

would be under strong competitive pressure and would not be able to realize the full ceiling on their sales. To prevent any abuse of this trading under the ceiling provision, industry committees, consisting of two or three leading wholesalers and the local Wartime Prices and Trade Board foods officer, were set up in the major centres to enlist the co-operation of the trade. These committees were given no enforcement powers but the trade was definitely informed that any abuse would lead to immediate cancellation of the privilege. On the whole, the scheme has worked quite well and throughout the year it has gradually been extended to additional products.

Control of Supplies.—The volume of goods and services available for civilians during the year was, on balance, slightly larger than in the previous year, but shortages persisted in a number of sections of the civilian economy. This was partly the result of the continued growth of consumer spending, which in some instances more than offset the effect of increased production. Scarcity of suitable skilled and able-bodied workers was a major restrictive factor in most industries, although there was some increase in the over-all supply of labour for civilian production. A number of changes in particular war programs, resulted in variations in the types and quantities of materials, plant facilities and labour that could be used in the civilian economy. Agricultural production exceeded the previous year's level and permitted substantially increased exports to Allied Nations. Various textile articles were in short supply owing to increased demand, decreasing labour efficiency and the difficulty of procuring adequate supplies from abroad. Building supplies, hardware and household appliances were produced in somewhat larger volume, but most of these articles, particularly building supplies, were still very scarce in relation to the greatly increased requirements. Demands for Canadian pulp and paper and their products continued to exceed available supplies which were slightly greater than in the previous year but were still restricted by the shortage of manpower.

Towards the end of the year the improvement that had appeared in the summer in various lines ceased, and the prospect changed for the worse. New war contracts halted the expansion in the output of civilian metal articles. The tendency for agricultural production in the West to shift towards wheat at the expense of feed grain and hogs, combined with high Allied and relief requirements of food, was reflected in a tightening of meat supplies. World textile supplies remained restricted and the requirements of liberated areas were increasing.

The Board's activities during 1944 reflected these general conditions. In view of the continued and, in some cases, intensified shortages of civilian goods, the Board had to take active measures to see that an adequate supply of essentials was produced. The production of certain articles of clothing was directed, a few household appliances were "programmed", and specific measures were continued to assure the largest feasible output of farm implements consistent with war needs. Scarce materials were allocated between different manufacturers and different uses to ensure sufficient supplies for essential production.

The Board kept the Wartime Industries Control Board informed as to civilian requirements for particular metals and, through the Interdepartmental Labour Priorities Committee, advised National Selective Service regarding labour requirements of civilian industry, requesting assistance when it was urgently needed to