

SESSION II.
1921.
NEW ZEALAND.

HOUSING ACT, 1919

(STATEMENT OF THE HOUSING SUPERINTENDENT RELATING TO THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 35 of the Housing Act, 1919.

20th September, 1921.

IN pursuance of section 35 of the Housing Act, 1919, I have the honour to present the following statement of the Housing Superintendent relating to the operation of the Act during the year ended 31st March, 1921.

G. JAS. ANDERSON, Minister of Labour.

REPORT.

During the year under review an amendment to the Housing Act, 1919, was passed. The principal provisions are,—

- (1.) To enable leasehold interests in land to be acquired for workers' dwellings. Whilst it is desirable to build on freehold land wherever possible, it may be found necessary to acquire leasehold land in those towns where the freehold cannot be obtained.
- (2.) Owing to the increased cost of building, the statutory maximum cost of dwellings was increased in the case of wooden dwellings from £775 to £900 (including section and administration expenses), and in the case of concrete or brick dwellings from £850 to £1,000.
- (3.) The provisions of Part II of the Housing Act, enabling incorporated societies of public servants to establish residential settlements and to obtain advances therefor, were extended so as to apply to any public-utility society formed for the purpose of establishing a village settlement or garden suburb. No applications have yet been made.
- (4.) Further power was given to enable Harbour Boards to borrow moneys for the acquisition of land and the erection of workers' dwellings pursuant to the provisions of Part IV of the principal Act.
- (5.) The remaining provisions related principally to the machinery of the Act, or to the restriction of rent of private dwellings. The latter has been dealt with in the general report of the Department.

BUILDING OPERATIONS, PRICES, ETC. (PART I.)

Early in the year the Government authorized the Housing Board to proceed, out of the number of dwellings allocated by the Board, with the erection of 500 dwellings throughout the Dominion in addition to 209 in course of erection at that time.

In allocating dwellings to each town the Board takes into consideration the number of applications received at the date of the allocation, the existing demand for dwellings generally, the number of workers' dwellings already erected there, and the prospects of future development and stability of the town.

Tenders were accordingly called for in all the principal towns of the Dominion, but in only four towns were satisfactory quotations obtained at a fixed price—viz., Wanganui, Napier, Nelson, and Christchurch. These were accepted, but the Napier contractor, after signing the contract, failed to proceed with the work. Builders elsewhere were willing to erect dwellings only on a percentage basis, or, if fixed prices were submitted, the amounts were considerably too high. The position improved towards the end of the year.