

## (ii) Hostel and Camp Accommodation

**350.** Reference was made in the previous annual report of the Department to the establishment of hostels at Lower Hutt and Wellington for the accommodation of girls directed from other centres to the Wellington district for employment in munitions work and in other essential industries. During the past year these hostels have been continued and have almost always been filled to capacity.

**351.** Notwithstanding the lifting of man-power controls covering female workers, the large majority of the girls accommodated at the hostels elected to remain in employment in important industries in the district, rather than accept the offer which was also open to them to be returned to their home districts should they so desire.

**352.** In view of the willingness of such a large number of these girls voluntarily to remain in employment in the Wellington district where their services were so urgently needed due to the overall shortage of labour that continues to be experienced, it was apparent that consideration would have to be given to the more or less permanent retention of these hostels for the accommodation of female workers.

**353.** Due to the centralization of many important major industries in the Wellington-Hutt district—for example, tobacco-manufacture, clothing-manufacture, &c.—and the continuing insufficiency of supply of female labour, it will obviously be necessary for some time to come to continue to attract female workers from the smaller centres and country areas where a sufficient volume and variety of employment is not offering to assist towards this end, and it has accordingly been decided to continue these hostels in the meantime as a more or less permanent feature of the service to be given to industry by the National Employment Service.

**354.** In addition to the hostels for girls, the Department also established during the year two camps for male workers in Auckland. These camps, situated at Waikaraka Park and at Avondale Racecourse, were previously used for military purposes and were taken over for the purpose of accommodating male workers directed to Auckland for essential employment, mainly in the food-processing industries. The Waikaraka Park camp was used for accommodating Europeans, and the Avondale camp for accommodating a large number of Maori workers directed to Auckland especially for employment in the freezing-works.

**355.** During the war period two camps had also been in operation at Wellington and Lower Hutt mainly for the accommodation of men employed in defence-building construction in those districts. These camps were later used to take in housing-construction workers, and, as a result of the gradual tapering-off of defence-construction work, for the accommodation also of men directed to employment in Wellington and Lower Hutt for a variety of essential industries. These camps were controlled by a semi-Government organization known as Defence Works Camps, but as defence-construction work began to decline and the camps were increasingly being used for the purpose of accommodating essential workers generally, negotiations were commenced with a view to this Department taking them over. This was eventually given effect to, and the Department took the two camps over on 2nd May, 1946.

**356.** These camps will now be retained by the Department and will be used to serve a very important function in the Department's plans towards meeting the off-seasonal unemployment problem that has always existed in a number of the secondary centres. As has been explained more fully elsewhere in this report, in a number of these centres there is always a substantial lay-off for a period of some months during the winter of men engaged in food processing and other seasonal employment, and difficulty has often been presented in placing these men in other productive employment between seasons.

**357.** There continues to be a very substantial shortage of labour in important industries in Wellington and Auckland districts, and this is work of a type that continues unabated throughout the year. Thus the Department is in a position to offer employment in Wellington and Auckland to these seasonal workers to cover the off-season gap, and by having these camps the Department is in a position to offer accommodation which could