

The personnel of the Board was as under :—

The Right Honourable Walter Nash, P.C. (Chairman).

Brigadier H. E. Avery, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O.

Mr. B. C. Ashwin, C.M.G. (Deputies : Mr. A. B. Taylor and Mr. N. R. Davis).

Brigadier G. B. Parkinson, C.B.E., D.S.O.

Air Commodore S. Wallingford, C.B.E. (Deputy : Wing Commander G. Carter, O.B.E.).

Mr. E. R. McKillop, O.B.E.

Mr. F. R. Picot, C.M.G. (Deputy : Mr. P. B. Marshall).

Mr. N. E. Hutchings, C.B.E.

Mr. A. H. Sage, O.B.E.

Mr. J. G. Young, C.B.E. (Deputy Chairman).

Mr. F. P. Walsh.

Mr. D. A. Ewen, O.B.E.

Mr. E. P. Meachen, M.P.

Mr. T. H. McCombs, M.P.

Brigadier Avery was General Manager of the Board, and Mr. J. G. Young was the Deputy Chairman.

Normal meetings of the Board were held fortnightly on every alternate Tuesday at 10.30 a.m., and usually lasted until lunch-time. Previous to the meeting an agenda was circulated to the members showing the matters to be dealt with, and this was usually received by the members on the preceding Friday ; but matters arising after the agenda was sent out and of which members had no notice were also dealt with at the meetings. Two months ago the hour of meeting was altered to 9.30 a.m. as it was found there was so much to do that they could not get through it in the time.

It should be pointed out that although the Board as at present functioning was constituted by the above-mentioned regulations on 31st October, 1945, a War Assets Realization Board was created in June, 1944, when its present Secretary was appointed Acting-Secretary and Brigadier Avery appointed General Manager. The latter, however, did not take over as a full-time position until the 30th September, 1944, when he relinquished his position as Quartermaster-General.

The magnitude of the Board's operations is evidenced by the fact that from its inception to the 31st March, 1946, it disposed of assets to the value of £14,748,936, and, in addition, a further £2,000,000 to the 31st July, 1946.

It is advisable to give a short history of the position before the acquisition of the motor-vehicles by the War Assets Realization Board to supply the necessary illuminating background. This position was fully explored, but to avoid unduly burdening this report I will give a summary sufficiently adequate. The position prior to the 24th September, 1945, was that during the progress of active operations in the Pacific arrangements were made between the New Zealand Government and the United States authorities whereby American motor-transport vehicles which could not be reconditioned in the Islands would be sent to New Zealand for such work to be done. The work was carried out under contract by Messrs. General Motors, Todd Motors, and Ford Motors companies under the control and supervision of the Munitions Controller. Up to VJ Day a large number of vehicles had been reconditioned and returned to the Islands. Shortly after VJ Day the United States authorities decided to cancel the contract in respect of all vehicles on which work had not been started. At that stage the number of vehicles involved was approximately 2,500, and, with few exceptions, all these required a major overhaul.

On the 24th September, 1945, the United States authorities communicated with the Munitions Controller offering the vehicles at the following prices :—

G.M.C. trucks	..	..	..	..	125 dollars each
Dodge trucks	..	..	..	..	100 dollars each
Jeeps	..	..	..	..	100 dollars each

The offer was for the whole of the vehicles in one lot, and amounted to some £94,242. An offer was also made of spare parts at published list prices, plus 25 per cent. surcharge.