

1949
NEW ZEALAND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

(REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1949

Presented to Both Houses of the General Assembly Pursuant to Section 27 of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946

Wellington, 1st August, 1949.

SIR, —

I have the honour to forward you herewith, in terms of section 27 of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, the second annual report of the Local Government Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1949.

Yours faithfully,

I. J. GOLDSTINE, Judge,

Chairman.

The Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, Wellington.

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REPORT

I. INTRODUCTORY

In presenting our annual report for 1949 we have not considered it necessary to make further reference to the functions and procedure of the Commission, which were dealt with fully in our last report.

The various matters considered by the Commission during the past year have been tabulated in the Appendix hereto.

It is apparent that the functions of the Commission are becoming more widely known, and its services are being availed of by local governing authorities, as well as by the public in general. The volume of inquiries made by organizations not directly connected with local government, and by individuals throughout the country, is an indication that renewed interest is being taken in the conduct of local affairs.

II. PROGRESS OF GENERAL REVIEW

Without recourse to an increase in the staff of the Commission to undertake preliminary factual investigational work it has not been possible to make an over-all general review of territorial local government during the year on account of the numerous urgent matters with which the Commission has had to deal.

In accordance with the policy which we have laid down, preliminary investigations by our own officers have proceeded in order that the Commission might have before it all the facts so far as they are ascertainable. The collection and co-ordination of factual data has been no inconsiderable task.

It has been possible, however, during the twenty-two months since the Commission was constituted to formulate certain principles in regard to the relationship of urban local government as it affects adjacent lands under rural control. The experience thus gained will be a valuable factor in determining the best type of county unit and the degree of responsibility of County Councils regarding administration of urban pockets within their boundaries.

A preliminary investigation of counties, for instance, is being undertaken, and it is hoped to complete this during the coming year. Such investigation is necessary to determine certain principles, such as the most suitable area which can be administered efficiently as a county unit. The trend of present-day costs relating to the administration and work associated with local government has accentuated the need for an overall-review in order that the best services can be given to the people generally. This, however, must be related to the democratic rights of the individual, and in making our decisions, on territorial adjustments in particular, we have found that this aspect has created intense interest and no little difficulty. We have, however, made every endeavour to give consideration to the interests of the greatest number, although some of our decisions may have appeared, at the time, to have detrimentally affected certain sectional groups or individual interests. Any form of reconstruction to meet the modern demands of technical efficiency and economy in local government, particularly where population is concentrated, must of necessity conflict to some degree with the democratic rights of the individual.

However, as a safeguard to what we consider to be the essence of good local government, the Commission has given considerable thought to recommendations for the institution of local committees in larger urban units. We consider that, given statutory recognition and certain minor functions, these local committees will adequately safeguard the interests of the people and enable purely local matters to be dealt with expeditiously, particularly if there is co-operation between the local committees and the elected representatives of the local governing urban authorities and their administrative and technical staffs.

III. ALTERATION OF BOUNDARIES: PUBLIC INQUIRIES HELD

GENERAL

Two important issues have presented themselves during the course of several inquiries relating to adjustment of boundaries.

One of these concerns the implementation of the provisions of the Town-planning Act, 1926. The need for such control by local governing authorities for present and potential urban areas is becoming more generally recognized. The long-term effect will be the diminution of a number of problems associated with urban development at present under the control of municipalities. There has been an indication that uneconomic utilization of land, with scattered urbanization taking place, has resulted in problems connected with the provision of amenities such as water, sewerage, transport, streets, footpaths, and so on. Haphazard development in the location of commercial and industrial areas has also manifested itself, although the Commission is not directly concerned with this aspect. In examining the areas and functions of local government, and determining a satisfactory solution, difficulties as to the extent of expansion of urban local government arise. Where applications for extensions of boundaries have been considered it has been evident in most instances that there has been a tendency to "spill-over" without due regard to control, and, as a consequence, heavy developmental costs must be faced to tie in these areas with the services which have been provided by the municipality. The implementation of the town-planning provisions, with particular regard to partial extra-urban planning schemes in counties adjacent to municipalities, would provide for the effective stabilization of boundaries, and the exercise of control of uneconomic development of a scattered nature, until the time has arrived when pressure of population demands an incursion into such areas for urban needs. Where decisions have been made by us to incorporate existing and potential urban areas in the districts of municipalities it appears desirable that, wherever possible, extra-urban planning should be undertaken by the counties concerned. This will have the immediate effect of stabilizing rural local government, and at the same time give to municipalities the advantages associated with the provision of amenities in a confined area over a period of fifteen to twenty-five years. The planning of services and amenities will, as a consequence, have a much greater long-term economic value. In most cases subdivisions in areas beyond the boundaries of municipal districts ultimately result in heavy capital expenditure to provide for footpaths, kerbing and channelling, and the installation of water and sewerage systems where pressure demands their inclusion in the confines of an urban district. Requirements as to subdivisions in counties must, of necessity, be confined to existing standards in the county, and accordingly where urbanization takes place such standards differ widely from those in urban districts.

