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Madras

Extension of the Payment of Wages Act to 'Declared' Factories

The Government of Madras has extended the provisions of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, to all classes of persons employed in industrial establishments within the meaning of sub-clause (f) of clause (ii) of Section 2 of the Act, which have been or may be declared to be factories under Section 5 of the Factories Act, 1934.

(Notification No. 227: G.O. No. 3501 P.W. (Labour) dated 26-9-1942: The Fort St. George Gazette, Part I, dated 13-10-1942, page 1031.)

Madras

Reporting Certain Accidents: Draft Amendment to the Factories Rules.

The Madras Government proposes amending the Madras Factories Rules, 1936, so as to provide that the manager of a factory shall notify the Inspector of Factories, as soon as possible, or within 15 days from the date of discharge of the worker, of all accidents causing any of the following injuries to workers, namely:- (a) Poisoning due to handling chemical products; (b) Injuries caused by the inhaling of dust, gas or fumes; (c) Ulceration due to chrome or injuries consequent on such ulceration; (d) Ulceration due to X-rays or other sources of radiant energy or to welding operations; (e) Anthrax infection; and (f) Glass-workers' cataract.

(Rules Supplement to Part I of the Fort St. George Gazette, dated 13-10-1942, page 5.)

CONDITIONS OF WORK

Hours of Work.

Working of Hours of Employment Regulations in 1940-41*

Scope of Application: Railways Covered.- By ~~the~~ ^{the} end of 1939-40, the Hours of Employment Regulations had been applied to the North-Western, East Indian, Eastern Bengal, Great Indian Peninsula, Bombay, Baroda and Central India, Madras and Southern Mahratta, and Bengal and North Western Railways. In the year under report, they were extended to the South Indian Rohilkhund and Kumaon, Assam-Bengal, and Bengal-Nagpur Railways with the result that all workers, with certain definite exceptions, employed upon all class I Railways, both State and Company-managed, are now entitled to the protection of the Regulations.

Difficulties in Application.- Difficulties were encountered by the Assam-Bengal and Bengal-Nagpur Railway Administrations in giving effect to the Regulations on their systems. In the Assam-Bengal Railway,

* Government of India: Department of Labour. Annual Report on the Working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on the North-Western, East-Indian, Eastern Bengal, Assam Bengal, Great Indian Peninsula, Bombay, Baroda and Central India, Madras and Southern Mahratta, Bengal and North Western, South Indian, Rohilkhund and Kumaon and Bengal-Nagpur Railways during the year 1940-41 by Mr. Abbas Khaleeli, I.C.S., Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour. Published by the Manager of Publications, Delhi. 1942. Price annas 8 or 9d. pp.13

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the difficulties were the lack of housing facilities for the workers and the shortage of additional staff. The position at the close of the year was fairly satisfactory. On the B.N. Railway, certain categories of staff objected to the arrangements made by the Administration for applying the Regulations to them. The B.N.R. Indian Labour Union championed the cause of the workers and pointed out that to give effect to the scheme proposed by the Administration would deprive the workers of certain privileges which they had been long enjoying. The dispute, which at one time threatened to assume a serious character, was referred to the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour by the parties for effecting a settlement. Thanks to the accommodating spirit displayed by both sides, the matter was on its way, at the close of the year, to final determination and satisfactory settlement.

Number of Staff Covered.- The total number of staff employed on class I Railways and as such affected by the Regulations was 486,087 on 31-3-1941, distributed as follows: North Western - 78,007; East Indian - 95,426; Eastern Bengal - 37,046; Great Indian Peninsula - 60,373; Madras and Southern Mahratta - 34,724; Bombay, Baroda & Central India - 49,738; Bengal & North Western - 24,573; Rohilkhund & Kumaon - 5,315; South Indian - 30,962; Assam Bengal - 13,310; and Bengal Nagpur - 56,613.

Protection of 'Excluded Staff'.- Running staff, staff engaged in supervision or management, and certain well-defined categories of inferior staff have been excluded from the scope of the Regulations. Their exclusion does not, however, absolve the Supervisor's Department from responsibility for watching over the conditions of their work. The Department has to satisfy itself that such staff - compendiously known as the 'excluded' staff - have not been deprived of the protection of the Regulations without sufficient justification. Further, it is incumbent on the Department to scrutinize the hours of work of the 'excluded' staff and suggest changes which may appear necessary on humanitarian grounds.

Inspection.- The following table gives the number of establishments inspected by the Inspectors of Railway Labour during the year under review:-

<u>Railway Establishments</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>Engineering</u>	<u>Power</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>Total</u>
W.	704	33	120	62	969
I.	545	145	106	155	951
B.	306	45	69	74	494
I.P.	538	130	154	206	1,028
& S.M.	354	78	68	95	595
B. & C.I.	520	71	114	184	889
& N.W.	236	34	77	34	381
K.	117	98	30	44	289
N.	97	15	21	26	150
I.	377	50	51	41	519
E.	13	2	6	9	30

6,304 establishments in all were inspected, giving an average of 350 to an Inspector, as against 319 in 1939-40 and 353 in 1938-39. This represents a considerable improvement over last year's figures and a slight improvement over the figures even of 1938-39 when it is borne in mind that in 1938-39 the substitution of warrants for the card passes, to which the general deterioration in the intensity of inspections is largely attributable, had operated for only three months out of 12. The

present improvement is largely due to the increase in the number of Inspectors. By reducing the size of each Inspector's beat, it has been possible to intensify inspections.

Classification.- In spite of the absence of any machinery designed to resolve differences of opinion as regards certain cases of classification there has been some improvement in the position. The question of providing the necessary machinery for resolving differences of opinion between the Department and Railway Administrations is now under consideration of Government. Two important cases of reclassification involving additional expenses to the Railways concerned are reported, one affecting the Watch and Ward jamadars and section mates in the M. & S.M. Railway and the other touching the Watch and Ward Overseers on the B.B. & C.I. Railway. These categories of the staff had been excluded from the application of the Regulations as being 'supervisory'. It required the intervention of the Railway Board to effect a reclassification in the railways. The additional annual recurring expense to be incurred by the B.B. & C.I. Railway alone in this connection is Rs. 17,500.

The total number of cases of classification reported 'open to doubt' was 173, compared to 197 of ~~them~~ the previous year, and cases 'challenged' numbered 223 against a total of 470 in the previous year. Such cases have been most numerous on the B.B. & C.I. Railway, with ~~the~~ E.I. and B.N.W. Railways ranking second. Excepting these and the N.W. and E.B. Railways where there have been incidental increases, the total number of ~~doubtful and challenged~~ cases show a steady and significant tendency to come down.

Continuous, Intermittent and Excluded Staff.- With the exception of N.W. Railway, where there has been a decrease of 1.3 and the M. & S.M. Railway where there has been neither an increase nor a decrease, the percentage of "continuous" workers has during the year under review improved on all Railways; the biggest increase (2.1) being on the B. & N.W. Railway. The percentage of 'essentially intermittent' staff has remained stationary on the E.B. Railway; it has increased on the N.W. and M. & S.M. Railways, and has suffered a decrease on the E.I., G.I.P., B.B. & C.I., and B. & N.W. Railways, the drop on the last being quite substantial (2.9). As regards percentage of 'excluded' staff, the position has generally improved except on the G.I.P., B.B. & C.I. and B. & N.W. Railways, where there have been further exclusions of staff from the scope of the Regulations.

