

Early in 1942, the production of automobiles was stopped (see Chapter XIV). To take care of the needs of physicians, nurses, fire-fighting and police departments and other users in essential classifications, 4,480 new cars were set aside in a government "bank". Cars from this reserve pool have been released only for essential purposes on a permit from the Motor Vehicles Control, Department of Munitions and Supply. By an order issued in July, 1944, by the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, purchases of passenger cars were restricted to one per year except in the case of fleet operators who are allowed to purchase one vehicle per year for every five in operation. The order also required dealers to sell used cars in their stocks to persons presenting an essentiality certificate (issued by the tire rationing officer) without requiring a trade-in or any consideration other than the selling price in cash. Manufacturers of trucks have been permitted to divert from military schedules certain models which are stripped of all military equipment and produce them for commercial purposes. All new trucks for civilian purposes are released only when the prospective purchasers have proven their essentiality to the Motor Vehicle Control.

In the case of electric stoves, the supply position in 1944, though far from plentiful, improved enough to dispense with permit requirements, and rationing was discontinued in March. Hot-air furnaces were subject to permit control for a period of six months, from July until December, 1944, after which the permit system was removed.

During the year, small-arms ammunition, which had been previously reserved for essential users, was made available in small quantities for hunting.

As a result of the expanded production program for farm machinery, seven items were removed from rationing. Rationing of most types of farm machinery and equipment will be continued until supply is more in line with demand, so as to ensure delivery of available machinery to farmers most urgently in need of it.

### **Priorities**

The Priorities Officer of the Department of Munitions and Supply has directed the movement of many materials and products into essential channels. Where controls have been established with respect to particular commodities such as rubber, steel, non-ferrous metals and timber, the Priority Officer works in conjunction with the various controllers of the Wartime Industries Control Board and the handling of priority assistance has often been left to the controller concerned.

The Coal Control has found it necessary to issue orders to restrict consumption of coal and to direct available supplies to the points most needed. The restrictions on consumption by householders and by industry have been on a percentage basis related to previous consumption. To prevent hardship, delivery priorities were granted wherever necessary.

## **Section 2.—Combinations in Restraint of Trade\***

Dominion legislative measures for aiding and regulating trade include specific prohibitions of operation against the public interest by monopolies and similar commercial combinations. Monopolistic trade arrangements tending to eliminate competition in price, supply or quality of goods, and thereby to unduly increase costs or prices, are illegal under laws including the Combines Investigation Act and Section 498 of the Criminal Code. These laws are designed to assist in achieving

\* Revised under the direction of A. MacNamara, Deputy Minister of Labour, Ottawa.