

(c) APPOINTMENT OF EXPERIENCED SCIENTISTS TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE

We gave much consideration to the possibility of appointing experienced scientists to the Public Service. We think that in scientific work at higher levels the most important factors are brilliance, experience, and ability to give fresh stimulus to scientific work rather than mere ability to carry on a particular job at the level at which it has been performed in the past. While the right of appeal should give priority to scientists of equal brilliance, experience, and initiative, already employed it should not protect mediocrity against outstanding ability or hamper the appointment of the best man on each occasion.

We think, too, that the appointment of overseas scientists of recognized ability in their particular fields to senior posts in the Public Service should be made easier than it is at present. There are, in our opinion, cases in which scientific appointments from outside the service should be made without hesitation.

(d) IMPROVED SALARIES

Salary scales obviously affect recruitment, and subsection (vi) below is devoted to this topic.

(ii) REDUCTION OF NET LOSSES

As indicated earlier in the report, we are satisfied that New Zealand is losing to overseas scientific employers, mainly within the British Commonwealth, more scientists than are returning or are coming to this country for the first time, and that the loss is in the main of the best of our scientists. We agree that New Zealand should make its full contribution to the British Commonwealth pool of scientific workers. With other parts of the Commonwealth, we benefit from scientific work done overseas. We think, however, that our contribution should not always be made by export, particularly when this is not balanced by a corresponding drawing-off from the pool. As we have indicated elsewhere, the development of scientific work of a very high standard in New Zealand may be expected to provide a field of work for first-class scientists both from New Zealand and other countries. The following steps should therefore be taken to recover a greater proportion of "exports" or, in other ways, reduce the margin between "exports" and "imports" of scientists.

(a) CONTINUOUS CONTACT WITH ALL NEW ZEALAND SCIENTISTS OVERSEAS THROUGH THE OFFICES OF THE VARIOUS HIGH COMMISSIONERS

In this way these scientists should be kept aware of suitable New Zealand vacancies. We are strongly of the opinion, however, that this action would be ineffective unless New Zealand conditions for scientists were improved (see paragraph (e) below).

RECOMMENDATION—

That arrangements be made through the various High Commissioners to inform New Zealand scientists overseas of suitable vacancies in New Zealand, and to inform New Zealand employers of scientific personnel concerning New Zealand scientists who are anxious to return.

(b) PROVISION OF A POOL OF RELIEVING TEACHERS IN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Education Department is continually receiving applications from teachers, often science teachers, in the United Kingdom who desire positions in New Zealand post-primary schools. There are vacancies in these schools, but, as is well known, all appointments to post-primary schools are made not by the Education Department, but by individual employing authorities. These bodies are not very ready to appoint a teacher quite unknown to them and unable to take up his position for possibly many months. On the other hand, scientists are not likely to undertake the long and costly removal to New Zealand unless they have a firm guarantee of suitable employment.