Payment of Overtime.- Numerous cases have come to notice where Railway servants had been called upon to work beyond their usual daily hours and no record whatsoever had been maintained. When claims for overtime payment to these employees were made on behalf of the servants to the Administration, they were turned down on the ground that there were no records. The report points out that unless the Administrations take steps to improve matters by insisting on their subordinates keeping accurate records, other measures would have to be devised to safeguard the ~~XXXXX~~ interests of the railway workers.

Periods of Rest.- There has been an improvement in the percentage of staff enjoying a calendar day's rest on all railways except the E.B. and B. & N.W. Railways, the G.I.P. Railway recording an increase of 3.1 per cent. The deterioration in the cases of E.B. Railway (3.3) and B. & N.W. Railway (5.5) is rather marked. The percentage of 'Continuous' workers has risen on both these Railways during the year under report and it appears that in an effort to improve the classification generally, the

Administrations have resorted to the expedient of substituting the statutory 24 consecutive hours' rest for a calendar day's rest. The report expresses the hope that while all efforts to effect improvements in classification are good in themselves, the Administrations would realize the greater importance to labour of one calendar day's rest as compared to the statutory 24 hours.

Extra roster work.- The attention of the Government of India has been drawn to the widespread and chronic character of this evil and as a result the Government of India in the Railway Department issued detailed instructions to Railway Administrations to eliminate extra roster work as far as possible. The employment of railway servants outside their usual daily hours is, however, dependent upon circumstances which it is not always within the power of a Railway Administrations to control, especially now that a war is on.

Running Staff.- Although it is over a decade since the Regulations were brought into being, they do not as yet cover the running staff. During the year under report, organised labour voiced its demand for extending the protection of the Regulations to the running staff. The matter has been brought to the notice of Government.

Railway Trade Unions.- In spite of the fact that the energies of most of the railway unions were fully absorbed during the year under report in the preparation and presentation of the workers' case for a dearness allowance before the Rau Committee, the unions continued to take active interest in the application and enforcement of the Regulations. A few of the unions displayed commendable zeal in getting the maximum out of the Regulations.

Wages

Working of Payment of Wages Act in Indian Railways in 1940-41.

8,400 establishments were inspected, under the Payment of Wages Act during 1940-41 to make sure that 850,000 railway employees, drawing salaries of less than Rs. 200 a month are paid promptly and without any improper deductions from their wages, by the Labour Inspectorate of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour. His report, recently published, on the working of the Act during the year 1940-41 shows that over 3,000 cases of delay in the payment of ordinary wages were detected. As in the previous year most cases of delay in payments related to the payment of increments, overtime allowances, leave salaries and officiating allowances. With regard to deductions from wages, the figures given in the Report show that fines aggregating Rs. 15,217 were imposed in 21,792 cases, while deductions for damage or loss totalling Rs. 105,710 were ordered in 59,668 cases.

Railway administrations were asked to refund fines and deductions for damage or loss in several cases where these had been imposed in contravention of the provisions of the Act. A few cases of failure on the part of paymasters to record cash recoveries on account of fines in the fines registers were detected. The practice which obtained on certain railways of fixing responsibility for loss or damage in certain cases jointly on a number of employees and debiting them in proportion to their respective salaries was held to be illegal and the railways concerned were advised to desist therefrom. The Report also notes that a number of debits, commonly known as "telegraphic debits", had been found to infringe the provisions of the Act and the administrations concerned had been advised to discontinue the practice.

The Report draws attention especially to the difficulty in inspecting contractors' establishments for want of detailed information. The failure of contractors to maintain registers giving details as to employees, wages paid, etc., in a set form, and the total absence of such registers in certain cases, is commented upon by the Conciliation Officer who advised the contractors in their own interests to maintain a register of wages in English giving complete details of employees, wage periods, wage rates, wages earned, deductions, wages paid and date of payment.

(Unofficial Note issued on 16-10-1942 by the
Principal Information Officer, Government of India.)

SOCIAL INSURANCE

Legislation on Sickness Insurance: Government of India to introduce Bill early in 1943.

The question of instituting a sickness insurance scheme in India was discussed at the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Labour Ministers' Conference held in 1940, 1941 and 1942. It is now understood that of the four Bills dealing with the labour problems which are at present being examined by Government and by industrial and labour interests, it is likely that the Bill dealing with sickness insurance will be ready for consideration during the next budget session (February 1943) of the Central Legislature. Opinions on this Bill are coming in, and the Labour Member, Dr. Ambedkar, is expected to set up shortly a small committee of experts on insurance to work out the actuarial details of the scheme in time to enable him to place the Bill before the forthcoming session of the Assembly.

(The Statesman, 14-10-1942.)

LIVING CONDITIONS

Nutrition

8th Annual Marketing Officers' Conference, Delhi, 23-10-1942.

In his opening address at the eighth annual Marketing Officers' conference held at New Delhi, on 26-10-1942, Sir Jogendra Singh, Member in Charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands, of the Government of India, emphasised the need for the grading and distribution of pure food.

Problems of the Present and Future. - Referring to the present boom in the prices of certain commodities, he said that the increased demand for these goods and the increased flow of money had raised new problems of price adjustments. The marketing staff could not lose sight of the question of prices. It was a problem that needed close study, keeping in view the interests of agricultural producers who constitute three-fourths of the Indian population. He emphasised the need to see that both the producer and the consumer got a fair deal. He also referred to the need to plan not only for the immediate wartime requirements but also for the period which will follow the end of the war. There was need for increasing production in various directions. Steps had to be taken to ensure that producers got a fair return for their labour, bearing in mind alternations in the value of money. ~~Marketing~~ Action had to be taken to prevent a slump and arrange for stability of prices or at least for the prevention of wide fluctuations in prices and real incomes such as those which occurred after the last war. Recalling the achievements of the marketing office during the last eight years, the speaker said that

in 8 years they had established standards of purity of certain principal products; the office had demonstrated the value of grading and formed 509 grading stations spread all over the country; it had graded and packed produce valued at about ~~xxxxx~~ Rs. 14.1 millions; it had organized a skeleton intelligence service which is of great promise; and, lastly, it had succeeded in securing legislation for the standardization of weights. But it remained for the Office to win the confidence of the producer and bring home to him the fact that pure products fetch a higher price; that separation of superior products from the inferior is the object of grading which helps to secure a better and more paying market. It had also to educate and encourage the middleman who forms an indispensable link between the producer and consumer to modernize his business and to realize the need of placing his goods to the best possible advantage by concentrating on the sale of products of guaranteed purity and of such specific standards as may be most required and appreciated by consumers.

