

1943
NEW ZEALAND

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

(THIRTY-FIRST REPORT OF THE)

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

To His Excellency Sir Cyril Louis Norton Newall, Marshall 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

As was the case last year, considerations of economy and the need for paper-conservation necessitate only a very brief report on the year's activities.

Staffing difficulties in the Service are still most acute. The total permanent and temporary staff (excluding casuals) as at 1st April, 1943, amounted to approximately 28,800. Of this number, some 7,350 are on military service. As mentioned in last year's report, on the outbreak of war there were approximately 14,000 male officers on the permanent and temporary staff. The difficulties caused to all Departments by the release of male officers indicated by the above figures can readily be imagined.

Close scrutiny continues to be given to the workings of all Departments by my own Inspectors and by departmental officers. All work which can possibly be left over until better times has been eliminated, and wherever possible departmental activities have been curtailed, so that all possible staff has been made available for military service or for the needs of War Departments and Departments vitally concerned with the country's war effort.

Public Servants on War Service.—It was with great regret that the loss of 124 officers on war service was recorded in my last report. Since that date this number has increased to 252. Of this number, 134 were in the Air Force, 107 in the Army, and 11 in the Navy. These officers, without exception, were of the type that could ill be spared, and the Public Service of New Zealand is the poorer by their passing. They have, by their sacrifice, set a standard which those left will find difficulty in attaining.

Administrative Changes.—The following changes in Administrative officers took place during the year:—

Mr. E. J. Fawcett, M.A., was appointed Director-General, Department of Agriculture, in replacement of Mr. A. H. Cockayne, who retired on superannuation.

Mr. R. B. Tennent was appointed Assistant Director-General, in replacement of Mr. Fawcett.

Mr. F. G. Oborn was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Taxes in succession to the late Mr. E. S. Smith.

Overtime.—Unfortunately, it is still necessary to work long periods of overtime in most Departments of the Public Service. This can hardly be avoided as there is a considerable lapse of time before the numerical replacements provided are competent to fill the places of the officers who have left. During the year the conditions of payment of overtime were considerably improved. The Public Service Regulations previously provided that overtime should be payable for the time worked in excess of forty hours weekly at ordinary rates of pay, and provided that the officers' salaries did not exceed £470 per annum. From 1st October, 1942, overtime became payable at ordinary rates of pay for time worked between forty and forty-four hours per week, and at time-and-a-half rates for time in excess of forty-four hours per week. Provision was also made to pay overtime to officers receiving salaries up to £565 per annum. Sunday and statutory holiday duty was previously paid for at time-and-a-half rates. Under the amendment, provision was made for payment at double rates for these days.

Minimum Salary for Married Officers. The minimum remuneration for married officers in the Public Service was increased from £230 8s. 1d. per annum to £243 per annum as from 1st September, 1942. In addition to this amount, a cost-of-living allowance of £26 per annum is payable, so that in effect the minimum remuneration for a married officer is now £269 per annum.

Paper-conservation.—During the year two officers have been given full-time duties connected with paper-conservation. All requests to the Government Printing Office involving the use of paper have been reviewed by this Committee prior to approval being given to printing. Opportunity was also taken for inspections to be made as to existing stocks of paper and forms held by different district offices. As a result of the operations of these officers consumption was cut down very considerably, and the position regarding paper-supplies of the Government Printing Office was vastly improved. Another indirect benefit of this survey of departmental forms has been the abandonment of the furnishing of certain returns which under present conditions could hardly be deemed essential. The work of this Committee is continuing.