

It may be said in general that when a group is registered the early directions to work of greater importance will affect only those persons in the group whose direction involves no undue disturbance of either their own affairs or those of their employers. When further groups have been registered and sifted to the same extent, the first group is re-examined with a view to securing a further yield from it. Such re-examinations result in the direction of further persons, with a gradually increasing incidence of disturbance and hardship in line with the increasing national need.

Financial Assistance.—To the end of 1942 it was possible to meet the needs of essential industry mainly without recourse to directions involving loss of income. This policy has, however, left a considerable pool of persons in non-essential work who in all other respects are available for transfer. The further development of essential industries requires that this pool be drawn upon, and in December, 1942, the Government accordingly approved of the granting of financial assistance where the circumstances of a transferred worker might warrant this. At the end of the period under review this scheme was about to be put into effect.

Classes directed.—The majority of directions to men have been given to engineering, building, and constructional workers, in order to move them into more urgent work in the trade to which they have been trained. Freezing and similar seasonal workers, often released from military camps for the purpose, have also formed a large proportion of the classes directed. In many cases men with skill or training of particular value in war conditions, such as coal-miners, sawmilling workers, and engineering and building tradesmen, have been found to be working in jobs such as motor-driving, which are of less importance and which do not make full use of their skill. These men have, of course, been directed back into work in their own occupations.

Up to the present time it has been found possible to avoid the enforcement of drastic changes of occupation on a large scale, such, for example, as the wholesale direction of white-collar workers into munition or other manual work, though in emergency conditions a number of temporary directions of this type have been resorted to.

Great interest attaches to the mobilization of woman-power through the use of the machinery for registration and direction, for it is in this field that the greatest proportion of latent labour-power is to be found.

Women are doing a magnificent war job. They are taking men's places on farms, in offices, on trains and trams, in motor-driving and mail deliveries, while in the secondary industries they form a large proportion of the staffs of engineering and munition plants, biscuit, clothing, and footwear factories, canneries, woollen-mills, and many others. Not by any means all of these women have had to be directed into war jobs; many thousands have gone into them of their own accord. Various analyses of women registering and women actually under direction have shown, however, that there still remained a fair number of available women who had not entered any employment prior to their being compelled to do so, and Man-power Officers have not been slow in finding suitable work for these women. The remaining types of transfer brought about by Man-power Officers have involved a general migration from shops and less essential offices and factories into hospitals, transport services, essential office, factory, and other types of work.

There is, however, the problem of accommodating women as well as other workers in the centres where the greatest demand for their services exists. Auckland, Wellington, and the Hutt Valley are at once the busiest industrial areas, the most difficult labour supply areas, and the most difficult areas in which to obtain accommodation.

To assist farmers during the mid-summer peak in farm activities an appeal was made to secondary-school boys to accept work on farms during the summer vacation. Arrangements were further made for such boys to be exempted from school attendance during February if farm-work necessitated their continued assistance. Where boys could not make their own arrangements in regard to farm-work, schools and Primary Production Councils were asked to co-operate with departmental officers in placing them. The response from school-boys was extremely good, more than five thousand accepting farm employment. In addition, parties of secondary-school girls assisted in fruit-picking activities, while in many cases teachers also took up work of national importance during the vacation.

8. RESTRICTION OF INFLOW INTO NON-ESSENTIAL WORK

It will be of interest to place on record the following extract from a report submitted to War Cabinet in March, 1942 :—

“The rapid drain of men from industry, as full-scale mobilization draws men into the forces, is setting up a high rate of circulation of workers. Employers in luxury and non-essential industries are enticing workers on a large scale from more essential industries.

“As the available man-power resources shrink up on the one hand, while urgent war production is required to expand rapidly on the other hand, this practice of enticement is prejudicing the whole of the Dominion's war effort.

“The most direct means to prevent the continuance of this spectacle is by the issue of a prohibition on selected industries and undertakings to prevent them from engaging labour without express authority to do so.”

The report goes on to point out that the problem of enticement arises particularly in those centres where shops, offices, and factories of every grade of essentiality are congregated together.

In accordance with these recommendations, the Employment Restriction Order No. 1 was made on the 14th May, 1942, its application being limited to certain classes of shops and less-essential manufacturing concerns in all but one of the centres where Man-power Officers' headquarters are located, and also in a number of smaller centres where important industrial units are situated.