Resolutions.- The need for centralised control over supplies and distribution of foodstuffs, as well as over prices was stressed in a long resolution adopted by the Conference. As the variations in the food control policies of various provinces and States have led to certain abuses and difficulties, the Conference recommended a more uniform policy for the control of wheat and other foodgrains and made certain suggestions as to the method of fixing prices for different crops.

Another resolution recommended the closer association of Marketing staffs (Central, Provincial and State) with the work of price control, civil supplies, organisation of transport facilities, etc. At present the Marketing Staffs are supplying much useful information to the Departments concerned with price control, but it is felt that they could be of further assistance in carrying out executive measures owing to their close and intimate contacts with markets and with producers, traders and consumers.

The difficulties in the way of grading and standardisation due to the shortage of certain commodities and of transport facilities were considered, and also the possibility of co-operative marketing and grading through organisations of primary producers. With a view to publicising the "Agmark" scheme, it was decided that rubber stamps bearing "Agmark" slogans should be supplied to local Marketing Officers for use on letter-heads, envelopes, etc. The Conference also decided that a film should be prepared showing the different stages of ghee grading and that subsidies should be given to shops which agree to stock "Agmark" products exclusively.

(The Statesman, 27-10-1942,
The Times of India, 2-11-1942.)

ORGANISATION, CONGRESSES, ETC.*

Workers' Organisations

All-India Municipal Workers' Conference, Poona, 24 and 25-10-1942.

An All-India Municipal Workers' Conference was held at Poona on 24 and 25-10-1942, Sardar Gopal Singh, Parliamentary Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, presiding. In the course of his presidential address, Sardar Gopal Singh deplored the existing social disabilities, and political inaction of the vast number of conservancy workers in the country. Wages, promotions, housing, and other conditions of work, he said, were the more important problems before conservancy workers. He also appealed to municipal workers to organise themselves into strong trade unions to safeguard their interests and better their conditions.

The need for representation of municipal workers in the newly set up tripartite labour Conference was also stressed.

Several resolutions bearing on the problem affecting municipal employees, such as minimum wage, dearness allowance, hours of work, old age pension and bonus, security of service, housing accommodation, medical relief, etc., were passed at the Conference. The Conference urged the Government and the municipalities to give immediate consideration to the unsatisfactory conditions of service of municipal employees in general and of those in the conservancy branches in particular and to secure a minimum standard in their existing service conditions. By another resolution the conference recommended the establishment of an All-India Federation of municipal workers to be registered under the Trade Unions Act of 1926.

The meeting urged all municipal workers to stand at their posts notwithstanding conditions involving serious danger to their lives and property owing to enemy attacks and do their work efficiently, and assured the municipal authorities, the public and the Government that the Federation and the provincial and primary branches would do all it could to assist the authorities in carrying out municipal functions in normal manner.

Office-bearers. - The following office-bearers were elected:
Sardar Gopal Singh, M.L.A.: President; Messrs. R.R. Bhole and G.M. Jadhav: Joint Presidents; and Mr. M. V. Dhonde : General Secretary.

(The Bombay Chronicle and the Statesman,
27-10-1942.)

SOCIAL POLICY IN WAR TIMEHours of Work.Exemption from Factories Act in Madras.

The Government of Madras has exempted watchers and persons engaged in fire protection work in factories from the operation of sections 34 to 40 (hours of work and rest) of the Factories Act subject to the following conditions: (1) The period of work shall in no case exceed 12 hours a day except when any shift worker on three 8-hour shift has to work in a subsequent or a previous relay as a substitute for any worker who fails to report for duty subject to the condition that the same worker may be employed on two consecutive 8-hour shifts but this shall not occur more than once in a period of 14 days; (2) No worker shall work consecutively for more than 13 days without a holiday for a whole day or at least for such period not less than 24 hours as the Chief Inspector shall consider equivalent to a whole day's rest; (3) Sufficient time (though not a fixed period) to the satisfaction of the Inspector shall be allowed for meals; and (4) The spreadover of hours of work shall not exceed 16 per day.

(Rules Supplement to Part I of the Fort St. George Gazette dated 13-10-1942, page 5).

Demand for Higher Dearness Allowance:
A.I.T.U.C. Resolution for Affiliated Unions.

The General Secretary, All-India Trade Union Congress, in a circular letter dated 25-10-1942 to the affiliated unions of the Congress points out that the immediate grievance of the workers at the present time is the suffering caused by the indifferent attitude of the Government regarding scarcity of food and the soaring prices. Dearness allowance, on a more or less inadequate scale, is granted to workers in various concerns, but on the whole Government has not given adequate consideration to the plight of workers in most industries. He has, therefore, suggested the adoption by the affiliated unions of the following resolution passed by the Working Committee of the A.I.T.U.C. at Bombay in July 1942.

"This meeting views with grave concern the miserable condition of workers, due to the high and steep rise in the cost of living, profiteering by merchants and middlemen, the inadequate and inefficient system of price-control, and the dilatory and indifferent attitude of the Government and the employers, in the matter of dearness allowance. The meeting urges upon the Government the urgent and essential need of efficient price-control, the checking of profiteering, supplying of commodities at the controlled prices, and automatic increase in dearness allowance to all workers in proportion to the increase in the cost of living".

Affiliated Unions are invited to make constructive plans to study the grievances of workers in the above matters in their individual areas, and to secure relief to the workers. The reports of the work they plan to do to help the workers are to be sent to the General Secretary, All-India Trade Union Congress. It is also pointed out that numerous trade unionists all over the country have been put in jail, restrictions have been put on meetings and organisational work and activities of trade union unions are likely to be hampered. The affiliated unions are invited to give a call to the workers to strengthen the membership of unions in spite of these difficulties and to carry on their day-to-day struggles with greater energy than before. "A strengthened trade union is the only succour of the workers during the present terrible times".

(The September-October, 1942 issue of the Trade Union Record, Bombay).

Concessions of Bombay Government to
Temporary Government Servants Joining War Service.

In order that temporary Government servants may not be deterred from volunteering for war service for fear of losing their posts on their return from such service, the Government of Bombay has directed that permanent posts on which no other Government servants had liens or on which the liens of the permanent incumbents have been suspended under *the* Bombay Civil Service Rules, in which the temporary Government servants are officiating at the time they volunteer for war service, should be reserved for them until they return from that service. Vacancies of a temporary nature, that is, vacancies in posts created temporarily for short periods or leave vacancies in permanent posts, in which the temporary Government servants are officiating at the time they volunteer for war service will be reserved for them only so long as they would have officiated in those vacancies had they not volunteered for war service. If such temporary posts are made permanent in the meantime they will not, as far as practicable, be filled substantively, but will be earmarked for the original temporary incumbents till their return from war service. The concessions will be subject to the conditions that these Government servants will be allowed to return to the posts or vacancies vacated by them in civil employ only if this can be done without prejudice to the continuance in civil employment of persons who were senior to, or had rendered longer service than, such Government servants when the latter proceeded on war service. These orders do not apply in the case of temporary Government servants officiating in the sub-ordinate services in the Medical Department.

(The Times of India, 28-10-1942).

