

INCREASED REQUIREMENTS

Turning now from the production which is being *achieved* to the output *required* of the farming industries, the most prominent features of the position were—

- (i) The increased and urgent requirements of the *United Kingdom* :
- (ii) The new and substantial and increasing requirements of the *American Forces* :
- (iii) The longer-term prospects of urgent demands for food for the relief of devastated *Europe*.

MAN-POWER POSITION

It was known that there were 7,000 farm workers serving with the Middle East Division and 4,300 with the Pacific Division, while the Air Force and Navy probably accounted for some 5,000 between them. Allowing 3,000 for casualties and a few hundreds for rehabilitation cases not yet returned to industry, it may be assumed that the farming industries have contributed a total of approximately 20,000 men to the Armed Forces, or about one-eighth of the pre-war labour force. Apart from this, there was evidence of a small-scale but persistent *drift* from farming to other occupations.

The resulting *reduction of man-power* on farms arising from both of the above causes was one of the limiting factors to any increase in food-production. It affected dairy production particularly, as losses from other types of farming have tended to be offset to some extent by Army assistance (such as the harvesting scheme) and other factors (including transfers from dairy production).

Quite apart from seasonal requirements for harvesting, freezing-works, butter-factories, canneries, and so on (which are dealt with in a separate section of this report), an increase in the *permanent farm-labour force* was urgently required as an important part of any scheme for increased production. This requirement, and the sources from which it could be met, are further discussed in later sections of this report.

B. THE BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION, AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES

At the beginning of 1944 the Dominion faced the following construction programme :—

Type of Construction.	Value of Work projected for 1944.
	£
Hospitals	5,500,000
Housing	4,000,000
Defence contracts	5,200,000
Hydro-electric	1,500,000
Industrial, public buildings, schools, &c. ..	1,800,000
Total	18,000,000

The capacity of the present labour force (which was already averaging 47 hours per week) would not, however, permit of more than *about two-thirds of the above programme* being executed within the yearly period. While supply difficulties existed, it may be said in general that the Dominion's building-capacity was governed more at that time by a *shortage of men* than by any other factor.

Quite apart from the hospital and defence contracts, the importance of making progress with hydro-electric construction and housing for servicemen and war workers was sufficiently evident to indicate that every possible step should be taken to make men available for this work. At the same time, much of the labour required would need to be *skilled*, and, apart from men in the Forces, there were virtually no skilled tradesmen available for direction to this work.

(As an instance of the demand, the Karapiro hydro-electric scheme urgently required 400 men in order to keep the constructional work abreast of the arrival of plant from England, while upwards of 1,000 men were required for housing work in Auckland and Wellington alone.)

C. THE RAILWAYS

An idea of the increased volume of traffic which the railways were being called on to handle, as compared with the reduced staff position, may be gleaned from the following table :—

—	1938-39.	1943-44.	Percentage Increase.
Passenger journeys per annum	23,266,000	38,611,000	66·0
Goods tonnage handled per annum	7,539,000	9,027,000	19·7
Gross revenue per annum	£9,345,000	£15,325,000	64·0
Total staff	25,765	23,422*	9·1 decrease

* Included approximately 2,000 females (as compared with 627 pre-war).

The increase in traffic had been due mainly to the forced reduction in motor traffic, to troop movements, and to the general increase in industrial activity.

Much overtime was being worked throughout all sections of the staff, the overall average hours actually worked being 48 per week. Even after absorbing over 1,000 men released from camp (including 600 specially returned from overseas), the Department was in urgent need of more men, particularly for workshops and track-maintenance.

D. MUNITIONS, ENGINEERING, AND OTHER SECONDARY INDUSTRIES

Heavy demands for a wide range of warlike stores—for example, such as batteries, blankets, boots, socks, and tropical suits—had been made on New Zealand by the United States Joint Purchasing Board. In many cases the magnitude of those demands greatly exceeded the capacity of the Dominion to supply. Shortages of raw materials and shortages of man-power necessitated much scaling down of requisitions.