

(d) ENFORCEMENT

188. The enforcement of the prices approved has not been neglected, and Inspectors are constantly covering both town and country districts with a view to ensuring that traders do not sell at unauthorized prices. Although Inspectors endeavour to be helpful and co-operative with traders in all cases, it is still found necessary for prosecutions to be taken in a considerable number of cases. During the year ended 31st March, 1947, 221 convictions for breaches of the Price Control Regulations were entered, and 9 cases were dismissed. The number of traders affected was 147. The total fines imposed now total £10,744 15s., of which the sum of £828 was in respect of the past year.

189. The Tribunal has continued to co-operate with all Government Departments whose work in any way can be of assistance to the effectiveness of price control. In this connection the Standards Institute, Customs Department (on sales tax), and the Supply Sections of Industries and Commerce have been consulted in an increased measure.

(e) SUBSIDIES

190. Although various subsidies were abolished following the presentation of the Budget in August of last year, the Tribunal is still responsible for the administration of several subsidies, particularly those relating to farm products, foodstuffs, and other stabilized goods.

SECTION 2.—FOOD AND RATIONING CONTROL

(a) RATIONING

191. During the year 1946–47 there has been no major change in rationing levels and procedure and little change in the world supply position of the commodities concerned. Routine activities during the year with the various commodities were as follows :—

(i) *Sugar*

192. In spite of the failure of the Queensland sugar crop through drought conditions, the full quota allocated for the calendar year 1946 was landed before 31st December, 1946. The International Emergency Food Council, which in 1946 succeeded the Combined Food Board as the allocating authority, has approved increases in Pacific quotas, subject to availability, which means that New Zealand may receive a greater quantity during 1947 than in any of the preceding three years. Supply prospects are thus a little brighter. Local manufacturers' allocations were revised in September, 1946, and a minimum of 75 per cent. of 1941 consumption was fixed as the basic quota for all manufacturers except brewers, who still remain on 50 per cent. of 1941 usage. Additional allocations were approved for such essential lines as jams, lemon-peel, and coffee essence, where increased public demand might have necessitated importation. The domestic consumer ration remained at 12 oz. per week throughout the year. Difficulties in distribution prevented the release of additional quantities of sugar for domestic jam-making, and the normal release of 9 lb. per ration book was made.

(ii) *Tea*

193. The system of allocation under the Empire Tea Scheme was in operation during the whole of the year under review and did not lapse until 31st March, 1947. The allocation for the year for New Zealand was sufficient to maintain the ration level at 8 oz. per person every four weeks and to enable an allowance of 1 lb. every three months to be made to all people of seventy years of age and over. This supplementary allowance was commenced in August, 1946, and has been fully drawn by those eligible. The reinstatement of auction sales of tea in Ceylon and India, which became effective on 1st January, 1947, makes the forward supply position obscure. Shipments which arrived during the year went into consumption as soon as received, and even if New