Although the cost of certain amenities in partly-developed areas where extra-urban planning control is exercised would have to be met, and more services would have to be provided, the costs associated with future subdivisions would, when such areas were incorporated in a municipality's district, be an initial one, which would be met by the subdivider in each case.

The second issue which has resulted in difficulty where alteration of boundaries have been effected has been in regard to electricity-supply where the municipality is a Supply Authority and a Power Board undertakes the supply beyond its boundaries. In accordance with section 13, subsection (3), of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, no scheme promulgated by the Local Government Commission may provide for the transfer of the whole or any part of any trading undertaking, or any functions relating thereto, of any local governing authority except upon the union, merger, or abolition of the district of a local governing authority. The Commission, as a consequence, cannot provide for the transfer of the whole or any part of the electricity-supply from

any county, borough, or Town Board except upon the union, merger, or abolition of the district of such local governing authority. On the other hand, there is authority to adjust the districts of Power Supply Authorities by incorporation of any part of their areas in the electric-supply district of a municipality.

In certain cases where alterations of boundaries have been effected there has been some disparity in the rates charged by the two Supply Authorities. In the case of Power Boards this position is due to the lack of density of population and to the much greater area of supply. In such power-supply districts, particularly where urbanization to any large extent has taken place adjacent to a municipal supply district, the area often forms a very remunerative portion of the Board's supply, and it would result in higher charges in the balance of the district should such area be excluded from the Board's district. On the other hand, the problem presents itself that, upon such an area being incorporated in an urban local authority's district, there is a natural tendency for the people to expect the supply of electricity to be provided by the local governing authority. As instancing the extent of this problem, we would mention that it has arisen in the following cases:—

- (i) The inclusion of the Town District of Tahunanui, and certain other areas of the Waimea County, in the City of Nelson :
- (ii) The inclusion of the Town District of Kamo in the Borough of Whangarei :
- (iii) The inclusion of areas of the Kairanga County in the City of Palmerston North :
- (iv) The inclusion of areas in the Waipa and Waikato Counties in the City of Hamilton :
- (v) The inclusion of areas in the Tauranga County within the Borough of Tauranga :
- (vi) The inclusion of portion of the Heathcote County in the City of Christchurch ; and also the inclusion of portion of the Paparua County in the City of Christchurch.

In so far as the supply of electricity in Christchurch is concerned, the anomalous position arose that the Heathcote County Council maintained a licence over a comparatively small area on the Cashmere Hills, and although this area was incorporated, territorially, in the City of Christchurch the electricity-supply still remained under the control of the County Council. A much greater difficulty arose in regard to the Sockburn area, forming part of the County of Paparua, which was incorporated in the city. The Springs-Ellesmere Electric-power Board deposed, during the course of the inquiry in Christchurch, that the area proposed for incorporation in the city, which was a very small portion of its district, represented more than one-third of its load, and was largely of an industrial and residential character. The cost of power in the Board's district, due to the scattered nature of its supply in the rural areas, is higher than in Christchurch. Although it was considered desirable, from the point of view of municipal government, that this area should be incorporated in the City of Christchurch, the Commission decided not to disturb the *status quo* in regard to power supply, for the present. It seems inevitable, however, that, sooner or later, there will be a demand by the people in the area for supply by the City Council, and should it be decided, after full investigation, to exclude the area from the Springs-Ellesmere Electric-power Board it would appear that the electricity charges in the Board's district will have to be very considerably increased to meet the loss resulting from the transfer of this area.

