

INSPECTING ORDNANCE OFFICERS' GROUP

Frequent inspections are necessarily made to ascertain the extent to which stored ammunition has deteriorated. Consequent upon these inspections all ammunition that has depreciated and thereby become dangerous is surveyed and finally destroyed. Under the surveys conducted by the group during the year many tons of ammunition and explosives have been surveyed, and any which was unfit for use was disposed of by the normal method of dumping at sea. A quantity requiring repair was made serviceable.

During the year the Chief Inspecting Ordnance Officer paid a visit to Australia for the purpose of examining methods of organization, inspection, repair, small-arms-ammunition production, and proofing. The experience gained as a result of this visit is being applied with advantage to this organization in New Zealand.

DEFENCE SERVICES PROVISION OFFICE

This office closed down in December, 1948, when responsibility for finalizing the remaining few transactions was taken over by other branches of the Army Department and the War Assets Realization Board.

During the year stores to the value of £109,289 were shipped overseas on behalf of the United Kingdom Government.

ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEER SERVICE

To repair the great variety of complex modern weapons highly-skilled tradesmen in many different trades are required in R.N.Z.E.M.E. workshops. It has not been possible to obtain sufficient personnel to perform all tasks, and, in spite of a steady, but small, increase in man-power throughout the year, the strength of R.N.Z.E.M.E. is still less than half of the approved establishment.

Such a shortage of skilled personnel makes it most difficult to cope with current repairs and to carry out reconditioning of the large quantity of equipment held in store. However, the efficient employment of the limited technical man-power available has resulted in a very creditable amount of inspection, repair, and maintenance being effected on wheeled and tracked vehicles, artillery equipments, small arms, instruments and radar. Navy and Air Force vehicles have also been repaired in R.N.Z.E.M.E. workshops.

During the year a mobile team was established in each of the three districts to visit all units for the purpose of inspecting vehicles, instructing units in vehicle maintenance, and doing what immediate repairs lay within the team's capacity until such time as units were in a position to do their own maintenance.

Certain tradesmen from United Kingdom on a five-year engagement have commenced duty in M.T. and Armament workshops, and more are expected. These tradesmen will give valuable assistance in their respective trades, and will help to fill the gap which exists until the present apprentices qualify as journeymen in over four years' time.

Reparations machinery ex-Germany has been periodically inspected, and some suitable machine tools have been acquired, which will enable certain very old and worn machines to be disposed of by workshops.

DENTAL SERVICES

During the period under review the staff situation within the Royal New Zealand Army Dental Corps has been considerably improved by the addition of four recently-qualified dental surgeons and by very necessary increase in the number of dental clerk