

WPB TO ANALYZE GOODS SHORTAGES

New Survey of Items in Civilian Use, Set for March, Will Aim at Equalizing Field

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 19—A second and more specific nation-wide survey on civilian consumer goods items which are in short supply will be made in March, Dr. Austin Grimshaw, who conducted the first civilian shortage census for the War Production Board's Office of Civilian Requirements, told the Fashion Group today.

He outlined an early spring check-up which will show, for each household visited, an inventory of the textile items on hand, an estimate how long it will be before the household runs out of each item, and a statement of intended purchases of necessary articles of clothing in various sizes and at various economic levels.

As a result of the first survey of fields in which civilians reported hardships as the result of wartime restrictions, Dr. Grimshaw said, some entirely new production programs have been set up, others have been expanded, a few that might have failed for lack of sufficient information have been buttressed and some which had been keyed too high have been reduced. As an instance, he mentioned items involving rubber, which have represented a serious war shortage, but various such wares will begin to reappear on the market as synthetic rubber becomes available.

Dr. Grimshaw expressed some surprise that his figures showed only 50 per cent of the women questioned as dissatisfied with the quality of wartime hosiery. On the whole, he commented, the WPB census of shortages tallied with the reports to date on a questionnaire survey conducted by the American Home Economics Association.

He stoutly defended as a time, energy and materials saver the WPB policy of not surveying shortages until they actually began to appear. Only through a three-way check, with manufacturers, retailers and consumers, can the true story of the scope of any shortage be ascertained, he said. The WPB is in such close touch with manufacturers that regular correspondence channels furnish a fairly complete check in any given field. The larger retail outlets, the mail-order houses, the big chains and department stores in general cooperate by reporting to OCR their inventories and comparisons of orders this year and last year on 300 items in civilian use.

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