

General.—It is not considered necessary for an officer of this Department to attend at the deliberations of the Commission and give evidence, though this can, and will, be arranged if the Commission deems it essential. The submission made herein is available for consideration and publication with the Commission's findings and may be said to represent the views of Air Department.

(Sgd.) T. A. BARROW, Air Secretary.

Because of the conflicting views which have been publicly expressed, and in order to meet doubts that may arise, we have decided that the authoritative statement quoted above should be recorded in our report.

(5) DEFENCE ASPECTS

A similar conflict of opinion was evident regarding the desirability or otherwise of a bridge or tunnel from the viewpoint of defence, and also regarding the vulnerability of a bridge as compared with a tunnel. Here again we have been aided in our deliberations by an authoritative statement supplied by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, which we quote in full :—

5th June, 1946.

The Chairman,
Auckland Trans-harbour Facilities Commission,
C/- P.W.D.,
Auckland.

AUCKLAND TRANS-HARBOUR FACILITIES

1. The Chiefs of Staff have considered the subject of trans-harbour facilities for Auckland. They are in agreement that improved facilities are highly desirable. The defence of Auckland will be greatly assisted to the following advantages :—

(a) Simplification of movement problems in the defence of the northern beaches and the Auckland fortress area generally.

(b) As an aid to E.P.S. in war or national emergency—

(i) In the evacuation of population.

(ii) Assistance in the event of air attack—fire-fighting, &c.

2. They consider however that, from the Services' point of view, no bridge should be built across the harbour. They are definitely in favour of the tunnel. The reasons against bridges in either of the proposed sites are—

(i) *Bridge, Parnell-Devonport.*—Damage to this bridge might close the whole harbour and, failing that, might seriously cut off the Naval Base from its fleet units. There is a real danger that Auckland, as a marine base, would be closed for a lengthy period.

Such a bridge would be a definite obstacle in the use of the harbour as a seaplane base.

(ii) *Bridge, Fanshawe Street-Northcote Point.*—Extensive damage to this bridge would limit very considerably the potential berthing space in the Upper Harbour, which might well be required if a fleet of any size were based on Auckland.

It would be an obstacle limiting the harbour for seaplane use, especially for the Hobsonville Base.

3. The Chiefs of Staff would favour a tunnel of the deep-level type either from Parnell to Devonport or from the vicinity of Fanshawe Street to Northcote. They have no strong views on which site is chosen, but from the defence aspects the Northcote proposition would be preferable, the reasons being—

(a) That the tunnel via Northcote serves the North Shore area more centrally.

(b) That portals of the tunnel would not be associated as a target with the Naval Base and *vice versa*.

If a tunnel were built at the Devonport end it must not pass under Calliope Dock or the subterranean fuel-tanks at the Naval Base.

A pre-cast tunnel of the type discussed before the Commission is more vulnerable than that already suggested. This risk would be acceptable to the Chiefs of Staff, provided that the proposed road extension to Dairy Flat was carried out. Such a tunnel would be less vulnerable than a bridge to normal air attack.

4. Whether a road extension or a tunnel is constructed, or both, satisfactory alternative means of transportation—*e.g.*, the present ferries—should always be readily available.

5. The Chiefs of Staff attach great importance to the proposed Point Chevalier-Whenuapai-Dairy Flat Road, giving, as it does, better and quicker access to North Auckland area and an alternative means of communication to the North Shore. The road will facilitate the movement of tanks, guns, and vehicles forward of Whenuapai and will therefore enable an invader to be dealt with on the beach or shortly after landing. The road will facilitate the defence of the aerodrome. The