

1942.

NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

(THIRTIETH REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

To His Excellency Sir Cyril Louis Norton Newall, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Member of the Order of Merit, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's Dominion of New Zealand and its Dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

As Commissioner under the Public Service Act, 1912, I have the honour to submit the following report as required by section 15 of the Public Service Act, 1912.

REPORT.

Although the Public Service Act, 1912, requires only that the Commissioner shall report on the efficiency of the Public Service and of its proceedings, it has been customary in this annual report to review any aspects of personal administration that seem to merit mention. This year, however, considerations of economy and the need to conserve paper induce the Commissioner to reduce his report to the very briefest compass.

The Service is on a war footing. The staffing problems could not very well be more acute. At the moment, 6,054 officers and employees are away on duty in one or other of the armed forces. Over and above that figure, 623 officers have already returned from military duty, so that altogether 6,677 are, or have been, in the uniformed Services. When it is realized that at the outbreak of war there were not more than 14,000 males in the Public Service (whether temporary or permanent staff), it will be readily understood not only that extreme endeavours have been made to release men for the fighting forces, but also that there has been an unprecedented difficulty in maintaining old and providing for new or developing services. The Commissioner has followed the policy that no officer is to be withheld from military service whose place can be filled or whose duties can be postponed or covered by some expedient. To this end, the strictest investigation has been instituted, and continues, for the purpose of eliminating any work that in the light of the country's danger cannot be classed as positively essential.

Many forms of work that had been hitherto regarded as indispensable to safe and prudent administration have been placed under a pitiless scrutiny and either discarded altogether or postponed for the time being. It is plain, however, that the Public Service has reached the point where proposals for further personnel must be most anxiously scrutinized. War conditions have in some aspects of State services reduced what would have been essential work in normal times, but other aspects of work have increased the need for staff. In the result, there is not much reduction in volume of work.