

(ii) REHABILITATION SERVICE LIAISON

The Rehabilitation Service—i.e., the Rehabilitation Division of the National Service Department—has for some time had in operation with each of the three Services a form of liaison in accordance with which it is supplied with particulars of every serviceman or servicewoman invalided out of the forces and this procedure will continue until all servicemen and servicewomen are discharged.

All sick and wounded personnel who have returned from service overseas have been met at the port of disembarkation, generally at the Clearing-station in Wellington, by officers of the Rehabilitation Service. At the initial interview an indication has, as far as this has been possible, been received of the needs of the ex-serviceman in whatever field or fields concerned. The Rehabilitation Officer in the centre of residence of the returned man has then followed up the initial interview and has taken whatever steps have been necessary to procure for the ex-serviceman any assistance of which he has stood in need.

Particulars of servicemen and servicewomen who have been invalided out of the forces have also been supplied to the Rehabilitation Service, which, where necessary, has established contact with the men and women concerned, taking any steps necessary to assure that needed assistance to which they have been entitled has been afforded them.

As was the case after the last war, privileges and allowances have been granted to personnel invalided out of the forces, and the Rehabilitation Service has, where necessary, taken up with the individual Services any instances of difficulty or delay in attending to one or other of these aspects.

(iii) PROGRESS OF DEMOBILIZATION

As in the case of the last war, it can be expected that two phases in the demobilization of servicemen will be remarked, the first a steady flow of sick and wounded personnel, and the second a mass demobilization on the cessation of hostilities.

By November, 1940, 29 soldiers had returned to New Zealand through Army Sick and Wounded after service overseas. At the end of December of that year the total returned had reached 112, and had mounted to 1,220 with the arrival of a hospital ship on the 11th July, 1941. As at the 31st March, 1943, the number of men and women invalided home from overseas had increased to 7,847.

Pending the passing of the Rehabilitation Act and the setting-up of the Council and Board, the Employment Division of the National Service Department (later the Rehabilitation Division) undertook the work of advising and assisting the returned men in their return to civilian life.

The following graph shows, in quarterly periods, the rate at which serving personnel have returned from service overseas through Army Sick and Wounded channels. These figures are not inclusive of fit men man-powered out of the forces, unless they have subsequently broken down in health and applied for assistance, of one or another kind, to rehabilitate themselves. Returned naval and air-force personnel are also included in these figures.

Graph showing Rate of Demobilization of Returned Personnel

