

of a bridge will be available within fifteen years, and possibly in ten years. We subscribe to the following views expressed by the Auckland City Engineer in the very able and comprehensive report presented by him to the Commission :—

(1) It can generally be accepted that the vehicular ferry service, from the long-term point of view, is of a temporary nature, and cannot be taken into consideration in determining the street layout of the city.

(2) However well located a bridge or tunnel may be, it seems that, even with a full system of causeways, a portion of the population would be (only) indirectly served thereby, and there is a practical possibility that certain of the North Shore areas will continue to be served by ferries at least for many years. It would not be unreasonable to assume that the proportion of the population that would be directly served by bridge or tunnel would be at most two-thirds, and possibly less in the initial stages of development.

(3) While the Auckland City Council should view the project from the metropolitan aspect in order to secure proper functional planning, it must also be mindful of the fact that there are as yet large undeveloped areas within its boundaries, and such a project would introduce costly problems in respect of street works and allied problems. The Council has also costly developmental improvements to meet in the future.

In amplification of our views on the subject of ferry services, we express our belief that for many years a passenger ferry service between the city and Devonport could compete with the proposed bridge in serving those residents of Devonport (including Stanley Bay) who live near to the waterfront, by providing a quicker and cheaper transport service than could be given by a bus service crossing the bridge. It is probable that apartment-houses will increase the density of population on the waterfront of Devonport and that a majority of the residents in that locality will prefer the ferry service. We are of the opinion that if the Devonport Steam Ferry Co., Ltd., is willing to continue passenger ferry services to Stanley Bay and Devonport, it should be allowed to do so; and in order to enable the company to formulate its plans for the future we suggest that, if our report is adopted, the Government should announce its decision at the earliest possible date.

With respect to the vehicular ferry services, we are of the opinion that, regard being had to delays, damage, and inconvenience unavoidable in a ferry system, there will be no justification, and indeed no scope, for continuing them after the bridge comes into use.

We summarize our recommendations concerning the ferry services as follows :—

(1) The provision of an adequate fleet and of improved and augmented services (including all-night services) to cope with the increased volume of traffic which will occur within the next ten to fifteen years.

(2) Avoidance of heavy capital expenditure on permanent works, such as the duplication or enlargement of existing ferry terminals or the creation of new terminals, the cost of which, according to evidence submitted to us, would amount to a substantial part of the cost of the bridge and approaches.

(3) Improvements to the roads and streets leading to the Birkenhead ferry terminal, for the purpose of relieving congestion at Devonport by attracting more traffic to Birkenhead, should be arranged for forthwith, and adequate subsidies should be granted to the local bodies concerned to enable them to effect such improvements in the shortest possible time.

(4) Such improvements to present passenger terminals as the Auckland Harbour Board deems advisable and necessary to be planned on a short-term basis only, and an assurance to be given by the Government that direct access by bridge will be an accomplished fact within a maximum period of fifteen years.

(5) A similar assurance to be given to the Devonport Steam Ferry Co., Ltd., together with an intimation that, while the vehicular ferry service will be discontinued when the bridge comes into service, no restriction will be placed on the continuance of a passenger service to Stanley Bay and Devonport, and possibly Bayswater.