

319. The revocations on 31st January, 1945, removed the cover of essentiality from all industries except hospitals, tramways, dairy factories, freezing-works, saw-milling, and coal-mining. The declarations in respect of the three former industries were revoked on the dates shown hereunder:—

28th February, 1946 : Hospitals (public and private).

9th March, 1946 : Tramways.

30th March, 1946 : Dairy factories.

320. By 31st March, 1946, declarations of essentiality had been cancelled directly affecting workers numbering 228,300 out of a total of 255,000 originally covered, and the only declarations still operating were those relating to the industries of meat-freezing, sawmilling (and forestry), and coal-mining, employing a total of 26,700 workers. The following comments give a brief indication of the problems still faced at 31st March, 1946, which precluded the revocation of the declarations by that date:—

(a) *Freezing Industry.*—At a meeting of the Man-power Utilization Council for the freezing industry held on 29th November, 1945, the matter of the date of revocation of the declaration covering the freezing industry received very full consideration. The Council unanimously passed a resolution recommending to the Government that the declaration should be retained until the end of June, 1946. It was emphasized that the busy season in the South Island would not conclude until June or later and that the rights of directed workers under the Occupational Re-establishment Emergency Regulations should be safeguarded.

(b) *Sawmilling and Coal-mining.*—In view of the basic importance of these industries to the Dominion's economy, and the pressing need for increasing the production of timber and coal, it was imperative that the labour complements of the industries be maintained. Considerable numbers of workers were still held in these industries under direction orders, and it is probable that many of these will take the opportunity of transferring to other industries when the cover of essentiality is lifted.

321. A decision has been made to revoke each of these remaining declarations on 29th June, 1946. Immediately following this the Industrial Man-power Emergency Regulations 1944 will also be withdrawn.

(iii) Relaxation of other Man-power Controls

322. As mentioned above, before the war in Europe had ended consideration had already been given to the extent to which man-power controls might be progressively reduced after the cessation of hostilities, and the Department had commenced a close scrutiny of the labour position in all industries and districts. With this information available it was possible under one month of VE Day (8th May, 1945), and some weeks before the first of the declarations of essentiality had been revoked, to announce relaxations in other man-power control measures which were to take effect on 30th June, 1945. These relaxations affected:—

(a) *The Wives of Returned Servicemen.*—From 30th June these were granted automatic release from direction or automatic consent to terminate employment in essential undertakings in all cases where they desired to do so in order to take up home duties. They were in addition exempted from future man-power direction.

(b) *Married Women Forty Years of Age or over.*—These were granted concessions identical with those allowed to the wives of returned servicemen.

(c) *All Persons under Eighteen Years of Age.*—These were granted automatic consent to terminate employment in essential undertakings in order to take up other employment of their own choice.

(d) *Widows of Deceased Servicemen.*—These had not been subject to control, but to make their position clear they were expressly stated as being free from direction and as receiving automatic consent to terminate, irrespective of their reasons for desiring release from employment.

323. Early in August, 1945, all returned servicemen (other than those specially released from further service in the Pacific area for placement in certain high-priority industries) were given freedom of choice of employment and were exempted from future direction.

324. The whole question of relaxation of man-power control over the various groups of persons, both male and female, and of the possibility of easing the restrictions on non-essential undertakings, was thus receiving continual attention simultaneously with the reviews of declarations of essentiality. In addition to the exemption of as