

1917.
NEW ZEALAND.

BOARD OF TRADE

(FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly in accordance with Section 11 of the Cost of Living Act, 1915.

To the Right Honourable William Ferguson Massey, P.C., President, Board of Trade.

SIR,—

We have the honour to present herewith the first annual report of the Board of Trade for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General, to be laid before Parliament in compliance with the Cost of Living Act, 1915. The report covers the period from the inception of the Board—namely, 1st March, 1916—to the 31st March, 1917.

On the 1st March, 1916, the undersigned were constituted a Board of Trade under the Cost of Living Act, 1915, to—

- (a.) Investigate and report to the Governor upon any case in which it is alleged that there has been an infringement of any of the provisions of the Commercial Trusts Act, 1910;
- (b.) Inquire into and report to the Governor upon matters affecting the cost of living, or upon any other question referred to it by the Governor relating to the supply, demand, or price of commodities;
- (c.) Inquire into and report to the Governor upon any complaint that the price of any class of goods is unreasonably high;
- (d.) Consider, inquire into, and report upon any question relating to the trade, commerce, or business of New Zealand which may be referred to it by the Governor;
- (e.) Institute inquiries in reference to markets for goods produced or manufactured in New Zealand, report the result of such inquiries to the Governor, and make recommendations to the Governor in regard to trade with other countries;
- (f.) Make recommendations to the Governor for legislation in relation to matters referred to it for consideration; and
- (g.) Generally to advise the Governor as to how the trade, industries, and commerce of New Zealand can be best encouraged, developed, and protected.

Immediately on receipt of our appointments we met as a committee and set about securing suitable office accommodation and staff and making a preliminary survey of the problems with which we were appointed to deal.

On the 23rd March the Board was officially informed by the Public Service Commissioner of the appointment of Mr. J. W. Collins, Chief Clerk of the Labour Department and Deputy Registrar of Industrial Unions, as Secretary to the Board.

The powers of the Board can be invoked—

- (I.) By the Governor requesting the Board—
 - (a.) To report upon any question relating to the supply, demand, or price of commodities;
 - (b.) To consider, inquire, and report upon any question relating to the trade, commerce, or business of New Zealand.
- (II.) By traders or other members of the public who allege—
 - (a.) Infringements of the Commercial Trusts Act;
 - (b.) That the price of any class of goods is unreasonably high.
- (III.) Or the Board on its own motion may—
 - (a.) Inquire into and report upon matters affecting the cost of living;
 - (b.) Institute inquiries in reference to markets for goods produced or manufactured in New Zealand;
 - (c.) Institute inquiries as to how the trade, commerce, and industries of New Zealand can be best encouraged, developed, and protected;
 - (d.) Make recommendations to the Governor for legislation in relation to matters referred to it for report.