

In providing comforts for men of the armed forces in New Zealand, and particularly overseas, the Board can justly claim, from opinions expressed by independent sources, that New Zealand sailors, soldiers, and airmen are at least as well cared for as any of their comrades in other Empire countries, but in expressing this measure of satisfaction with the result the Board is fully conscious that much remains to be done, and that even greater efforts to raise funds will be necessary during the forthcoming year to cope with the increasing demands that must be met if our people at home are to do their full duty to the men and women of our fighting forces. It must be remembered that the standard of living of New Zealand men drawn from civil life into the armed forces has been high, and, no matter how efficient a comforts organization may be, it cannot hope to do more than cushion some of the difficulties, discomforts, and shortages inevitably associated with war. The need for bridging this gap, as far as possible, is fully realized by the Board, and this is its chief objective.

NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD.

The work of the Board may be summarized as follows:—

- (1) The erection, maintenance, and equipment of recreational huts (other than service huts which are erected by the Government) and the extra furnishing *only* of the service huts and messes:
- (2) The supply of comforts to men on visiting escort vessels:
- (3) The supply of comforts to naval, military, and air force personnel on troopships and overseas:
- (4) The care of the sick and wounded, and prisoners of war:
- (5) The organization, through Provincial Councils, of such special appeals as may be required to assist the relief of civil distress and injury arising out of war action, whether in New Zealand or overseas:
- (6) The provision or supplementing of regimental funds for troops overseas:
- (7) The retention, as a reservoir to assist Provincial Funds, of the balance of money in hand at the end of the war, including surplus trust funds raised during the present war, not required for original purposes.

The Board carries out this work in conjunction with existing national social welfare organizations which have been appointed the Board's main expending agents. These organizations are:—

Y.M.C.A.	..	..	..	..	..	} For fighting services generally.
Church of England Military Affairs Committee	..	..	..	..	..
Catholic War Services Fund Board	..	..	..	..	..
Salvation Army	..	..	..	..	..
Air Force Relations	..	..	..	..	..	For the Air Force.
Navy League War Council	..	..	..	..	..	For Navy and deep-sea merchantmen.
The Joint Council of the Order of St. John and New Zealand Red Cross Society	..	..	..	..	..	} For sick and wounded and prisoners of war.

PROVINCIAL PATRIOTIC COUNCILS.

Briefly, the eleven Provincial Patriotic Councils are responsible for the entertainment within their provinces of men of the armed forces in camps and on leave; the provision of wool for knitted comforts particularly for men overseas; the provision of gift parcels for despatch overseas at regular intervals; the supplementing of regimental funds in New Zealand; the supply of comforts to naval ratings within New Zealand; the provision of amenities, sports gear, and comforts for men on coast-watching and other stations in New Zealand; and particularly the provision of some emergency financial assistance to members and ex-members of the fighting forces, or their dependants, who may be in necessitous circumstances.

MONEY-RAISING ACTIVITIES.

At the outset the Government made a grant of £1,000 to meet incidental expenses associated with the establishment of the National Patriotic Fund Board. Dominion-wide collections were made on behalf of the Board's funds, and Provincial Patriotic Councils also conducted appeals. Subsequently this procedure was changed, and Provincial Patriotic Councils were appointed sole collecting authorities within their own districts, and on the Board waiving its right (other than in emergencies) to collect for its own fund, the Councils agreed to raise for the Board the moneys required to carry out its programme. Under the earlier arrangement the Board conducted three Dominion-wide appeals for funds. The first two appeals (known as the "Governor-General's Appeal" and the "National Patriotic Seal Campaign") realized approximately £55,000. The third appeal (known as the "Fighting Services Welfare Appeal") realized approximately £104,000. This Fighting Services Welfare Appeal was conducted for the National Patriotic Fund Board by a Joint Committee of the Y.M.C.A. and the Salvation Army. Subsequently the Joint Council of the Order of St. John and New Zealand Red Cross Society conducted an appeal (known as the "Sick, Wounded, and Distress Appeal"), and this realized a sum of £587,412. The total funds thus collected on a Dominion-wide basis to the 30th September, 1940, amounted to £746,451. The money collected for the Sick, Wounded, and Distress Appeal was earmarked specifically for the purpose for which it was collected. The proceeds of appeals, apart from the Sick, Wounded, and Distress Appeal, have been used for the current requirements of the Board, and henceforward it is not proposed, except in special circumstances, to depart from the principle of giving each Provincial Patriotic Council the sole authority for collecting funds in its own district.