

Every effort has been concentrated on releasing at the earliest possible date those blocks which are being developed and subdivided for the settlement of discharged servicemen, but operations have been hampered owing to the limited supply of essential materials, particularly fencing-wire. Another delaying factor has been the erection of buildings, especially houses. Details of properties acquired and purchased for soldier settlement during the year, together with a résumé of the progress made in land-development operations, are given in a later section of this report.

Revaluations of Crown leases and licences, in terms of section 216 of the Land Act, 1924, which were suspended during the war years, are now being undertaken. Up to the 31st March, 1948, 24 cases have been finally dealt with, and reductions in capital values totalling £29,288 were approved. Applications by 14 high-country, pastoral-run holders for a review of their annual rentals, in terms of section 277 of the Land Act, 1924, were also considered. In these cases reductions in rentals amounting to £1,675 were approved.

The volume of work associated with the administration of the Discharged Servicemen's Settlement and Land Sales Act, 1943, is still heavy, and, as will be seen from the information set out later in this report, satisfactory progress has been made in dealing with transactions arising as a result of the operation of the Act.

## LEGISLATION

### LAND LAWS AMENDMENT ACT, 1947

Amendments to certain provisions of various Acts administered by the Department, and also some entirely new provisions, were enacted in the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1947, which contains three Parts.

*Part I* gives servicemen settlers, after three years' occupation of their holdings, the right to apply to the Land Settlement Board for a review of their charges. The legislation also provides that in the event of a serviceman being dissatisfied with the Land Settlement Board's decision he is to have the right of appeal to the Land Sales Court, which is to deal with each case in substantially the same manner as if it were an appeal to the Court from an order of a Land Sales Committee determining the basic value of the land under the Servicemen's Settlement and Land Sales Act, 1943.

*Part II* contains amendments of a machinery nature to the Land Subdivision in Counties Act, 1946.

*Part III* includes an amendment to section 40 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1945, covering the disposal of Crown land for commercial purposes, and an amendment to section 52 of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, to permit the erection of caretakers' residences on domain lands. An amendment to section 3 of the Swamp Drainage Amendment Act, 1928, relating to classification of lands for rating purposes, is also included in this Part of the Act.

### RESERVES AND OTHER LANDS DISPOSAL ACT, 1947

This Act, of thirty sections, makes provision in *section 15* for the extension of the term of certain Crown leases which were due to expire by effluxion of time. The necessity for this legislation arose from the fact that the Department, owing to pressure of land-settlement and other business, is not in a position at present to handle the work involved in the renewal of leases. The other sections in the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1947, are of a machinery nature, and deal with Crown lands, reserves, endowments, and other lands.