

2. THE REDISTRIBUTION OF MAN-POWER IN 1943

After a full review of the position by War Cabinet in the early part of 1943, a substantial reduction of the home-defence Forces was decided on, and an allocation was made of the resulting release of men as between the overseas sections of the Army, the Air Force, and industry.

As a preliminary step a man-by-man survey of the Army was made, each man being asked to complete a card showing full details of medical grade, age, Army duties, home address, dependants, civilian occupation, qualifications and employment history, and whether prepared to volunteer for transfer to the Air Force or to a number of important industries which urgently needed men. These cards were concentrated in the National Service Department and used as a basis for the redistribution of man-power as described below.

(a) *Transfers of Army Personnel Overseas.*—The 8th Middle East Reinforcement, long held in New Zealand, was despatched early in the year. The 9th and 10th Reinforcements followed in quick succession.

A substantial body of fit men was despatched to New Caledonia, enabling the Force already located there to be built up in strength sufficiently to become a two-brigade combat Division.

(b) *Transfers from Army to Air Force.*—Some thousands of the men in the Army who had volunteered to transfer to the Air Force were actually transferred to Air Force camps. For a time these men formed a pool from which, over a period of many months, men were fed through training courses of various types.

A comb-out of the Pacific Division resulted in several hundreds of additional potential air-crew personnel being returned to New Zealand for flying training. These men were replaced from other Army sources in New Zealand.

(c) *Releases from Camp and Transfers to Industry.*—The card survey enabled a selection for industry to be made from among men in the home-defence Forces who were ineligible for overseas service by reason of their age or medical class. Steps were quickly taken to secure the release of men with those types of skill for which there was an acute need in industry.

Virtually all the tool-makers, pattern-makers, saw-doctors, bushmen, shoeing-smiths, loom-tuners and many other special types were quickly released. Men whose homes were in difficult labour-supply areas (such as Auckland, Wellington, and Hutt) were similarly released.

In addition to this process of selective withdrawal, thousands of individual applications were received from employers. These were examined by Man-Power Officers, and, if a good case was shown, were passed on to the Army. In the majority of cases these applications were successful.

As a special policy measure, youths aged eighteen and nineteen were released as a class on their own application in order to enable them to lay the foundations for their normal future careers. Some hundreds of men unfit for overseas service and men in the over-forty age classes were similarly permitted to leave the Army on their own application.

Further reductions of the Army in New Zealand were arranged in subsequent months, and by September, 1943, some 14,000 releases to industry had been achieved. Subsequent reductions in the home Forces have since brought the figure of men released since March, 1943, to more than 18,000, apart from substantial drafts which have returned to industry after service overseas. The overall total who have been released over the whole period from June, 1942, to end of March, 1944, exceeds 40,000 men.

3. KEY STATISTICS, 1939-43

In this section of the report a number of key statistical tables are presented covering the period from the outbreak of war until the end of 1943.

(a) *Basic Population Resources and Movements :—*

When war broke out, New Zealand's total population (including Maoris) was ..	1,630,000
Were it not for war casualties, the "natural increase" (together with immigration during the war) would by the end of 1943 have brought it to ..	1,723,000
i.e., a gain in the first four years four months of war of ..	93,000

(b) *Effect of Transfers Overseas and Casualties.*—Transfers overseas and casualties affected the figure of 1,723,000, however, as follows :—

Population in New Zealand (end 1943) ..	1,639,000
Forces serving overseas ..	70,000
War casualties—	
Deaths ..	6,000
Missing ..	1,000
Prisoners ..	7,000

(c) *Net Withdrawals from Industry.*—The number withdrawn from industry by the Armed Forces was, however, considerably greater than the 84,000 (including casualties) shown in the above table. This figure may be estimated as follows :—

In the Forces overseas ..	70,000
Casualties overseas ..	14,000
In the Forces in New Zealand ..	66,000
Rehabilitation cases not yet returned to industry ..	4,000
Total withdrawn from industry ..	154,000*

* Includes 8,000 women.