

IKAROA AND SOUTH ISLAND NATIVE LAND COURT DISTRICTS

There has been a great increase in the volume of work during the past year, the number of applications received being 164, as compared with 93 in the previous year. Ninety-five loans have been approved, and 47 jobs have been completed, as compared with 24 in the previous year.

In the Ikaroa District there are 6 more workmen employed than there were last year, and in the South Island an additional 8 men have been engaged.

To cope with the increase in the volume of work, a store for the storage of building-materials in bulk has been erected at Levin, while space has been hired at Hastings, Picton, and Kaiapoi. The position in the Wairarapa district is not satisfactory and consideration is being given to the establishment of a store at Masterton. With the present position of building-materials, it is essential that delivery be taken when supplies are available.

In several areas where building teams are not operating it has been necessary to have work done by private contract, and in the Wellington City area, where several jobs are awaiting action, the services of a firm which includes a returned serviceman have been obtained. In Takapau one contractor has been engaged on Maori housing for some time and has several other jobs in prospect, while 2 houses in Plimmerton are at present under construction by private contract. Every encouragement is given to applicants who are qualified tradesmen and who wish to build their own houses. At present 2 houses are under construction, 1 at Paraparaumu and 1 at Stokes Valley.

The provision of housing-sites, particularly in the Wellington City area, is becoming increasingly difficult, and it is becoming necessary to purchase sections, as applicants have no suitable land of their own. As building sections in Wellington are at a premium, applicants are going farther afield, and houses are becoming scattered over a wide area from Island Bay in the south, to Stokes Valley and Paraparaumu in the north. This factor, together with the numerous inspections of houses and sections required for prospective purchasers, is making large calls upon the Building Supervisor's time. In other districts some applicants have interests in suitable building sections, but delays are being experienced in obtaining consents to partition where numerous owners are involved. Care is taken to guard against haphazard building in one block by seeing that owners agree to a suitable scheme of partition.

The activities in the South Island have been extended by the undertaking of several jobs at Takaka and the establishment of a building team at Kaiapoi. In this latter district 1 house is almost completed and another is under construction. A steady supply of work for this team seems assured for some considerable time to come. Another new departure was the erection of a house at Chatham Islands, which involved many difficulties, particularly as regards supervision and transport of materials.

PART V.—MAORI REHABILITATION FINANCE COMMITTEE

The year 1946 saw the repatriation and discharge of most of the Maori personnel from overseas, and as a consequence departmental activity in this sphere was considerably accelerated. The Committee held eight meetings during the year and authorized the expenditure of approximately £140,000. Although this figure is slightly smaller than the amount approved for the previous year, it represents assistance on a much wider scope.

It is the policy of the Department to ensure that Maori ex-servicemen who seek establishment on the land are placed on properties which are self-supporting. Some difficulty has been experienced in finding areas which, when developed, would provide the ex-serviceman with an economic single-unit holding, and consequently the amount expended upon land-settlement during the past year has been somewhat less than that