

Memorandum written by H. R. Richmond, Superintendent
Superintendent's Office, New Plymouth 29 Mar 1866
Archives New Zealand Reference TP 8/1/2 Miscellaneous papers Taranaki Province

Memorandum as to various courses which may be adapted in reference to the occupation of the country and the suppression of the rebellion in the District lying between the Hungatahua and Patea Rivers.

[1] The whole of the Military Settlers to be located in the Province may be concentrated at Patea (or at Patea and the land immediately South of Stony River) and all the intermediate posts abandoned, no further movement against the Natives being undertaken at present. If this plan be followed the intermediate land will according to the ideas of the Maories, be abandoned, we shall have acknowledged ourselves unable to hold it, and shall have to reconquer or purchase it hereafter.

[2] A course similar to the above may be followed with this difference that instead of abandoning all the intermediate stations, two or more be kept up to be supplied from the coast. The ports being held as a sign that we have not abandoned the country, and as points of support for any future active operations. These positions I suppose to be held merely for Military purposes, as I believe it to be out of the question to attempt to form settlements for agriculture intermediate between Stony River and Patea until the Natives shall have so far submitted that the coast road may be safely travelled without armed escorts. This course, although preferable to the former inasmuch as nominal possession of the country is retained will (if not accompanied by active operations), give the Natives time to recruit their strength for a further struggle whereas if now closely followed up there is good reason to think that they would soon submit.

[3] The third course, and that which I would earnestly recommend, is to send a small force of Colonial Troops and Friendly Natives into the district, and follow up the rebels as has been done on the East Coast until they give in or quit the neighbourhood. At the present time whilst a large number of Military Settlers are still on pay this could be done at a much less extra expense than if deferred until their time has expired.

I am aware that some if not all of the Officers Commanding Posts along the Coast have orders to continue harassing the Natives, but except in the case of the Officer stationed at Waingongoro I am given to understand that those orders are practically inoperative. It is unnecessary to observe that such operations cannot compare in effect with those of a moveable column, having no fixed point to hold, but having all the stations to fall back upon for support. The Natives having been brought to submission, the settlement of the country might be proceeded with as most convenient.

Probably it would then be desirable to form two intermediate settlements between Stony River and Patea near to the best landing places on the Coast. This would divide the distance of sixty miles into three intervals of twenty miles each, and would form centres of population which might be expected to spread pretty rapidly owing to the attractive character of the country. Any land which might be available for sale would probably thus fetch better prices than it otherwise would do, and the proceeds could be applied to the construction of a road, the introduction of more immigrants or otherwise promoting the permanent occupation of the country.