National Service (Technical Personnel)
Second Amendment Ordinance, 1942.

The Governor General promulgated on 3-10-1942 the National Service (Technical Personnel) Second Amendment Ordinance, 1942, to make certain minor changes in the Ordinance.

(The Gazette of India Extraordinary,
dated 3-10-1942, pages 1011 to 1012).

Railways (Employment of Military Personnel) Ordinance, 1942.

The Governor General promulgated on 8-10-1942 the Railways (Employment of Military Personnel) Ordinance, 1942, to regulate the employment of members of the Army in the working and management of railways. In the case of such personnel, the Indian Railways Act and the Rules made thereunder are to be applicable, and the liability of the railway administration under the Act and the Rules will also extend in respect of such personnel. But the provisions of Chapter VIA of the Act (relating to hours of employment) are not to be applicable to military personnel. If at any time the whole of the working, management and maintenance of a railway, or of a specific portion or section of a railway, is assumed by the military authorities, the Central Government may notify the fact of ~~an~~ such assumption in the official Gazette, and thereupon, so long as such assumption continues, the Indian Railways Act, 1890, shall cease to be applicable to the railway or the portion or section of a railway concerned.

(The Gazette of India Extraordinary,
dated 8-10-1942, pages 1019 to 1020).

Safety Measures:

A.R.P. Measures in Indian Factories.

A.R.P. and Factory Workers.- A.R.P. measures in Indian factories are based on the same principles as A.R.P. measures which have proved effective in the United Kingdom in ensuring the safety and welfare of workers. The actual measures which, naturally, have been modified to suit local conditions, may be placed under the following heads:-

(1) The provision of structural A.R.P. protection (including air raid shelters, fire precaution and fire prevention measures and First Aid facilities) is well advanced and is being pressed forward.

(2) It has been laid down that factory A.R.P. services are intended primarily for the defence of the factory and the factory workers.

(3) In addition to the technical training of squads required for specific A.R.P. duties, the principle has been laid down that all factory personnel should receive some regular form of A.R.P. training, outside working hours. For this they are to be paid at the appropriate overtime rates.

(4) Allowances and remissions of various kinds are being introduced to counteract hardships due to war conditions. These include payment of bonuses or dearness allowance, and provision for pensions or disability payments.

(5) Stocks of essential foodstuffs, etc., are being laid in at factories to guard against any possible breakdown in normal supplies.

(6) The evacuation of families of workers from threatened areas has been permitted in the interval before air raids develop, and facilities are being provided.

(7) Factories have been advised to establish a news service for their workers (by means of bulletins pasted on notice boards and the use of loud-speakers) to dispel ignorant or malicious rumours.

Air Raid Shelters.- All factories in areas where air raids could occur are being provided with shelters for the full number of persons who might be in the factory during a raid. These shelters consist of open zigzag trenches, either sunk in the ground or where necessary raised above the surface, or sometimes, where there is no room for trenches, of brick-built shelters with reinforced concrete roofs, built close to the factory buildings. Concrete roofs have been provided for brick-built shelters to protect the workmen against falling bits of brick or concrete if the factory building is hit. There is no need for a concrete roof over a trench, as trenches are narrow and are always situated well away from buildings. Brick-built shelters are designed to be just as safe as slit trenches. Workmen are trained to keep entrances to shelters free of any rubbish.

A.R.P. Training.- All factory workers are to have regular training in taking cover, evacuation to shelters, shelter discipline, fire prevention, control of incendiary bombs, etc.; practice in dealing with incendiary bombs and fires, it is considered, will be extremely valuable to workers at home as well as at the factory. Factory workers are to be trained outside working hours for brief periods, the men being paid at the appropriate overtime rates for the periods spent in training. The cost is to be treated as A.R.P. revenue expenditure in assessing profits for taxation purposes. 'It is not necessary', said a recent letter issued

by the Labour Department, 'to aim at a high standard of technical proficiency; the emphasis should be rather on explaining the efficiency of measures taken for the safety, and welfare of labour, on developing discipline and building up morale.'

In most factories, frequent practice evacuations to the shelters are held. When the siren sounds, the workman is expected to go quickly but quietly to his own place in his own shelter as previously arranged and rehearsed, and to stay in the shelter until permitted to leave by the shelter warden. Workmen are also instructed to space themselves out evenly along the whole length of the shelter, squat down, keep their heads low and not to lean against the sides of the shelter. Finally, it is impressed on workers that frequent practice evacuations, A.R.P. rehearsals and tests are not a danger signal indicating that raids are immediately expected, but merely a sign that necessary preparations are being made.

(The Statesman, 18-10-1942, and the Leader, 24-10-1942).

Labour Welfare.

Labour Welfare Measures during War Time: Government of India's Suggestions to Employers.

According to a communication from the Commissioner of Labour, Bombay, to the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, the question of maintaining the stability of labour in industrial concerns has been engaging the attention of the Government of India for some time. Among the steps which it considers advisable in the present circumstances to achieve this purpose is the provision of adequate welfare measures to show to the workers that the management is taking steps to ensure that labour is well looked after in any emergency that may arise. The following are some of the measures which are recommended in this connection:-

- (a) The opening of cost price grain shops - these will not only serve the immediate requirements of the workers but ~~would~~ will also serve to inspire confidence in them that adequate steps are being taken to ensure that whatever emergency may arise grain will be available at reasonable prices.
- (b) The collection of adequate stocks of grain to ensure supplies in an emergency. A week's stock is suggested and if the emergency develops rations may be provided free from this stock.
- (c) The provision of canteens: as the families of workers will in many cases have left the district, provision of cooked food is likely to have a great moral effect on labour.
- (d) Facilities for remitting allowances to families. If employers can arrange for remittances by money order at their expense it would be much appreciated by employees.
- (e) Any amelioration in the conditions of work would be likely to have a beneficial effect. For example, experience in other countries indicates that short breaks during work tend to sustain production at a higher level. The introduction of such short breaks in India will probably also have the same result.

The Committee of the Chamber, in its reply of 2-9-1942, suggested in respect of facilities for remitting allowances to families that Government themselves should make arrangements with the postal authorities

for the transmission of such remittances free of cost.

(The Journal of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, October 1942 issue).

War and Indian Labour.
Dr. Ambedkar's Statement re. Government Action.

At a press conference held at New Delhi on 30-10-1942, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Labour Member, Government of India, explaining what Government has so far done for Indian labour during the war, emphasised that besides undertaking direct responsibility for labour welfare and providing facilities for the training of a great number of technicians, Government had introduced certain new and beneficent principles such as compulsory arbitration between employers and labour and enforcement of fair wages and conditions of service, which formed an essential part of the recent, necessarily restrictive, war-time legislation relating to labour and which, he was confident, would survive and be amplified in post-war legislation.

