

1940.

NEW ZEALAND.

**AIR DEPARTMENT**

(REPORT ON THE), FOR THE YEAR 1939-40.

*Presented in pursuance of Section 7 of the Air Department Act, 1937.***REPORT BY THE HONOURABLE F. JONES, MINISTER IN CHARGE OF THE AIR DEPARTMENT, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1940.**

MR. SPEAKER,—

I have the honour to present to Parliament the report of the Air Department for the year ended the 31st March, 1940.

To all concerned with civil and Service aviation I desire to express my appreciation of the energy and resource that have been displayed in what has been a particularly strenuous year.

**REPORT BY THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1940.**

The Hon. the MINISTER OF DEFENCE.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report on the Royal New Zealand Air Force for the year ending 31st March, 1940.

**EXPANSION PROGRAMME.**

During April, 1939, a further expansion scheme was recommended by the Air Department with the object of broadening the basis on which to expand the training organization in the event of war. This scheme, which was supported by the British Air Mission and the Pacific Defence Conference, provided for—

- (a) The conversion of the Blenheim Air Force Station to a Flying Training School with an output of 140 pilots per annum :
- (b) An increase in the Flying Training School at Wigram from an output of 80 to 140 pilots per annum :
- (c) The purchase of additional aircraft and equipment necessary to maintain fully the training operations at these two schools.

**PROGRESS PRIOR TO OUTBREAK OF WAR.**

Up to the outbreak of war considerable progress had been made with the whole expansion programme, and on the 4th September, 1939, the position was as follows:—

- (a) Territorial Squadrons had been established at Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch :
- (b) An aero club organization with approximately sixty elementary training aircraft of the Tiger Moth type existed :
- (c) The peace building programme for No. 1 Flying Training School, Wigram, was nearing completion, and this unit was already dealing with an increased intake of pupils :
- (d) The peace building programme for No. 2 Flying Training School, Blenheim, was approximately half-completed :
- (e) The peace building programme for the operational station at Ohakea was nearing completion :
- (f) The landing-ground at Whenuapai had been prepared, and the peace building programme had made satisfactory progress :
- (g) Expansion up to the scale laid down in peace for the Royal New Zealand Air Force Depot, Hobsonville, was making satisfactory progress :
- (h) The peace building programme for the Territorial Flight at Dunedin had just commenced :
- (i) An adequate stock of bombs for twelve months' operations at maximum scale visualized was available in the Dominion :
- (j) The Railway Workshop scheme for training Flight Mechanics and Flight Riggers was making satisfactory progress. Buildings had been completed at the Railway Workshops at the Hutt, and the first course was running. The buildings at the Railway Workshops at Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin were nearing completion.