

Any immigration which is undertaken should be of the selective type. We have shown that at the moment there is little scope for the absorption of workers in agriculture, and we are inclined to think that, taking into account the number of returned servicemen proposing to enter this type of occupation, New Zealand will itself in the future provide sufficient operatives adequately to equip the agricultural industry. We do not wish this to be thought in any way as an opinion that the absolute importance of agriculture is declining or about to decline. The plain facts are that on present evidence there is less available suitable land on which new agricultural development can take place than is popularly assumed. Undoubtedly, farming will become more intensive, but the experience of the past two decades has suggested that mechanical and scientific improvements have been the basis of the greater intensity with which the land is farmed at the present moment, and as a consequence the available labour-power has a greater output per head than previously. In other words, if the scientific and mechanical improvements which have been going on, particularly over the past two decades, are continued, the available labour power will result in a greater output. For these reasons we cannot recommend any large-scale Government immigration for agricultural purposes.

While we have above commented that there is less suitable land available for settlement than is popularly imagined, we think that a comprehensive investigation of the possibility of utilizing some of the second-grade land of the Dominion for more intensive use should be made. The investigation we envisage should comprise not merely the economics of the situation, but also the possibility of the development of the scientific resources of the Dominion so as to make the land more fertile than it is at present. This may involve considerable expenditure for developmental purposes, but if more of this second-grade land is made available for intensive settlement the return to the Dominion as a whole will more than repay the expenditure involved.

It is obvious, however, that the shortages in secondary industries, and to a lesser extent, in tertiary industries cannot be made up in a short run from our own population. There is a great deal to be said for a carefully planned immigration policy. By planning we mean that the immigrants should be carefully selected for their occupational aptitudes. It is obvious, for instance, that we need coal-miners, sawmillers, and operatives for many of our growing secondary industries. We are not in a position to state what numbers are required, but we think this is a matter which should occupy the very close attention of the National Employment Service in co-operation with the Departments specifically charged with the supervision of particular activities. As far as secondary industries are concerned, the Industries and Commerce Department should work in close co-operation with the National Employment Service. Similarly with the Mines Department, the Forestry Department, and other Departments.

We have previously expressed the opinion that, if possible, immigrants of British stock from the British Isles would prove the most satisfactory in this country. We realize, however, the grave difficulties which face Great Britain at the present time. That country also has a serious shortage of certain types of labour, and, in view of the strenuous endeavours which are being made to recover the export trade and to rebuild the industrial structure of that country, Great Britain may not be happy at seeing a large number of the younger and more able-bodied men and women emigrating to New Zealand. The emigration of any considerable number of the younger generation from Great Britain would accentuate the present tendency in that country for the older section of the community to increase relatively, and would therefore be potentially a very dangerous procedure from the point of view of the motherland. We are also conscious of the fact that several other countries, including Australia and South Africa, are exploring the possibility of attracting immigrants from Great Britain. From whatever angle we examine this subject, we appreciate the fact that, even if it were possible to bring in immigrants to this country immediately, it may be difficult to find these immigrants in Great Britain.