

reconditioning. They were largely immobile, and many of them had been cannibalized for essential parts. The conditions under which the trucks operated are stated by Colonel Adamson in his book on the Ordnance Automotive Reclamation Project in New Zealand :—

When the U.S. Armed Forces arrived in the Pacific two and a half years ago motor transportation sprang to a position of first importance accompanied by obstacles hitherto unknown to modern armies. In an area comprised almost entirely of jungle-covered islands scattered over one-eighth of the world's surface without railroads or truck lines, without highways or bridges, trucks were forced to roll through mud, swamp, and coral while roads were being constructed. Vehicles and parts were critical, the tropical climate unpredictable, and maintenance units were either unavailable or long delayed in arriving, with no heavy maintenance shop committed to this area. Wholly disabled and critical vehicles began to accumulate. Such was the situation which prompted Army officials to make negotiations for the conversion of New Zealand automotive assembly plants into fifth echelon repair shops for the reconstruction of Army vehicles. Facilities for assembling the peacetime products of General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler were located in Wellington, and these facilities have become the greatest automotive clinic of the Southern Hemisphere. The undertaking is no superficial overhaul job. It is instead a task of complete reconstruction. Battle casualties, wrecks, and disabled vehicles are transported from eleven island bases and funneled into the dis-assembly lines at Wellington, where they are torn down to their smallest integral part. Caustic baths, sand-blasting, rethreading, regrinding, and replacement with new and reconstructed parts are but a few of the steps taken before the worn derelicts emerge as "new" vehicles. The word "new" is used advisedly, since by standards of both performance and appearance these vehicles are meeting every combat requirement.

The Munitions Controller states also that, after the first four hundred, the vehicles were all affected by salt water. The vehicles were densely parked in Gracefield Camp, Seaview—somewhere about half the Jeeps being loaded on the G.M.C. trucks.

This, then, is a general outline of the situation the Board was called upon to deal with in disposing of the vehicles.

I will now give a detailed summary of the Board's proceedings in connection with the disposal.

The following table shows the number of vehicles received by the Board and the number for which tenders were called :—

				Received by Board	Tenders called for.
G.M.C. trucks	..	..	..	1,234	1,225
Dodge trucks	..	..	..	420	420
I.H.C. trucks	..	..	..	3	3
Diamond T trucks	..	..	..	4	4
Jeeps	..	..	..	546	546
Cars	..	..	..	35	..

Of the above, nine G.M.C. trucks were transferred to the Public Works Department, and these were hand-picked for £5,055 (the value placed on the trucks was actually £7,866—the difference between these two sums being accounted for by the Customs Department being credited with 41½ per cent. for duty and sales tax as per agreement with the Board). Thirty-five cars were sold by tender in single units for £7,186, having been valued prior to sale at £2,220. No question arises as to the propriety of these two transactions.

The Board then proceeded to call for tenders, the following being a copy of the advertisement :—

WAR ASSETS REALIZATION BOARD

MOTOR VEHICLES (WRECKED AND INCOMPLETE) MOTOR PARTS AND SCRAP METAL ex UNITED STATES FORCES

TENDERS close with the Secretary, War Assets Realization Board, Defence Services Building, Bunny Street, Wellington (P.O. Box 5080, Lambton Quay), at NOON on MONDAY, 4th March, 1946, for the purchase of MOTOR VEHICLES (wrecked and incomplete) MOTOR PARTS & SCRAP METAL ex United States Forces located at the Holding Park, Seaview Road, Lower Hutt.

Lot 1 comprising approximately 1,225 "G.M.C." trucks.

Lot 2 comprising approximately 420 "Dodge" trucks.

Lot 3 comprising approximately 548 "Ford" Jeep trucks.

Lot 4 comprising approximately 200 tons Motor Parts & Scrap Metal.

The deposit to be lodged with each Tender is 5% of amount tendered.