Technical Training.- Dealing, first, with technical training, Dr. Ambedkar referred to the Bevin scheme and said that altogether 250 boys in five batches had been sent to England and the sixth was on its way. Of those trained under this scheme, 149 had returned to India, and 135 of them had already been posted in various factories and workshops on wages representing an average increase of 65 per cent. over their previous earnings, which had varied roughly between Rs.30 and Rs.100 a month. Besides the Bevin Scheme, the technical training scheme, started in July 1940, with the initial object of producing 3,000 semi-skilled tradesmen, had now expanded so much that the total number of trainees would be 70,000 by June 1943. Some 380 training centres under this scheme were working in the whole of India with a total training capacity of 45,000 trainees. A hundred technical experts had been obtained from England to run these institutions and under these experts, 163 Indian trainers had so far passed out, who could take charge of instruction at the various centres. On September 30, some 32,416 persons were undergoing training under the scheme and on the same date 21,750 trainees had been enrolled either in the defence services or ordnance factories or civil industry.

Explaining how each province was faring in the scheme, Dr. Ambedkar said that each province had been assessed to have the capacity judged by reference to the number of institutions and other facilities available in it, to train a certain aggregate number of technicians; and the following figures showed to what percentage of the total capacity each province had worked up - Assam and Orissa, 89 per cent. each; N.W.F.P. 88; Madras 86; Bengal 83; C.P. and Berar 82; Punjab 73; U.P. 72; Behar 67; Delhi 66; Sind 53; Bombay 52; and Ajmer-Merwara 47.

Labour Legislation.- Passing on to his second point, Dr. Ambedkar said that the Government of India had introduced two new basic principles in its labour code. Pre-war labour legislation in India, he said, dealt only with three matters; first, conditions of labour prescribed in the Factories Act, which was a general Act, and other Acts such as the Mines Act, the Railways Act, etc.; secondly, terms of employment such as those embodied in the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Payment of Wages Act, and thirdly, relations between employers and workmen defined for instance, in the Trade Disputes Act and the Trade Unions Act. Legislation during the war had been voluminous, but he took up for his purpose the Defence of India Rule 81(a), the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance and the

National Service Technical Service ~~Ministry~~ Personnel Ordinance, which, from the popular point of view, would be classed as repressive measures, as in some way they restricted the liberty of labour. The Defence of India Rule 81(A) for instance, required that in all cases in which labour contemplated a strike, it must give 15 days' notice. Originally this rule had been confined to industries of a public utility character, but today it was of universal application. But the rule also enunciated the important principle of compulsory arbitration and enforcement of the arbitrator's award. Compulsory arbitration has actually been applied in some 25 cases so far. The two ordinances debarred persons from leaving their job and enabled the Government to transfer a certain percentage of labour from one industry to another, but they also gave power to Government to prescribe wages and conditions of service when the restrictive provisions were enforced.

"So far as my experience goes", said Dr. Ambedkar, "I have known of many strikes which petered out without bringing any benefit to the workers. Today, such a thing cannot happen, because there is the distinct provision that if labour wants to go on strike and if it formulates definite grievances, Government is bound to refer the matter to arbitration and if the arbitrator finds that the demands are just and proper, then Government has the power to enforce the award. This is a great advance on the chaotic conditions that prevailed previously". The other principle, namely, the right of fair wages and fair conditions of service, was also a new thing. "These two principles", Dr. Ambedkar declared, "will never be dislodged but will be amplified and enlarged in legislation that may come hereafter".

Labour Welfare.- Under the third point, namely, labour welfare, the Labour Member referred to the opening of cost price grain shops. It might, he said, appear to be a purely charitable concern but underlying it was a very important principle, namely, that Government recognised that after military requirements, the second place of priority should be assigned to labour's requirements. It might not have been laid down in so many words, but it was definite that Government agreed to the opening of such shops and further agreed that the Central revenues could be made to bear a share of any loss on such shops. Government also had the power to secure stocks of grain for labour in an emergency, had undertaken A.R.P. measures, both in factories under Government control and in others, and had accepted the definite principle of a flat rate instead of a percentage rate in giving relief against dearth. It was the flat rate which benefited the lower paid worker.

Under the head social welfare came the eight newly appointed Labour Welfare Officers working under Mr. R.S. Nimbkar, the Labour Welfare Adviser to the Government of India. For the successful administration of welfare work, three things were necessary; first, establish direct contact between labour and the Central Government, secondly, inform labour what was being done for them by the Central Government - much of the discontent and dissatisfaction against the Central Government arose from ignorance of what Government was doing and proposed to do for labour - and thirdly, report to Government when things went wrong and when it became necessary for the Central Government to take action. There was no doubt, Dr. Ambedkar asserted, that the Government of India had done the best thing in appointing these eight officers in order to enable it to carry out the new duties it had undertaken.

Labour and the Constitution.- Replying to the possible criticism that what the Central Government had done was not enough, and that it

should have done more, he referred to the peculiar constitution under which labour fell within the concurrent field of legislation, so that even if the Centre wanted to pass any law with regard to labour, its administration had to be left to provincial Governments. Dr. Ambedkar suggested that war time legislation, which had given certain new powers to the Central Government, might be the beginning, he hoped it was the thin end of the wedge, of greater central control of labour matters, or a step towards what he had always advocated, namely, that labour should be a central subject. The Indian constitution, Dr. Ambedkar went on, was very much like the American Constitution, in which labour was finding great difficulty by reason of the dishotomy between the administrative powers of the Centre and those of the provinces. It had been held in America that the states by themselves were unable to carry on completely the work of labour welfare and the Central Government should come to their aid. The problem had been solved in the United States by the scheme of grants in aid. Recent reports described the extent to which Central Government there had, by this means, been able to secure administrative control in the states over labour welfare. It might be that the Central Government would be able to follow the procedure so satisfactorily worked out in the U.S. to get control by grants-in-aid.

(The Statesman, 31-10-1942 and
the Leader, 5-11-1942).

Duties of Recently Appointed Assistant Labour Welfare Officers.

Reference was made at page 39 of our September 1942 report to the decision of the Government of India to appoint 8 Assistant Labour Welfare Officers under the Labour Welfare Adviser to the Government of India. For the purpose of organising labour welfare, the country is being divided into eight areas. Of these six areas represent the provinces of Assam, Bengal, Bihar, the U.P., Bombay and Madras. The C.P. and Orissa together comprise the seventh area, and as there is not a large labour population in the North-West, the eighth area will consist of Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara, the Punjab, the N.W.F.P., Sind and Baluchistan. The Assistant Welfare Officers will receive a week's training in New Delhi before being deputed to their respective areas. Their duties will consist mainly of promoting the organisation of A.R.P. measures and cheap food grain shops. A number of such shops have already been opened by Government factories, railways and private employers, and this action, it is stated, has had an excellent effect on the morale of the workers. The question of cheap cloth is ~~now~~ receiving attention but no solution has yet been found. The administrative duties of the assistant welfare officers will be to remove the causes of industrial strikes, to strengthen the trade union movement on right lines and to supply independent information to the Labour Welfare Adviser to the Central Government about the labour situation in their respective areas and about political and economic issues that may be involved in any strike or labour demonstration.

(The Statesman, 20-10-1942).

It is understood that only 7 Assistant Labour Welfare Officers are now being appointed and that the eighth, for Assam, is not to be filled in for the present.

