

APPENDIX C

ANNUAL REPORT ON BUILDINGS BY THE GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT

The GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT to the Hon. the MINISTER OF WORKS

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the activities of the Architectural Branch for the year ended 31st March, 1943.

During the period 1942-43, our third year of hostilities, we have achieved really remarkable results in the building industry. Centralized control of man-power and materials, co-ordination of requirements of the fighting Services, and the establishment of a close liaison between the contracting organizations and the State Architectural Service have resulted in administrative efficiency and, above all, speed in construction. We have built to a scale never previously equalled and most certainly never contemplated as possible with the reduced man-power and restrictions in available materials resultant respectively upon the demands of the Services for personnel and the necessity of limiting shipping-space for the transport of essential war equipment, &c. Local building-materials have been used to the fullest extent possible, and New Zealand industries have made a valuable contribution in the manufacture of essential building products.

The volume of work completed and the speed attained in the prosecution of major schemes have so far outdistanced our peace-time efforts that I consider it well worth while recording the means by which these results have been attained. They are—

- (a) Centralization of administration, and co-ordination of requirements of the various fighting Services in a directorate called the "Administrative Planning Committee," directly responsible to War Cabinet:
- (b) Centralization of executive, and control of priorities, man-power, and materials required for the building industry through the Commissioner of Defence Construction, who is directly responsible to the Minister of Works, and thereafter decentralization through the various State works offices:
- (c) Complete cessation of civil works, and concentration upon the defence building programme and those civil works classified as "essential defence works":
- (d) Abandonment of competitive tendering, and adoption of a system whereby work is allocated to contracting organizations having the requisite man-power, experience, and administrative capacity for the class of work involved. Work done is quantity surveyed and paid for at unit rates agreed to by the State and contracting organizations. Wage and material rates, though fixed, are subject to review, and amended as deemed necessary from time to time. This is equivalent to price stabilization in the building industry:
- (e) Total control of the timber-supplies. The source of supply and fulfilment of timber demands in accordance with priorities accorded defence works are arranged through the State Forest Service. Payment to the mills is made by the State through the State Forest Service and is not the responsibility of the Contractor:
- (f) The efficient manning of all works through Allocation Committees located in all the main centres. These Committees comprise directors of contracting organizations, the local Man-power Officer, and the District Engineer in each centre. Through these Committees small contracting organizations are welded into well-organized co-operative groups, and competition for labour is eliminated:
- (g) Wherever possible, prefabricated demountable accommodation has been employed in order that buildings may be utilized for rehabilitation purposes at the conclusion of hostilities. This also permitted full utilization of joinery-factories and factory personnel, thus materially supplementing labour available in the building industry.