

particular goods on the fixed day he shall be deemed to have been willing on that day to sell the goods in question at the same price and on the same terms and conditions in all respects as when he last sold goods of that kind before the fixed day.

Further, where proceedings are taken against a firm for a breach of the regulations, and it is proved that the firm on any date subsequent to the fixed day sold goods at a certain price, that price shall, unless the defendant proves to the contrary, be presumed by the Court to be not less than the price at which on the fixed day he sold or was willing to sell such goods. This clause also applies to services.

The Tribunal now also has power to require a vendor of a new line of goods to submit such particulars as will enable the Tribunal to determine whether the price charged is fair and reasonable. The expression "new line" of goods means any goods that were not sold in any given locality on or before the 1st September, 1939. The Tribunal now has power to make an Order analogous to a Price Order relating to such goods.

Doubt had been expressed whether the Price Stabilization Emergency Regulations covered a combination of goods and services, such as restaurant meals. The Tribunal always considered that the regulations covered such transactions, but the amended regulations have made it quite clear that such transactions are subject to the regulations. It has also been put beyond doubt that sales of goods and the performance of services by any local authorities or public bodies are governed by the regulations.

It is now an offence for any person, without the authority of the Price Tribunal, to issue any price-list or similar document containing a statement that all or any of the prices mentioned therein have been approved by the Tribunal, or without the authority of the Tribunal to fix a tentative price subject to alteration or adjustment after the Tribunal has given any decision regarding the price of the goods in question, or without the Tribunal's authority to pack goods in smaller containers or put a small quantity of goods in a container. It is also an offence for a vendor to alter to the prejudice of the user the formula or recipe ordinarily used in the production or manufacture of any goods, or to manufacture any goods of an inferior quality to that of similar goods made by him or by his predecessor in business.

The Tribunal now has power to require retailers to display notices showing particulars of former selling-prices and of new selling-prices, together with a statement that any increased prices have been duly authorized by the Tribunal, and that such prices are not applicable to former stocks not included in the authority to increase prices. Every manufacturer, wholesaler, or retailer of goods, or any one supplying any services, must keep proper books, accounts, and costing records, and preserve such records and documents.

The policing of the regulations has been carried out by the staff of the Tribunal in Wellington, the District Officers of the Department of Industries and Commerce at Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin, the Inspectors of Factories in the smaller towns, and such policing has been extended by the appointment of full-time Inspectors in each of the four main centres. These Inspectors will make regular trips to the smaller centres, and a good deal of policing work has already been done by them.

In September, 1940, the Government called a Conference representing all sections of trade and industry in the Dominion to discuss economic problems arising out of the war, to survey the country's economic position, and to consider the possibility of stabilizing wages, costs, and prices. Mr. H. L. Wise, Member of the Price Tribunal, gave lengthy evidence before the General Working Committee set up by the Conference, and detailed the work done by the Tribunal to control prices. The Conference presented its findings in a series of fifteen recommendations, six of which related directly or indirectly to the control of prices. The Conference suggested that better results could be obtained by a more rigid inspection system and deterrent penalties for proved breaches of the regulations.

As indicated above, full-time Inspectors have since been appointed to assist in policing the regulations. The Tribunal has, of course, no jurisdiction over the matter of penalties imposed for breaches of the regulations.

The Conference also suggested the addition of a representative of the consumers to the Price Tribunal, and the Government has now appointed two Associate Members of the Tribunal—namely, Mr. L. Munro, who will have special regard to the prices of general merchandise and foodstuffs, and Mr. B. S. Connor, who will devote his attention to the prices of clothing, drapery, and footwear. Both these gentlemen have had wide experience in their respective branches of business. In addition to taking part in the deliberations of the Tribunal on questions of what increases should or should not be approved in their special lines the Associate Members will alternately sit as Associate Members of the Tribunal at public hearings.

The Economic Conference was of opinion that considerable savings could be effected by the adoption of standards, and that an effort should be made to standardize a range of essential commodities which would assist the Tribunal in the stabilization of prices. The Price Tribunal is co-operating fully with the Standards Institute in the formulation of standards, and has made suggestions for the development of standards for a wide range of commodities. The Tribunal is represented on a number of Committees of the Standards Institute at present engaged in formulating standards for different commodities.

The Control of Prices Emergency Regulations 1939 give the Tribunal power, with the consent of the Minister, to make Price Orders, and thirty-four such Price Orders have been made. These covered the prices of sacks, Whakatane Paper Mills products, scrap metal, potatoes, meat, nails, raw tobacco, superphosphate, rags, matches, storage batteries, bolts and nuts, footwear repairs, canned asparagus, American fencing-wire, Australian wire netting, masonite and cane-ite, baking-powder, milk, beeswax, oats, soup-powders, chewing-gum, and knitting-wools.