

Scaffolding Inspection.

757. **This service should not be provided at the cost of the general taxpayer, and we recommend that a scale of fees be drawn up with a view to recouping the cost of inspection from contractors and builders.** A reasonable scale of fees should provide an income of at least £2,000 a year.

758. Dealing now with the expenditure under vote Department of Labour, we have to report as follows :—

SUBDIVISION I—LABOUR.

Item—Salaries, £33,547.

759. Included under this item are the following :—

Administration of Shearers' Accommodation Act by Department of Agriculture, £360.

760. **We consider that this service should be discontinued and recommend accordingly.**
Saving, £360.

Allowances to Officers of the Department of Justice acting as Clerks of Awards, £130.

761. This should be deleted.
Saving, £130.

Item—Advertising, £175.

762. This should be reduced to £125.
Saving, £50.

Item—Department of Justice : Services of Officers, £50.

763. This should be deleted.
Saving, £50.

Item—Expenses Medical Referees under the Workers' Compensation Act, 1922, £10.

764. This is a nominal item to meet the expenses indicated. **The parties to a dispute, and not the general taxpayer, should meet all expenses incurred.**
Saving, £10.

Item—Fees to Assessors of Conciliation Councils, £650.

765. At present assessors on Conciliation Councils in connection with local disputes are allowed £1 1s. (less two statutory reductions of 10 per cent.) for each day on which they are engaged at a sitting of the Council, and a further 12s. 6d. per day (less 10 per cent.) for each day they are absent from home when sittings are adjourned from place to place. In the case of a Dominion dispute similar allowances are payable for each day an assessor is absent from his home.

766. **These charges should not be borne by the general taxpayer, but by the parties concerned, and we recommend accordingly.**
Saving, £650.

Item—Freight, Cartage, and Transport Charges, £100.

767. This should be reduced to £50.
Saving, £50.

Item—Office Fittings and Requisites, £300.

768. This should be reduced to £200.
Saving, £100.

Item—Postages, Telegrams, Rent of Boxes, £2,075.

769. The Department is put to considerable expense in connection with the despatch of citations in industrial disputes. Each citation is despatched by registered post and the postage is borne by the Department. **As with the payment of fees to assessors in disputes, we consider that this cost of postage should be defrayed by the parties concerned.**

770. The number of citations is in the aggregate very considerable. In one dispute in 1927, 2,270 citations had to be despatched by registered post.

771. Allowing for the economy resulting from the foregoing, there should be a reduction of £875 in this item.

Saving, £875.

Item—Printing and Stationery, £1,900.

772. The expenditure in respect of printing in this Department is relatively large. A contributory factor is that copies of awards are supplied free to all parties, including one copy for approximately every ten members of a union. **This cost should not be borne by the State, and a charge should be made for all copies of awards supplied to the parties interested.** The cost of printing such awards, which under the present system is met by the State, is approximately £500 per annum.

773. **We recommend that a charge be made for all copies issued.**
Saving, £500.