

reduced as a result of the tapering-off of the number of Service personnel demobilized. During the year grants were made in 368 cases—to 363 ex-servicemen and 5 ex-servicewomen.

During the period 1st April, 1946, to 31st March, 1947, £8,244 was paid by way of this allowance—£8,047 to ex-servicemen and £197 to ex-servicewomen—a total reduction in expenditure of £6,885 on the previous year's figures.

DEMOBILIZATION ALLOWANCES

To provide for the maintenance of unfit discharged Service personnel who require continuation of medical treatment, or medical after-care, and who are unable to resume civilian employment by reason of their incapacity, the payment of a temporary allowance, termed a "demobilization allowance," is in operation. During the year applications were received from 99 ex-servicemen and 9 ex-servicewomen. Grants were made to 56 ex-servicemen and 6 ex-servicewomen. The amount paid out by way of demobilization allowances was £5,209 for the year. There were 18 allowances current at 31st March, 1947.

IMPERIAL AND OTHER OVERSEAS PENSIONS

Much additional work has been thrown on the Department during the past year as a result of the repatriation and rehabilitation of ex-servicemen who served in units of the Empire Forces other than the New Zealand Forces.

Numerous paying authorities overseas have sought the assistance of this Department in order to pay retiring pay, release leave, and other privilege payments, while payment of gratuities for such authorities is now being undertaken. Because of the varying rates and nature of payments and allowances which involve questions of conversion of currencies and exchange, the task has involved considerable accounting work and correspondence with overseas authorities, but the Department has been pleased to undertake the work and so assist ex-servicemen and their dependants who, in many cases, have taken up permanent residence in New Zealand.

In many other cases the Department has been the channel for making temporary grants while ex-servicemen of other than New Zealand Forces have been in New Zealand. Arrangements have been made to deal with payment of allowances to Polish ex-servicemen when these take up residence in the Dominion.

Altogether sixty different classes of payments are handled by the branch of the Department handling the payments for the United Kingdom and other Governments.

STAFF

The effective strength of the officers employed in the Department increased from 1,353 at 31st March, 1946, to 1,427 at 31st March, 1947. The increase is accounted for mainly through extra staff being required to handle the large number of family benefits now in operation, and also due to further officers being demobilized from the Armed Forces; 46 officers are still absent on military service and 70 on special leave without pay and 7 on loan to other Departments.

Opportunity is taken to record appreciation of the excellent service rendered, during a difficult year, by the staff of the Head Office and district offices of the Department. Members of the staff generally have applied themselves unsparingly to their duties, notwithstanding that long hours and constantly varying problems have been the rule.

C. DUNN, Acting-Chairman	} Social Security Commission.
E. PEARCE, Acting-Commissioner	

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