The adjacent Power Boards of Banks Peninsula and Malvern are in an insecure financial position. The amalgamation of the districts of these Boards with the Springs-Ellesmere Electric-power District would not materially improve the position of any one of the Boards, and even if no alteration were made in the Springs-Ellesmere Electric-power District in relation to Christchurch such amalgamation would possibly result in the creation of one large unfinancial Board.

This is a case where it appears that the Christchurch City Council cannot reasonably avoid some responsibility in the event of the Sockburn area being incorporated in the city, and provision being made for the supply of electricity by the municipality. However, as indicated previously, the provisions of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, preclude the Commission from reaching what would no doubt be a satisfactory solution to the problems of electricity-supply between the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers. It may be mentioned in passing that the supply area of the City Council covers substantial county areas already, including those of Waimairi, Halswell, and portions of Heathcote. An anomaly arises in that there is no representation on the Supply Authority from these county areas. Should electricity funds be appropriated by the City Council for other purposes—for example, the relief of rates or the provision of amenities for the ratepayers of Christchurch City—these disfranchised areas would have no say in the application of such moneys. We make no observations regarding the administration of the City Council or the distribution of electricity, but, nevertheless, the serious anomalies as stated do exist.

(1) CHRISTCHURCH METROPOLITAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

During the year under review the Commission undertook a major inquiry into the areas and functions of local Government in the Christchurch metropolitan area. The inquiry, which commenced on the 18th May, 1948, extended over a period of forty days. The number of witnesses who appeared before the Commission in various capacities was 104.

Issues Involved at the Inquiry

(a) The alteration of boundaries to exclude portions of the Counties of Heathcote, Halswell, Paparua, and Waimairi, and to include these areas in the City of Christchurch.

(b) A proposal to include in the Borough of Lyttelton certain portions of the Mount Herbert County extending from the Borough of Lyttelton to Governor's Bay along the foreshore, and along the southern extremity of the harbour, including Charteris and Church Bays, to Diamond Harbour, which at present forms part of the Borough of Lyttelton.

(c) The question of the exclusion of any area of the City of Christchurch, and its inclusion within the district of a county.

(d) The question of the inclusion of the Boroughs of Riccarton and Lyttelton in the City of Christchurch.

(e) The question of the inclusion of the estuary of the Heathcote and Avon Rivers in the Christchurch Drainage District for the purpose of undertaking such work as might be necessary for the drainage of the city.

(f) The transfer of the functions of the Christchurch Tramway and Drainage Boards to the Christchurch City Council.

(g) The hearing of eight separate petitions which had been lodged regarding adjustment of boundaries and inclusion of certain areas in the Christchurch Drainage District.

(h) Consideration of a petition by D. W. Dell and others, of Christchurch, presented to the Hon. the Speaker and members of the House of Representatives. This was referred to the Commission in view of the implications arising out of the subject-matter contained therein. The petition prayed that the right be granted to the ratepayers of Christchurch to determine the system under which drainage-rates should be collected in Christchurch.

The inquiry had its origin in a request by the Christchurch City Council dated 29th July, 1947, asking that the Commission investigate the problems of local government in the Christchurch metropolitan area. However, prior to this request and the

setting-up of the Commission, the Parliamentary Select Committee on local government had recommended that the problems of Christchurch should be among the first to be investigated by the Commission.

Prior to the commencement of the inquiry considerable investigation was undertaken by the Commission's investigating staff. This involved not only research into the problems from a factual standpoint, but a survey of the historical background of local government in the area, in order that we should be fully apprised of the progressive development of local government, its functions and areas, and be fully informed as to the future possibilities of further development and growth.

In order to meet such problems Parliament provided machinery to undertake the detailed task of examining such an over-all situation by setting up a permanent Commission in 1946.

