

As an experiment import licences have been issued for a limited number of different types of prefabricated houses. The purpose is to ascertain their suitability for our conditions and to obtain accurate data as to the complete costs of this type of accommodation ready for occupancy.

The Government is anxious to do everything possible to assist in overcoming the housing shortage, but a real factor that should not be overlooked is that the demand for all types of buildings, houses, schools, offices, camps, and hostels exceeds the architectural capacity, material, and man-power resources available. There has been a tendency to try and go too fast. The result has been a lack of any real competition among contractors, and this usually means higher costs. A slackening of Government work, if that were practicable, might have an appreciable effect on prices and costs.

#### **School Buildings**

New schools and other educational buildings represent a very heavy commitment because of the rapid numerical growth of the school population and the development of new housing and farming communities. The greatest need at present is for additional class-rooms for schools, and that type of building is to receive priority. For these purposes £2,750,000 has been allocated for education buildings, compared with an expenditure of £2,336,000 last year. In order to reduce the call upon loan-moneys and because of the non-productive nature of such assets financially, £750,000 of the amount to be spent this year will be provided from revenue.

#### **Electric Power**

Electric-power schemes under way in the South Island include a very large one at Roxburgh, a smaller one at Tekapo, and extensions to existing schemes at Waitaki and Cobb River. There are also lake control schemes at Pukaki and Tekapo. In the North Island efforts are being concentrated on the completion of Maraetai while considerable progress has been made on another large project at Whakamaru, and investigations into the practicability of using geo-thermal steam for power development are being vigorously pursued.

Work on all these schemes is limited mainly by the labour forces available, but the Government's immigration policy should help to meet this difficulty. Provision has been made for increased capital