

strain on the teachers available. This shortage of teachers and school buildings was not overtaken by 1939, when the war began. During the war, owing to the absence of many of the men with the fighting services, there has been a shortage of input of teachers. This shortage has been accentuated by the rising birth-rate from 1936 to the present date. The raising of the school leaving age to fifteen years will place a strain on the accommodation and teaching staff in secondary schools.

These educational problems must be given serious consideration when the question of the immigration of children is discussed. It is an important factor in connection with the proposals to bring war orphans in large numbers into the country.

The development of large housing estates, particularly in the Hutt Valley and in the Auckland area, has created serious and urgent problems, because this redistribution of available school population has necessitated the construction of many school buildings at a time when housing must receive a large priority. There is a close liaison between the Education Department and the Housing Department on this question.

16. HOUSING

At every stage of our inquiry into the possibility of arranging for immigration into the Dominion we were met by the fact that the housing shortages were so serious as to make it impossible for us to recommend an immediate commencement of large-scale immigration. At the present time returned servicemen are entitled to 50 per cent. of the available State houses, and, in addition, large numbers of civilians, particularly in the four main centres, are in need of satisfactory housing accommodation. The Director of Housing Construction states that 45,000 houses will be needed within the next three years to catch up with the deficiency and to take account of the normal annual requirements. Once the satisfaction of the internal demand for houses is in sight, immediate steps should be taken to secure immigrants for the purposes discussed earlier.

17. TOWN-PLANNING

In view of the increasing population of the Dominion and of the possibility within the next few years that a considerable number of immigrants will arrive, steps should be taken to see that new towns and suburbs are adequately laid out under modern town planning laws.

18. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF A CHANGING POPULATION

The fact that the population is steadily ageing has some very important results financially. It increases the burden of old-age benefits and increases the responsibility of the working community for the dependent sections of the community.

On the other hand, an increasing population will, other things being equal, result in a lowering of the burden of debt, particularly of the unproductive debt.

19. RESEARCH INTO POPULATION PROBLEMS

Our investigations have shown that proper attention has not been paid to the problem either of the absolute size of the population or of its internal distribution in the framing of departmental policies. We therefore recommend that a small secretariat should be attached directly to Cabinet charged with the continuous study of population movements, studies which can be made available to Departments in the framing of their own departmental policies.