

ADDENDUM

GENERAL REPORT ON OPERATIONS OF THE SOLDIERS' FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BOARD

Following the cessation of hostilities and the consequent demobilization of the Armed Forces, the time seems opportune to place on record a summary of the operations of the Soldiers' Financial Assistance Board, which has functioned almost from the commencement of hostilities, although during the past few months its operations have been on a greatly reduced scale and before very long the Board will have finally completed the task for which it was established. The following is therefore submitted by way of a general survey of the broader issues which arose in the course of its operations:—

CONSTITUTION OF BOARD

The Board was set up within a few months of the outbreak of hostilities. Regulations which had been put into operation closely following the declaration of war gave the necessary authority without special legislation being required, and, in announcing the personnel of the Board, the Government also indicated the general lines upon which the Board was to operate. Expressed briefly, it could be stated that the function of the Board was to grant assistance to servicemen who, as a direct result of joining the Forces, were unable to meet the normal and reasonable commitments of civil life. The Board was not empowered to meet principal repayments on mortgages, and the maximum assistance which could be granted in the case of any one applicant was £156 per annum. The machinery of the State Advances Corporation was utilized for the administrative work in connection with the Board. The necessary funds were provided from the War Expenses Account.

The original members of the Board were:—

Chairman—

A. D. Park, C.M.G. or	}	Joint Managing Directors, State Advances Corporation.
T. N. Smallwood, O.B.E.		

Members—

B. C. Ashwin, C.M.G., Secretary to the Treasury.
 D. Barnes, Timaru.
 J. G. Barclay, M.P., Whangarei.
 H. E. Combs, M.P., Wellington.
 T. L. MacDonald, M.P., Mataura.
 Ernest W. Hunt, Public Accountant, Wellington.

The appointments were purely honorary, although provision was made for meeting travelling-expenses incurred in attending meetings.

Closely following the press announcement of the establishment of the Board, application forms were prepared and circulated to all military camps, as well as to all post-offices throughout the Dominion. Arrangements were also put in train with Base Records, the Navy Office, and the Air Department for the supply of such information as would be required both as regards the general rates of pay and allowances and also the amounts which would be payable to individual applicants. Provision was also made to keep the Board informed of any changes which might occur in the status of those applicants to whom assistance of a continuing nature was granted.