

This PUBLIC BILL originated in the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, and, having this day passed as now printed, is transmitted to the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL for its concurrence.

*House of Representatives,
7th October, 1915.*

Right Hon. Sir Joseph Ward, Bart.

COST OF LIVING.

ANALYSIS.

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A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to establish a Board of Trade and to make Provision for the Regulation of Trade. Title.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows :—

1. This Act may be cited as the Cost of Living Act, 1915.

2. (1.) A Board of Trade is hereby established, consisting of the Minister of Industries and Commerce and three other persons to be appointed by the Governor, who shall hold office for a term of three years, and may be reappointed. Short Title.
Constitution of
Board of Trade.

(2.) Each of the said appointed members shall be paid such annual salary as is from time to time appropriated by Parliament for the purpose.

(3.) Any of the said appointed members may be suspended or removed by the Governor for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or misconduct.

(4.) Any of the said appointed members shall be deemed to have vacated his office if he—

(a.) Engages during his term of office in any paid employment or any business outside the duties of his office :

(b.) Becomes bankrupt, compounds with his creditors, or makes an assignment of his salary for their benefit :

(c.) Absents himself from duty for a period of fourteen consecutive days, except on leave granted by the Governor, or becomes incapable of performing his duties :

(d.) Resigns his office, by writing under his hand addressed to the Governor.

Appointment of
deputies of
members of Board
of Trade.

3. In the case of the illness, suspension, or absence of any appointed member the Governor may appoint a deputy to act for him during his illness, suspension, or absence; and every such deputy shall, during the time he acts as deputy, have all the powers and authority of the member for whom he is acting. 5

Minister of
Industries and
Commerce to be
President of Board.

4. (1.) The Minister of Industries and Commerce (hereinafter referred to as "the Minister") shall be the President of the Board.

(2.) The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board at which he is present.

(3.) In the event of the absence of the President from any meeting of the Board, he may appoint some other Minister of the Crown to act for him at that meeting. The fact of any such Minister acting for the President shall be sufficient proof of his authority to so act. 10

Appointment of
Secretary and other
officers.

5. (1.) The Public Service Commissioner may from time to time appoint some person to be the Secretary to the Board of Trade, and may also appoint such other persons as he thinks fit for the purpose of carrying on the business of the Board. 15

(2.) All officers appointed under this section shall be members of the Public Service and subject accordingly to the provisions of the Public Service Act, 1912. 20

Duties and Powers of the Board.

Duties and powers
of Board of Trade.

6. The Board of Trade is hereby empowered—

(a.) To investigate and report to the Governor upon any case in which it is alleged that there has been an infringement of any of the provisions of the Commercial Trusts Act, 1910; 25

(b.) To inquire into and report to the Governor upon matters affecting the cost of living, or upon any other question referred to it by the Governor relating to the supply, demand, or price of commodities; 30

(c.) To inquire into and report to the Governor upon any complaint that the price of any class of goods is unreasonably high;

(d.) To consider, inquire into, and report upon any question relating to the trade, commerce, or business of New Zealand which may be referred to it by the Governor; 35

(e.) To institute inquiries in reference to markets for goods produced or manufactured in New Zealand, to report the result of such inquiries to the Governor, and to make recommendations to the Governor in regard to trade with other countries; 40

(f.) To make recommendations to the Governor for legislation in relation to matters referred to it for consideration; and 45

(g.) Generally to advise the Governor as to how the trade, industries, and commerce of New Zealand can be best encouraged, developed, and protected.

Delegation of
powers by Board.

7. For the purpose of conducting any inquiry or investigation under this Act the Board of Trade may delegate any of its powers or functions to one or more members of the Board, or, with the approval of the Governor in Council, to any fit person or persons. 50

8. (1.) When conducting any inquiry or investigation under this Act the Board of Trade, and any person or persons to whom any powers of the Board are delegated as aforesaid, shall be deemed to have been appointed under and in pursuance of the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1908, and all the provisions of that Act shall apply accordingly.

Board to have powers of Commission of Inquiry.

(2.) No person shall be excused from answering any question put to him, or from producing or making discovery of any document, on any such inquiry or investigation, on the ground that the answer to the question or the production or discovery of the document would tend to criminate him in respect of any offence against the Commercial Trusts Act, 1910, or any other Act.

9. Whenever an inquiry or investigation is made by the Board it shall be its duty to report in writing to the Governor in respect thereto.

Board to report result of inquiries or investigations made by it.

10. (1.) The Board may conduct its proceedings in such manner as will best conduce to the proper despatch of business and to the ends of justice.

Conduct of proceedings of Board.

(2.) A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but no member shall participate in any hearing or proceeding in which he has any pecuniary interest.

(3.) The Board may from time to time make such regulations as may be requisite for the order and regulation of proceedings before it.

(4.) Any person may appear before the Board and be heard in person or by counsel.

(5.) Every vote and official act of the Board shall be recorded, and its proceedings may, in its discretion, be public on the request of any person interested.

(6.) The Board shall have an official seal, which shall be judicially noticed.

11. A report of the transactions of the Board for each year ending on the thirty-first day of March shall be laid before Parliament within twenty-one days after the commencement of the session of Parliament held next after the said day.

Annual report to be laid before Parliament.

General.

12. The Commercial Trusts Act, 1910, is hereby amended by omitting from the Schedule the words "Meat," "Fish," "Flour, oatmeal, and the other products or by-products of the milling of wheat or oats," and "Sugar," and substituting the words "Any article of food for human consumption, and ingredients used in the manufacture of any such article."

Commercial Trusts Act, 1910, amended.

13. (1.) The Governor may from time to time, by Order in Council gazetted, make regulations authorizing and controlling—

Extended powers of Borough Councils.

(a.) The establishment by Borough Councils of milk-stations for testing, treating, and distributing the milk-supply of the borough; and the carrying on by Borough Councils of the business of a dealer in milk and milk-products and ice;

(b.) The establishment, equipment, and maintenance by Borough Councils of refrigerating-chambers and chambers for the cool storage of articles of food of a perishable nature intended for human consumption;

- (c.) The purchase, equipment, and maintenance by Borough Councils of trawlers for the purpose of engaging in fishing and the carrying-on by such Councils of the business of dealing in fish ;
- (d.) The establishment, equipment, and maintenance by Borough Councils of bakeries, and the carrying on by such Councils of the business of a baker ; and 5
- (e.) The establishment, equipment, and maintenance by Borough Councils of brick-making works, and the carrying on by such Councils of the business of a brick-maker. 10
- (2.) Such regulations may apply generally to all Borough Councils or to any specified Borough Council.
- (3.) Any Borough Council may, in respect of any matter which by any such regulation it is authorized to undertake, make such by-laws, and, with the approval of the Minister of Internal Affairs, fix such charges as it thinks fit. 15