

1915.
NEW ZEALAND.

EXPEDITIONARY FORCE:

PROVISION OF REINFORCEMENT DRAFTS FOR THE (MEMORANDUM ON).

Laid on the Table of both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave.

MEMORANDUM ON PROVISION OF REINFORCEMENT DRAFTS FOR THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

I. REINFORCEMENT DRAFTS.

1. It must be realized that the Reinforcements which are sent from New Zealand are not intended to increase the size of the Expeditionary Force in the field. Their role is to maintain that Force in the field at full strength, and at its full fighting efficiency at all times. Casualties, whether caused by deaths, wounds, sickness, or strain, must be made good by efficient and fit men within a few hours, otherwise defeat may be the result. The principle laid down in the Field Service Regulations of the British Army is that Reinforcements must be available and ready to replace wastage before casualties occur. The scale of wastage, calculated from the experience of past wars, has proved to be an underestimate, and New Zealand has had to increase her efforts accordingly. There was a tendency in the early part of the present year to criticize the necessity for such large Reinforcements to be sent before the Expeditionary Force had seen a shot fired. Actual events, however, in the Dardanelles have shown the wisdom of the policy laid down by the Army Council.

Object of
Reinforcements.

2. But New Zealand has not limited herself to providing Reinforcements on this greatly increased scale. She has in addition provided many new units subsequent to the despatch of the Main Body of the Expeditionary Force. It must not be lost sight of that all these new units require Reinforcements on the same scale as those units which accompanied the Main Body. For instance, the scale of Reinforcements required for Infantry is calculated at 180 per cent. per annum. If, therefore, a new battalion is offered, it means that almost two additional battalions must be provided as Reinforcements for that one battalion for each year the war may continue.

New units.

3. If at any time there may be a temporary surplus of registrations great care is necessary before the popular cry to make an increased offer of fresh troops can be acceded to. To put units into the field which waste away for want of Reinforcements is entirely opposed to the principles laid down by the Imperial Government for the maintenance of our armies in the field. We have to prepare for a war which may last for three years. It would be an everlasting disgrace to New Zealand if before the war came to an end she had to confess that she could not maintain her Expeditionary Force in the field. The honour of putting a large number of units into the field at the one time would be forgotten in the failure to maintain them there. We must prepare for a long war, and it is essential that we should count the cost, and make sure that our resources of men are organized in such a manner as to last to the finish. New Zealand must not be exhausted before peace has been declared.

Surplus registrations
and increased offers.

4. In addition to the limitation of available numbers there are other limiting factors. They are—(a) Training Staff; (b) camp accommodation; (c) uniforms, &c.; (d) arms. To consider these in detail:—

Limitations on size
of drafts.

(a.) The size of Reinforcement drafts, and the consequent numbers of men in training, must be limited by the numbers and organization of the available Instructional Staff. Applications have been made to the Imperial and

Training Staff.