

# REPORT

## CHAPTER I.—FOREST POLICY

1. *General Administration.*—The transition of the Dominion from a war to a peace economy has intensified rather than simplified the general administrative problems of the State Forest Service. Under the impact of six years of war on timber production, forestry has suffered severely, and must continue to do so until the present demand for timber is overcome and adequate forestry staff and labour have been secured. All that it has been possible to do has been to concentrate with the meagre staff available upon fire-prevention, forward planning, and training, which will allow arrears of essential silvicultural and general maintenance work to be overtaken as rapidly and as efficiently as practicable when labour requirements are eventually met.

A continuation of man-power difficulties and of timber control for a period of at least two years, which now appears inevitable, will call for mutual forbearance on the part of all concerned. Both Forest Service staff and the employers and employees in the timber industry are suffering from war weariness, the result of working long hours, often under extremely arduous conditions; the public is understandingly tired of controls, which, however necessary they may be or how well administered, invariably appear vexatious; and returned servicemen long separated from their families—civilians too—are clamouring for dwelling facilities.

The bald fact of the matter is that the accumulated arrears of repairs, maintenance, and new construction over six years of war are of such a magnitude that not only timber, but also all other building-materials, could probably be absorbed for several years to come at twice the pre-war rate of consumption. The same applies in many other lands, even more so in war-devastated countries, so that overseas supplies of timber and other building-material must likewise continue in short supply. It must be obvious that there is no short-term solution to the problem, hence the necessity for patience and forbearance. The Department can only hold the scales of justice in the allocation of available supplies to various zones and industries by a factual assessment of the many complicated claims which the Office of the Timber Controller is requested to handle, and at the same time explore, develop, and persevere with every conceivable means of increasing production and relieving the timber shortage. It is advisable in principle that timber control should be transferred from a war emergency to a peacetime basis, and recommendations to this effect will be presented to the Government during the current year.

2. *Staff Reorganization, Recruitment, and Training.*—During the 1929-35 depression the Forest Service, like many other governmental and private organizations, allowed recruitment to lapse, and current staffing difficulties spring from this fact. In retrospect, it appears difficult to justify the fact that over a long period of years the Department did not recruit a single field officer. With the ever-increasing expansion of forest activities and with the changing character of much of the work it has been necessary not only to reorganize the whole administrative structure of the Department, but also to develop a twenty-year staffing objective, together with a training scheme covering virtually every category of trained personnel, in order that the future expenditure of public moneys amounting to many millions of pounds may be reasonably safeguarded. This training scheme, which is based on a recruitment policy first brought into operation in 1939, was inaugurated two years ago with the establishment of the Rotorua Forest Training Centre, and it has since been further developed by the setting-up during the year under review of a Vocational Training School at Tapanui. Training courses for all