

1942.

NEW ZEALAND.

NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD

(REPORT OF) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th SEPTEMBER, 1941.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Patriotic Purposes Emergency Regulations 1939.

The Hon. MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THE New Zealand National Patriotic Fund Board has the honour to present its second annual report and balance-sheet for the year ended 30th September, 1941.

I. INTRODUCTORY.

In this report, which presents the results of the second year's operations of the New Zealand National Patriotic Fund Board, a very great increase in the activities of the Board is recorded. This increase shows itself not only in the extension of activities previously carried on, but generally in the development of new types of efforts and new spheres of activities. Some idea of the extension can be obtained by a reading of the Board's accounts printed at the end of this report.

The eleven Provincial Patriotic Councils are autonomous bodies, and therefore, the report of the Board does not cover their activities, except in so far as their work is directly related to that of the Board.

II. EXPENDING AGENTS OF THE NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD.

A great deal of the patriotic work for which the Board is responsible is carried out through agents financed by the Board, and as there is considerable public misapprehension as to the status of these expending agents it is desirable to set out, briefly, their operations and their relationships to the Board. The main expending agents which work directly with the fighting forces are the Young Men's Christian Association, the Church of England Military Affairs Committee, the Catholic War Services Fund Board, the Salvation Army, the Navy League War Council, and the Air Force Relations. The Joint Council of the Order of St. John and the New Zealand Red Cross Society is concerned as an agent of the Board with the provision of extra comforts for the sick and wounded and in regard to the Prisoners of War Information Bureau and prisoners of war weekly parcels. Other expending agents are the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association, the Lady Galway Guild, the Public Service Association, Overseas Seamen's Gift Committee, the Commercial Travellers' Association (for blind ex-servicemen), the Country Library Service (books, periodicals, and newspapers), and the New Zealand Sheepowners' Acknowledgment of Debt to British Seamen Fund. All these agents have rendered conspicuous service in their allotted spheres.

In the public mind, however, the wartime services performed by these organizations as agents of the Board are in some respects not dissociated from their peacetime activities, and even many servicemen who use the recreational huts and amenities of these organizations fail to realize that the people of New Zealand, through the patriotic bodies, and not the staffing organizations, provide all the money spent on the war comforts work of these welfare organizations. The privilege granted to expending agents in displaying their names and symbols on the Board's recreation huts in camps has tended to create this erroneous impression. The actual position is that the huts have been built, equipped, and are maintained from patriotic funds. The Board has arranged for the placing of suitable notices in each recreational hut and the painting of the Board's name alongside that of the expending agents on the outside of the huts, and this should in future assist in giving credit to all concerned for their work in the co-ordinated scheme.

In clearing up a general misunderstanding the Board in no way detracts from the work of its expending agents, but merely desires to clarify the position and to reply to frequent uninformed statements that welfare organizations are doing all the work and that patriotic bodies spend little or nothing on the men.

It must, however, be emphatically stated that if the national welfare organizations had not been included in the general scheme the Board could not have carried out its work so expeditiously and well.

III. WORK FOR THE NAVY AND THE MERCHANT NAVY.

(a) *New Zealand Naval Forces.*—In view of the arduous duties and the isolation involved in much naval work the Board has made a special endeavour to provide extra comforts for the men, in addition to those provided by the New Zealand Navy League War Council and other bodies. Provincial Patriotic Councils superintend general work on behalf of naval personnel stationed in or visiting their territories. The Board provides for the urgent and special requirements of the Service generally and of visiting naval men and New Zealand naval units proceeding abroad for service. For some New Zealand ships requests were made for bulk supplies of tinned fruits, &c., and these were supplied in