

An assessment based largely on 1939 conditions was made of the capacity of the building industry to undertake work, and on this assessment a programme for the current year was recommended, Cabinet fixing the allocations for each principal class of work and to each Department of State. These allocations have been published.

ASSESSMENT OF DEMAND FOR WORKS

In order to secure a complete coverage of proposed works it became necessary to take the matter up again with all Government Departments. While some Departments had reasonably complete plans for some years ahead, others had not, and in order to put the whole matter on a uniform basis Departments were asked to submit proposals covering a period of ten years ahead. A period of ten years was fixed for the reason that in any longer period works would tend to become visionary and that for planning purposes any lesser period was not very effective. All Departments were suffering from lack of technical staff, and considerable assistance in the preparation of these ten-year schedules had to be furnished from the Ministry of Works itself. Personal contacts were also made by officers of the Ministry of Works and by District Engineers of the Public Works Department to local authorities, and, where appropriate, the machinery of Regional Councils was used to obtain local-authority development proposals over a similar period of ten years. Information from Government and local authority sources was filed on a uniform basis for the purpose of analysis.

ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION RECEIVED

The analysis of information received in the Ministry of Works covering both buildings and works proposals from all sources for the ten-year period ahead has enabled, probably for the first time in the history of New Zealand, the whole problem of physical development to be seen in perspective. The first fact which emerges from a review of the information gathered is that the proposals of State Departments, local authorities, and of private people are very closely related to each other, and it is contrary to the national interest for them to be regarded separately. It is felt that the importance of securing a practical co-ordination between these three groups of interests cannot be overemphasized.

Whilst it would hardly be justifiable to state that Government Departments have not planned ahead or to infer that there has in the past been a lack of co-operation between Departments, the planning and co-ordination possible has been on a voluntary and incomplete basis, whereas to secure the best results it should be positive and mandatory.

The method of preparing departmental estimates and of carrying out departmental works which has applied in the past has largely resulted in the Departments being in competition for building resources, and in their proposals being unco-ordinated.

Again, the proposals of Government Departments have seldom been made known to local authorities in time for the local authority to take these into consideration in its own internal planning. It is felt that the results of town-planning so far could have been greatly improved had Government Departments given a lead in regard to their own works. One thing stands out—namely, that without knowledge of the Government's