

conditions, of the huge programme of works involved, and upon the contractors and other building interests who played such a conspicuous part in the total effort. Mention should also be made of the officers of the Housing Construction Division, who controlled largely the manufacture and distribution of prefabricated units, and the Timber Controller, who, at a time of great demands for timber, was faced with unprecedented problems.

PART II—THE POST-WAR PERIOD

Practically every nation which was engaged in the war is faced with a six years' accumulation of maintenance and deferred development, and in Great Britain, the United States, and Australia, amongst others, authorities similar to New Zealand's Ministry of Works have been set up to deal with the problems which have arisen. The methods which have been adopted by the Ministry of Works have been decided upon only after a careful examination of the detailed procedures which have been used in these countries. Advantage is being taken also of the position generally to check as far as possible a certain disorder in urban and rural development, and to replace the old system of haphazard growth by a more logical system of planning.

6. NEW ZEALAND'S IMMEDIATE POST-WAR NEED FOR BUILDINGS

When New Zealand entered the war she was still embarrassed by a post-depression housing shortage, running into many thousands of houses. Had the additional work of slum-clearing and routine replacements been able to be carried out, rural housing standards radically improved, and miners' and sawmill workers' accommodation brought up to a satisfactory state, there would have been enough work to keep the building industry busy for many years, even without any increase in population. The population has increased, however, during the war period by more than 100,000, and there has been some redistribution as between town and country and between one part of the Dominion and another. These factors were for a time partly offset by the absence of men abroad with the Armed Forces, but with the return and demobilization of these men and the realization of marriages deferred by the war, the demand for houses has inevitably become greater than at any time during the last twenty-five years.

Information received by the Ministry of Works indicates that some 25,000 more houses are required than are available at the present time, and it is considered that over the next fifteen years a further 40,000 houses in the cities and boroughs alone will require replacement—this figure being based on the results of a survey taken in 1937. Adding 95,000 houses to accommodate the population increase which has been estimated to occur by 1960 (including a suitable allowance for immigration), we have a total of 160,000 houses required over the next fifteen years, which might be increased to 180,000 if a policy of improved housing for rural, mining, and sawmilling industries is to be put into effect. This would necessitate building at least 12,000 houses per annum over the whole of this period. If it were possible for this number to be exceeded for a few years and later the annual number built to be tapered off slightly as circumstances permitted, this would conform to the needs of the Dominion as far as they can be seen at present. The figures received by the Ministry of Works in regard to housing have been accepted with some reservations and are now being subjected to an independent check.