

E. WOMEN'S LAND SERVICE

The Women's Land Service was originally established for the purpose of assisting in the work of maintaining food-production at the time when the threat of invasion to New Zealand necessitated the withdrawal to the Forces of every possible fit man from farming, along with all other industries.

Progress in recruitment was not spectacular at the outset, and conditions applying to the women were later improved, with consequent increase in the numbers applying to enter farm-work.

During the past year there has been a further drive for recruits, and women from all occupations, no matter how essential, were invited by radio to put in applications to join the Women's Land Service. A special campaign was also conducted in farming districts throughout the Dominion, and as a result of this drive the number of girls actively engaged in the Service increased considerably. Between October, 1943, and the end of March, 1944, the number rose from 972 to 1,879.

The administration of the Women's Land Service has now been largely decentralized and the work is handled primarily by District Man-power Officers. Since this change has been made there has been a further marked increase in recruiting.

F. WOMEN'S WAR SERVICE AUXILIARY

With the relaxation of the Emergency Precautions Scheme following upon the improved situation in the Pacific, one of the original purposes for which the Auxiliary was formed does not now exist to anything like the same extent. The operations of the Auxiliary have, however, been extended to cover a wide field of useful activity.

The principal duties carried out by the members include the provision of voluntary staff for canteen huts, Service clubs, and hostels throughout New Zealand, visiting of sick and wounded soldiers in hospitals, training of hospital aids in kitchen and laundry work, and training in obstetrics for the assistance of maternity hospitals.

Vegetable plots are still being maintained, the vegetables being supplied to the families of soldiers overseas and to Service clubs, or sold for the benefit of patriotic funds. The Auxiliary has rendered valuable assistance by organizing committees in connection with war loans and national savings, and in collecting and repairing clothing for occupied countries. It acts as a recruiting agent for the Women's Land Service. The organization is represented on Food Committees.

12. CIVIL DEFENCE

The progressive relaxation of the emergency services of the Dominion as the threat of invasion passed on was described in the last annual report.

The outlook as regards possible invasion has continued to improve throughout the past year, and the risk may now be regarded as negligible.

There has therefore been very little activity in this section of the Department's organization, which is now reverting to its normal peacetime functions of providing the nucleus for organized safeguards against the risk of earthquake, epidemic, flood, conflagration, or other large-scale disaster. As from the 1st April, 1944, this work was transferred to the Internal Affairs Department.

13. INDUSTRIAL MAN-POWER

A. BASIS AND SCOPE OF MAN-POWER CONTROL, INCLUDING RECENT CHANGES

(a) MAIN MEASURES OF CONTROL OVER INDUSTRIAL MAN-POWER

At the close of the period covered by the last report the Industrial Man-power Emergency Regulations 1942 were operative. Those measures of control, introduced in January, 1942, provided for control over labour in three main directions. There was control over the outflow of labour from industries essential to the war effort. Coupled with this there was registration of males and females for compulsory direction into such industries. Thirdly, there was control over the engagement of labour. In their present form these measures of control are set out in the Industrial Man-power Emergency Regulations 1944.

(i) *Control over Outflow of Labour from Essential Industries.* Power was taken to declare either industries as a whole or individual undertakings to be essential. The main effect of such a declaration is to make it illegal for either employer or worker to terminate employment without first obtaining the consent of a Man-power Officer. Thus the outflow of labour from such industries or undertakings is regulated in accordance with the national interest. The imposition of such a restriction on workers had, however, to be balanced by certain safeguards. The provisions governing essential industries and undertakings provide that the worker's wages may not be reduced, that he must be paid a minimum weekly wage whether the employer is able to employ him fully or not during the week, and that he may appeal to an independent tribunal against any refusal of consent to his application to terminate his employment or against any termination or dismissal at the instance of the employer. Furthermore care is taken, in declaring undertakings essential, only to declare those in which wages are up to the prevailing rates in the industry and where conditions are otherwise satisfactory. In essential industries and undertakings there are now employed some 180,000 males and 75,000 females—approximately 40 per cent. of the total working population. Another 153,000 persons are engaged in farming, which, although it has not been declared essential because of the practical difficulties involved in operating the provisions of a declaration under the special circumstances which obtain in this industry, is nevertheless regarded as an industry of first wartime priority. The Dominion's total working population comprises some 634,000 persons.

Of the 255,000 workers in essential industries, some 6,000 per month have latterly been permitted to change employment for various reasons, a monthly labour turn-over of 2.3 per cent. The great majority of these workers moved to other essential industry of equal or greater importance.