

2500 members of rifle clubs. I am convinced that should the defence of the district be undertaken on the lines I suggest there will be no lack of men to carry it out, men who would be willing to give the time necessary for training, and whose services being voluntary would far exceed in value those of men enrolled under a compulsory system. The Volunteer force would consist of 400 garrison artillery, 400 field artillery (two batteries of six guns each), 1600 infantry (two regiments) and 100 engineers. There would also be 100 permanent artillery men. I propose having 20 Maxim guns, which would give one maxim to each infantry company. The rifle clubs would not require the same amount of training as the Volunteer corps, but must have sufficient to operate with them, and to advance or retire in good order, and to take advantage of cover when in action.

I have submitted these details because they are necessary to explain my proposals with regard to the defence of the district.

The following is an approximate estimate of the cost of armament proposed:—

| | | |
|--|----------|--------|
| One 9.2 gun | £ | 12,500 |
| 150 rounds armour-piercing shell ammunition | | 3,750 |
| Freight, mounting, gun pit, magazine and quarters for men | | 20,000 |
| Six 6in guns, £5000 each | | 30,000 |
| 2000 rounds, at £15 10s | | 31,000 |
| Freight, mounting, gun pits, magazines and quarters for men | | 25,000 |
| Six 12-pr guns on pedestals | | 9,000 |
| Freight and mounting with magazine 3000 rounds | | 3,000 |
| Two batteries of field artillery, six guns each battery, with two wagons per gun | | 25,000 |
| 12,000 rounds shrapnel | | 12,000 |
| 20 field Maxims | | 9,000 |
| 500,000 rounds of ammunition | | 2,000 |
| 5000 magazine rifles, with bayonets and accoutrements | | 20,000 |
| 5,000,000 rounds of ammunition | | 25,000 |
| Total | £230,250 | |

Taking the cost of the above armament as £230,000 I wish to submit the following proposition, viz.:—That the three North Canterbury counties of Ashley, Selwyn and Ashburton should form a defence district to be called the North Canterbury Defence District, and should undertake to obtain and mount the armament proposed. The estimated cost being £230,000, and calculating interest at 4 per cent, with 1 per cent sinking fund,, would entail a cost to the district of £11,500 a year for about thirty years. In order to compute the burden entailed upon the community by this proposal I have extracted the following figures from the statistics of local bodies for the year ending March, 31, 1907. They will be approximately correct, but I believe include the value of Government and other properties not subject to local taxation.

As the expenditure proposed will be for the protection of Government property as well as of private property, I consider that the Government should bear its full share of any rate struck to provide for the expenditure.

County Values Exclusive of Boroughs.

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| | £ |
| Ashley | 5,483,861 |
| Selwyn | 9,490,087 |
| Ashburton | 6,593,757 |
| Total | 21,567,705 |

Boroughs, Capital Value.

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| | £ |
| Rangiora | 215,995 |
| Kaipoi | 184,130 |
| Christchurch— | |
| Central | 5,907,379 |
| St Albans | 1,154,238 |
| Sydenham | 1,351,682 |
| Linwood | 786,882 |
| Woolston | 297,696 |
| New Brighton | 117,905 |
| Sumner | 353,455 |
| Lyttelton | 854,754 |
| Ashburton | 445,618 |
| Total | 11,669,734 |