

local female labour, factories, particularly clothing-factories, have been established or re-established in certain of the smaller towns. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that there is still a reserve of female labour in some areas—*e.g.*, in Westland, where there are practically no secondary industries.

Departmental records of overtime are in respect of extended hours worked by women and boys. For the calendar year 1941 overtime to the extent of 1,413,157 hours was worked in factories, the figures for 1939 and 1940 respectively being 950,140 and 1,241,807. Pursuant to resolution of the Industrial Emergency Council, Inspectors have permitted overtime in excess of the statutory maximum of one hundred and twenty hours a year. Careful inquiry has, however, been made to ascertain that the health of workers has not been impaired as a result of these extra hours. Many awards contained a provision the effect of which was to introduce a necessity to pay double rates after three hours had been worked in any week. As a result of the Overtime and Holidays Labour Legislation Suspension Order 1941 (Serial number 1941/241), penal rates were reduced to time and a half for the first three hours on any one day and twelve hours in any week (four hours and sixteen hours respectively under any award where the four-hour limit previously applied). From December, 1941, therefore the penal-cost factor which may have prevented overtime being worked on many contracts was removed. Thus the amount of overtime worked in 1942 should disclose a further increase. As a result of a survey undertaken in April, 1942, it was estimated that the overtime then being worked in some of the important industries was as set out in the table following. It would appear, however, that in a number of cases no overtime at all is being undertaken. On the other hand, cases of excessive hours of work have occurred, particularly in the engineering trades.

Canister-making	10 to 12 hours per week.
Canvas-working	2 to 17 "
Clothing-manufacturing	3 to 16 "
Engineering and munitions	10 to 30 "
Soap-manufacturing	4 to 10 "
Timber, joinery, and box making	6 to 14 "
Woollen-milling	6 to 15 "

The recent British Government "Statement relating to Production" is commented on by the Ministry of Labour *Gazette* in respect of hours of work as follows:—

"On the subject of the determination of the best length of the working-week for different kinds of work and for men, women, and juveniles, the Statement draws attention to investigations by the Industrial Health Research Board which indicate that, over an extended period, weekly working-hours should not exceed sixty for men and fifty-five for women, and declares that it has appeared to the Government to be more useful to take all possible steps to restrict weekly hours within these limits than to institute further investigations which were unlikely to produce different results.

"As regards the recommendation that workpeople should have one day's rest in seven, while factories, on the other hand, should be kept working wherever possible seven days a week, it is observed that, though it is possible for such a system to be arranged in some factories, it would seem that in very many, if not most, cases, five and a half or six days of production (with or without two day shifts or day-and-night shifts) will continue to be the best system that can be devised. The Statement adduces a number of reasons for this conclusion, and also points out that it is important to bear in mind that Sunday work makes added demands for transport and other ancillary workers. All Departments agree that in the interests of the maintenance of production at the maximum level, Sunday work should be restricted (subject to some exceptions) to essential maintenance or repair work and to occasions when special emergencies have to be met."

Inspectors report shortages of labour in many industries, also in farming activities and, since the introduction of extended defence contracts, in building construction and associate industries. Pursuant to an order under the Labour Legislation Emergency Regulations 1940, workers on defence works are employed for a normal working-week of fifty-four hours. Apart from the withdrawal of men for the armed forces, a demand for workers has occurred as the result of the development of industries not previously known in this country. Manufacture of wallboard from wood-pulp, manufacture of plywood, extended manufacture of paper, manufacture of pottery-ware, completion in local factories of the manufacture, for example, of electric lamps, and silver-plated hollowware are examples on the manufacturing side, while in the sphere of primary production the growing of linen-flax and subsequent processing, the increased acreage in cereals, and the growing of seeds may be quoted. In addition, demands for supplies for the armed forces have caused increases in canister-making, canning of all kinds, biscuit-manufacturing, clothing and footwear manufacture, &c.

General extension of the working-week has been advocated in the press and otherwise as an essential requirement in present conditions. This question of hours has received frequent and extended consideration by the Industrial Emergency Council. The Council has taken the view that a blanket extension of ordinary hours will not, of itself, bring about an increase in production. Thus, it has adhered to the forty-hour week, dealing in individual cases with extension problems. Removal of restrictive overtime provision and reduction of penalty rates for overtime and holiday work have been referred to above. Throughout the Council has afforded workers' and employers' organizations an opportunity to present evidence, and every possible step has been taken to maintain good will and co-operation in the Council's recommendations.