

28. We therefore regard it as essential that when administrative positions in the Public Service require to be filled, particularly in those Departments having technical, professional, or scientific interests, the officer appointed should be selected chiefly because of his administrative abilities, and should be able properly to balance and co-ordinate the various policy and financial matters affecting the Department. This we regard as vital to successful and at the same time economical management of Departments of State.

#### OFFICE FITTINGS AND REQUISITES.

29. It has been particularly evident from the investigations made that considerable sums are expended annually on the purchase of office fittings and requisites, and we are of opinion that in some quarters there has been a tendency to undue extravagance in this respect.

30. It should be possible to provide for the standardization of office furniture and equipment to a greater degree than has been done in the past. It is certain that by this means substantial sums could be saved, and the adoption of standardization of furniture and equipment should lead to substantial economy.

31. This appears to be a matter which could profitably be entrusted to the Stores Control Board.

#### TELEPHONE SERVICES.

32. The annual cost of official telephones in Government offices exceeds £46,000 per annum, and it seems that there is room for economy in this connection, more particularly by the use of extensions or by the installation of domestic exchanges.

33. A more important point in regard to telephones is in connection with those installed in the residences of Government officers and paid for by their respective Departments. An expenditure of £8,800 per annum is involved in this respect, and this seems to be far in excess of what can be looked upon as reasonable.

34. The Government defrays the cost of private telephones of many officers who should be expected to provide their own. A telephone may now be regarded as an essential part of the equipment which officials above the rank and file of the Service should be expected to provide.

35. **We recommend that it be established as a definite rule that telephones in private residences be not paid for by the Government, except in a limited number of approved cases where officers could not be expected to install telephones at their own cost.**

#### ALLOWANCES IN ADDITION TO SALARIES.

36. The annual cost of allowances in addition to salaries payable to officers of the Public Service is no less than £143,086, and this excludes house allowances payable to teachers in the service of Education Boards.

37. We are of opinion that the payment of special allowances in addition to salary is essentially wrong in principle, although we concede that there are cases where it is justified.

38. **We recommend, however, that the payment of allowances to individual officers be subject to close overhaul by a central authority with a view to the cancellation of many of the allowances at present granted.**

#### NEED FOR UNIFORMITY IN REGARD TO STAFF ADMINISTRATION, CLASSIFICATION, GRADING, ETC., FOR THE WHOLE OF THE STATE SERVICES.

39. At the present time the three main branches of the Government service (exclusive of the teaching service)—namely, the Railways, the Post and Telegraph Department, and those Departments under the control of the Public Service Commissioner—are separately administered. Although to all intents and purposes the salary scales in operation in each branch are uniform, there is no statutory organization or method to ensure that comparable positions and the working-conditions in the three main branches of the Service are dealt with on the same basis.

40. The Public Service Commissioner is in a position to co-ordinate the grading of the staffs in the several Departments under his control, and we consider it desirable that this principle should be extended to all Departments.

41. If the present practice of separate control is continued, it is, in our opinion, necessary that a committee should be set up, consisting of the Permanent Head of the Railway Department, the Permanent Head of the Post and Telegraph Department, the Public Service Commissioner, and the Secretary to the Treasury, whose duty would be to consider any grading proposals, &c., affecting all Departments. Obviously, however, it would not be practicable for these officers to have an intimate knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of every officer, and it would no doubt be found necessary to set up a sub-committee, consisting of the Staff Superintendent, the Staff Inspector, or other suitable officer from each branch, who had the necessary intimate knowledge and who would submit recommendations (and the reasons therefor) to the committee. There is a difficulty that the scheme might be found cumbersome and unwieldy, but even a modification should be a step in the right direction. A committee of this nature could also discuss questions of procedure in dealing with staff problems, punishments, rewards, leave of absence, travelling-allowances, &c.