

(7154.) NORTHERN, WESTLAND AND OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND
COAL-MINES.—ORDER AMENDING AWARDS.

In the Court of Arbitration of New Zealand, Northern, Westland, and Otago and Southland Industrial Districts.—In the matter of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1908, and its amendments; and in the matter of all Coal-mines awards now in force in the Dominion of New Zealand.

Monday, the 24th day of April, 1922.

WHEREAS, pursuant to a special provision contained in each of the said awards, power is reserved to the Court, of its own motion and by general order, to increase or diminish the excess rates of remuneration fixed and defined by the said awards over the standard rates as from the 1st day of May and 1st day of November, commencing on the 1st day of May, 1922, in the ratio between (*a*) the percentage of the increase in the retail prices of food for the preceding March or September respectively over the retail prices of food current in July, 1914, as shown by the Government Statistician's returns of the three food groups combined, and (*b*) the percentage of the increase (57·76) in the retail prices of food shown in the return for the month of

January, 1920, over the retail prices of food current in July, 1914: And whereas it is further provided in the said awards that in calculating the increases or decreases of time rates the calculation shall be made to the nearest penny, and in the case of piecework rates to the nearest farthing: And whereas the ascertained percentage of increase in the retail prices of food for the month of March, 1922, over the retail prices of food current in the month of July, 1914, is 41·21: Now, therefore, in pursuance of the said special provisions of the said awards and of every other power in that behalf thereto enabling it, this Court doth hereby order as follows:—

1. That the excess rates of remuneration over and above the standard rates as fixed and defined by each of the said awards shall be diminished in the ratio which 57·76 bears to 41·21.

2. That this order shall operate and take effect as from the 1st day of May, 1922, and shall continue in force during the currency of each respective award, or until such time as the Court shall otherwise order.

3. That this order shall be deemed to be incorporated in and form part of each of the said awards respectively as from the 1st day of May, 1922.

[L.S.]

— F. V. FRAZER, Judge.

MEMORANDUM.

This order is made in accordance with the provisions of the clause headed "Variation of Rates," appearing in the different Coal-mines awards. The rates fixed by the awards are, in the case of time rates, 60 per cent. above the rates payable in 1914, and, in the case of piecework rates, 50 per cent. above the 1914 rates. The increases of 60 per cent. and 50 per cent. were adopted from the national agreement made in February, 1920, which provided for these increases on the basis of the price-statistics for food for the month of January, 1920, which then showed an increase of 57·76 per cent. over the prices ruling in July, 1914. The Court accordingly decided to base subsequent six-monthly increases and reductions of rates on the percentage of increase or decrease disclosed by the Government Statistician's returns of food-prices for the months of March and September in each year. The 57·76 per cent. increase of January, 1920, is represented by an increase of 41·21 per cent. in March, 1922. The framers of the national agreement, in working on the food figures alone, no doubt had in view the fact that fluctuations in rents and coal prices do not affect miners to the same extent as they affect other people. It is to be noted that the reduction in the rates of remuneration provided for in this order does not apply to the standard rates—that is, it is only the excess above the standard rates that is to be reduced in the ratio of 57·76 to 41·21. As indicated in the memorandum appended to each award, the standard rates are equivalent to 100–160ths of the present time rates, and 100–150ths of the present piecework rates. The reductions affect only the remaining 60–160ths and 50–150ths of these rates respectively.

[L.S.]

F. V. FRAZER, Judge.