Rationalisation of Rail Transport: Government Plan.

The question of rationalising railway transport in order to enable it to shoulder the growing burden during the coming busy season has been engaging the attention of the Government of India. The object aimed at is to dispense with unnecessary transport in order to avoid waste and utilise the surplus, thus created, to carry the more essential needs of the civil population. A special officer has been appointed by Government to study the transport system adopted by army depots, which are naturally the main customers of railway during the war period.

Details of the Government Proposals.- It is understood that various aspects of the question were discussed by the Hon. Sir Edward Benthall, Member for War Transport, Government of India, with the General Managers of the G.I.P. and the B.B. & C.I. Railways and the Chairman of the Bombay Port Trust, recently. The idea appears to be to make each industry self-sufficient, as far as possible, in regard to its requirements of raw material and other accessories as well as in the sphere of distribution of manufactured goods. Thus, for instance, it is suggested that cotton mills in Bombay should depend on the nearest centres producing raw cotton, the cotton textile industry in Ahmedabad should be able to get its supply of raw material from Gujerat, while the mills in the Central Provinces and Berar should have the first claim on cotton grown in their own province. This plan is proposed to be extended to organised large-scale industries like jute, cement and paper in the first instance.

Transport of Foodstuffs.- Such a plan is considered necessary in view of the increasing pressure on railways for carrying traffic on account of the Defence Services. If the scheme materialises, it should be possible for railways to devote the extra wagons that would be available under the rationalised system for the movement of foodstuffs ~~far~~ from producing to consuming centres. It is gathered that though large stocks of sugar are awaiting to be railed to Bombay from Bihar, they could not be moved because of the dislocation of railway transport and the position is not likely to be relieved for some weeks more. On the other hand, several thousand empty wagons had to be returned recently from the Punjab because ~~some~~ speculators would not part with their stocks of wheat and the outside supply in that province was not sufficient to be carried by those wagons. Railways are at present anxious to move foodstuffs from several producing centres to consuming towns, but are considerably handicapped owing to the paucity of offerings.

(The Times of India, 1-10-1942).

Possibilities of Increased Traffic by Country
Craft on the West Coast of India: Enquiry Completed.

Reference was made at pages 37 to 38 of our August 1942 report to the inquiry into the question of employing sea craft for transport on the west coast of India in order to relieve pressure on the railway system, which was recently ordered by the Government of India. It is now understood that the enquiry has been completed and the Government of India expects to receive shortly the report of Messrs. Sorley and Lalubhai who conducted the inquiry. It is further understood that the inquiry has indicated the possibility of developing transport by sea craft provided a suitable organisation is set up for the purpose. It appears that what is intended is not establishment of Government control over sea craft, but the setting up of a proper system of intelligence and official advice and help so that

owners of sea craft would, in their own interest, play a co-ordinated part in the solution of transport difficulties.

(The Statesman, 27-10-1942).

Production.

Development of Government Organisation for War Supplies of Cotton Textiles in India.

Attention is directed to pages 4 to 6 of the October 1942 issue of the Indian Textile Journal, 1942, where is published an article under the title: "War Supplies of Cotton Textiles: A Brief History of the Early Days of the War and a Review of the Present Government Organisation for Procurement of Cotton Textiles".

Tea Reserves in India to be Maintained: Government Clarifies Position.

The Government of India recently issued a press note on the tea position in India, in view of a certain amount of speculative hoarding of Indian tea apparently under the impression that there may be a shortage for internal consumption during the current year. The Government declares that under no circumstances will Government allow India's internal reserve to fall below 130 million lbs., which is about 33 per cent. in excess of last year's consumption. Under the block purchase scheme, India will not export during 1942-43 to the full extent of her available tea export quota which is about 489 million lb. (including the carry-over of allotment from 1941-42) but only her exportable surplus after maintaining an adequate reserve for internal consumption. The estimated production for the current year is about 555 million lb. of which only 42½ million lb. will be allowed to be exported under the new scheme - both for the United Kingdom and out-markets. The crop which will remain for the current year's internal consumption will be about 134 million lb.

Relaxation of the order prohibiting private exports of India tea after 30-9-1942 (consequent on the introduction of the scheme for the block purchase of all exportable surplus) appears to have been misunderstood. Export Trade Controllers were instructed to issue licences in certain cases to enable the clearance of stocks held against past firm contracts. It was, however, not the intention of the Government that such teas should continue to be licensed, irrespective of the destinations to which they were bound.

(The Statesman, 29-10-1942).

Rubber Production Drive in India: India Rubber Production Board Set Up.

The loss of Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and Burma has enormously increased the value of India's rubber production. Before the war, it represented about one per cent. of the total world production; today it represents nine per cent. of the production now available to the United Nations. Early this year Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar convened a conference of representatives of the rubber manufacturers and producers at which it was agreed to set up a purchase control organisation to stabilize prices and canalize purchase orders through existing trade channels. The Government

of India also appointed a Controller of Rubber Manufacturers in the Supply Department and an adviser on rubber purchase in the Commerce Department. During the summer months various steps were taken to increase production. A committee of leading planters in South India reported that most of the large estates were already producing their maximum crop but that some addition could be obtained by tapping to full depths by the introduction of additional tappings each week by modification in the distribution of tappers tasks and by the fixing of a guarantee price sufficiently high to compensate the producer for the damage resulting from drastic tapping.

Establishment of Indian Rubber Production Board. - The campaign to increase rubber production in India will receive a powerful stimulus when the new Indian Rubber Production Board begins to function, as it is expected to do shortly. It is understood that Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore, will be the president of the Board, and it is thought that the resources of the Travancore State, in which 76 per cent. of the total rubber acreage is situated, will support the production drive.

Functions of the Board. - The establishment of the Board was one of the decisions reached at the second rubber conference held at the end of September, 1942. The Board will represent the Governments of Travancore, Cochin and Madras, the Commerce and Supply Departments of the Government of India and the rubber producers' organisations. With its headquarters at Kottayam, Travancore, the Board will have the task of encouraging and ensuring the maximum production of rubber by intensification of tapping, new planting, improved methods of manuring and spraying, the distribution and maintenance of machinery, scientific research, propaganda, etc. A Rubber Production Commissioner will be appointed who will devote his whole time, freed from administrative duties, to securing the maximum production possible on each estate. He will also endeavour to remove impediments to maximum production.

Rubber Purchase Office in Cochin. - In pursuance of the second decision reached at the conference that the Government of India should be the sole purchasers of all types and grades of rubber, a rubber purchase office will shortly be set up in Cochin which will accept tenders for all grades of rubber f.o.b. or f.o.r. Cochin from estates and dealers at fixed guaranteed prices. Arrangements will be made for a 100 per cent. payment against godown receipts and inspection notes and for the storage and transport of rubber to manufacturing centres so that stocks might not accumulate on estates.

