

Although in some cases they retain wartime designations which are now somewhat out of date, the officers, in fact, include among their duties those of trade representatives. To provide an efficient and reliable service to New Zealand traders the Department must have the means of obtaining promptly up-to-date information of market conditions in those territories where New Zealand products can be sold and where New Zealand requirements can be procured. It seems to be a generally accepted viewpoint that official representation is necessary to provide the coverage which is beyond the scope of individual traders.

Two factors are combining to emphasize interest in exports from New Zealand under headings other than our traditional products. One is the extremely heavy demand throughout the world for goods of all kinds, which is creating, as it were, pressure from the outside. The other is the manufacture of goods here by industries developed under the stimulus both of new enterprise and of war necessity, which is creating pressure from the inside. The flow of inquiries from local sources and from abroad is sufficient evidence that there is widespread interest in the possibility of our increasing the range and volume of products for export and this Department is the agency through which assistance on such matters can be made available. Our manufacturers and exporters now more than ever before, need detailed information to guide them through the problems created by foreign laws, regulations, and controls; they need, too, up-to-date data concerning potential export markets and sources of supply abroad, as well as information which we can give them bearing on foreign trade. This means that our Commerce Division must keep in close touch, on the one hand, with known and likely importers of our goods in other countries and, on the other hand, with manufacturers and exporters here. In this sphere the Commerce Division will be extensively engaged in providing a wide variety of trade-promotion information and commercial intelligence. To this end, and to give a wider and more effective medium of distribution of this material, plans are under consideration for the issue of a monthly trade and commerce journal covering useful and helpful points of commercial intelligence.

Inquiries from abroad for New Zealand goods are both general and specific. Where they refer to specific commodities, contact is made with all possible suppliers. Where they are of a general nature or cover a large range of goods, they are given wide publicity among manufacturers and exporters through the co-operation of the New Zealand Manufacturers' Federation, the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and other organizations such as the Woollen-mill Owners' Association. For their part, manufacturers and traders are providing information on potential surpluses for export from production of secondary industries, and this knowledge serves as the means of providing estimates of the future trade position as well as allowing us to answer inquiries and to keep our representatives overseas up to date with details which may prove of benefit to the manufacturers themselves. Already, of course, manufacturers and exporters in New Zealand who desire to establish their goods in overseas markets are given all possible assistance by the Commerce Division, including the Department's representatives overseas.

It is in consequence of the Government's interest in furthering the trade in New Zealand-made goods that this Department takes so prominent a part in such exhibitions as the New Zealand Industries Fair, held annually in Christchurch under the auspices of the Canterbury Manufacturers' Association. At the 1945 fair the Department erected a spacious court and lounge in which the Standards Institute, Post and Telegraph Department, Dental Hygiene Division of the Health Department, the Tourist Department, Rehabilitation Department, National Film Unit, as well as our own Department, made displays. The fair was an unparalleled success, the total attendances being in the vicinity of 175,000, with a peak of 19,000 on VJ Day. Proposals for similar exhibitions in Auckland, Dunedin, and Wellington have been considered, but fairs were not held in any of these three centres during the year.