderness' and later considered part of some weak legislation. One who has worked for many years with the Maoris, believes that if an experienced European is to serve, the power of the veto is necessary if that person's knowledge is to be at all beneficial. But even without the veto the views of each member should be recorded in the

minutes, and it is felt that the opportunity at least of benefitting from the experience of a European should not be lost. The idea initiated by the Tolaga Bay incorporation may augur well for the future.

However, it does seem that if all committees would take heed of the advice used in connection with one of the Gisborne cases, problems would not arise to such an extent. "In most districts," it was stated, "members of a committee regard appointment as a position of honour rather than as a money-making one....If it is to remain at a high professional level they must be appointed for their ability, integrity and desire to help the incorporation, rather than whether they belong to a major or minor group....The real value of the executive of any body corporate lies in its contribution of knowledge of sound farming and station management to the farming venture concerned." 15

3. ADMINISTRATION.

Since 1954, when it has been obligatory to deposit copies of the annual reports with the Maori Affairs Department, the auditors in their reports have continually impressed upon the bodies corporate the need for economies in administration. From figures 5-10 it is evident that most have contained expenditure within reasonable limits but a few, again those which are not being managed efficiently, have costs out of all proportion to the size of the property and the total revenue received.

The Wairoa Incorporation (Onenui) referred to in connection with the committee of management 16 has also had the problem of excessive administration costs. Until 1955 the East Coast Commissioner managed this property with an administration rate of only nine percent, yet between 1960 and 1963 under the incorporation the expenses rose to average 37 percent of the total income or £2,730 per annum. 17 This

17. Wairoa Minute Book No.66, p.368.
great variance between the ability of the Commissioner and an incorporation to manage the same property reflects little credit on the latter and fully justifies the continued pleas for economy.

Perhaps the worst example, however, can be seen from Figure 9 where it is readily apparent that an excessive percentage of revenue is being absorbed by administration. In 1960 a neighbouring incorporation run by the same committee was involved in a court case whereby many of the 'abuses of trust' and excessively high charges were made public.\footnote{This is the incorporation referred to in relation to misappropriation of funds.}

That administration costs have been excessive for a property of some nineteen hundred acres can be gauged from the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table XII</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration costs in Wahirere Blocks 1956-1959.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary's fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary's Assistant's fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary's Motor expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit and Accountancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Supervisor's fee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One would have thought that the £682 approved in 1956 would have been sufficient for secretarial and accounting fees but they have been almost double this amount each year. In addition, the secretary in 1958 drew out £750 and in 1959 £200 as recompense for work done or money expended on matters...
entirely unconnected with incorporation business. Although these payments were later approved by the owners at the annual meeting little or no time was allowed for the question of accounts, especially the recompense drawn by the Secretary, to be discussed.\textsuperscript{49} When it is seen that administrative expenditure for Incorporation 2, only 100 acres smaller, was £281 in 1959 (4.2 percent of the total revenue) compared with £1,992 in this case (28.7 percent of the revenue) the acute position becomes clearly apparent.

Fortunately it is only the occasional incorporation that reaches this stage in 'the abuse of trust' but this example does highlight the problems that can arise if the secretary or committee is in anyway dishonest or attempts to 'feather their own nests'.

4. **PROXY VOTING.**

By regulation 40 of the Maori Incorporated Owners Regulations 1955 it was provided that "any incorporated owner who is a person under disability ....may be represented at any meeting by a trustee who may attend, vote or act either personally or by proxy in the same manner and on the same conditions as if he were an incorporated owner."\textsuperscript{20}

Proxy voting has proved a problem to the incorporations and a bone of contention amongst those who have had association with them. On the one hand it must be admitted that since all owners are shareholders in the body corporate their rights and interests must be protected, by proxy if necessary. On the other hand, however, too many problems have arisen in the actual operation of the scheme.

The concept of proxy voting, as with the committee of management, is considered sound but often the whole basis has been abused notably in incorporations experiencing


dissension, or by owners using proxies to further their own ends. In the Wairoa District, especially in regard to one or two incorporations, on the occasions that proxies have been used there has been litigation and strong objection to matters resulting from their operation. 21 When competition is high and interest great the proxies of absentees are capable of completely dominating all matters before the meeting in the face of a large attendance in person who are far more intimately acquainted with the problems under discussion. 22

By far the majority do not favour proxies and attempts have been made in the last few years to have this section of the Act amended but all attempts have been turned down in higher Courts. It does seem that some change at least must be made in the lay-out of the voting papers. As they stand at present (fig.17) the Maori has no real idea of what he is endorsing or not endorsing as the case may be; too often he will give a proxy to a glib speaker who has presented only one side of the problem in question. The whole concept of proxy voting must be tightened if each owner is to have his true wishes recorded, and some method introduced whereby the problems can be clearly indicated on the proxy paper itself.

5. GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

The question of the percentage of revenue to be paid in dividends each year is often a matter of much strife between owners, committees of management and those who have more interest in maintaining and developing the land. There is a feeling among many concerned that not enough is being spent on development and the static level of production on many stations suggests that this is probably a justified complaint. In connection with this cleavage the following figures are of interest.

22. ibid. p. 295.
MEETING OF INCORPORATED OWNERS

APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

Reg. 41 Maori Affairs Act 1953

I, ................., being an owner, or trustee for ............., an owner of the land called ............., do hereby appoint ............., of ............., my proxy to attend and vote on my behalf at the meeting of the incorporated owners of the said land, to be held at ............., on the ... day of ........ next, and at any adjournment thereof.

As witness my hand, this ........ day of ....... 19...

Witness to the signature of the said .............


Fig. 17 An Outline of the Proxy Voting Paper.
### Table XIII

**Percentage of Total Revenue paid out in dividends in Selected Incorporations 1955-1963.**

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 plus</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from annual audited Accounts.

From these figures it appears that although one or two of the incorporations have maintained a very high dividend percentage, most have steadily dropped in relation to total revenue. This can be seen especially by a comparison of 1955 and 1963. In 1955 only two incorporations had a dividend of less than ten percent, whereas by 1962 the number had risen to five. It must be admitted that of these five only two actually paid a dividend, but nevertheless, the overall pattern shows that owners are realising that more must be put into the property and less taken out.

Finally, the question of revenue expended on grants and donations to individuals, Maori institutions, education and religion: it is difficult to generalise on this matter as some incorporations are paying out large sums annually but a few have paid nothing since the formation of the body corporate.

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23. Refer to footnote 9, p.47.
24. Of the three not paying a dividend two had operated at a loss in the previous year and the third had instituted an extensive programme of improvements.
To the extent that generalisations are useful, however, it can be stated that from a business point of view most are over generous but it must be remembered that the Maori will give with much less regard for the future than the pakeha. Although from the financial angle they may be unwise, they have at least aided materially in the maintenance of maraes, meeting houses and Maori custom, which especially to the older Maoris, is a very important factor. It is considered that no other institution could have been as helpful on this point.
Chapter 7.

Some Justifications of the Scheme.

The Land.

From the studies on farm development it has become clearly discernible that the incorporations have had mixed success in raising their standards of pastoral development. In fact, it may be truthfully stated that despite their large combined acreage they have not aided in the increased production so often stressed to be necessary from New Zealand's existing grasslands. Yet from the figures on farm production, dividend payouts and administration costs, some improvements can be seen since the depths of the 1958/59 season.

(a) Development.

Most owners are only now realising that unless a property is adequately managed it is incapable of continually producing a high output and paying a large dividend. It is in this light that many incorporations, notably in the Tolaga Bay/Whangara and Ruatoria districts, have taken advantage of the service available from the Department of Agriculture's advisors and have begun improvement programmes based on an annually calculated budget. In the matter of two or three years this has noticeably aided the development of blocks which had previously been showing either a static or declining yield.

Influence has been especially directed to the need to use the limited development capital to improve the more fertile lands. Cropping of the available flats with winter green feed and utilising these flats in close conjunction with the neighbouring easier hill country has been paramountly stressed. Not only will this serve to produce a higher ratio of fat.
Plate 16. '...using development capital to further improve the easier and more fertile blocks'. The manuka on the hills has been sprayed by helicopter and will be burnt and oversown; the flats formerly covered in rushes and poor pasture were sown in high quality grasses in 1963. Mangaheni 2D (Paroa Station).

Plate 17. Similar attempts on Paroa Station to provide good pasture on flats of high carrying potential - 25 acres of rushes and manuka have been cleared and sown with the aid of a Catchment Board subsidy for drainage.
stock but should noticeable increase the total revenue received by each block.

