

quite obvious that some competent officers are not applying for promotion outside their town of residence because of their prospective difficulty of obtaining other accommodation. It is difficult to assess the indirect effect of these housing difficulties on the efficiency of the Service. It must be concluded, however, that, where the most efficient officer for a position feels unable to apply, there must be, in the long run, an adverse effect on the Service. This is particularly so where the married man with a family is restricted to an even greater extent than the single officer or the married officer without any family.

For the more junior officers the conditions can be alleviated by the provision of suitable hostel accommodation. Some progress in this direction has been made in Wellington, and it is hoped that more premises will be made available for use as hostels in the not very distant future.

The provision of adequate housing would also do much to assist the difficult staffing positions in such Departments as the Prisons and the Mental Hospitals Department. Many capable officers in these Departments are lost to the Service because on marriage they are unable to obtain suitable housing accommodation reasonably adjacent to the institutions. This is particularly the case with country institutions.

UNIFORMITY IN THE STATE SERVICES

For more than twenty-five years there has been in existence a committee of senior officers set up with Cabinet approval, called the Uniformity Committee. The present personnel of this Committee is as under:—

Secretary to Treasury:

General Manager, New Zealand Railways:

Director-General, Post and Telegraph Department:

Director of Education:

Public Service Commissioner (Chairman).

As will be seen, representatives of the larger State Services are members of this Committee. The functions of the Committee are the reviewing of any major proposals affecting conditions of employment or rates of pay in the Services represented, the attainment of the greatest degree of uniformity possible among the Services and advise to Government on such other matters as may be referred to the Committee from time to time. During the years this Committee has functioned it can be claimed that it has served a very useful purpose in the machinery of Government.

However, with the setting-up of the Railway Industrial Tribunal, the Committee finds that its usefulness as a reviewing body has practically disappeared. The Tribunal has mandatory powers, and its findings are immediately implemented in the Railway Department. The decisions of the Tribunal affecting conditions of employment which are more advantageous than the corresponding conditions in other Services are immediately seized upon by the employees' organizations with a request for their adoption. The result is, in effect, that the Railway Tribunal's decisions have repercussions on all Services.

The Public Service with a Consultative Committee and the Post and Telegraph Department with an advisory Council have recently obtained a new scale of salaries differing from that operating in the Railways Department. As in certain respects this scale is an improvement on the previous scale, there is no doubt that the Railway Tribunal will have representations made for the acceptance of this scale in the Railway Department.