

### MINISTER'S STATEMENT.

THE report of the Department for the past year indicates throughout the very close association existing between its activities and the Dominion's war effort. For the purpose of developing this association so that it would function as completely as possible, a special and very representative committee, the Defence Scientific Advisory Committee, was established, and has been responsible for the rapid exploration and implementation of various projects which have been of real assistance in connection with defence.

During the year it has been possible to make the maximum use of the Dominion's scientific resources, both of personnel and of equipment in connection with a very wide range of problems associated with the needs both of the fighting forces and the civilian population. In addition, it has also been found possible to provide help by way of scientific personnel loaned to Great Britain, Australia, and other parts of the Empire.

The year has revealed the importance of scientific assistance to industry in a number of directions. The successful drying of low-grade butter and the preparation of dried butterfat of acceptable quality has enabled the shipment in unrefrigerated vessels of quantities of a valuable food material which previously could not be exported. Investigations in drying of meat have resulted in the preparation of a foodstuff which is acceptable to Great Britain, while dried vegetables produced experimentally have possessed quality eminently suitable for Service requirements. The value of New Zealand species of seaweeds has been demonstrated for the production of agar of good quality, supplies of which from original sources were cut off as the result of the war. Valuable new information concerning the culture and curing of tobacco has been acquired and will promote the sound development of this industry. The introduction of new non-shrinkage treatment for woollen materials marks another noteworthy advance. Methods for the production locally in bakeries throughout New Zealand of supplies of yeast have eliminated potential dangers which would arise in the baking industry through interruption of communications. Coal surveys and investigations have helped greatly towards maintaining a high output and securing optimum utilization of New Zealand's coal resources during a time of national emergency.

Soil survey and grassland research are proving of direct advantage to the defence forces through information relating to mapping, topography, aerodrome-maintenance, and water-supplies, while a magnetic resurvey of the whole of the Dominion is providing data of immediate value in connection with the war.

There has been maintained through the scientific services of the Department a very close contact with both military and industrial developments throughout the Empire. Many of these contacts had been established for some years, but during the past year, which has been beset with so many difficulties, their real worth has been demonstrated, and there has been built up a system of helpful co-operation. The free exchange of knowledge and the painstaking research by our scientists is the very basis of the Empire's war effort and will be of great significance in our future industrial and social development.

I would take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the good work the Department has achieved and the excellent response of the staff in all branches in carrying out the heavy and responsible tasks they have had to undertake during the past year.

D. G. SULLIVAN,  
Minister in Charge of Scientific  
and Industrial Research Department.