

The question of immigration has been under consideration by my Ministers for some time, and it is anticipated that the report of the Parliamentary Committee on Population appointed last year will be available early in the session. Meanwhile my Government have initiated arrangements in the United Kingdom for the selection of two hundred nurses for mental hospitals, and inquiries are being made as to the possibility of obtaining a thousand young single men and women for work in New Zealand.

One of the chief difficulties at present being encountered is that of shipping. There are, in addition to the prospective immigrants, over eight thousand people with claims to passage to New Zealand registered with the High Commissioner's Office in London, and this factor, together with that of housing in New Zealand, must be taken into consideration in any plans made for the reception of immigrants.

My Government regarded it as of prime importance to remove as quickly as possible the controls over man-power under which labour was mobilized for the Dominion's industrial war effort. It was a source of considerable satisfaction, therefore, when it was possible to remove the last of these controls during the year.

My Ministry of Supply and the various Supply Controllers have been progressively relaxing the control measures which were necessary during the war to maximize the Dominion's production and ensure equitable distribution of available essential supplies. Thirty-four wartime controls over industrial materials were revoked within a few weeks of the end of the war, and only six now remain. My Advisers will revoke remaining wartime controls affecting trade and industry as soon as the supply position will permit.

After a comprehensive investigation of the whole resources of the Dominion, my Ministers have prepared both immediate and long-range programmes of national development. These detailed and comprehensive plans, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Works, are now being pushed ahead by the various Departments of State.

These schemes, including as they do projects for the supply of increased electric energy, irrigation and land development, improved communications by road, rail, and air have been well advanced in order that public works generally can be executed according to national, regional, and industrial priorities, and with due regard to the economic employment of available resources in labour and materials.

During the past year my Ministers have prosecuted their house-building programme, which remains the first priority, to the utmost extent permitted by supply of man-power and materials, and it is pleasing to record that twenty-one thousand State rental houses have now been completed and tenanted. With increasing supply of labour and building materials, my Ministers propose to use every endeavour to meet the urgent needs of the private housing situation.

My Government intend, in the post-war period, to devote the utmost attention to the fulfilment of the aims of their education policy by further provision of the best possible facilities. Many circumstances, including an increased birth-rate, have increased the rolls of students in the schools and contributed to the need for more teachers and buildings. The selection and training of a sufficient number of teachers is recognized as the prime essential of education, and steps are being taken to ensure that requirements are fully met. A vigorous building programme is to be instituted to overtake wartime arrears and thus provide much improved accommodation for primary, intermediate, secondary, and University education.