

1907.
NEW ZEALAND.

DEFENCE FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL OF DEFENCE AND BY THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF THE
NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCES, FOR THE YEAR 1907.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MY LORD,—

Wellington, 7th August, 1907.

I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the report of the New Zealand Defence Council, 1907.

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD,

Minister of Defence.

His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand.

REPORT OF NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE COUNCIL, 1907.

It having been decided by Parliament that a Council of Defence take the place of the previous administration and control of the Forces by a General Officer Commanding and Staff, the members below named assumed duties on the 5th January, 1907. The Volunteer year closes on the 28th February of each year, this report therefore cannot be termed other than an introductory statement for general information, with a short *précis* of the duties of the Council of Defence, and the policy or lines on which it is proposed to obtain better efficiency and readiness for defence

CONSTITUTION, COUNCIL OF DEFENCE.

The Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward, P.C., K.C.M.G., Minister of Defence, President.
Colonel A. W. Robin, C.B., N.Z.M., Chief of the General Staff, First Military Member.
(To arrive from England,) Adjutant and Quartermaster-General, Second Military Member.
Colonel R. H. Davies, C.B., N.Z.M., Inspector-General, Third Military Member.
Colonel R. J. Collins, V.D., N.Z.M., Finance Member.
Colonel W. H. Webb, N.Z.M., Secretary and Member.

MEETINGS.

The first meeting was held on the 7th January, 1907, Council afterwards regularly meeting until the departure of the Hon. the Minister of Defence to attend the Conference of Premiers in London. The Hon. R. McNab acted as Minister during the absence of the Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward, P.C., K.C.M.G.

POLICY.

Taking all circumstances into consideration it was decided that the policy of defence should for the present continue purely voluntary; that regulations be made and amended to further encourage enlistment and obtain efficiency; that provision be made for forming reserves, for more decentralisation, increasing the powers and initiative of district commanders, and for the completion of staffs, &c.; and, generally, that endeavour be made to popularise the Force in the eyes of the public; that the Force be for service in defence of the colony, over-sea contingents required at any time being raised and equipped as a special Force. That coast-defence be considered, and, when decided, gone on with and maintained in relation to the naval policy existing between the Home-country and our colony.

Should the Volunteer Force not be maintained or brought up to an efficient state, Volunteering has had its last chance. If the general public are in earnest as to defence, they must themselves assist and insure that under the Volunteer system sufficient enlistment is made, and that once men are enlisted they attend regularly. The alternative is a system of universal or compulsory training, whereby the burden of service in the Defence Forces will be more evenly distributed.

DUTIES OF COUNCIL OF DEFENCE.

The Council of Defence is an advisory body to the Hon. the Minister of Defence on all matters connected with defence. It also prepares and puts before the Minister such subjects as may be necessary for his consideration and decision. When not in Conference with the Minister, its