Not only were the questions of functions and areas of local government in this instance under consideration, but the desire of certain ratepayers, as expressed in a petition to the House of Representatives, was also considered in regard to the desirability of a change in the basis of rating for drainage purposes. The incidence of the present rating system, based on capital value for drainage purposes, was considered by the petitioners to be inequitable, and a good deal of evidence was heard by us in this regard, with a view to finding a solution which would accord with the wishes of the ratepayers in the area.

One difficulty which confronted us in respect of the major issues was to gauge public opinion. There was little or no objection from the people within the confines of the city, but in the areas adjacent varying views were expressed, both by individuals and by representatives of local organizations. In one area the residents appearing at the inquiry expressed a desire to retain their district as a separate entity, and they pointed out that they had all the services which were required by them. They did acknowledge, however, that they had a proprietary liability for certain other municipal amenities which were provided by the city, and they intimated that they were prepared to contribute towards their cost. No practical method exists, however, for implementing such desires, nor can one be devised in any system of local government. One witness went so far as to suggest that, rather than be incorporated in the city, he preferred to see the establishment of a separate borough from a portion of the riding of his county. This would result in far greater costs to the particular community and would provide no solution in regard to the provision of general amenities to the people in the area. It was also elicited that this particular area, which formed part of the riding of the county, had little interest in or knowledge of the rest of the county, and although credit must be given for the local interest that was taken in this district it appeared to us that this would not be materially affected if the area was incorporated in the city. In fact, it might be developed to a much greater degree for the benefit of the community as a whole.

The matters which were reviewed by the Commission, and the problems involved in such large urban areas, are not confined to New Zealand. These questions, which are of the greatest public interest, have been under consideration and, in some cases, dealt with during the past two or three decades in all major English-speaking countries in the world. Although solutions have differed, in general there has been a recognition of the fact that urban areas which are geographically and economically one have similar problems which are common to the area as a whole. The question has, in most cases, been dealt with by the setting-up of a Royal Commission. This method has been consolidated in New Zealand by the appointment of the Commission, and this will result in a degree of uniformity in reorganization of local government throughout the Dominion. A growing tendency for concentration of population in certain strategically placed localities is world-wide and has been more in evidence in recent years since the

development of motor transport, with its varied range and effect on social and economic life. The concentration of population in such localities has, from the point of view of convenience, necessitated some form of over-all control of the major requirements, particularly the services and amenities in larger urban units of local government. Population has spread very rapidly beyond the existing boundaries of urban authorities, and has made incursions into certain rural areas which are being administered by rural local authorities. The powers vested in counties are unsuitable for heavy concentration of population, and where this spreading takes place adjacent to large urban units considerable difficulty is occasioned by urban authorities in maintaining existing services and at the same time providing for the needs of the population outside the district. This is particularly significant in regard to the provision of amenities and the equitable allocation of cost.

While in earlier years the present form of control may have been satisfactory, both as regards territorial local authorities and those authorities established to administer transport and drainage, the standard and character of services required from a local authority has tended to become much higher during more recent years. This has resulted in the employment of officers with greater technical ability, the utilization of modern equipment, and the combination of general activities conducted by local authorities. It thus enables authorities with the larger additional revenue to improve their overall efficiency and spread the cost more equitably over a wider area.

