

and materials will permit their construction. No doubt when this time arises physical planning and programming of works for national, urban, and regional development will be a most important administrative process associated with the implementation of the Government's full employment policy.

In completing the announcement of the regional schedules of works, popularly, but erroneously, termed "ten-year plans," I have faced throughout the country audiences comprising every shade of political thought, and there has been no criticism whatever of the principle of regional planning which, although on the statute-book since 1929, has made little progress.

The unusual circumstances following the war required a review of accumulated Government and local-body works, and presented a unique opportunity for the Government in publishing the review to put the principles of regional planning into practical effect. Briefly it represented an earnest endeavour on the part of Government to associate local bodies with the forward development of the country by publishing in a comprehensive manner, as a first step only, works currently under consideration. These should now be reviewed by regional authorities in conjunction with the Government Departments concerned and with all relative information available regarding the natural resources of each particular region. This initial step in the planning process should be followed by investigation, planning, and preparation of actual drawings and specifications according to the priority determined from year to year. I hope that plans for the future development of each region will be built up, and when that is done we will have for the first time some conception of what New Zealand can be like in the future. It may well be that this investigation and preparation of national, urban, and regional development works for eventual association with and contribution to full employment will yet prove the most fruitful endeavour of the Ministry during the period of man-power and material shortages. I cannot too strongly stress the need to realize that if we are to make advances in this field of development linked with full employment, the Government's policy to associate Central Government with local authorities constituted through regional or metropolitan authorities is of the utmost importance. New Zealand has reached a stage in its progress when the development proposals of Central and local Government, and indeed those of major private interests, must be considered together.

Improved transport and communications have entirely altered the relations local bodies have to each other, and we cannot wait for local bodies to argue out individual differences whilst rivers, floods, and other natural forces take no notice of administrative boundaries. Land-development, highways, railways, aerodromes, harbours, and similar works can only be decided with due regard to all interests which will use these facilities. The Government therefore finds it impossible to plan efficiently ahead on the basis of representations from a very large number of individual local bodies where these are not associated on some basis of community of interest. Nor should it be left to the Government alone—local people know more about their districts than any one else, and as they have to live amongst and use the works provided they are entitled to some say in the matter. It was an endeavour to group local authorities in associations of community of interest that resulted in the conception of Regional Councils. This does not mean that there will be undue interference with established procedure.

There are works which are purely national in character, such as hydro-electric proposals, making heavy demands on man-power and materials, also there are local works which are parochial and solely the concern of the individual local authority and regarding which representations can be made direct to the Government separately by local bodies as in the past. Within this latter category come mainly county road works, which have no general or regional significance except in local demands upon man-power and materials. The bulk of the proposals in the works schedules, however, are regional in character and are those which concern all local authorities grouped in the area. In the preparation of annual public-works programmes, the Government will particularly seek the advice and assistance of regional authorities in respect of such works.