

7. ACCOMMODATION AND AMENITIES

It has been the policy of the Commission to provide waiting-rooms and amenities at ports where the finances of the Harbour Boards are such that this work cannot be undertaken by them, and the Commission has, during recent years, erected assembly halls and administrative offices at the ports of Napier, Westport, Greymouth, and Nelson. It is primarily the responsibility of Harbour Boards under the Harbours Act to provide waiting-rooms and amenities for waterside workers, and the Commission has always taken the view that this responsibility should be undertaken by Harbour Boards at the four main ports, where the finances of the Boards are such as to enable this work to be undertaken. The Commission has, however, agreed at main ports to meet the cost of equipping restaurants and cafeterias, provided the Harbour Boards supply the necessary buildings and facilities.

Up to the present date the Commission has either expended or been committed to expenditure to an amount of £80,000 in providing modern waiting-rooms at secondary ports and equipping restaurants and cafeterias at main ports.

The progress made during the year regarding the provision of accommodation and amenities is summarized as follows:—

Auckland.—Modern cafeterias were opened in November, 1947, at Princes, Queen's, King's, and Export Wharves. These cafeterias are being operated by the union through a cafeteria committee and are providing an efficient service to waterside workers at the port. The Auckland Harbour Board met the cost of providing the cafeterias, while the Commission was responsible for all costs of equipment. The Commission also provided a mobile canteen, which is being used to carry refreshments to workers at other wharves. The Commission has also expended a considerable amount of money in the equipment of the main restaurant in the Port Building with a view to making provision for the supply of hot meals there.

Wellington.—The main restaurant at Wellington is being operated by the local branch of the union, and after experiencing a number of difficulties in the early stages, the restaurant is now operating satisfactorily. Cafeterias are being provided at Aotea Quay and Taranaki Street Wharf, and these should be available in the near future. The Commission has spent approximately £6,000 in the purchase of equipment and in alterations to the restaurant at the port.

Following negotiations with the Wellington Harbour Board, arrangements were made whereby the Board would provide washing-facilities around the wharves and also improve the lavatory accommodation. Arrangements have been made for a site to be made available to the Board from the Marine Department, and the Board has been requested to proceed with the preparation of plans and specifications for a modern waiting-room.

Lyttelton.—Plans and specifications are in course of preparation for the erection of a modern waiting-room at this port. The Harbour Board has been requested, and has agreed, to provide a first-aid room on the waterfront, and cafeterias.

Gisborne.—During the year, the Commission erected an administrative office on Harbour Board property adjacent to the men's waiting-room. The provision of an office as central pay office and bureau on the waterfront at Gisborne will lead to greater efficiency at the port.

Nelson.—A modern waiting-room with administrative offices was almost completed by the end of the year. The total cost for the erection of the building was approximately £14,500.

Timaru.—The Commission met the cost of effecting improvements to the present waiting-room at this port.

Bluff.—A modern waiting-room with administrative offices is in the course of erection at the port of Bluff, and this building should be completed before the end of 1948.