An example of the success of this scheme can be seen on the Whangara B5 block. In May 1963 a paddock of some seventy acres of flats and rolling hills fattened some 1700 lambs; in 1962 the same paddock had been covered in toi toi and blackberry. By 1965 it is aimed to have the whole paddock of 102 acres sown in high quality pasture after a further crop of vetches and oats have been eaten off in March 1964, and turnips in October.¹

There is no cheap method to obtain full productivity of this land. When it is considered that the initial development of the land, the sowing of oats and vetches, and the application of superphosphate together amount to over £18 an acre before the first stock can be fattened, the difficulties become obvious. However, with careful management the outlay is more than compensated by the increased numbers of fat stock and by enabling inherently productive land, often formerly covered in rough pasture and waste, to be gainfully used.

Other incorporations in the District have cut the ubiquitous rushes on the flats, and scrub on the neighbouring hills in an attempt to provide more and better pasture. In the blocks where development capital is available, determined efforts have been made to have the land topdressed at least once. It is hoped that with the continued guidance of the Advisory Officers the majority will realise the need for redevelopment, however costly this may appear. No incorporation can continue to pay out a high dividend without improvements in pasture and fencing being systematically undertaken.

¹. Personal Comment. Field Advisory Officer, Department of Agriculture, Gisborne.
Plate 18. Hillsides of gorse recently sprayed on Mangahi 2D (Paroa Station) - the ridges sown in high quality pasture are a striking contrast to the areas of dying gorse.

Plate 19. 'Other incorporations .... have cut the ubiquitous rushes on the flats and scrub on the neighbouring hills'. This photograph clearly shows the attempts to provide more and better pasture on Paramata 3 (Iwinui Station).
Plate 20. The end product of the green crop of vetches and oats sown 1964 - Whangara B5 Station. This paddock, formerly virtually useless under toi-toi and blackberry, is now capable of fattening lambs and cattle.

Plate 21. Low rolling hills on Whangara A3 (Tapuwae Station) recently ploughed, topdressed and resown - the nature of the previous rush and weed infested pasture can be seen in the foreground.
(b) **Conservation.**

"Any programme of resource planning", states Firey, "will have one of two objectives: that of developing natural resources and that of conserving natural resources. While these objectives need not be mutually exclusive they generally are".\(^2\) In this case development and conservation would not appear to be mutually exclusive. The attempt to develop the natural resource—the land—to a higher rate of productivity has become increasingly evident but at the same time measures of conservation, especially to halt soil erosion, have also been increased.

In the counties of Waipu, Uawa, Waikohu and Cook twenty four of the active incorporations—a total of 177,400 acres\(^3\)—were under the Five Year Erosional Control Programmes of the Gisborne Catchment Board in 1963. Of the forty not under the scheme most are either small, amounting in total to only 35,700 acres, or not experiencing great erosional problems. Based on figures for all Maori lands under the Programmes the Maoris as at November 1963 spent 1/10.7d. per acre on erosion control compared to Europeans 1/6.2d.\(^4\) It would appear that where the Maoris are carrying out conservation work their effort per acre is better than the Europeans' but fewer have benefitted from the services offered. Those that have taken the step have gone a long way towards alleviating the erosion problems with a marked stabilising effect on formerly actively eroding areas.

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3. This excludes the Tahora and Kangaipoike blocks which straddle the boundaries of these counties.

4. Figures supplied by the Poverty Bay Catchment Board, Gisborne.
Plate 22. Attempts at soil conservation on Uruahi Station. Pole planting in an attempt to stabilise some of the more actively eroding areas.

P.B. Catchment Board.

Plate 23. A debris dam on Kouka Station to halt rapid stream erosion.

P.B. Catchment Board.
Programmes of conservation and development by the incorporations have resulted in farming standards gradually improving. Some success has been achieved especially in the last few years. However, the materialistic viewpoint, although of great importance, is not the whole basis by which the concept can be judged. The influence of the incorporations on the Maoris as a race and as an individual must also be considered.

The most obvious and beneficial result to the Maoris is that the system has succeeded in perpetuating communal ownership of tribal lands. The whole history and cultural heritage of the race is enshrined in the land and ownership gives each individual the right of participation in the community life. To-day, even though the Hunn Report has attempted to disprove the importance of land holding by statistical evidence of land sold, viewpoint emanating from the Presbyterian Conference; from Maori Youth Conferences at Ruatoria, Rotorua and Whakarewarewa and from individual Maoris conclusively show that land ownership is still considered to be of vital importance. This then is a major contribution.