This has steadily developed in Christchurch, which over the years has absorbed a number of adjacent authorities and portions of counties, involving in all some fifty-five adjustments. The city was originally constituted with an area of 1,062 acres, and to-day the area is 16,788 acres. The City Council provides an over-all water-supply system in its district, with the exception of New Brighton, together with amenities such as parks and reserves, totalling 7,778 acres, public conveniences, libraries, an aerodrome, vehicle-testing station, public baths, art gallery, and recreational facilities, and also provides facilities for the general benefit of the community, such as assistance to municipal bands, and a concert-hall. Considerable financial contributions are given by it to public organizations, and a certain development of the metropolitan area is, as far as possible, catered for by a Public Relations Department. The city also maintains an abattoir and cemeteries for the people in the area as a whole. Housing schemes have been undertaken, and pensioners' cottages, workers' dwellings, and transit-housing schemes have been established. It also administers city and suburban domains, including Hagley Park and the Botanical Gardens. Administration of the Milk Board and the regional planning organization is also undertaken by its officers. A considerable saving to the ratepayers of this area has been made by the establishment of fire and accident insurance funds, with accumulated funds totalling some £96,000. The cost of providing the aforementioned amenities by the City Council has been estimated at 13s. 5d. per head, whereas the equivalent cost in the adjacent local authorities, where extensive urbanization has taken place, has been 1s. 7d. per head in the case of Riccarton Borough, 1s. 10d. per head in the case of Waimairi County, 1s. 9d. per head in the case of Heathcote County, 6d. per head in the case of Paparua County, and 1s. 2d. per head in the case of Halswell County. These figures indicate the disparity which exists in various sections of the community in respect of the provision of amenities, and the extent to which the City Council is providing for neighbouring built-up areas. The population of Christchurch City has grown progressively since 1901 from 17,538 to the present-day figure of approximately 124,000. That of the metropolitan area under consideration has been estimated at 156,100. The potential population of Christchurch has been investigated exhaustively, and we consider that by 1975 the population in the metropolitan area will, at its present rate of growth, approximate 225,000 people.

Ad Hoc Authorities

In Christchurch two *ad hoc* authorities—a Tramway and a Drainage Board—were constituted in 1876 and 1902 respectively, principally on account of the number of territorial local authorities in the wide confines of Christchurch at that time, and in order that the requisite over-all functions could be carried out. In both instances they are rating authorities, the Drainage Board deriving practically the whole of its revenue from this source, while the Tramway Board levies rates in order to effect recovery of operating losses and portion of the standing charges on loans. The collection of these rates, however, has been a matter for the territorial local authorities, wholly or partially, in the two Boards' districts.

On a number of occasions since the Drainage Board was first constituted the question has arisen as to the transfer of its functions to the Christchurch City Council, but the difficulties associated with an over-all drainage system could not reasonably be undertaken where the territories of other local authorities were involved.

As the territorial claims of the city were of such extent as to reasonably cover the problems, so far as area was concerned, of the Drainage Board and the Tramway Board, a good deal of consideration was given to the matter. The necessity for the continued existence of these authorities in such circumstances was therefore of vital concern. In so far as the question of area was concerned we were of the opinion that the functions of each authority could be efficiently undertaken within even a lesser area than that proposed by the city, if administered by it. It then resolved itself into the question of whether the City Council could economically and efficiently undertake the operations of these two authorities. Other cases where control was effective were cited—for instance, Wellington—and there was no doubt in our minds that the City Council could satisfactorily undertake the administration and the technical difficulties at present confronting both authorities; further, the city would be in no worse position in regard to over-all economy and efficiency. Certain of the problems—for instance, in Waimairi County—so far as drainage was concerned, would have to be undertaken by the county instead of by the Drainage Board. It was made clear that the Catchment Board, which is the final authority in such matters, would co-operate to the fullest extent necessary.

Christchurch Drainage Board

The provision of drainage and sewerage has, in general, been undertaken by the Drainage Board, although in respect of drainage, there are a number of anomalies. The City Council is still responsible for a large number of storm-water drains in the city area, as well as for maintaining a number of gully traps. In one area it was found that a divided control existed, the Board being responsible for the household drainage, while the waste water, when it reached the side channels, came under the control of the City Council. When it reached the main drain, the Avon River, it again became the responsibility of the Board.

Drainage in Christchurch, owing to the flat terrain, is regarded by technical experts as a matter of major consequence, and in order that effective control at its outlet could be established, and adequate provision made, we considered it necessary to incorporate the estuary of the Heathcote and Avon Rivers in the city.

The Drainage Board's proposals involved extensions of its existing boundaries, mainly for the purpose of land drainage. The North Canterbury Catchment Board, which has an over-riding authority in such matters, stated, through its Chairman, that it could, and would, not only exercise supervision, but, where necessary, give practical assistance in carrying out such works as might be necessary.

