

Police.

Concerning the Police Department, provision is being made for the erection of new police-stations at Palmerston North, Mount Cook (Wellington), Whangarei, Wanganui, Nelson, Greymouth, and Timaru, where the existing stations are very old buildings, beyond repair, and quite inadequate for present-day requirements.

It is also proposed to carry out additions and alterations to the Central Police-stations at Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, to provide for badly-needed additional office and barrack accommodation.

The numerical strength of the Police Force has been increased by 175 men, of whom 125 are required to enable the weekly working-hours to be reduced from fifty-six to forty-eight. A reduction to forty hours per week was not found practicable, and as some compensation for this an increase of 10s. per week in pay has been granted to all members of the Force.

Provision is also being made for procuring additional technical equipment for the Police Department.

**Marine
Department
radio
beacons.**

An allocation of £20,000 has been made for continuation of the programme of installing radio beacons at suitable lighthouses on the coast.

At the same time lights at the stations are being changed over from incandescent gas to electric light, and current will also be provided for the residences of keepers.

A small sum has been provided in continuation of a programme of replacement of lighthouse buildings which are showing deterioration due to age.

**Comparative
expenditure.**

May I, towards the conclusion of this Statement, make some comments on the estimated expenditure on particular items for the year under review, and submit a comparison with the last year of the previous Government, 1935-36. The total estimated expenditure this year is £34,427,721 as against £25,890,567 for 1935-36, an increase of £8,537,154.

Where is it proposed to expend the extra sums?

Of the major items, highways shows an increase of £951,000, but it will all be expended on roads and bridges to the particular benefit of the motorist and the general benefit of our people in town and country.

The cost of departments grouped in the estimate under general administration and law and order is up by £701,000 due to restoration of salaries and wages and extension of other facilities, including Commissions for mortgage adjustments.

Defence shows an increase of £585,000. Apart from the amount required for Air Services, this increase arises from a policy to which the Government were partially committed on coming into office.

The cost of development of primary and secondary industries is £672,000 greater, but any expenditure that will lead to increased utilization of our raw materials and national resources is good economy.

If we turn to social services we find that health expenditure, including Mental Hospitals, is up by £444,000.

Extension of education facilities is costing £950,000 more, but if well spent it is the essence of progressive economy.

War pensions show an increase of £250,553, whilst the veterans receive £163,456 more. The sum required to assist our old people is more than double the amount of two years ago. Widows with young children will receive £188,000 more, and the reproach of the invalids who were not previously provided for has been removed at a cost of £627,000.

There are other minor increases, but a decrease is recorded under family allowances.

One of the most interesting indexes to the progress of the Dominion is the recorded statistics of applications for and payments of family allowances. Honourable members will recollect that in 1934-35 a family of husband, wife, and more than two children could not claim the family allowance if the family income exceeded £3 5s. increased by 2s. for each child in excess of two. In that year 12,321 allowances were paid, and this meant that 12,321 mothers with more than two children had incomes of less than the limit mentioned. In the year 1936-37, after slightly more than a year of the present Government,