

1943
NEW ZEALAND

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(In Committee of Supply, 27th May, 1943)

By the Hon. WALTER NASH, Minister of Finance

MR. CHAIRMAN,—

After an absence from New Zealand of over a year it is again my privilege to present to honourable members the annual Financial Statement. Before doing so, however, I would take the opportunity of mentioning that as New Zealand Minister in Washington I have had exceptional opportunities of comparing and contrasting conditions in New Zealand with those overseas, and as regards our war effort in the services, in our factories, on the land, and in other directions and the strides which have been made in recent years in the material well-being of the people the comparisons are not unfavourable to the Dominion. Much still remains to be done ; the war has yet to be won, but I am confident, and I say this with some knowledge of the position, that, although disappointments may be many and hardships not a few, the tide of war has at long last turned in favour of those who are fighting for freedom. We may henceforth look forward to a gathering momentum of men, of supplies, and of equipment such as will tell its own tale on the land, on the seas, and in the air.

Our forces, Maori and pakeha, in the Middle East, in the United Kingdom, and in the Pacific areas have played a magnificent part in the war effort of the United Nations and have brought not only credit and renown to themselves, but honour to their country.

Until victory is achieved and the foundations laid of an enduring peace, when we can once again turn our minds and devote our energies to the development of an economic system based on the creation and utilization of abundance, we must concentrate our energies on the problem of providing the greatest aid to the war effort. New Zealand has already done much. We can confidently say that we are on a total war footing. To-day, as most of us are aware, a very large proportion of the population is serving or has served in the armed forces.

With such a heavy withdrawal of man-power from industry it is inevitable that difficulties are being experienced, although these have been mitigated by the re-employment of married women and retired men. The industrial situation has necessitated adequate measures of man-power control, and these have been applied, firstly, to restrict the outflow of workers from essential works ; secondly, to direct workers, including women, into essential work ; and, thirdly, to restrict the inflow of workers into non-essential activities. Such has been the success of the Government's efforts in this connection that the factory output in 1941-42 reached the record value of £155,500,000, which is more than 36 per cent. above the value of production in the pre-war years. The increase is principally connected with essential war needs such as engineering, footwear, and woollen goods.

Man-power.

Secondary industries.