

N.Z. BUILDING PROGRESS

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Editorial Comment

"National" in Name.

The recent batch of nineteen appointments to the Legislative Council shows how hopelessly alienated politics is from honest everyday business. We are supposed to be stimulated to high patriotic sacrifice by the sight of party politicians thrusting their party squabbles behind them for the period of the war, so that all may unite under the National banner in the only duty which matters to-day. The National Government stands, we are told, for unity, and the temporary sacrifice of political ambitions. Yet, when it came to making nineteen nominations to the Upper House, how was the process conducted? Did the Government look around for the best business brains to help in guiding the nation's affairs in a time when business administration is proved to be one of the great war-winning factors? Did the National—save the mark! Government put its composite head together to find out some people who, by reason of organising ability shown in war service have won the right to recognition from the State? No, the Government simply resolved itself back into its old party shape, each side nominating a man, until the list was full of the political rubbish—the rejects—of both Reform and Liberal camps, and His Excellency the Governor was then advised to "call" these estimable party hacks to a sphere which they had failed to reach or to hold by the right of the people's votes. If there is any value in the nominative system at all, it is in the fact that it gives governments power to call to the nation's counsels men of ideals and constructive capacity who lack the talent for wooing demos, but who become excellent servants of the democracy so long as they have not to stand for election against more experienced ticklers of the public ear. In failing to live up to the high national ideal for which it is supposed to stand, the National Government went down a hundred per cent. in the estimation of the business community, which now realises, and