

As part of the plan for working in collaboration with the local authorities and for securing their co-operation, a committee has been set up consisting of the Mayors of Lower Hutt, Petone, Upper Hutt, and Eastbourne, and the Chairman of the Hutt County Council. Mr. Mawson is maintaining regular contact with this committee.

In addition, consultations have taken place with and active co-operation is being sought from numerous business and social interests in or connected with the Hutt Valley, with a view to studying all phases of the problem and producing a scheme of development which serves the best interests of all concerned.

C. INTERNATIONAL HOUSING AND TOWN-PLANNING CONGRESS.

The Sixteenth International Housing and Town-Planning Congress, organized by the International Federation for Housing and Town-planning, was held in August, 1938, in Mexico City. The New Zealand Government has for many years been associated with the work of the Federation, but it has not previously sent an official delegate to the Congress, although it has been represented on several occasions by New-Zealanders resident in England and others. It was felt that, in view of the developments in this field which are taking place in New Zealand at the present time, valuable knowledge would be gained if a direct representation from New Zealand was made. To this end it was decided to send Mr. A. G. Harper, Officer in Charge of the Local Government Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, to the Congress, and in view of the subjects under discussion and the knowledge Mr. Harper was able to gain of movements in housing and town-planning in other parts of the world this decision was fully justified.

Among subjects which were discussed and which were of particular interest to New Zealand can be mentioned "Housing in Tropical and Sub-tropical Countries," "Progress in World Housing," "Town-planning Education," "Planning, Recreation, and the Use of Leisure Time," and "National Planning." Mr. Harper has made a very full report on the subjects discussed at the Conference, and already the information which he has gained has been of considerable value to the Government. Mr. Harper was able to discuss in some detail the work of the New Zealand Government in the field of housing and town-planning and in the physical welfare and recreation movement, and considerable interest was taken by the Congress in this development. It is felt that New Zealand has much to gain from and to contribute to these international gatherings.

V. LAND-AGENTS.

Seven hundred and thirteen licenses were issued and 16 transfers granted, as compared with 694 licenses and 10 transfers for the previous year.

Two cases of default on the part of land-agents were considered by the Department during the year. One of these cases was adjusted with the appropriate insurance company after certain questions had been submitted to the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal for decision. The other case is still being investigated.

VI. AUCTIONEERS.

Four hundred and fifty-nine licenses were issued, 7 transfers were granted, and 204 changes of endorsement of seller were made, as compared with 444 licenses, 2 transfers, and 326 changes of endorsement for the previous year.

Default on the part of one auctioneer was brought to the notice of the Department, and the matter was adjusted with the appropriate insurance company.

VII. EMERGENCY PRECAUTIONS.

A. GENERAL SCHEME.

In order that an adequate organization should be available in any emergency of a national or local character the Government appointed a Committee to prepare, for the guidance of controlling authorities, an emergency-precautions scheme. The general object of this scheme is to provide a uniform basis for organization throughout the Dominion for the control in any locality of all essential services when these have been suspended as a result of a disaster. While the scheme is designed primarily to provide for control in the case of disaster due to natural causes, it nevertheless provides an organization to cope with disasters consequent upon enemy action. The Department of Internal Affairs is charged with the administrative control of the scheme.

A copy of the provisional scheme drawn up by the Committee was forwarded to selected local authorities with a view to obtaining their general comments. The local authorities to whom the scheme was submitted evinced great interest, and many forwarded valuable suggestions. Some local authorities have already prepared local emergency schemes, based on the provisional proposals forwarded to them.

In the light of the comments received, it is proposed to revise the scheme and distribute it to interests affected. As finally issued the proposals should provide an authoritative guide to controlling authorities as to the action necessary in an emergency.

B. ANTI-GAS TRAINING.

The liability of the Dominion to enemy air attacks has been under consideration by a special Committee. Among other suggestions, the Committee recommended that in the four main centres classes be formed of specially selected persons who will receive elementary instruction in anti-gas measures. It is considered that the most satisfactory work will be done if membership of the classes