

steadily for the next five to ten years and will not be concluded until every serviceman and servicewoman—Maori and pakeha alike—has obtained whatever assistance he or she might need towards re-establishment.

During the year under review much attention has been devoted by my Ministers to the task of settling ex-servicemen on the land, and experience indicates that a total of eight thousand men, including two thousand already settled, will seek rehabilitation on farms of their own. Almost a quarter of a million acres of land are being developed for the settlement of servicemen, and my Government expects that land-settlement of ex-servicemen will result in an eventual investment of more than £50,000,000 of public moneys.

In other fields of rehabilitation there has been steady development, and particularly in that of trade and occupational training, for some form of which more than seven thousand ex-servicemen or ex-servicewomen have to date been approved.

During the year employment surveys have been made with the object of discovering possible openings for suitable ex-service personnel in all other industrial fields, and it is heartening to know that there is almost an entire absence of unemployment among ex-servicemen in this country.

The housing of ex-servicemen is also a matter of special concern to my Government, and considerable progress has been made, despite shortages of building materials and labour. Some sixteen thousand ex-servicemen have been housed already not only in State rental dwellings, but in houses built or purchased by the ex-servicemen with the assistance of rehabilitation loans.

The importance of farming industries in the Dominion's economy has always been fully appreciated by my Government, and great credit is due to the primary producers who, during the war, maintained output at the highest level. Food in the post-war period will undoubtedly occupy a place no less important than it did, and a new drive for production is now being organized by my Government, in collaboration with farmers' representatives, to assist in supplying the world's much needed food requirements. My Ministers are determined to assist the farmer in every way possible by giving incentives and encouragement to increase production still further, and it is anticipated that a resumption of supplies of phosphates from Nauru in the coming year will materially assist towards this end.

My Government consider the further development of the land resources of the Dominion to be of paramount importance, and they will pursue an active policy of land improvement and settlement while scope remains. They regard it as their first responsibility to provide for the settlement of ex-servicemen, and the whole of the land and material resources available to the Lands and Survey Department must meanwhile be concentrated towards that end. When the needs of rehabilitation have been met those same resources will be devoted to the development and improvement of the remaining suitable land for the settlement of those to whom the benefits of the Rehabilitation Act have not been available.

My Advisers propose to continue a vigorous policy of industrial development. Reconversion from war to peace-time production has proceeded smoothly, and, in spite of the demobilization of eighty thousand persons from the Armed Forces between VJ Day and May, 1946, full employment has been maintained with adequate choice of work over a wide range of occupations for rehabilitated servicemen.