

In addition, the Commission had purchased on behalf of eligible applicants, 13,003 already existing properties, and had taken over mortgages existing on 3,041 dwelling-houses. Dual assistance had been approved in respect of 38 applications, making the total number of homes provided under the War Service Homes Act, 37,487. Homes are insured under a comprehensive policy, the total insurances in force, including cover notes, amounting to £18,389,559. The total receipts of the Commission to 30th June, 1943, were £31,729,754, of which £12,622,828 was paid to the National Debt Sinking Fund. Arrears of instalments outstanding at the close of the year were £501,663, or 1.83 per cent. of the total instalments due.

In April, 1941, the War Service Homes Act was amended to provide for the granting of assistance to certain classes of eligible persons, and their dependants, in respect of service during the war which commenced in 1939.

§ 18. Daylight Saving.

Daylight saving during summer time was introduced throughout Australia by the Commonwealth Government under the National Security Regulations. Summer time was fixed at one hour in advance of standard time in all States from 2 a.m. on 1st January, 1942, to 2 a.m. on 29th March, 1942, and from 2 a.m. on 27th September, 1942, to 2 a.m. on 28th March, 1943, and in all States, except Western Australia, from 2 a.m. on 3rd October, 1943, to 2 a.m. on 26th March, 1944. At the Premiers' Conference held at Canberra in August, 1944, it was decided that ordinary time should be observed during the 1944-45 summer.

§ 19. Commonwealth Food Control.

1. **General.**—It is convenient to consider Australia's War-time Food Production and Control in two periods or under two phases. Under the first phase come the effects on Australia's agriculture of the Second World War up to the outbreak of hostilities with Japan, while under the second phase we consider the fundamental changes wrought by the entry of Japan into the war.

The main effect of the outbreak of war was to raise problems of surplus production. The onset of the war found Australia reasonably well prepared in this direction and generally speaking the farmer was able to continue production without interruption.

Australia began in 1938 to prepare for food control in the event of war, not only to safeguard her economy, in which exports have always occupied an important place, and to protect primary producers against market collapse, but also to ensure that essential supplies moved quickly to the United Kingdom. Plans were laid then for mass marketing to replace individual enterprise, and understandings were reached that as far as shipping was available, the United Kingdom would take the export surpluses of most of our principal foods.

It is not difficult to understand the acute problems which followed the restriction of shipping space for our exports. Surplus foodstuffs were a worry for two years. The primary producer was supported, but in this general situation little attention was paid to maintaining labour supply in rural industry, providing essential agricultural machinery, etc., and production consequently tended to decline.

In viewing the second phase we again find that Australia was well prepared from some aspects. The possibility of Japan entering the war was considered, and in 1940 the Emergency Supplies Plan was adopted to take care of civilian food supplies in the event of invasion, hostilities on the mainland, and the consequent dislocation of internal transport. Reserve stocks of selected foods were placed in all grocery stores throughout Australia and special Government stores were established in many places for civil or Service use. While it has never been used as an emergency measure the Plan has been most valuable in many ways. It was always a sound precautionary measure and has greatly assisted in ensuring the regular flow of civilian supplies.

Apart from the Emergency Supplies aspects, however, there were the immediate and far-reaching effects of a large increase in the size of Australia's Defence Forces and the arrival of substantial American Forces. These meant that enormously increased supplies were required in Australia itself and in the nearby Islands. At the same time British demands became more urgent than formerly, especially for butter and meat, because of the diversion of American food supplies to Russia. Instead of problems of surplus production, Australia now had to face problems of shortage, and plans were made to maintain and increase production to meet present commitments and to prepare for greater future commitments. Indeed, it was not long before Australia, for the first time in her history, had to face the prospect of restricting her own food consumption in order to share her supplies with other countries.

2. **The Establishment of the Commonwealth Food Control.**—In May, 1943, the Commonwealth Food Control was established under the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture to develop the machinery necessary to cope with the situation and to implement a thoroughgoing food policy. The Secretary of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture, J. F. Murphy, C.M.G., became Controller-General of Food, and he has received special powers under the National Security Act. (S.R. 1943, No. 165.)

3. **Policy and General Organization.**—Overall direction of food policy is now in the hands of Production Executive and the Food Executive of Cabinet. Within the actual food control administration the principal activities are agricultural production, factory production, procurement of food for the Services, and the inspection of factories and foodstuffs, export policy, control and direction of exports, Commerce Act inspection of export goods, and collaboration with the British Food Mission, United States army specialists, and marketing boards.

