

food-processing industries, such as freezing-works, butter and cheese factories, and canneries; they have played a part in the selection of men for the Army harvesting scheme; they have successfully mobilized the student labour of the Dominion for seasonal and holiday work; they have found workers urgently in hundreds for hydro-electric constructional works, for hospitals, farms, coal-mines, gasworks war industries, and for many essential services; they have scrutinized tens of thousands of applications to leave essential employment, and have investigated and decided each case; they have dealt with tens of thousands of applications to engage in less-essential work, cases of absenteeism, applications for financial assistance, and claims for travelling-expenses and separation allowance; they have extended the registrations of women to embrace those in the thirty-one to forty age groups; they have scrutinized all applications of women to join the Armed Forces and the Women's Land Service; they have prepared hundreds of special reports, returns, investigations into individual cases, and special subjects; they have convened hundreds of meetings and worked out detailed matters of local policy with organizations of workers and employers. As the year closed they have faced one of their biggest single jobs—that of building up the personnel of the farming industries on a scale in keeping with the great increase in production which is required.

It is safe to say that, even allowing for all the inconvenience to individuals which is inherent in the loss of complete freedom in the choice of their work, the system of industrial man-power control, as it has been administered by the District Man-power Officers, has not borne harshly on the community. On the other hand, it has provided an element of industrial stability which has made a vital contribution alike to the achievement of the Dominion's war effort and to the maintenance of living standards throughout the community.

In spite of a substantial increase in their work, the staffs of the District Man-power Officers have shown only a slight numerical increase during the past year. The year has been rather one of consolidation and improvement in the internal organization of District Man-power Offices, and has been marked by the establishment of a regional system which provides for the District Man-power Officers to be grouped round the three main centres of Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Regional Conferences of Man-power Officers have been held, and a Dominion Conference of Man-power Officers and Appeal Committees was held in Wellington under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Industrial Man-power.

D. MAN-POWER APPEAL COMMITTEES

In contrast to the Armed Forces Appeal Boards, the Industrial Man-power Appeal Committees have experienced no falling off of work during the past year.

A steady 3 per cent. of directions into essential work and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of decisions regarding termination from essential work have been found to give rise to appeals. Appeals against decisions regarding engagement in less-essential work have formed only a negligible fraction of the number of decisions, while only about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of cases in which fines have been imposed for absenteeism have led to appeal.

Approximately one-half of the appeals against directions into essential work have been successful; one-third of appeals against decisions regarding termination of essential employment, and one-quarter of appeals regarding fines for absenteeism, have similarly succeeded.

As the general volume of work handled by District Man-power Officers has tended to increase, so has the volume of appeals reflected this increase, so that it has recently been found necessary to set up a further Committee, making a total of five Appeal Committees now functioning.

E. EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION SCHEMES

Even though man-power is in short supply, the need for special assistance in keeping in employment the semi-employable margin of the labour force (which would otherwise rapidly become completely unemployable) has not entirely disappeared, though a further reduction in the scope and extent of this assistance has become possible during the past year.

The following statement shows the operations of the various employment promotion schemes under the control of the Hon. the Minister of Labour for the period from 1st April, 1943, to 31st March, 1944:—

Scheme No. 4v. This scheme provides subsidies for twelve months on the basis of £1 10s. per week for the first six months and 15s. per week for the second six months in respect of the employment of inexperienced labour on farm-work.

Up to 1st April, 1944, a total of 1,294 inexperienced farm hands had been placed under this scheme for training, and in an additional 246 cases house allowance had been paid. Of the whole number placed, only 1 was still in subsidized employment at the 1st April, 1944.

Scheme No. 13.—This scheme provides for the full-time employment at award rates with local bodies and other employing authorities of registered and eligible men.

At 1st April, 1944, only 494 men remained in employment under this scheme. These men represented cases of visible handicap, medical disability, advanced age, or failing powers, and all except a negligible proportion had dependants. It is considered that, denied work, many of these men would deteriorate, whereas steady employment and the difference between social security benefit and award rates of pay enable them to maintain their health and a reasonably contented psychology, to provide a somewhat improved standard of comfort for their dependants, and to render useful service to the community.

The numbers of men engaged in each main class of work are:—

Streets, roads, and reserves	..	..	..	..	..	387
School-ground improvements	..	..	..	..	..	6
River-protection	..	..	..	..	..	5
Vegetable-production	..	..	..	..	..	90
Recovery of essential war materials	..	..	..	..	..	3
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	3
						494