

BUREAU OF INDUSTRY

INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY ACT, 1936

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1943

During the year there were no changes in the personnel of the Bureau.

The activities of the Bureau, due to war conditions, have been curtailed, but the industries that have been licensed under the Industrial Efficiency Act have been in a better position to rationalize their activities on a wartime basis than the industries which were not subject to licensing. In view of the fact that most industries throughout the country are under the control of one of the wartime Controllers, and the question of the supply of essential materials in many instances is so difficult, no new industries have been licensed under the Act during the year under review.

An amendment has been made to the Act giving the Hon. the Minister of Industries and Commerce authority to appoint a permanent appeal authority. Prior to the amendment, the Minister himself was the appeal authority, but had power to appoint some one to make recommendations to him. The new amendment does away with this, and enables an appeal authority to be appointed who will have power to make a final decision. The Hon. Sir Francis Frazer has been appointed to this position.

To meet wartime conditions, regulations under the Act, called the Industrial Efficiency Emergency Regulations 1943, were brought down enabling the Bureau to issue temporary licenses. This procedure was found necessary to protect the interests of those licensees who had joined the armed Services. The temporary licenses will in the main be issued to new entrants to a licensed industry in localities which were previously served by licensees now in the armed Service, and for the duration of the war only.

Brief *résumés* of the principal action which has been taken during the period under review in regard to the more important of the licensed industries, are set out hereunder:—

Fisheries Industries.—War conditions have affected the industry adversely, in that a number of the most efficient fishing-vessels have been taken over for naval service, and, moreover, a substantial number of fishermen are serving overseas or with the armed forces within New Zealand. The diminution in supplies has given rise to serious marketing problems, and the question of more equitable distribution of the catches now being landed is receiving the close attention of the Food Controller.

In so far as canning is concerned, a new unit has commenced operations at Picton.

Pharmacy.—Under present conditions the Pharmacy Plan Industrial Committee has not found it practicable to embark upon the development of further features of the Pharmacy Plan, but in the meantime the work already done is increasing in usefulness. The production of a standard pack of household drugs has proved a great success.

During the year another goodwill advertising campaign was covered, and met with general approval.

There has been the usual amount of activity in connection with matters affecting pharmacy licenses, and the Committee has made recommendations to the Bureau in respect of numerous applications for transfers of licenses and changes of address. One new license was granted during the year.

Flax (*Phormium tenax*).—There has been considerable activity in this industry. A new State flaxmill was opened at Westport in December, very favourable reports of which have been received, and in view of the considerable areas of flax available in the vicinity it is confidently expected that the mill will soon be working at full capacity.

Mills were also opened at Pakawau, Collingwood; at Kanieri near Hokitika; at Otanomomo near Balclutha; and at Te Aroha and Kaiangaroa in the North Island. Another new mill is in the course of erection at Kerepehi, and the productive capacity of the mill at Dargaville has almost been doubled by the introduction of new equipment.

Sale of Motor-spirit.—A steady decline has taken place since 1939 in the number of applications made to the Bureau, under regulations governing the sale of motor-spirits, due to the falling-off of business brought about by restrictions. Many licensees have voluntarily closed down, and others have been forced to close through being called up for the armed forces. Those concerned have transferred their licenses or have made application to the Bureau of Industry for the suspension of same for the duration of the war, or until such time as conditions return to normal. In most cases satisfactory arrangements have been made for the licensee to resume business at the same premises on cessation of hostilities.

Footwear.—Since the last annual report five meetings of the Footwear Plan Industrial Committee have been held for consideration of various matters affecting the industry. Close co-operation has been maintained with the Director of Production and the Factory Controller, particularly in regard to the production of military footwear. Military commitments for 1943 are such that it was necessary to prepare a programme of civilian production that would meet our urgent essential needs, and at the same time allow the greatest possible military production.

Salt.—A license has been granted to the Latex Rubber Co., Ltd., of Christchurch, to manufacture salt in New Zealand subject to conditions calculated to safeguard New Zealand industry, and at a later date to provide the basis for possible embarkation on a programme of manufacture of all allied products such as soda ash and other sodium compounds.

Active steps have been taken by the licensee to prosecute the undertaking and commence the necessary evaporation of sea-water at the earliest possible moment. Some little time will be required to bring the project to the stage where salt will actually be produced.

Pulp and Paper Products.—The manufacturing operations of all the New Zealand units at Matura, Whakatane, and Penrose are in full swing. All mills are manufacturing various types of paper, board, &c., required specially for use in avenues directly associated