However, simply to retain land ownership is not sufficient. Of far greater importance from the production viewpoint, the system "has enabled an adaption of communal ownership to a capitalist economy", with the Maori now able to bring farming activities and management into line with European standards while still retaining the old tribal ties. "Any system which preserves a community of interests," stated Ngata, "may be the best means of improving the industrial life among a communal people".

5. Hunn Report: op. cit. p.58
7. 'Native Land Tenure in Waiapu County', A.J.H.R. (Gl) 1908. p.3.
At the same time as provision has been made for the productive use of the land, the system of incorporation has provided one of the strongest bases for the continuation of Maori culture. Many aspects of the former culture have departed but important elements still remain, especially the Maori language, arts and crafts, and the institution of the marae. It is in relation to these aspects that donations from the individual blocks become of importance. A majority of the incorporations have made annual grants to the local maraes, and although these are usually small they have aided in maintaining the interest of the Maori in the distinctive features of their race. A few of the larger blocks have given large sums: Mangapoike A in the last nine years has donated approximately £16,000 for the establishment and maintenance of meeting houses and also provides houses for workers who are beneficiaries.

Important elements of the past are being preserved. However, realising that New Zealand must depend to an ever increasing degree on skill and education, the incorporations have not neglected the future. The Mangapoike A block has donated over £5,000 in nine years for higher education and nearly all blocks contributed to the Maori Education Fund in 1962/63. The Wairoa incorporations have evolved a scheme whereby one of the blocks operates an imprest account for Maori welfare work, including educational grants and support of the marae complex, with each block paying into the central its share of the money required. The same group has also inaugurated a farm training school from where selected youths are sent to an accredited agricultural establishment and after training are assured of employment.

Other incorporations, gradually realising the need for training and education for responsible positions, have begun to provide educational grants for dependants of shareholders.

8. Refer to p. 59.
Provision of trained men in all fields for the future has become of increasing importance in the last few years.

The various religious denominations have also benefitted from incorporation grants. Mangahei 2D block at Tokomaru Bay donated £60 to each of the Anglican, Mormon, Ringatu and Ratana churches in 1963 and another from Wairoa has given £267 to the Anglican Diocese Trust each year since 1955. Others have given smaller amounts at various intervals.

The effect, therefore of a combination of European financial and agricultural methods with the tribal communalism of the Maori has been the basis for the justification of the incorporation. This basis appears adequately to fulfill the concept of 'integration'... which the Hunn Report states to be 'the obvious trend and also the conventional expression of (racial) policy in New Zealand to-day'.

The Presbyterian Synod has stated integration to be 'the combination of the Maori and Pakeha into an harmonious community which enjoys the privileges and accepts the responsibilities of their common citizenship wherein there are no racial barriers, and wherein with mutual understanding and respect each race is free to cherish its cultural heritage'. If this can be accepted as a reasonable interpretation, and it appears adequate, then it would seem the incorporations should succeed in fulfilling this ideal.

However, it has been stated that the incorporations have tended to lead to a withdrawal from the pakeha and that a 'definite anti-European feeling has arisen among some Maori communities....It is not uncommon for Europeans to surrender freehold land to the Maoris in the exodus (from the Coast) because they feel there is little future in the economic development; some fear what they call a Maori cry to 'get the Europeans off the Coast'. It would be difficult to

fully discuss this statement without further investigation into the economic and sociological aspects, but it must be remembered that the Maoris are now controlling land, which in some cases, has been out of their hands for three or four decades while under European lease, with the result that they are perhaps guarding their rights too zealously. 'If the initial direction (of the incorporations) may seem a withdrawal from the pakeha, it is only for the purpose of establishing identity' 13 and it is confidently believed that the concept will allow for harmonious development in the future.

Finally, to return to the basic problem: the problem of land tenure.

From the administrative angle, as has been seen, the system does not really overcome the difficulties. Unless sole title is gained administrative problems are not lessened, for even when interests are incorporated succession still goes on, lists of owners must be kept, and profits distributed to these owners. The incorporations must also keep detailed accounts if only for taxation purposes and for all except the largest, the cost is becoming a serious problem.

Yet, is too much influence being placed on the necessity to overcome the multiplicity of ownership? The essential aim of any land tenure system is not to overcome outside administration problems but to incorporate enough interests to form an economic pastoral unit. Once a unit is economic, working efficiently, and has a registered title through which others can deal, it should not be hindered by the multiplicity of ownership within that unit.

