

## **Disposal of the Navy buildings**

There was considerable public debate, even before the Navy left Motuihe, about what to do with the buildings. This is an extract from the *New Zealand Herald 22 December 1962*

The opportunity to use and develop the whole island presents a challenge to the enterprise and imagination of the city. The City Council should be warned from past experience against letting the remnants of the naval establishment be diverted to any purpose which would deny any part of the island to public enjoyment.

In 1964 the Director of Parks commissioned a report on the state of the buildings left on Motuihe after the withdrawal of the Navy. **Mr Simmonds found the following:**

70 separate buildings, 50 of which were of large proportions. Eg 12 dormitory blocks 90' by 23' Gymnasium 115' by 40' and hospital building 80' by 80'.

The buildings were either to be demolished, sold for removal or resited for further use in order to restore the land to its pristine condition. The buildings are of wood frame construction with corrugated iron and fibrolite roofing and have been reasonably maintained. The older buildings, 50 to 40 years which were part of the quarantine station, are at the end of their economic life.

After the Navy vacated the area the Ministry of Works took over and they have systematically removed electrical fittings, including ranges, all worthwhile sanitary fittings including baths, basins and pans.

Estimated cost of clearing the land = 30,000 pounds. This should be spread over a period of 3 years.

It has been suggested that the area be taken over by the Health Department or some private organization for health camp purposes or for the development of a public holiday camp or amusement park or for a guest house. These ideas have limited appeal as they would deprive the general public of their intrinsic right to take advantage of the land and beach frontages.

Conclusion: In view of the high cost entailed in order to add 31 acres to the existing Domain, and when balanced against a probable land value of 3,000 pounds, and the limited annual return expected the Crown is by no means over-generous in offering this land to Council, encumbered as it is with buildings which have in themselves little value because of their incomplete utility. It could be suggested that the Crown be asked to make some contribution towards the clearing of the area say 7,000 to 10,000 pounds.

### ***New Zealand Herald 27 September 1964***

The Government has offered the Auckland City Council a grant of 2,500 pounds toward the cost of demolishing or removing buildings on Motuihe Island. The 30 acres of land and the buildings were offered to the council last year after the Navy left the island. When members of the council parks and library committee inspected the former base they discovered that the Navy had stripped the buildings of all worthwhile fittings.

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Two buildings on Motuihe Island have been offered to the Justice Department. The buildings would be taken by barge in sections to Rotoroa Island for the sanatorium of alcoholics. The Council will recommend that the remaining buildings be demolished.