Present Position of Rubber Production. - One of the problems which will face the Rubber Production Board concerns the grievances of the producers that the British Government is paying more for Ceylon rubber than the Government of India is prepared to pay for Indian rubber. Having passed through catastrophic fluctuations in prices during the past 20 years the producer is nervous about the future. More than half the rubber under cultivation in India is in the hands of the small growers. There are only about 160 estates of 100 acres or more in area. The remainder are comparatively small holdings, and there are over 13,000 of them, representing a considerable productive capacity. Thus, as most large estates are already producing their maximum, the key to substantial increase in production lies largely with the small grower for whom the most potent incentive to all-out production will be a guaranteed and reasonably high price.

(The Statesman, 20-10-1942.)

Cotton Movements Panel set up by Government of India

The Government of India has set up an advisory committee known as the Cotton Movements Panel, representing various interests, in order to ensure that the requirements of the Indian cotton textile industry are given due weight in the allocation of transport facilities for securing raw cotton without embarrassing the provincial governments, the regional transport authorities and the railway administrations in dealing with the general transport problem. The Panel will be presided over by Mr. J.B. Greaves, Honorary Adviser on Mill Stores, Cotton Textiles Directorate. The main task of the Panel is to ensure a steady flow of cotton in adequate quantities to cotton mills, particularly for mixings, in order to enable them to maintain the standard of quality demanded by the specifications governing war supplies. The panel will co-operate with the provincial governments, especially with the Government of Bombay, and local bodies in arranging these supplies in a manner that will assist them in maintaining the economic life of the large urban areas where cotton is consumed. It will also ~~not~~ maintain close contact with railways and assist them in controlling and co-ordinating transport. The object is to maintain, in the interest of the cotton grower, free and competitive markets for all varieties of cotton.

In order to facilitate its working, the executive organisation of the Panel will call for particulars regarding the type of cotton and the sources of supplies in the past year and ascertain from mills their minimum requirements, especially for executing war orders. With the co-operation of the East India Cotton Association, it is proposed to get the data regarding the quantity and quality of the coming crop in each area. After collecting this data, the Panel will draw up general directions for guiding the railways, the mills and merchants as to the areas from which the mills in each district should draw their supplies. The underlying idea is to ensure the greatest possible economy in transport and it is proposed to direct the parties concerned to adhere to these directions if it is considered necessary for economising transport. These directions will, however, be subject to the sanction of the War Transport Department. As a result, the Panel will be in a position to advise the Regional Transport Authorities on measures for regulating the volume and flow of supplies of cotton to the mills.

(The Times of India, 22-10-1942.)

Stimulation of Small-Scale Industries for War Purposes: Results
Obtained.

The Central Government in the current year is spending over Rs. 100 millions on purchases on war supplies from small-scale industries. For several months now, an organisation specially devoted to the encouragement of small-scale industries has combed the country. Certain difficulties had to be encountered and overcome and now a fair start has been made which is reflected in the progressively larger orders which are being placed.

Part played by Co-operative Societies.- Efforts were made to introduce the co-operative method wherever local conditions were suitable, so that the primary producer rather than the middleman benefits. In the Punjab, the volume of production through the co-operative effort is described as most gratifying and the manufacture of cutlery in this area has been very successful. In the North-West Frontier Province, larger numbers of blankets, footwear and timber articles are produced

for war supplies through the Provincial Co-operative Department. In the United Provinces, the co-operative scheme has diverted a large number of orders from other agencies to the small-scale industry and the same is true of other provinces. The U.P. Government has placed Rs. 1,200,000 at the disposal of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies for grant of interest-free loans.

Results Obtained.- In two recent months, the value of orders for non-textile items reached about Rs. 60 millions and textile orders about Rs. 30 millions. Not the least encouraging feature of this development has been the skill and adaptability displayed by the worker. A small workshop in the Punjab has supplied a number of sewing machines to a local garrison and all these machines were made under the supervision of a man who cannot follow even a drawing. He saw a sample and had the skill to undertake the job and execute it to the satisfaction of the local purchasing organisation. Millions of yards of camouflage nets are being made by villagers in various parts of India. In 1941-42 these nets were worth Rs. 18.2 millions to them. They will be worth Rs. 50 millions this year. Inadequately equipped as these small workshops are, they display an amazing versatility of skill and craftsmanship and their usefulness in wartime is judged not only by the variety and size of production but also by the relief that they give to the large industries by taking over the manufacture of the more simple and less complex items of war stores.

Government Action.- The Government of India in March 1942 convened a conference of representatives of provincial and State Governments (vide page 46 of our March 1942 report) to consider what part small industries can and should play in the procurement of war supplies. A list of articles suitable for procurement through small industries was drawn up and a definite quota - about 25 per cent. of the total requirements - was allotted to such supplies. Official agencies were set up in the provinces and states, whose duty it is to organize small industries within their areas, secure contracts for articles which can be supplied by them and afford assistance in the matter of raw materials, finance, inspection and relations with the Supply Department and generally to promote the working of the whole scheme.

(The Statesman, 27-10-1942.)

Control Measures

Steel Re-Rolling Mills to form into an Organisation to facilitate Control of Scrap: Government Decision.

According to a communiqué issued by the Government of India in the third week of October, 1942, the Government recently decided to invite all steel re-rolling mills in the country started before 1-9-1941 to enrol themselves as members of the Steel Re-Rolling Mills Association on or before 15-11-1942. This decision has been reached in order to provide equality of opportunity to mills started before 1-9-1941, to secure efficient conversion of steel, to safeguard established mills, as far as possible, against failure in the supply of scrap and to avert profitless competition. In a communiqué issued on 6-9-1941, the Government of India expressed the view that the available scrap was ~~scarcely~~ scarcely enough to enable existing mills to carry on their normal business and warned all concerned that in the event of the Government of India having to take special measures to regulate the supply of scrap to re-rolling mills and other users, they would not include any re-rolling mills started on or after 1-9-1941.

The Government of India has found it convenient to work through a single Trade Association. A Committee for the classification of all mills (old as well as new) which are or may become members of the Steel Re-Rolling Mills Association on or before 15-11-1942, will be appointed as soon, after that date, as possible. This Committee will consist of two representatives of Government and a representative elected by all the member-firms of the Association and will determine the classification of the mills according to their efficiency, convenience of location and transportation facilities, into categories A, B and C. An endeavour will be made to supply scrap to mills in category A for two shift working and to category B for one shift working. Mills placed in category C will receive whatever is left after the requirements of mills in categories A and B have been supplied.

The rate of charge for conversion from scrap to steel will be fixed by agreement between the Government and the Association from time to time on a sliding scale, mills in category C getting the highest rate for conversion. The rates at which steel will be supplied to Government or sold and the other conditions will also be determined by agreement. All re-rolling mills will be obliged to dispose of the whole of their products in accordance with the instructions of the Iron and Steel Controller, Government also intends in the near future to control iron and steel scrap by statutory order and to fix maximum prices for all categories of scrap.

(The Indian Spectator, New Delhi, 19-10-1942).

Standard Cloth for the Poor:
Modifications in the Original Scheme.