Further, it is generally accepted that no law can be better administered than that which finds general approval in the eyes of the people to whom it is applied, and the Maoris

have accepted the system. They have at hand a powerful medium which if properly applied and wisely used, can be a useful instrument, not only to fulfil their objectives but to overcome the whole tenure problem. What then have the incorporations achieved in regard to land tenancy?

Firstly, they have enabled the existing areas of Maori land to be retained, farmed and controlled by the Maoris themselves; vital points to be considered when discussing any system of land tenure. Secondly, they have provided the basis for the establishment of a unit of economic size by utilising the multiplicity of ownership to the best advantage. Thirdly, by the establishment of an economic unit, commencement can be made to halt erosion of the land, and to provide the opportunity for efficient farming and development programmes. Finally, they avoid the build-up of large reserves of unused capital by the dividend pay-out and development schemes.

These last factors fulfil Belshaw's 14 notion of what a satisfactory system of land tenure in New Zealand should entail. Two other items - ensuring wage rates comparable with other occupations, and the maintenance of stability of income - are not really applicable, but in relation to the two remaining factors it must be admitted that the incorporations have not reached a satisfactory standard. The necessity of ensuring that those with training and ability are fully engaged in farming has not been realised by the Maoris; and the provision of a secure tenancy is available even when farming is not competent. Some of the reasons for these failures have become apparent in earlier chapters. An attempt will be made to expand on these, to present other problems, and to provide a few comments on the future in the final chapter.

Chapter 8

Whither the Incorporations?

Through the whole period in which attempts have been made to overcome the problems of tenure in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District, the traditional outlook of the Maori towards land ownership has remained an entrenched feature. Although verbal evidence suggests that the mana of land holding and the concept of turangawae are gradually declining in importance, their influence cannot be ignored in formulating any new system of tenure. To do so is only to invite hostility.

It is natural that Europeans may find difficulty in understanding such a condition. Many are the variations on the statement that 'there is a great necessity for the Maori to integrate into European society.... they have been pampered for too long'. Yet for those who have read texts on Maori customs and culture, such as Pirth's 'Economics of the New Zealand Maori' or have worked directly with the Maoris, it is obvious that these beliefs are a natural corollary to the old tribal system of society.

The concept of communal land tenure is not limited to New Zealand. The East African Commission in its report on the nature of customary land tenure stated, "Most of the land which is in African occupation is held on customary tenure. The fact that customary tenure is deep rooted in African society and is by its nature resistant to radical change must be taken into account in applying new tenure laws. The rights in land which the African enjoys in his tribal society depends largely on the rights and obligations he has towards that society. He cannot escape from the latter without surrendering the former and escape means the abandonment of everything held to have importance and meaning in life'. This statement could be applied equally well to the

Maoris and the concept also has its counterpart in parts of the British Isles in respect to the clan and family systems of Scotland and Ireland.

Closely allied with this mana of the land are the close ties of kinship between individuals of the hapus who comprise the incorporated owners, and the communal rights and privileges which such ties produce in the management.

That such an outlook continues to be of importance is seen in a variety of affairs in the incorporations. It helps to explain the high percentage of revenue paid in dividends; the donations and grants to individuals, maraes and meeting houses; and the desire to obtain one from the tribal group as manager. When used in moderation this outlook can only be beneficial to the Maoris. But the existence of these communalistic conditions, does not always produce the best results if they are judged by the farming standards necessary to maintain high efficiency and increased output. When not applied with reason and honesty they can reveal themselves with unfortunate results. Some of the problems of management, voting, administration and especially the committee of management have been outlined. How then can these problems be overcome and yet still maintain the concept of the incorporation with its ideal of customary benefits?

The main problems still evident are human problems: efficiency in control and efficiency in management. The future of the incorporations in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District depends on solving these problems, as it is confidently believed that if they are overcome other problems will solve themselves.

Two cardinal principles should be adhered to by the owners and committees.

1. To obtain the most efficient and qualified farm manager.

2. To insist upon the most able committee of management.

Since the whole basis of revenue and dividends depends on efficient management, it would be in the interests of all
to obtain the best man available. No doubt it is natural that the incorporations wish to retain one of their members as manager, but too often the best farmers in the district are not given a chance to compete as the position is appointed 'in committee'. This remains the basic weakness of the incorporation system and where a block is failing because of inefficient management the feelings of tribal fellowship must be over-ruled.

