

The principal problems of the time had lain in the examination of the man-power aspects of certain proposals put forward by General Sir Guy Williams K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., special Military Adviser to the New Zealand Government. These proposals involved, notably:

- (a) The provision of certain additions to the strength of the division in the Middle East;
- (b) Readjustments to the rate of reinforcements to the Middle East;
- (c) Reorganization of the Home Defence Forces involving—
 - (i) Increases in strength, affecting both the Territorial Force and the National Military Reserve;
 - (ii) The provision of a full-time Territorial cadre;
 - (iii) The substitution of two months' collective training per annum in place of two weeks; and
 - (iv) A reversion to the greater use of men suitable for overseas service in the Territorial Force.

A separate class of problem opening up at that time lay in the evolution of ways and means of reducing the rate of circulation of workers in industry, and the loss of workers from essential industries as an indirect result of the withdrawal of men to the forces, and the consequent competitive bidding of employers for the now scarce labour resources. A more positive mobilization and redistribution of workers within the industrial field was becoming increasingly necessary. Much thought and study was being devoted to the subject, and particularly to the measures already adopted in the United Kingdom to deal with the corresponding problems.

Looking at the position and problems in retrospect and in prospect, these were the main features of the situation when, early in December, 1941, Japan suddenly entered the war.

PART II.—DEVELOPMENTS SINCE DECEMBER, 1941

10. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGED WAR SITUATION

Prior to the outbreak of war in the Pacific, New Zealand's effort had been mainly concerned with two predominant objectives—firstly, the supply of fighting men to the overseas theatres of war, and, secondly, the supply of foodstuffs to the United Kingdom and the armies of the Middle East. The proposed reorganization of the home defence forces did not involve the permanent withdrawal from industry of more than a small proportion of their personnel; the great majority had been, and were expected to continue to be, trained on a part-time basis only.

The appearance and rapid progress toward the South Pacific of a formidable enemy broke up the whole of this background and threw a sudden emphasis on the organization of the Dominion for defence against air raid and invasion. A new spirit of driving urgency pervaded the whole war effort—universal service and preparedness were the keynotes, whether in connection with the armed forces proper, the Home Guard, the Civil Defence organizations, or the civilian population.

In a rapid procession of new developments, every defensive phase of the war organization was strengthened out of all recognition. The principle of compulsory universal service was introduced into the Emergency Reserve Corps and the Home Guard, with the result that the membership of these organizations increased by leaps and bounds. Women entered the ranks of the Army, and fit men were relieved from sedentary duties in the forces by women and unfit men, so that they would be available instead to fight the invader. The Territorial Force was mobilized on a full-time basis, and a rapid succession of ballots was held with the object of building it up to a level which was far beyond anything previously contemplated.

While members of the home defence forces and freshly balloted men were being called rapidly into camp, a Ministry of Civil Defence was set up and private citizens were soon adapting themselves to black-out regulations, fire-watching duties, the construction of domestic air-raid shelters, and the like.

On the industrial side, the main features of the position were the rapid withdrawal of men to the home defence forces, combined with the urgent need to increase the man-power available for the prosecution of defence construction works and other war industries and to prevent the circulation and outflow of labour from essential into non-essential industries, and this situation led to the rapid implementation of control over the movements of industrial workers.

As regards the continued supply of man-power to the overseas forces, this was completely suspended for more than a year, except in regard to a relatively small number of Air Force and a few naval trainees.

In short, the entry of Japan into the war involved a complete reorientation of the war effort.

In the remaining sections of this Part of the Report the leading aspects of this reorientation will be described in fuller detail.

11. THE MOBILIZATION OF JANUARY, 1942

With the Christmas—New Year break at the beginning of 1942 came the mobilization on a full-time basis of a considerable part of the Territorial Force and the National Military Reserve.

This mobilization created a new situation and raised an industrial problem which called for immediate action. In dealing with men called for territorial service, Appeal tribunals had in the past assumed that only a short period in camp each year was involved, and consequently many men were released for service who would have been held back indefinitely from the forces had military training been understood to involve permanent withdrawal from industry. When such withdrawal was in fact applied to many thousands of men all at the same time, the whole crop of these anomalies appeared simultaneously. But this was not all. The question of the withdrawal from industry of the older men of the National Military Reserve had never arisen at all, and no selection whatever had been made from amongst these men as to who should be available for service and who should be withheld from the forces.