INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION

The New Zealand Standards Institute has continued to participate in the work of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). During the year ISO has greatly expanded its activities. In addition to the 35 international committees which had already been established as indicated in the last report, a further 21 of the committees listed in that report have now been instituted. In addition, the following 2 committees not previously mentioned have also been formed: ISO/TC/68, Standardization in the Sphere of Banking; ISO/TC/69, General Definitions Relating to Chemical and Physical Test Results.

New Zealand has continued to participate whenever practicable in the work of these committees. In particular, arrangements were made for representation at a meeting of ISO/TC/38, Textiles, held in England in 1948. Dr. E. Marsden, Scientific Adviser to the New Zealand Government in the United Kingdom, and Mr. R. V. Peryman, formerly chief chemist, New Zealand Woollen Mills Research Association, ably represented New Zealand. They have also been associated with the work of a number of sub-committees which were set up in this field.

UNIFICATION OF SCREW THREADS

In November, 1948, representatives of the United States, Canadian, and British Governments, and of the national standards organizations in each country, signed a Declaration of Accord concerning the unification of American and British screw threads.

This agreement represents the culmination of some thirty years collaboration and investigation. It has been acknowledged by engineers and industrialists as the most advanced single step taken since the end of the war to ensure over-all savings in production costs. This was confirmed by experience during the war, which provided clear evidence of a direct economic loss of at least 100,000,000 dollars, due to the necessity to duplicate plant in each country, in order to produce and service war equipment to satisfy the needs of all. The economic loss incurred was not, of course, confined to the duplication of plant. Even greater was the incalculable loss which resulted from the confusion and delays caused by the use of equipment requiring the two series of screw threads.

For many years British industry has been using a screw thread having an angle of 55° and thread form with rounded crests and roots. United States manufacture has been based on a screw thread with a 60° angle and flat crests and roots. Canadian industry, being closely associated with Britain and the United States, has had to use both threads. The agreement for unification now provides for a standard screw thread at a 60° angle and a rounded root for the threads. The crest may be flat as preferred in the United States, or round as preferred in Britain.

Each of the three countries is preparing standard specifications incorporating the decisions reached. The British standards, when completed, will be considered in New Zealand, as well as in the other Commonwealth countries, and will be formally adopted here with the concurrence of industry, so that we may secure the significant advantages of these advances. The standardization now achieved permits complete interchangeability of interrelated parts of equipment made in the various English-speaking countries. This will yield advantages in the economic field, as well as from the point of view of national security, beyond our capacity to estimate at this stage. Because all mechanisms and structures are held together by fastenings such as bolts, nuts, screws, and rivets, the unification of screw threads will greatly facilitate international trade in these products.

This development is but further evidence of the importance of standardization in the international sphere, which is but the second stage that follows standardization on a national basis. In all countries there is now increasing recognition that the extension