

The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.—Enacted in 1907, the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, which forbids any strike or lockout until the matters in dispute have been dealt with by a Board of Conciliation and Investigation, normally applies to disputes in mines, agencies of transport and communication and certain public utilities. At the beginning of the present war, however, the scope of the Act was extended to cover disputes in industries producing munitions and war supplies and in construction work on defence projects. With the consent of the parties concerned, the machinery of the statute may also be utilized in connection with disputes in other industries.

This extension of the Act and the tremendous expansion of war industry in Canada brought about such an increase in the number of applications for Boards of Conciliation and Investigation that provision was made in 1941 for an informal inquiry into any disputes by an Industrial Disputes Inquiry Commissioner with a view to its prompt settlement, if possible, without recourse to the more formal and expensive procedure of appointing a Board of Conciliation and Investigation. Later in 1941, workers who were reported to be dissatisfied with the recommendations of a Board were forbidden to strike until a strike vote of those concerned had been taken under the supervision of the Department of Labour.

During the 37 years in which the statute has been in effect, up to Mar. 31, 1943, 1,336 applications were received for Boards of Conciliation and Investigation, an average of 36 per year; 719 Boards were established, an average of 19 per year; and, as a result of board procedure, cessation of work was averted or ended in all but 54 cases, an average of less than 2 per year. Principally on account of the extension of the scope of the statute to cover disputes in war industries, more cases were dealt with during the fiscal year 1942-43 than in any previous year. In 1942-43, 146 applications were received for Boards of Conciliation and Investigation, 40 Boards were established and, as a result of board procedure, cessation of work was averted or ended in all but one of these cases. Of the remaining applications, some were still outstanding at the end of the fiscal year. In the majority of the cases, however, settlement was obtained as a result of the intervention of Industrial Disputes Inquiry Commissioners.

Fair-Wages Policy.—Wages and hours for work on Dominion Government contracts for construction are regulated under the Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act, 1935, and by an Order in Council of June 7, 1922, as amended Apr. 9, 1924. Hours on such work are limited to 8 per day and 44 per week and the wages to be paid are those current for the type of work in the district concerned, or, if there are no current rates, fair and reasonable ones as determined by the Minister.

Wages and hours for work on contracts for the manufacture of equipment and supplies for the Government are regulated by the Order in Council of 1922 as amended on Dec. 31, 1934, and by an Order in Council of Oct. 4, 1941. The hours on such work must be those fixed by the custom of the trade in the district where the work is performed, or fair and reasonable hours. The wages must be current or fair and reasonable wages and may not in any case be less than 35 cents and 25 cents per hour, respectively, for men and women over 18 years. Lower minimum rates are fixed for workers under 18 years of age and for learners.

The Fair-Wages Policy, which was formulated in 1900, is administered by the National War Labour Board (see below).

Control of Wages.—This policy is part of the Government's general anti-inflationary program. It was introduced in December, 1940, but at that time, though it was recommended for all employers, it applied only to Boards of Concilia-