

INTRODUCTION

1. This report, covering the twelve months from 1st April, 1945, to 31st March, 1946, is also the final report of the National Service Department. The Department was established in July, 1940, as a wartime administration to deal with wartime mobilization of personnel initially mobilization for military service, but later including mobilization for industrial service and control over inflows and outflows of industrial personnel. By 31st March, 1946, its wartime tasks were virtually at an end, although a few phases of its administration will necessarily continue for some months after this date. The winding-up of even these last few phases was already in train at the end of the twelve months under review.

2. This report, therefore, serves three purposes. It records the activities of the Department over the twelve months. In addition, as a winding-up report, it records briefly the over-all achievements of the Department during its period of operation. Finally, it introduces the plans and the outlook for the very different peacetime personnel activities which are already succeeding it.

3. Commencing with a brief survey of the position, both military and industrial, which confronted the Department on 1st April, 1945, the report sets out briefly the major policy decisions over the ensuing twelve months as these affected the Department's activities. Then follows an account of the administrative set-up of the Department during those twelve months, and its finance and expenditure.

4. Having thus traversed the broad background of events and the administrative set-up of the Department, the report proceeds with a survey of the position regarding military mobilization for the twelve months as against a background of the war period as a whole. This is followed by a survey of the position regarding industrial mobilization.

5. Up to this point —i.e., the end of Part III—the report deals with a stewardship that has already become largely of historical interest only. The war, with its military and industrial mobilization measures, is finished with except in so far as it leaves some legacy—both of difficulties and of knowledge gained—for the peace. Since the end of hostilities the emphasis has changed from mobilization to employment.

6. The report, in its later parts, therefore surveys the post-war employment field entered during the period as against the background of the pre-war employment position and the effects of war on that position. Having traversed the employment field, it deals with legislation already on the statute-book for the better administration of employment matters within a Government policy of full employment and with the National Employment Service coming into operation on 1st April, 1946.

7. Finally, the report gives an account of the establishment within the twelve months under review of a Home Aid Service to be administered conjointly with the National Employment Service upon the establishment of the latter.

8. Appendix A briefly sets out the main features of population changes as affecting the Department's activities. Appendix B, in various charts and tables, provides statistical elaboration of the subject-matter of the various parts of the report.