

REPORTS ON OFFICERS

Reports on officers were called for on 31st January, 1948, and further reports are required on 30th September, 1949. For groups of officers within Departments the reports are valuable and generally reliable, but their use is limited when comparing officers in different Departments.

The form of report is under constant review and the Commission has welcomed suggestions and criticism from officers.

The Commission recognizes that the success of the reporting system depends on the reporting officers. Full instructions are given, and special emphasis is placed on their responsibility to the officers they mark.

Although reports often upset staff, some system of regular reporting is necessary, but we would like it known that the Commission considers reports are not the main, or only, factor in promotion policy. They represent but one element in the processes of assessing the best applicant for any job.

INTEGRITY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The ethical standard of public service in New Zealand remains on a high plane, despite individual lapses now and then. In such a large and complex organization as our Service there are bound to be occasional deviations from the strict code of conduct. During the year three serious cases received ample press publicity at the time, viz. —

- (1) Acceptance of a £10 bribe by a clerk in the Building Control Office at Auckland.
- (2) Theft of £994 by forgery of workmen's time-sheets and lorry hire by a clerk of the Ministry of Works at Whenuapai. (£575 recovered.)
- (3) Conspiracy between a clerk of the Marketing Department and the owner of the Timaru Egg Floor to defraud the Government of egg subsidies totalling £1,861 3s. 4d.

In all three cases the offenders were convicted and sentenced by the Courts.

The integrity of the Public Service and the probity of its members in general are not open to question if these isolated incidents are viewed in proper perspective—that is to say, against a background of 30,000 employees.

NEW FUNCTION

As from 1st April, 1949, all employers' liability insurance was taken over by the Crown from private companies by authority of the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1947. The Commission was faced with the problem of finding 300 additional staff for the State Fire and Accident Insurance Office. Nearly all these vacancies were filled in time by recruitment outside and by transfers from other Departments.

EXERCISE OF COMMISSION'S POWERS OUTSIDE WELLINGTON

The setting-up of small branch offices in Auckland and Christchurch has fully justified the Commission's policy of delegation of functions. Individual officers and Departments have benefited by the prompt and more personal attention that can be given to staff problems on the spot. Recruitment and transfer of staff, liaison with local controlling officers, staff-training assistance, cadet instruction short courses, inspection of Departments, and problems of office accommodation are all dealt with by the Commission's staff in Auckland and Christchurch. There is little doubt that the establishment of these offices is fostering a spirit of *esprit de corps* among Service personnel in these cities, and this in itself assists in promoting the efficiency of the Service.

In other centres the Commission uses the services, on a part-time basis, of senior officers in Departments, who act as its representatives. This has proved satisfactory and has greatly facilitated the making of appointments.