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Government Drafts Textiles

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CONSERVING clothes and fabrics by careful wear and remodeling will be a stabilizing factor in the war-time textiles emergency. Home sewing will increase. Workers who have been making ready-made clothes now can be employed in munitions plants.

Standardization is increasing at a rate never before equalled in the United States, and fear of the American woman losing interest in her looks and clothes in these times is unbased.

While there will be a shortage of textiles for civilian use, the situation does not seem entirely hopeless. Those factories whose services are not being used for military demands, or which are not adapted to wartime production can continue to produce at a rapid rate within the limitations of the war. Civilians will have to assume the part of second fiddle to the defense forces.

The general public, while being warned to control over-extensive buying of materials, is also asked to conserve on buying such things as “black-out” goods without waiting for instructions from reliable sources as to where these fabrics will be needed most. There will be no call for such materials in certain parts of the country and the public is urged to let those who have immediate need for it take the supply in hand.

Increasing awareness of the problem concerning war demands upon textiles is rising to importance in the minds of the public. As the concern grows, the people will want to know what the demands of the units of defense in this country will be and how they will be met.

To equip the millions of men in the armed forces with good quality, sturdy material and at the same time to produce enough textiles for the many civilians at home is the sum total of the textile manufacturers' job.

In December, the OPM urged an all-out production for the country's textiles mills and since then the production of fibers and material has increased as rapidly as the mills and the men can work. One thing stands certain, that by over-time and multi-shift operation, the capacity of the textile industry will be capable of supplying the wartime demands.

Several plans are under formulation to keep a stable economy in the war-time stress. One is the Production Requirement Plan, which will handle each manufacturer's requirements for periods of three months ahead. Allotments will be made according to the statements compiled by the industrialist as to: (1) the volume of products he has been making; (2) their use in relation to defense or essential civilian needs; (3) amount of scarce materials he has on hand; (4) additional amounts he will require. The decision will then be made by the PRP as to a final rating for the manufacturer's demands. Supplies for end products such as textiles, yarn, dye and starch are included in this plan.

From the office of the Price Administrator come plans for price schedules. The general level of prices for materials have gone up since war was declared. The work of the price administrator is to keep a level maximum of prices. Now temporary schedules are being readied to halt the steady price advances and to stabilize prices until definite schedules have been completed.

Experimentation to find synthetic materials to substitute for the common fabric is being slowed down until requirements and estimates needed for such materials can be made. There is a conservation of chemicals to a certain extent but plans are being made to equip factories to make fabricial substitutes. When these are completed, the possibilities of a shortage of chemicals may be dissolved.

A modernization program to increase production of fabrics for military purposes, to enable more efficient production, and a wider range of fabrics by over-hauling and replacing machinery, is going on in almost all of the factories throughout the country. All the electrical power and transportation facilities are being conditioned for the all-out program.