

With regard to the week-end mail, the General Manager explained that after the office closed on Saturday mornings he for a time required a skeleton staff to attend on Saturday mornings to clear the mail and hand it to him, but after a time he considered this unnecessary and cleared the mail himself, twice on Saturdays and once on Sundays. Any mail marked "Tender" remained unopened and was put into the tender box the same time as the mail was handed in to the records staff. He saved two hours valuable time each Monday by so doing, which he was able to devote to other business of the Board. However commendable this zeal might be, it was contrary to the rigidity of Treasury Instructions. There is nothing to show that any harm resulted from this practice, but, on the contrary, valuable time was saved for the Board's service. This concludes my traverse of the matters for inquiry, and it is my duty also to add that nothing transpired during the inquiry reflecting on the integrity of the General Manager or any member of the Board. The General Manager throughout a prolonged examination gave his evidence freely and without equivocation and showed an over-readiness to shoulder responsibility for matters which were not his sole responsibility.

And whereas I was further directed by the said Warrant to make such recommendations as I deemed fit to make in respect of the premises. I have the honour to report that I consider that in its present constitution the Board is too cumbersome a body for the effective discharge of its functions in a businesslike manner. The larger the number of members the more is the sense of personal responsibility dissipated. The evidence showed a too-ready acquiescence in the recommendations of the General Manager—the Deputy Chairman could not recall an instance where the Board had disagreed with the General Manager's recommendations—and a failure to give time to due consideration of important matters. The official members have not necessarily the qualifications to deal with business matters. The Board should be organized on a businesslike basis, as it would be in the commercial world. If the members are too numerous, there can be no adequate discussion of business in a reasonable time.

I consider a Board consisting of the General Manager and two or three members of business experience, with power to co-opt various official representatives as occasion required, would be a more competent and efficient Board and would be a support to and also a check on the General Manager and be in a position to explore and more adequately deal with his recommendations and be identified with and have a personal sense of responsibility in the Board's decisions.

The Board to be still subject to the Minister of Finance, as provided by the present regulations.

Also, that a direction should be given by the Board as provided by Regulation 20 for the keeping of the minute-book records by the Secretary. It is an unnecessary burden on the General Manager to deal with such routine matters.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

[L.S.]

J. R. BARTHOLOMEW,

Commission.

Dated at Wellington, this 23rd day of September, 1946.

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing (688 copies), £60.

---

By Authority: E. V. PAUL, Government Printer, Wellington.—1946.

Price 1s.]