

(12) The weekly pay-out in wages and salaries was £2,971,469 to 427,348 persons in surveyed industries in October, 1947. By October, 1948, this had risen to £3,239,908, paid out to 438,480 persons. These figures represent an average weekly pay-out (which includes overtime and covers males, females, and juveniles) of £6 19s. in October, 1947, and of £7 7s. 9d. in October, 1948.

(13) Manufacturing industry has continued to spread into secondary centres and smaller towns. The Department maintains an up-to-date record of each town and city with a population of 1,000 or more, the record including industries already operating, numbers employed, labour available, seasonal surges in labour force, school rolls and school-leavers, local transport facilities, and other information. There has continued to be a fairly steady stream of inquiries for this information from manufacturers, including overseas firms interested in the possibilities of establishing in New Zealand.

(14) Taken as a whole, the employment characteristics of the twelve months under review give a picture of continuing buoyancy accompanied by a gradual easing in the acuteness of the labour shortage in most districts. There have been appreciable improvements in the staffing of key industries, while the seasonal industries in the 1948-49 season have, in the main, been fully manned. The latter industries have found labour more readily available than in past seasons. The acute shortage of labour in the main industrial centres, particularly of female labour, is likely to continue, although there are signs of easement in most districts apart from Wellington and Lower Hutt. In some localities, however, the position is much easier, and there is scope for new industries in such localities. Attention is particularly drawn to centres of Maori population, where the availability of labour is expanding more rapidly and where there is a steadily increasing outflow of Maori school leavers of good ability.

(15) It can again be emphasized, however, that increasing efficiencies in industry are equally important with increasing labour force as factors in achieving higher levels of production. The loss accruing from excessive labour turnover has already been mentioned. It is considerable, and much of it clearly springs from in-plant causes. The loss accruing from industrial accidents and sickness is of major proportions. Industrial discontents are likewise a major cause of loss of production. At least a proportion of these spring from the same causes as labour turnover—deficiencies in working conditions and shortcomings in the handling of personnel problems. The reduction of labour turnover, the development of a greater and more concerted safety-consciousness, and the improvement of industrial relations add up to industrial morale. Morale, in its turn, is a factor of personal relationships, interests, and loyalties and can only be developed satisfactorily on the basis of some adequate sort of “get-together” concerning common interests and objectives. The labour force will not achieve its best without a high industrial morale.

SECTION 2—CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS OF INDUSTRIAL WELFARE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

(1) The number of factories in New Zealand and the number of persons employed in factories both continue to increase. Factories increased by 598 to reach a total of 19,700 at 31st March, 1949. Employment in factories then covered 128,348 males and 36,336 females. Almost two-thirds of factories and factory workers are in the North Island.

(2) This growth in factories and factory employment is steadily increasing the responsibilities of the Department in its administration of the Factories Act. In particular, much of the work lies in the smaller factories and, while factories employing up to twenty workers employ in the aggregate less than half of the persons employed in factories, they nevertheless form a majority of factories in number. This necessarily increases the incidence of inspection work.