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138. *Reduce fees of Chairmen of Military Service Boards.**Vide 105. Page 56.*

This is a matter for decision by the New Zealand Government. The rates of pay were not fixed by the Defence Department. The Defence Department has nothing whatever to do with the Military Service Boards, which are judicial bodies constituted under the authority of the Military Service Act. The remuneration of Chairmen and members was not fixed by the Department, but by Government on the recommendation of the National Recruiting Board. It was originally intended to ask for honorary service on these Boards, but as it was considered that such a proposal would unduly restrict the choice of selection and of representation of different interests, it was finally decided to fix the fee at one guinea per diem and the travelling-allowance of £1 per diem, and pay Chairmen and members alike. The position of the Stipendiary Magistrates appointed as Chairmen was specially considered, and it was decided to place them on the same footing as Stipendiary Magistrates who are appointed members of Commissions set up under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, except that in the case of the Military Service Boards the total amount of fee and travelling-allowance was fixed to coincide with the amount paid to other Chairmen and members.

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139. *Brand clothing and equipment to prevent pilfering.**Vide 62. Page 36.*

All uniform clothing and equipment is branded with the New Zealand Government brand.

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140. *Transfer Branches of Director of Recruiting and Director of Personal Services to Government Statistician.**Vide 18. Page 11.*

It is, of course, realized that the organizing ability of Mr. Malcolm Fraser would be of considerable value if it were decided to combine the Branches of Recruiting and Personal Services with the registration-work at present undertaken by the Government Statistician, but it must not be overlooked that highly technical, legal, and military duties are performed by the Directors of these branches as at present constituted, which could not, without previous experience, be carried on by the Government Statistician. The Commission's assumption that the work, at present necessitating the employment of 254 clerks, could be successfully undertaken with a maximum of 100 and probably only fifty is difficult to understand, because they do not propose to reduce the work now done in these branches. It is admitted that if extensive amendments were made in the Military Service Act, 1916, and an entirely different system were evolved for carrying out the various duties under this Act, some reduction in the clerical staff might be made; but it must be remembered that when the present system was instituted the Defence Department was faced with the putting into operation of a system which had never previously been tried, and the difficulties for the carrying-out of which could not be foreseen. The Branches of the Directors of Recruiting and Personal Services were not formed until 1917, when, on account of the large number on active service, male clerical labour was very scarce, and experienced clerks unobtainable from Government Departments to take charge of the various sections. The result was that the clerks employed even in important positions were almost entirely inexperienced, and, although every endeavour has been made, it had not yet been possible to obtain a really efficient staff.

If the Government Statistician were to undertake the duties as suggested by the Commission he would be faced with exactly similar difficulties in the quality of the staff he had to employ, and it is difficult to believe that under these circumstances the work could certainly be done with less than two-fifths and probably one-fifth of the number now employed. Had the Defence Department been able to obtain a building in which all its branches could be housed there would have been a reduction in the number of clerks in all the newly created War Branches, but as this has so far been found impracticable a certain amount of overlapping has been necessary, although every possible care is taken to reduce this to a minimum by careful co-operation between the various branches.

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141. *Administrative Staff to be in mufti.**Vide 46. Page 28. Vide 109. Page 57.*

This, it is presumed, is intended to refer to the rank and file employed on home service, although the report deals with it "irrespective of rank." It would not be desirable that the Quartermaster-General, the Adjutant-General, the Director of Movements and Quartering, the Director of Base Records, &c., should always be in mufti, but consideration might be given to the demilitarizing of the whole of the clerical staff. There are cases where experienced clerks go on home service for the purpose of taking up military work in uniform. The fact also must be faced that troublesome soldiers are much more easily dealt with by a non-commissioned officer in uniform. The subject requires the most careful consideration, because whatever advantages are to be gained will be achieved only at the cost of the certain loss of many men whom the Defence Department cannot afford to lose, loss of disciplinary powers, and the creation of a new era of overtime expenditure. The advantages, except in the direction of cutting out married allowances to certain married men, are not so obvious. The proposal, however, will have careful consideration.