

One of the most successful national drives made was for cleaning-rags, realizing 92,536 lb. These rags were urgently required for Army, Navy, and Air Force equipment. Added to two previous appeals (mainly contributed from New Zealand homes), a total tonnage of 148 has been collected, or 331,520 lb.

The salvaging of waste rubber, paper, and rags has been national in scope since the Council was appointed, but improved availability of other material for industrial use, such as non-ferrous metals, cast iron, and glass containers has made wider appeal unnecessary. In Canterbury Province, however, metals and glass containers were continuously collected, sorted, and disposed of to factories and users concerned. Impressive totals over the five years are recorded—viz., 2,173 tons of non-ferrous metals and 4,780,000 glass containers.

The Council has acknowledged its indebtedness for co-operation given and services rendered by the Ministry of Supply and the military authorities, particularly in the practical assistance given by the former in providing funds for advertising purposes, and to the latter in supplying Army trucks when available for collecting bulk loads of waste rubber to central depots and yards.

Because of the general volunteer services given by members of the Council and its affiliated bodies, together with free services rendered in transport and in any other phases of the work, great economies were exercised in the handling and disposal of materials required to assist New Zealand's war effort. This commendable community service has resulted in large sums being realized in the sale of all material disposed of. For the year ending 31st March last the net credit earned reached £10,498, which, with credits added for the four previous years—1941 to 1944, inclusive—made up a grand total of £45,976. The whole of this sum, paid over to the National Patriotic Fund Board, was earmarked for the purchase of comforts for our Forces, men and women, overseas.

#### UTILIZATION

The work of the National Utilization of Waste Depot has increased during the year, and an indication is afforded by the number of Army garments salvaged, being approximately 45,000, as against 20,000 last year.

In addition, supplies of clothing have been made available to the Galway Guild, U.N.R.R.A., N.E.I., Red Cross, including a quantity for the Channel Islands as well as for unfilled local demands in New Zealand.

The Paper Mâché Section has continued to supply a range of utensils for hospitals and other essential demands. An extension in the making of toys has proved successful, and the range of articles includes decoy ducks.

Increased activity amongst servicemen in hospital has marked the year, and now includes regular visits, in addition to taking care of such needs as can be attended to by the organization.

Over £1,000 has been donated for patriotic purposes.

Over 100 workers continue to give of their time and skill in this outstanding work, and the determination to continue until the end of the war has not faltered, which redounds to the credit of the workers and affords an indication of the attitude of all those New Zealand women who believe in the cause which is being justified at such a great cost.

#### PRICE CONTROL

The Price Tribunal has continued to maintain strict control over the prices of goods and services during the past year. The tightening-up of the regulations from time to time, and the full implementation of the Government's policy of stabilization, accompanied in some cases by the necessity for subsidy payments, have brought about a substantial increase in the volume of work, and this has necessitated the employment of additional staff. In the engagement of staff, preference has been given to returned servicemen.

The Control of Prices Emergency Regulations 1939 gave the Tribunal power, with the consent of the Minister, to make Price Orders, and during the year 134 such Price Orders have been issued. The cumulative total of Price Orders to 31st March, 1945, is 349. The goods which were the subject of these Price Orders covered a wide range, including, for example, various types of foodstuffs, knitting wools, and knitted wear. In the aggregate, many thousands of lines are involved, some of the orders being very comprehensive.

In the year under review the Tribunal initiated Court proceedings in 301 cases, in which 290 convictions were obtained, 3 cases being dismissed, and 7 withdrawn. The total cases taken under the price control regulations is now 1,417, with 1,395 convictions, 15 dismissals, and 7 withdrawals. The fines imposed total £8,245 10s., of which the sum of £3,119 was collected during the past year. The major portion of the fines collected for this year was as a result of two outstanding cases involving profiteering and other breaches of the regulations which were taken against firms in Auckland. The fines in these cases amounted in one instance to £1,050, and in the other to over £300.

On the 20th December, 1944, Amendment No. 5 of the Control of Prices Emergency Regulations 1939 came into force. This new regulation was issued for the purpose of clarifying the authority of the Tribunal in connection with cases where selling prices were granted by way of approval. It stipulated that any approval given under the amended regulations should, to the extent thereof, operate as if it were a Price Order.

The co-operation between the Tribunal and the Standards Institute, referred to in previous reports, has been maintained, and in numbers of instances prices have been related to definite standards of quality. From the point of view of effective price control, the formulation of standards is complementary to the fixation of prices, for deliberate deterioration of the quality of a product is just as much an increase in price to the consumer as is an actual increase in the price itself.