

(4) *The Sale of Motor-spirits.*—The Shops and Offices Act, 1921–22, in the interests of consumers, virtually excluded the sale of motor-spirits from closing-hour provisions. In 1939, however, there was apparent among motor-spirit retailers a desire to discontinue Sunday sales. When motor-spirits were rationed at the outbreak of war a movement to restrict hours took shape, and in October, 1939, two organizations of garage-proprietors and petrol resellers asked for regulations which would restrict hours, enforce Sunday closing, but provide for urgent sales. There were many objections and difficulties, but they were at length overcome, and after a series of conferences of all interested parties—including representatives of the trade, of consumers, of the workers' organization, and the Oil Fuel Controller—unanimity was reached and the Oil Fuel Retail Hours Emergency Regulations 1940 were gazetted on 2nd May, 1940.

(5) These regulations provided for a requisition procedure (similar to that of the Shops and Offices Act) by which a majority of resellers in a district could requisition the Minister of Labour to apply specified hours of opening and closing to the district.

(6) Subsequent amendment of the regulations made provision for applications for exemption from such opening and closing hours to be made by resellers on the grounds of hardship.

(7) The requisition procedure proved unsatisfactory and from 1st July, 1942, the Oil Fuel Retail Hours Emergency Regulations 1942 came into operation in the place of the 1940 regulations. These imposed uniform hours for retail sale throughout New Zealand and introduced the "Register of Emergency Sales"—a record of each emergency sale outside the specified hours.

(8) These regulations, with minor amendments, remained in force during the remainder of the war and for a short time afterwards. The relaxation of restrictions on the supply of petrol brought representations for the removal of the regulations in 1946, but complete removal was not acceptable to the resellers or to the organizations of workers in the trade. It was undoubtedly desirable to have wartime emergency measures revoked as quickly as possible, but both employers and workers in the trade desired the retention of some sort of control and it was further necessary to protect the interests of the consuming public.

(9) The method adopted to deal with the situation comprised the amending of the Shops and Offices Act (Shops and Offices Amendment Act, 1946, section 4) to provide that regulations might be made prescribing the days on which and the hours during which premises might be open for the sale of motor-spirits, petrol, or motor accessories. Draft regulations were then prepared by the Department and submitted to a conference of interested organizations—namely, the New Zealand Retail Motor Trade Association (Inc.), the New Zealand (North Island) Motor Union (Inc.), the New Zealand (South Island) Motor Union (Inc.), the New Zealand Farmers' Union (Inc.), and the New Zealand Engineering and Related Trades' Industrial Union of Workers.

(10) All parties agreed upon the provisions of the draft regulations with minor amendments, with the exception of one of the motor unions which objected to two of the items proposed for entry in the Register of Urgent Sales. It was agreed that the regulations should operate for a trial period of six months, after which a further conference should consider their operation and the necessity for the entries in the Register.

(11) The regulations, issued as the Motor-spirits Retail Hours Regulations 1946 (Serial number 1946/201), came into force on 1st December, 1946. They were similar to the Emergency Regulations and provided hours for sale as follows:—

On four days of the week	Between 7.30 a.m. and 6 p.m.
On the day of the late night	Between 7.30 a.m. and 8 p.m.
On the half-holiday	Between 7.30 a.m. and noon.
Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday, Anzac Day	No sale all day.
Other holidays	Between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.
On Christmas Eve and on the Thursday before Good Friday	Up to 11 p.m.