The sharp rise in the price of cloth and yarn has been receiving, for some time past, the attention of the Central Government. Certain provincial Governments have urged control over yarn and have stated that there is an urgent need for cheap cloth for the poorer classes. It is understood that the original scheme of standard cloth (vide pages 47 to 48 of our January 1942 report) is likely to be modified as it has not made an appeal to provincial Governments which feel unable to assume financial responsibility for ordering such cloth and for organizing its distribution. Certain provincial authorities have, however, offered to recommend dealers who will buy standard cloth and distribute it through normal trade channels.

Fresh Proposals.- Now that the original scheme is not making headway, it is thought that the most effective method of handling the problem is to invite textile interests to produce standard cloth representing a small proportion of their total production and to call upon mills to distribute it through their regular dealers. The Government can help such an organisation by statutory orders to ensure that all mills play their part in the scheme and that cheap cloth is made available only to classes for whom it is primarily intended. It is likely that the Commerce Member, Mr. N.R. Sarker, will shortly call leaders of the textile industry for consultation on the point.

Yarn Production.- The problem of yarn is also likely to be dealt with in the first instance by seeking the help of trade interests. The original plan of the Central Government was to introduce yarn control in three stages. To begin with, the dealers were to be licensed. If this step did not produce the necessary remedy the distribution of yarn was to be controlled and, finally, the price of yarn was to be fixed. Provincial Governments have, in most cases, taken the first step and have furnished the Central Government with a list of wholesale dealers

licensed by them, but they have not so far indicated the quantity of yarn required in their respective areas. The complicated nature of the problem of distribution of yarn is recognised more especially as it has ramifications in villages, and the standard of yarn used in handloom varies greatly. It is also clear that ~~speculation~~ speculation is playing an important part in causing yarn prices to rise. It is felt, however, that a scheme of control would require much greater co-operation and co-ordination between the Central and Provincial Governments and with the trade concerned than what appears to be forthcoming. It is understood that the Government of India is working out a scheme which will overcome these difficulties.

(The Statesman, 16-10-1942.)

Industrial Disputes

The Hyderabad Trade Disputes Order, 1942

The Government of Hyderabad State has brought into force in the State a Trade Disputes Order, which is designed to prevent the declaration of strikes and lock-outs without due notice. The Order provides for the establishment of conciliation boards and industrial courts for the arbitration and settlement of trade disputes. The declaration of strikes by workers, and of lock-outs by employers, without either party giving 21 days' notice, or before the completion of conciliation proceedings, or proceedings instituted in an industrial court, has been prohibited under the terms of the Order. A strike or lock-out will also be deemed unlawful if declared before the expiry of two months after the original dispute has been settled. The President of the Nizam's Executive Council has been empowered to refer any trade dispute to a conciliation board, on a written request from an employer, or from five per cent. of the workers, and to an industrial court for settlement, either at his own discretion or on the recommendation of the conciliation board.

(The Industrial Bulletin dated 26-10-1942 issued by the Employers' Federation of India, Bombay.)

Food Policy

Preliminary Meeting of Bombay Food Advisory Council.

The preliminary meeting of the Food Advisory Council recently set up by the Government of Bombay was held on 31-10-1942; Mr. H.F. Knight, Adviser (Finance) to the Governor of Bombay, presided. Mr. Knight observed that the meeting had been called in order to explain the functions of the Council and settle its procedure. He emphasised that the functions of the Council would be advisory, but assured the Council that its advice would always be considered. He suggested the advisability of the Council disposing of work by means of informal discussion rather than by passing formal resolutions. The best course appeared to be for him to summarise at the end of the discussion what the general opinion of the Council as to the advice to be given to the Government was, and to take a note of important dissension.

Panels for Various Trades. - Referring to the Government's proposal to constitute panels for the various trades, Mr. Knight explained that in food supply matters the Government urgently needed the co-operation and advice of trade accustomed to deal with essential commodities. Experience in the past, had, however, indicated the futility of discussing expert matters in a general committee. It was, therefore,

proposed that expert knowledge of the trades concerned should be made available to the Council and the Standing Committee through representative panels of the trades concerned. He suggested that panels may be constituted almost immediately for wheat and wheat products, rice - imported and country, other foodgrains, sugar, ground-rut and cotton seeds, retail grocery trade, and that the constitution of panels for other commodities or questions should be deferred until the necessity for it was evident.

problems of Supply. - Mr. Knight also referred to the desirability of constituting a Standing Committee of the Council to advise the Supply Commissioner on the more important problems of supply which arose from day to day and stated that it was not intended that ~~the~~ representatives of specialised food trades should be appointed on the Standing Committee, their advice being obtained through the appropriate panels. The Standing Committee should represent the administration, general trade and business, and the consumer.

Food Problems of Bombay. - Mr. Knight then turned to the problems facing the Provincial Government, the chief one, of course, being that Bombay has to be fed by imports. He briefly indicated some of the consequential difficulties such as shortage of transport, bans imposed by Provincial Governments on the export of foodgrains, etc., the increase in prices and profiteering, the shortage of stocks with trades, the closure of markets, the tendency to hoard foodgrains and the difficulty of retail distribution. He indicated briefly the present position of supplies of the main food necessities of life in Bombay and the prospects of replenishing ~~the existing stocks by drawing~~ on the more important Districts in the Province. He expressed the hope, however, that with the co-operation of the Central Government, the producing Provinces and the States, replenishment out of the new crops coming on the market would be possible. In conclusion, he emphasised the need for taking the long view, and observed that under the stress of war it was not possible to predicate that private enterprise alone could or should feed the City, and that the State, therefore, might have to assume - as in other countries, - a large share of work of supply and distribution.

Action so far taken. - Mr. A.D. Gorwala, the Supply Commissioner who followed Mr. Knight, explained in greater detail the measures taken by the Central and Provincial Governments in the matter of controlling movements and prices of essential commodities, the organisation of the Provincial Department of Supply and the establishment of Government fair price grain shops and depots.

(Press Note dated 31-10-1942 issued by the Director of Information, Bombay)

Proposal to establish a New Department of Food.

According to the Delhi Correspondent of the Hindu, Madras, the Government of India is considering the desirability of setting up a new Department of Food to meet the criticisms that problems relating to food take far too long to decide and prompt decisions become necessary in times of crisis. At present, three Departments are directly concerned, namely, those of Commerce, Education and Supply, the last-named having a rapidly growing foodstuffs section. During the last session of the Central Legislation, there were several demands for the establishment of a machinery to deal promptly with problems of food.

The Commerce Department grew into an enormous Secretariat under Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar with 34 sections inside it. Somehow, the problem of reshuffling portfolios was not taken up when the Council was expanded,

and in consequence, there is absence of method in the business of distribution. There are, so far as food is concerned, a number of Food Controllers. A strong opinion is current in favour of the creation of a new Department of Food with a separate establishment, which would have under its direct supervision sections now dealing with the various aspects of the food problem, whether consumption, distribution or increased production.

(The Hindu, 23-10-1942.)

The Department of Food in the Government of India was set up in November 1942; Mr. N.R. Sarker, Member for Commerce, will be the Member in charge of the new Department also.