The sewerage problem in Christchurch has been aggravated by the spread of urbanization over a large area, which has resulted in the inner area reticulation becoming inadequate for present and future needs. The position has been reached where some

portions of the urbanized areas of the Board's district cannot be reticulated on this account, and proposals involving the expenditure of some £670,000 were envisaged to meet the position. The question of co-ordination between the Board and the City Council on matters which affected both local authorities was raised during the course of the inquiry, and it was ascertained that while there was close liaison between the technical officers this was purely on a personal basis, and was not sufficiently effective in respect of major works to be undertaken involving co-ordination of such matters as finance, labour, plant and equipment, and street works.

Christchurch Tramway Board

The question of public transport was considered during the inquiry, and it was revealed that the continued operation of the existing system was considered to be in jeopardy, replacement with a modern system, at a cost of some £1,300,000 having been proposed. Evidence was given by the City Council as to lack of co-ordination between the two authorities, particularly in regard to such matters as traffic control. A number of the tram-tracks in certain parts of the city had deteriorated, and the Tramway Board was of the opinion that the tramway system should be supplanted by a modern trolley-bus or omnibus system. This would overcome the heavy cost of track replacement and continued maintenance charges, and would be more in keeping with the modern trend of transport in other parts of the world. However, it was apparent that in making this proposal there had been no co-ordination regarding future financial liabilities of the metropolitan area as a whole. With the city's proposals involving loan expenditure of some £500,000, a total of approximately £2,500,000 was involved, and the ability of the ratepayers to meet the attendant costs, as well as the substantial loan liability, was questioned. Where *ad hoc* authorities are concerned, the needs of each could no doubt be considered paramount, and without some over-all controlling authority in such matters there must always be a danger of lack of co-ordination between individual authorities charged with separate functions.

Town-planning

A factor already generally referred to previously in this report was the need for a co-ordinated town-planning scheme to cover the whole metropolitan area. It was realized that the City Council's efforts between 1928 and 1938 to implement its own schemes could not be, in the long-run, satisfactory unless co-ordinated with those of contiguous areas. As a result, the Metropolitan Town-planning Committee, comprising representatives of the city and other local authorities, together with a number of representatives of other organizations, was set up for the purpose of co-ordinating planning requirements throughout the metropolitan area. It is understood that the final report of this committee, which has been accepted in general principle by the various local authorities in the metropolitan area, will be available shortly, but it must be recognized that this committee has no statutory power, and any decisions made must finally rest with the territorial local authorities and be subject to the agreement of the Town-planning Board.

Matters which are dealt with in a town-planning scheme include, *inter alia*, streets, systems of sewer and storm-water drainage, lighting, water supply, and the provision of amenities. This latter problem, together with the functions of internal *ad hoc* authorities, raised the question as to whether a better form of administration of the area as a whole could be evolved with greater efficiency and less cost to the community as a whole.

Water-supply

The availability of an over-all reticulated high-pressure water-supply system has been one of the basic reasons for applications for the inclusion of adjoining areas in the City of Christchurch. Certain of the areas under consideration during the inquiry were

already reticulated— for instance, Mount Pleasant, Cashmere, and the Heathcote Valley in the Heathcote County, and portion of the Riccarton Borough. In the latter case technical witnesses submitted evidence at some length in regard to this matter. Riccarton Borough has had handed over to it a State housing water-supply system which covers a major housing area, and it was extending mains from this source with a limited coverage. Evidence was submitted to indicate that it intended developing an over-all water-supply system by independent pumping units in various parts of the borough to feed into the mains to provide adequate pressure. Development along these lines, it was indicated, would be carried out over a number of years out of revenue. At the present time a small portion of Riccarton Borough, at its southern extremity, is supplied by the city. The City Council maintained that, should the Commission decide to incorporate in the city areas to the west of Christchurch in the Waimairi County—*e.g.*, Fendalton— it would be necessary to take a large main through the centre of the Borough of Riccarton from the city reservoir on the Cashmere Hills. An adequate supply could then be provided throughout the Riccarton Borough from this source.

