

After very careful consideration we are of opinion that some exploration should be undertaken of the possibilities of securing immigrants from certain northern European countries, in particular from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland. Such evidence as is available to us suggests that even from these countries there may be some difficulty in attracting sufficient immigrants to satisfy our demands. In these places, also, we are given to understand that certain other of the British Dominions are exploring the possibility of attracting immigrants to their shores.

This whole discussion of immigration, however, is conditioned by the fact that at the moment the grave housing shortages make it impossible to recommend that large-scale immigration should be embarked on immediately. It may be possible to begin at a fairly early date with the immigration of single young men and women carefully chosen because of their particular qualifications in industries which are short-staffed in the Dominion. The immigration of these single people would not create immediately the housing questions which an immigration policy which covered married men with wives and families. On the other hand, we recognize that it is necessary to consider the immigration of married persons with families, and, as we have stated before, we feel that an immediate investigation should be made of the immigration possibilities in Great Britain and northern Europe. Specific plans should be made as to their absorption in particular industries in the Dominion, and generally the Government should have long-term plans available which can be put into operation at the earliest possible date consistent with the supply of houses and the availability of transport.

Some witnesses discussed with us the question of bringing to New Zealand large numbers of war orphans from Great Britain and Northern Europe.

In the first place, we have no information as to the extent to which such orphans would be available for bringing to New Zealand. Before we could express an opinion as to the part New Zealand should play in the absorption of such orphans more information is necessary.

Further, the Director of Education has pointed out that the education system of the Dominion is strained to the limits at the present time. This fact would need to be taken into consideration in any plan for large-scale immigration of such children. Finally, the care of these children requires very considerable thought. No adequate solutions were suggested to us, and we have been unable adequately to investigate this problem.

In conclusion, we feel that New Zealand has some responsibility with regard to these children, but until the factors outlined above are properly investigated no positive commitments should be made.

Long-term planning in relation to immigration involves not merely the securing of the immigrants and the arrangements for their transport to the Dominion, and not merely the provision of houses, but also a definite direction as to industrial development not merely as to what industrial development is to take place, but also as to where it is to take place. We feel it important to reiterate that every stimulus should be given to industry to settle other than in the four main centres.

VIII. HOUSING AND TOWN-PLANNING

Throughout this report we have stressed from time to time that the provision of more houses is basic to an increase in the population, particularly from immigration. We recognize the strenuous efforts which are being made to catch up with the present deficiency. We also agree that the serious shortage of houses in the four main centres is of primary importance, but we feel that in the long-term planning of housing development more attention should be given to the provision of houses in the secondary centres. We think that this would tend to encourage the further geographical distribution of industry. Admittedly, it is not the only factor governing the location of industry, but it is an important factor.