

BUREAU OF INDUSTRY.

In furtherance of the announced policy of the Government of encouraging the establishment and expansion of secondary industries within the Dominion so as to achieve a greater measure of employment in those industries, a Bill has been drafted aiming, *inter alia*, at the securing of greater efficiency in industry, and the regulation and control of industrial units for the benefit of those engaged in such enterprises, the workers, and the public generally. It is anticipated that this Bill will be introduced shortly, and under its provisions statutory authority will be given for the setting-up and constitution of a Bureau of Industry. The functions of this Bureau will be advisory, and will include the securing of the co-ordination of various State Departments interested in proposals for setting up new industries, regulation or control of existing industries, the investigation of proposals which have for their objective the development of new industries and the extension of existing ones, and the consideration of means whereby assistance can be granted to those industries that operate economically and provide employment either directly or indirectly for the people of New Zealand. By means of this Bureau, the members of the staff of which will consist of State employees especially fitted by training and experience to consider problems of an industrial and economic nature, decisions and recommendations representative of all Departments concerned in each problem will be expedited. The Bureau will be allied to the Department of Industries and Commerce and will, therefore, operate in close conjunction and collaboration with the Department. The Bureau will also assume the functions of the previous Development of Industries Committee.

Pending the setting-up of the Bureau as outlined in the foregoing paragraph, the Hon. the Minister of Industries and Commerce has appointed, under the provisions of the Board of Trade Act, an interim Bureau of Industry consisting of the permanent heads of various Departments directly interested in the development of industries. This interim Bureau held its first meeting on the 18th May, 1936, and up to 14th August nine full meetings had been held. In addition, however, some twenty-eight meetings of committees have been held to consider in detail the wide variety of subjects which have been referred to the Bureau for its consideration and recommendations. These subjects included the following matters :—

- Rubber Tire and Rubber Industry.*—Proposals to manufacture in New Zealand.
- Flax Industry.*—Improved methods of cultivation, manufacture, and utilization of phormium.
- Coal-utilization.*
- Dehydrated Grasses.*—Proposed manufacture for feed.
- Sodium Chlorate.*—Proposals for manufacture.
- Linseed-oil.*—Proposals for manufacture.
- Power Alcohol and Wood Distillate.*—Proposals for manufacture.
- Citrus Fruit.*—Expansion of the fruit-growing industry.
- Asbestos.*—Possible use of domestic supplies in manufacture.
- Forest products,* Utilization of.
- Industrial Costs.*—Effects of recent legislation.

In addition to the above, a considerable number of other subjects associated with the primary and secondary industries of New Zealand have received attention by the Bureau and its committees. Of especial note and importance is a comprehensive report which has been furnished to the Government by the Bureau upon the subject of the flax-milling industry. This report, embracing various recommendations, was completed after exhaustive inquiry and investigation both by the present Bureau, the previous Development of Industries Committee, and the various Departments concerned.

The Bureau works in close co-operation with the Labour Department in relation to the subsidizing of industries, and with the State Advances Corporation in regard to the extension of financial assistance to industries under the provisions of the State Advances Corporation Act, 1936.

It has been found that this advisory body appointed under the Board of Trade Act, and acting as the Bureau of Industry, pending the statutory creation of the Bureau upon a permanent basis under its own Industry Promotion and Efficiency Act, has been valuable in co-ordinating the activities and functions of the various Departments, in working in conjunction with the Department of Industries and Commerce in regard to industry generally, and in expediting the consideration of problems before the Government. It is anticipated, therefore, that when the Bureau of Industry proper is established under the provisions of a statutory authority, which will specifically enumerate the functions and duties of the Bureau, the organization will be most valuable in securing the establishment and development of industry along the most efficient lines, to the ultimate benefit of New Zealand manufacturers, workers, and the public generally.

WAGE CONDITIONS AND FORTY-HOUR WEEK.

The results of recent industrial legislation, with the amended conditions of employment set up by the Court of Arbitration, are now becoming effective.

Close contact has been maintained with manufacturers by the Department, and a considerable volume of data bearing upon the issues involved has been collected. Estimates of prospective increases in production costs of representative industrial groups have been carefully examined. While definite increments in the total cost of manufacture of many commodities will accrue from the new industrial conditions, these increments will vary considerably, owing to many contributing factors.