

1941.
NEW ZEALAND.

MILITARY FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT.

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

Wellington, 15th June, 1941.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the New Zealand Military Forces for the period 1st June, 1940, to 31st May, 1941.

GENERAL REMARKS.

In view of the paramount claims of security, it has been necessary to withhold from publication herein certain information which normally would appear. The report therefore does not include details of the coast defences, whilst other matters dealing with strengths, reserves of all natures, and the development of local resources have also been omitted.

The past year has been one of intense activity for the Army in New Zealand. Not only have a further 23,483 all ranks been enlisted, given their preliminary training and all that it entails in detailed administration, and despatched overseas to join the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, but in addition over 30,000 all ranks have been given three months' continuous training in camp, and manœuvres in circumstances approximating as nearly as possible to war have been carried out on two occasions in all three military districts.

The carrying-out of this programme has been rendered possible only by the untiring efforts of all members, both military and civilian, of a most loyal and conscientious staff.

MAINTENANCE AND TRAINING, 2ND NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

During the year the enlistment, concentration, training, and despatch overseas of drafts for the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force have been regular and well controlled. Staffs responsible have, with experience, increased in efficiency, and the whole process from enlistment to despatch overseas proceeds with the minimum of disruption.

The scope and syllabus of training have been governed by overseas requirements and experience, and kept up to date by close liaison with overseas command and the United Kingdom.

Although the training period in New Zealand is short, drafts leave the country with a thorough grounding of individual training in weapons, field-work, and special subjects, in preparation for advanced training overseas.

RAISING AND TRAINING OF OTHER OVERSEAS FORCES.

In view of the situation in the Pacific, it has been found necessary to accept further responsibilities in that area. Such commitments as have been accepted have received most careful consideration both between the Services and as between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and Australia.

This has necessitated the raising and maintenance of additional units and has caused an increasing strain on our resources in instructors and arms and equipment.

In general our forces mentioned above supply periodical drafts to the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force in Middle East, while these drafts are replaced by reinforcements raised and trained here. By this means the strain of garrison duties in isolated stations is mitigated and an opportunity given to the troops themselves to see active service.