

stations and other concerns were thus involved, and were required to pay penal rates for work at week-ends and on statutory holidays. Again many awards and agreements conceded like conditions. These made it increasingly difficult to justify the withholding of the concessions from employees of the Public Service.

There may be room for differences of opinion, from the point of view of national policy, about the requirement to pay penal rates for work falling outside the Monday-to-Friday week. This certainly raises problems where services must be continued without regard to the day on the calendar. Yet, whatever differing opinions may be held on this issue, it seems clear beyond doubt that conditions in the Public Service must conform substantially with conditions in other employment. The policy cannot be applied partially and incompletely. It is in this spirit that the change was recently made in the Public Service.

At the same time heads of Departments and all Controlling Officers have been urged to keep overtime, and week-end work, under constant and vigilant review, to the end that it may be reduced or cut out. When overtime is worked as a regular practice the return in results achieved is doubtful. We have also emphasized the "penal" nature of payments for work on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, or statutory holidays, the objective being that work thus subject to penalty should be avoided as far as possible.

EMPLOYMENT OF WORKMEN

Approximately 21,000 temporary employees are engaged under Public Service Regulation 150. They are workmen whom certain Permanent Heads are authorized to employ for various types of work other than clerical duties. Examples are workmen on various construction jobs, in State mines, and in State forests. The conditions of employment are in most cases fixed by agreement with the union representing the particular class of worker, and a practice has grown up over many years past whereby the agreement is signed by the Minister for the Department concerned. As these workmen are employed by the Public Service Commission it would seem that legally the Commission alone, and not the Minister, should sign the agreement. An alternative would be to provide that such workers are not to be subject to the Public Service Act. Administratively this would not be good. If a salaries tribunal were established (and reference is made to this later), there would seem to be an even stronger case for leaving such employees under the control of the Commission.

STAFF OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION AND ITS ACCOMMODATION

Improved efficiency in the Public Service is assisted if the office of the Commission is adequately staffed. As at 31st March, 1948, the staff was 129, compared with 107 the previous year. The appointment of Assistant Inspectors has permitted the Senior Inspectors to commence a tour of New Zealand, and already most offices in the South Island have been visited. The Inspectors are accompanied by a Commissioner or an Assistant Commissioner. The Superintendent of Staff Training has also visited various towns to stimulate staff-training programmes. These visits are welcomed by officers, and they help the Commission to select the best officers for promotion.

The appointment of a legal officer has been fully justified. His help in daily legal problems, and in cases coming before the Board of Appeal, is valuable. An increase in the junior staff has been necessary to enable the senior officers to use their time to best advantage.

To accommodate the increased staff the Commission now has additional space in the University Senate Building previously used by the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. Improved efficiency has resulted from alterations to the building and the rearrangement of the staff.

Following the appointment of Mr. J. A. E. Engel as Deputy Director-General of Health (Administrative), Mr. J. K. Hunn, formerly a Senior Inspector, was appointed an Assistant Commissioner.