

enough on the job for checks to be applied by the responsible officers controlling works. Costs which come to hand many months after jobs are completed are quite useless for this purpose and do not indicate what the Engineer or other officer in charge of a work wants to know—*i.e.*, whether his work is exceeding the estimate, and for what reason. The lack of an effective costing system throughout the Department has resulted at times in heavy overexpenditure not being realized until works are nearing completion, and has also made it difficult for the Department to prepare estimates. In this respect New Zealand lags behind most other countries. Arrangements have therefore been made to send an Engineer, who will specialize in this field, together with a qualified accountant, to the United States with the object of examining systems of job costing on large construction works and machinery for handling the detailed work. Costing on large projects in the United States has been known for many years to be on a much more efficient basis.

BUILDING CONTROL

The issue of building permits, which virtually meant the application of a system of building priorities, had, until August, 1945, been the responsibility of Mr. G. W. Albertson, who acted in the dual capacity of Building Controller and Director of Housing Construction. This was a wartime arrangement, and in order to allow Mr. Albertson to devote his whole time to the increasing responsibilities connected with the erection of State houses his appointment as Building Controller was revoked, and the Chief Housing Inspector in the Ministry of Works, Mr. R. L. MacPhail, thereupon became the Building Controller. In this respect the Building Controller is responsible direct to the Minister of Works, who took over the administration of building-control policy from the Minister of Supply. The Minister of Works is now responsible for recommendations to Government regarding building-control policy, the office of the Building Controller being attached to that of the Commissioner of Works.

PHYSICAL PLANNING

A final change of great importance occurred in November, 1945, when the responsibility for all physical planning passed to the Ministry of Works. Previously under action in the Organization for National Development, which had established twenty-five Regional Councils and built up the nucleus of a town-planning design staff, and which had contained the Secretariat of the Town-planning Board, this work now became the function of the newly-created Planning Division of the Ministry of Works, which took over the whole of the staff engaged on it. Secretarial assistance to Regional Councils, hitherto provided by the Rehabilitation Department, was, however, withdrawn, though arrangements were made for a 25 per cent. subsidy to be paid to Councils employing their own secretaries.

The vesting for the first time in the one authority of the whole responsibility for physical planning has been a very important step. The association of the *planning* with the *execution* of works, which is now possible within the Ministry of Works enables the principles of forward planning to be given direct and practical application. The setting-up of the necessary staff has been difficult, and the organization of this section in the Ministry of Works