4. **Agricultural Production.**—Agricultural production is organized through the Director-General of Agriculture and the State Departments of Agriculture. For co-ordination of policy the Australian Agricultural Council functions under the chairmanship of the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, and the Standing Committee on agriculture works with the Agricultural Council.

The principal forms of responsibility reposed on the Commonwealth Food Control in respect of agricultural production are:—

- (a) Co-operation with the States in the organization of agriculture for the special purpose of war-time production. This is done through the State Departments of Agriculture and the District War Agricultural Committees.
- (b) The organization of man-power for all urgent agricultural purposes.
- (c) The production and use of agricultural machinery of all kinds.
- (d) The direction of production generally, with special emphasis on products in short supply such as vegetables and milk for all purposes.

The special problems of production of various crops and live-stock products involve questions relating to the use of animal foodstuffs, fertilizers and seed, the provision of adequate man-power and machinery, and the general organization of the agricultural industries so that the best will be obtained from the resources available.

5. **Food Processing.**—Food processing factories are numerous and varied in their scope, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria. All the principal branches of food processing, viz., cereal foods, meat products, dairy products, fruit products, vegetable products, are subject to control and direction.

A Division in the Food Control Organization deals with all branches of factory production of food. This Division is responsible for securing from the existing factories the maximum output, by overcoming current obstacles to full production, such as man-power difficulties and delays in securing materials essential to production; rendering technical service and planning future expansions of factories and the establishment of additional factories when the expected future demands so necessitate.

6. **Service Foodstuffs.**—To cope with the enormous demands for Service foodstuffs, a special section has been set up whose activities are confined to the procurement of foodstuffs to meet the demands placed on food control. The section covers demands for the Australian Forces and Ancillary Services, demands for such of the United States Forces as are being supplied from Australia and also to meet certain overseas commitments to the British Ministry of Food, etc.

All problems of production created by Service demands are dealt with in the division of the Food Control Organization relating to agricultural production, factory production, and technology and inspection.

7. **Civilian Foodstuffs.**—The distribution of food for use by the civil population is covered by Food Control in association, where necessary, with the Civilian Requirements Board.

8. **Inspection of Factories.**—The inspection of the output of factories, including the actual inspection of the factories themselves, is a function of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture.

The technological staff of Food Control makes analyses of food products continuously and gives considerable assistance to factories.

9. **Export Policy.**—The consideration of export policy, including the negotiations of Trade Treaties and the conclusion of international arrangements relating to food, is a normal function of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture.

10. **Co-operation with United States Authorities.**—There are many food specialists in Australia with the American Army. They comprise experts in agricultural production, agricultural engineering, and food canning and dehydration. The Food Controller is frequently in contact with the United States Army authorities in regard to the co-operation of these experts for advice on agricultural and factory production.

11. **British Food Mission.**—The British Food Mission in Australia is consulted on all matters concerning the export of food to the United Kingdom.

12. **Marketing Boards.**—All the marketing boards functioning under the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, e.g., for wheat, dried fruits, canned fruits and dairy produce, work in close association with the Food Control Administration. The organization and functions of these Boards are covered in another section of the Official Year Book.

§ 20. Department of War Organization of Industry.

1. **Creation.**—To give effect to proposals outlined by the Prime Minister in introducing the Ministers of State Bill 1941, five new Departments of State were created under Section 64 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution on 26th June, 1941. The establishment of three of these Departments—Aircraft Production, Transport and War Organization of Industry—was the Government's response to evidences of strain in the national economy, following the superimposition upon normal civilian activities of a rapid expansion of production for war, and an equally rapid diversion of man-power from industry to the Armed Forces.

2. **Economic Background.**—Already, various Departments, acting either independently or in co-operation, had taken measures as occasion demanded, to ensure uninterrupted progress of programmes of war production, to safeguard the country's financial structure, or to conserve vital materials. The restrictions and controls implemented by them, however, could cover only limited and immediately related fields. The situation demanded an agency which could view economic problems of growing number and intensity relative to the economy as a whole, which could ensure maximum co-ordination of both public and private activities, and which could promote as rapidly as possible the full mobilization of the nation's economic resources for the purpose of waging total war. The Department of War Organization of Industry was created to undertake these responsibilities, but, owing in part to changes of Government, its organization was delayed and the Department did not begin active operations until December, 1941.