

The general issue of official price-lists incorporating all prices authorized by the Tribunal presents difficulties because, except in the case of Price Orders and except where provision is otherwise made, the Tribunal's decisions apply only to individual traders, and not to all traders in the particular industry. This means that any increases approved apply only to those traders who have made application and who have proved to the Tribunal the justification for such increases.

Realizing the importance of ensuring strict compliance with the Price Regulations, the staff of Inspectors has been augmented. Apart from automatically providing a ready and effective liaison service between the Tribunal and individual traders, &c., it is very evident that the activity of these officers has had a most desirable effect against the levying of prices higher than those authorized.

In instances where breaches of the regulations are discovered, careful consideration is exercised in the light of all surrounding factors in making decision as to the institution of Court action, or otherwise. Since the inception of the Price Emergency Regulations action has been taken in 136 instances, resulting in 130 convictions and 6 dismissals.

As at 1st September, 1941, in accordance with the principle recommended by the Economic Stabilization Conference convened in late 1940, the following thirty-eight commodities, &c., were stabilized in price at the levels ruling at that date:—

Foodstuffs.—Meat, flour, milk, sugar, bacon, cheese, honey, eggs, bread, butter, coffee, condensed milk, tea, rolled oats, oatmeal, baking-powder, and salt.

New-Zealand-made Clothing and Footwear.—Men's, women's, boys', and girls' shoes (New Zealand leather in each case), men's all-wool underwear, women's woollen underwear, boys' all-wool underwear, boys' all-wool jerseys, girls' all-wool underwear, men's woollen socks, boys' school hose, woollen piece-goods, knitting wools, blankets, suitings (from New Zealand wools), and shoe repairs.

Public Services : Fuel and Light.—Tram fares, electric light, gas, coal, and coke.

Simultaneously, it was indicated that the list as above was subject to extension in the light of future circumstances.

In view of the inter-relation between standards and price stabilization, the Tribunal continues to co-operate closely with the Standards Institute.

The working-arrangements made by the Tribunal during preceding years with many trade associations to provide for prices in those trades and industries being effectively controlled have been still further extended so that they now cover practically all branches of trade and industry. Each arrangement is evolved to suit the particular conditions current in the trade or industry concerned, so that, in effect, compliance with the Price Regulations is facilitated without undue disturbance of normal methods of trade operation.

The extent to which the retail-price index has risen from the outbreak of war up to 31st December, 1941, is 10·5 per cent. Comparable figures for other Empire countries are not available for a date later than October, 1941, and in the case of Canada, August, 1941. At these dates the increases shown since September, 1939, were: New Zealand, 8·5 per cent.; Australia, 10·13 per cent.; Canada, 12·8 per cent. (August, 1941); United Kingdom, 44 per cent. Thus New Zealand has shown the smallest increase of any of the above countries.

MANUFACTURING : GENERAL COMMENTS.

For the greater part of the year manufacturers held their ground remarkably well. The period was not without its difficulties and trials, particularly in relation to continuity of supplies of raw materials and the depletion of staffs due to the expansion of the defence services. Where the source of raw materials used was domestic in its origin production was substantially increased, much of the additional output being for defence purposes. This was revealed in the woollen-mills, boot and shoe factories, and biscuit-factories.

Summed up, it can be said that the manufacturing industries have made a major contribution to New Zealand's war effort and that, due to the degree of expansion over recent years, the supply of civilian-consumed goods was maintained at a higher level than would otherwise have been the case.

An indication of the remarkable expansion which has occurred in what may be termed the *true* manufacturing industries of the Dominion is contained in the following statistics of employment relating to these industries:—

1934-35	..	..	53,468	1938-39	..	..	71,881
1935-36	..	..	58,659	1939-40	..	..	76,665
1936-37	..	..	66,419	1940-41	..	..	80,646
1937-38	..	..	71,485				

Between 1934-35 and 1940-41 the total number of new employees engaged by the true manufacturing industries was 27,178.

The following are comments on some of the more important of the Dominion's industries:—

Woollen-mills.—The story of the woollen-mills of the Dominion during the past twelve months is one of progressively increased production of material and clothing for the armed forces necessitating expansion of buildings and plant and extension of working-hours.

Clothing Industry.—Contracts for the manufacture of uniforms have kept factories busy during the year, some being engaged exclusively on this class of work.