The advice of the Department of Agriculture on the need to work within an annual maintenance budget and carry out a calculated programme of improvements could be used to a greater degree. The excellent response to field days held by District Field Officers at Tolaga Bay and Ruatoria, and the scheme introduced by the Wairoa group to send selected youths to an accredited agricultural school, show that the management is beginning to take a greater interest in the land. Yet, more can be achieved by the incorporations. To invite advice or assistance is not an admission of failure; today is a highly scientific undertaking and all farmers heed advice if it will enable them to increase efficiency.

The problem of committee of management is also vexatious. It is the exception rather than the rule for owners to elect members unless they are in the block concerned, but as a result, many are elected who have little or no idea of sound farming procedure. The committee then elected often lies at the mercy of those who voted for them. In many cases, especially with the 'absentee owners' who exercise their vote by proxy, the only real matter of importance is how large a dividend the committee will pay. Many owners, it must be admitted, are now beginning to realise the futility of this reasoning as they see the land revert, but an efficient committee, especially one which has a real interest in the land, can still fall from grace if it recommends a smaller dividend.

3. ibid. p.74.
than the owners believe can be paid. At the next election the committee receives its answer: the members are voted off.

It is obvious that the committees have their problems. But this does not excuse the member who abuses his position or the apathetic committee which finds its burden of control irksome. When a committee meets for 2 hours 40 minutes in three meetings and charges some £150 it is clearly apparent that it does not have the real interests of the corporation at heart.

As Smith has stated, the owners should look at matters in a more determined manner and say, "let us choose the men to best manage our business having regard to but not wholly dependent upon standing or relationship". The committee introduced by the Judge of the Maori Court in the Paremata Block, whereby three members representing the owners plus two efficient European farmers were appointed, bears close scrutiny by other incorporations.

However, the question still arises as to what can be done with those incorporations which are being managed inefficiently, are showing a declining revenue and are still refusing to take advantage of the advice available to them.

Far too often the Auditor's reports show the failings of an incorporation, but seldom are they acted upon. Provision is made by section 303 of the 1953 Maori Affairs Act for a fine of £10, for such omissions as failure to keep accounts, failure to hold a general meeting of owners whereby officers are elected and an annual statement of accounts presented, and failure to keep a register of incorporated owners. From enquiry it appears that although numerous warnings have been sent out, no attempts have been made to levy a fine on any incorporation in the District; such a penalty, with the

4. ibid. p.75
5. ibid. p.68
approval of an appointed investigator into the inefficient units, may well do no harm in some cases.

Many believe that the Maori Land Court can wind up a body corporate, but neither the Court nor the Maori Affairs Department has any official responsibility for the efficiency of incorporations. The only statutory duty is the one imposed upon the Court to receive the accounts and make them available for public inspection, which gives the Department the same power as the public to peruse the accounts but no power to act upon them. Only when an official complaint is lodged can any direct action be taken as in the case of the two Gisborne incorporations but relatively few complaints are forthcoming. By the nature of his communal society the Maori is more likely to condone those in power availing themselves of financial or other advantages than to condemn them.

Yet the Court, even if it desired, cannot take the position of aggressor in these matters. It is necessary if it wishes to maintain the high opinion and prestige now held in the eyes of the Maori people, to maintain its status as an arbitrator. If this is lost, even less would be achieved as the Maoris would carry out orders in only a passive manner as a form of protest.

What appears to be needed is some legislation whereby a person in authority known to the Maori, can demand improvement when incorporations are being conducted in an obviously inefficient manner. It is essential that a local person be appointed, as an outsider with no intimate knowledge of the individual incorporations can only invite mistrust and hostility.

But besides the intervention of the Court and the influence of the law, what can be done to achieve efficiency from those blocks not working at capacity? One suggestion

made in connection with the Lake Rotoiti district was that the land should be split into incorporations belonging as far as possible to one family group, as it was found that it was easier to manage a block if ownership was confined to immediate relations. "The family incorporations run on business lines instead of a communal base, says Schwimmer, "are the most satisfactory, creating harmony and efficient agricultural methods." 7

The same, however, cannot be said for incorporations in the Tairawhiti Maori Land District. Usually those incorporations based on the shares of one family are smaller than the average, and thus, closer to the marginal line of economic production. Further, they often appear to be the least efficient especially in relation to stock losses. One such incorporation in the last three years has lost 1450 sheep or nearly 25 percent of the flock held at the beginning of each year, and in 1960, 27 out of a total of 67 cattle, an amazingly high number for a station of only 436 acres. Finally it is in such 'family incorporations' that abuses of administration, especially payment of dividends in anticipation of profits, are most prevalent: many have a long list of debtors which places an added strain on the working capital available. It would seem that the effort needed to form family blocks would not be beneficial, if only because most units would become closer to an uneconomic size.

