

Enclosure.

The GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA to the SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

(Received in Colonial Office, 12th June, 1917.)

South Africa, No. 338.

SIR,—

Governor-General's Office, Cape Town, 5th May, 1917.

With reference to Mr. Bonar Law's despatch, No. 329, of the 29th March, 1916, I have the honour to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a minute from my Ministers regarding the Scientific and Technical Committee recently appointed by the Union Government, the circumstances which led to its appointment, and the nature of its functions.

2. I trust that the request made in this minute may be communicated to the authorities concerned.

3. I may add that the representative character of the Committee, the support which they are receiving from my Ministers, and the interest taken in the work by those who can materially assist in its development, augur well for the success of the movement. I have taken considerable personal interest in the matter, and, as High Commissioner, I propose that the three Protectorates of Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Swaziland should be affiliated with the Committee, and I have already obtained the assent of the Administrator of Southern Rhodesia to co-operate with and to be represented on the Committee.

I have, &c.,

BUXTON,

Governor-General.

The Right Hon. Walter H. Long, M.P., &c., Downing Street, London.

Enclosure No. 1 in South Africa Despatch No. 338, of 5th May, 1917.

Prime Minister's Office, Cape Town, 2nd May, 1917.

MINUTE No. 642.

WITH reference to His Excellency's minute No. 9/174/2, of the 27th April, 1916, transmitting despatch No. 329 from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, enclosing memorandum by the Committee of the Privy Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and to Minister's minute No. 1264, of the 31st August, 1916, Ministers have the honour to inform His Excellency that arrangements have now been completed for the organization and carrying-out of a system of investigation into the national resources of South Africa with a view to assisting and developing industrial activity within the Union.

Towards the end of 1915, acting on the suggestion of the Imperial authorities, the Government appointed a committee, under the title of the Government Munitions and Industries Committee, the membership of which was fully representative of the Chambers of Commerce and manufacturers' associations of the Union, to consider how far the question of the manufacture of machinery parts and other requirements in the Union could be undertaken, in order to relieve, as far as possible, the workshops of the United Kingdom. This committee made certain helpful and instructive suggestions, which it is believed have tended to encourage the local manufacture of machinery and other requirements which had not before been produced in this country. The work of this committee was in the main confined to practical engineering matters, very important in themselves, but by no means covering the whole field of industrial research.

The Government, therefore, in October last, appointed an Industries Advisory Board, which, whilst carrying on much of the work of the original Munitions Committee, was intended to have a wider scope and to include within its purview the whole industrial situation of the Union. The members of this Board hold office for three years, and, being almost exclusively business men representative of commerce, manufactures, and labour, they can be relied upon for the adoption of a broad business outlook, and are able to give Government the advantage of a wide commercial experience. The duties of the Board are to consider the many applications constantly being made to the Government for assistance and information in regard to industrial matters, to advise the Government on possible lines of industrial development, and to indicate the direction in which Government aid should be extended.

At its first meeting in October the matters specifically referred to the Board were as follows:—

- (a.) Statistics and information.
- (b.) Scientific and industrial research.
- (c.) Questions of industrial legislation.
- (d.) Encouragement of local industries.
- (e.) Investigation into the available raw products of the country.

The Board had subsequent meetings in December and February, 1916, and have considered a number of important subjects. The most important results of the recommendations of the Board to date have been—

- (1.) The decision of the Government to put into force a Statistical Act, and to carry out an industrial census, which will take place between June and September this year, and which will for the first time give South Africa accurate information in regard to the general industrial position of the country:
- (2.) The appointment of a Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee to deal with all scientific and technical questions, and questions of research which may be referred to them by the Industrial Advisory Board.