

APPENDIX F

ANNUAL REPORT ON BUILDINGS BY THE GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT

The GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT to the Hon. MINISTER OF WORKS.

SIR.—

I have the honour to submit the following report on the activities of the Architectural Division for the year ended 31st March, 1949 :—

Work has proceeded satisfactorily despite difficulties common to the whole building industry. Shortages of man-power have necessitated negotiation with contractors, in some cases causing delays in the commencement of contracts, while shortages of materials and the necessity for the introduction of substitutes have retarded progress. Shortage of subcontractors, particularly for the mechanical engineering work now so essential in modern buildings, has led to further delays.

These problems, together with that of obtaining competitive tenders for works distant from contractors' headquarters, have made estimating and the evaluation of tenders most difficult.

The position regarding technical and clerical staff remains difficult, and will continue so whilst such a vast programme of work remains to be undertaken.

More senior staff with experience are still needed to deal efficiently with the work in hand and to give adequate departmental training to junior men.

Professional and technical liaison with all Government Departments has been maintained, and the aim to co-ordinate and standardize the work done in the Division has been recognized as being to the advantage of all concerned. During the year an architectural group was established to work in close association with the engineers of the State Hydro-electric Department, and further steps have been taken to unify fire-protection services.

Professional and technical advice has been given to the Accommodation Board, and work has also been carried out for the Earthquake Damage Commission, the Standards Institute, and the Local Government Loans Board. Where it has been found necessary to assist other Departments with their architectural work, qualified officers have been seconded to those Departments.

Maintenance of buildings owned by the Government is increasing and it is evident that a special section will need to be formed to carry out this class of work. In this connection the district workshops must play an important part.

During the year a tornado, passing through Frankton and Hamilton, did extensive damage to houses and commercial buildings, and I am pleased to report that the staff of the Division carried out emergency repairs and reinstatement in a commendable manner.

The expected visit of Their Majesties to the Dominion threw a large volume of preparatory work on some of the staff, particularly on those in the workshops at Wellington. Although it is regretted that the visit was postponed, this work reduced routine production considerably.