The method of control by family groups does not appear to be an answer. Thus it becomes increasingly obvious that when incorporations have not been successful over a period of years, the most beneficial scheme would be to wind up the body corporate and lease the land to the most efficient farmer. This was realised by Ngata as early as 1929 when he noted that "the next move will be, I think, an impetus to leasing of lands of the incompetent by the competent and a partial re-aggregation of small holdings that will economically be found as unsuitable for separate farms." 8

8. Quoted in Keesing F.M. : op. cit. p.120.
This should now be acted upon as it will be advantageous not only to the land, but also to the owners through the medium of a regular return from the lease. It is expecting too much for many of the incorporations which are marginal units to begin with, to provide for those working on the land and also to pay dividends.

In addition it must be remembered that the statutory protection against debt, applies to incorporations as to other Maori lands. This means, that unlike their European counterparts, incorporations are not fully subject to the vitalising rigours of economic realities. Many continue in a state of economic inactivity when their European equivalents would have been put into liquidation and their assets taken over by someone able to put them to beneficial use. Thus for the smaller incorporations, it is vitally important that they increase their acreage or they will fail.

Greater hope can be held for the larger incorporations of a proven economic size. The idea of the incorporations is probably the most effective compromise possible between the need for financial organisation and technical knowledge on the one hand, and the basis of Maori tradition, temperament and custom on the other. But like all compromises it has its disadvantages and it is obvious that the administration has not reached a sufficient standard. In the preamble to the Maori Lands Administration Act 1900, two statements attract particular attention. The first, "and whereas it is expedient in the interests of both Maori and Europeans that provision should be made for the better settlement and utilisation of large areas of Maori land at present lying idle, unoccupied and unproductive" has been fulfilled by the incorporations but the second "and whereas it is necessary also to make provision for the prevention of

useless dissensions and litigation" 10 has not been provided for, some 64 years later.

If a conciliatory view be taken, this could be put down to teething troubles which any new system is liable to experience. Many believe that given firstly an economic unit, secondly, financial assistance and thirdly sound management with an efficient committee of management, the incorporations can reach as high a standard as any European farms. The first problem can be overcome by the incorporations with their whole aim of combining enough units to form an economic block, and the second is no longer the problem it was as the Banks are becoming increasingly willing to lend money if a legal title has been established. It is the third that needs to be rectified: a difficult problem but by no means insurmountable.

As Dr. Sinclair stated in relation to development in the Tolaga Bay district, "The story of the Maoris has been the story of their land; as the land disappeared so did the people and as the lands prospered so did the people.... The rise or decline of the district to-day rests on the incorporations' overcoming the present problems both inherited and of their own volition". 11 It must be remembered that the large Maori blocks are communal lands and therefore they may be said to be impressed with a trust. To allow the present possessors to destroy the land means that they destroy what should be assured for the future.

To conclude with a final statement by Sir Apirana Ngata who in his lifetime did so much to overcome the Maori land problem, "The call is now on the younger generation of the tribe for whom our forefathers treasured hopes and dreamed dreams in their time when the tribal resources were slender

10. Quoted in the 'Stout/Ngata Commission on Native Land Tenure', A.J.H.R. (S-1c) 1907. p.5.

and not so well organised as they are now. To them we owe
the whole of our education; they fought to retain the lands
we live on; they bridged the gap between the old communal
system and the co-operative efforts of to-day ....It is our
turn to carry on the responsibilities in our time and in
accordance with greater resources and higher standards". 12

The answer lies with the Maori himself.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aroha</th>
<th>affection, love.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hapu</td>
<td>clan or section of a tribe.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kaumatua</td>
<td>old people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mana</td>
<td>influence, prestige.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turangawaewae</td>
<td>a fundamental concept of Maori life really means the tie each individual Maori has with his tribal lands. (See Maori Synod of the Presbyterian Church: A Maori View of the Hunn Report p.28).</td>
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