

required to take into account in making a pronouncement or a general order. Its effect was, for example, that in making either a pronouncement or a general order the Court was no longer bound to have regard to the wartime price index which was previously used for measuring changes in the cost of living. It expressly directed the Court also to take account of the economic conditions affecting finance, trade, and industry in New Zealand, and relative movements in the incomes of different sections of the community. The amendment provided, further, that no standard wage pronouncement or general order was to take effect less than one year after the date on which any previous pronouncement or general order had taken effect.

(3) The decision of the Court (issued on the 12th April, 1949) is published in 49 Book of Awards. At the end of the hearing the workers' organization had requested the Court to make a general order on its application, the request being opposed by the employers. The Court decided that it would make a standard wage pronouncement. It decided that the standard minimum rates of wages for adult male workers will in future be as follows :

Skilled workers, 3s. 11d. per hour.

Semi-skilled workers, 3s. 6d. to 3s. 8½d. per hour.

Unskilled workers, 3s. 5d. per hour.

The margin between the standard rate for unskilled workers and the standard rate for skilled workers has thus been increased. It was previously 5½d. per hour, and will in future be 6d. per hour.

(4) The Court stated that it proposed, in amending awards and industrial agreements as a result of the pronouncement, to increase in general the rates of remuneration of adult female workers by such amount as would bring them to a level approximately 10s. per week above the rates which operated from 1st October, 1947. The rates for junior workers would be adjusted proportionately.

(5) The pronouncement was not in itself a general wage order, and therefore had no operative effect. It was merely an indication of the rates of wages up to which rates prescribed in a certain number of awards and industrial agreements were likely to be brought by means of individual amendments. All amendments made to give effect to the pronouncement, it was stated, would operate from 1st June, 1949.

(6) Table XVII of the Appendix shows the minimum wage rates in a number of occupations as at 31st March, 1949. Where there is no Dominion or similar award in force, Wellington rates are shown.

(h) *Amendments to Legislation*

(1) The Statutes Amendment Act, 1948 (sections 21-24), amends various provisions of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1925, and its amendments.

(2) *Section 21.*—This section amends section 89 (8) of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1925, which provides that in making an award the Court of Arbitration may, if in its discretion it thinks fit, direct that any provision of the award relating to the rate of wages to be paid shall have effect as from such date prior to the date of the award as the Court thinks fit. In practice, the Court has not agreed to fix a retrospective date for the payment of wages when making an award, except in very special cases or unless the parties agreed to such date in Conciliation Council. The effect of the amendment is to repeal subsection (8) and to substitute a new subsection providing that the Court shall, unless it sees good reason to the contrary, fix as a date for the payment of wages under any award the date fixed for the first sitting of the Conciliation Council. The purpose of the amendment is to remove causes of dissatisfaction arising from delay in the making of a new award and the consequent postponement of the date from which wage-increases are likely to operate. The amendment removes any excuse for stoppages of work on this account because workers will know