One of the major questions at issue was the lack of control of underground supplies, and it was indicated that at present no such control can be exercised in any of the areas considered by the Commission. The promiscuous sinking of wells by private householders had caused some difficulty. The necessity for an adequate supply of high-pressure water for fire-fighting purposes was clearly indicated, and it was apparent to us that, without some satisfactory system to meet the over-all requirements of the metropolitan area, such protection could not be satisfactorily given.

An indication was also given that insurance premiums would, other things being equal, be reduced if areas were supplied with high-pressure water and brought within the Christchurch Fire District, which covers the same area as the City of Christchurch. The City Council intends establishing further reservoirs on the Port Hills, and is in fact at the present time constructing a major reservoir to meet present and potential requirements. An area known as New Brighton, which has been in the city since 1941, still remains to be reticulated, but the city maintains that this would have been done much earlier but for labour and supply difficulties during the war years. The position was at present being rectified, and work was proceeding for the reticulation of this area.

Constitutional Structure

In considering metropolitan local government in the Christchurch area the constitutional structure of the existing authorities, and the resultant efficiency and economy of the area as a whole, was a factor of major consequence. It was apparent that both the *ad hoc* authorities, the Drainage and Tramway Boards, were constituted largely because there were in existence in 1876 and 1902 respectively a number of territorial local authorities, both urban and rural, over which the districts of these two authorities extended.

The need for such *ad hoc* authorities being superimposed over the area, with separate staffs and equipment, had been questioned during recent years, and it was apparent from the numbers of votes recorded in elections held that there has not been much public interest shown in them. In the case of the Drainage Board, only approximately 10 per cent. of the valid votes of electors on the roll were cast in 1944, and some 20 per cent. in 1948. The Tramway Board election figures were somewhat similar.

Rural Local Government

The statutory powers of County Councils differ from those of municipalities, and in general deal with such matters as pertain to rural districts. When the Counties Act was first placed on the statute-book it was not considered that counties would govern large urban areas, although in recent years some consideration has been given to extending

the counties' powers to provide for the control of urban areas. In Christchurch there were two substantially urbanized areas in counties, one being the Fendalton Riding of the Waimairi County, and the other a portion of the Cashmere Riding of the Heathcote County.

In municipalities each resident is entitled to only one vote in municipal elections, but in the case of counties the ratepayer whose capital value is £1,000 or less receives one vote; those with over £1,000 capital value but not over £2,000 two votes, and those with more than £2,000 capital value three votes. While there may be justification for this in farming areas, where the rating potential is determined by the rateable areas, it can have no justification in urbanized areas.

The present statutory Government subsidy differs in counties and boroughs, the maximum subsidy to which a borough is entitled being £450, while in the case of a county it is £2,500. In the cases of the four counties in which adjustments of boundaries were considered by the Commission the combined capital values were very much smaller than those of the Christchurch City, but the annual subsidies received approximated £6,200. It appeared to us inequitable that such highly urbanized settlements as Fendalton and Cashmere should receive subsidies so much out of proportion to that received by the Christchurch City Council. There is no doubt that such subsidy was granted to provide for the roads used by county residents in purely rural areas, and not for urban streets such as in Cashmere and Fendalton. Urban authorities with populations exceeding 6,000, receive a proportion of 8 per cent of the motor-spirit taxation for the construction or maintenance of continuations of highways. Counties, on the other hand, have no liability in regard to State highways and, in general, receive a three-to-one subsidy on main highways in respect of construction and maintenance. This position, of course, applies even in urbanized areas such as Cashmere and Fendalton.

Where counties have large areas of rural country the riding system for electoral purposes could be defended on several logical grounds, whereas the system of wards for similar reasons in urban areas has long been considered unnecessary. In the latter case members of the local authorities have a sufficient knowledge of the problems in the whole area, and can, without much difficulty, inspect or discuss them on the spot. In the case of one of the counties concerned the witnesses who appeared at the inquiry knew little, and by implication were concerned little, with the problems of the other ridings in their county. We gained the impression that, although Cashmere and Fendalton formed the whole or major part of the riding in their respective counties, the people in these areas regarded themselves as self-contained units and were not greatly concerned with the rest of the county. It was indicated by one member of a County Council that, in his opinion, each riding was in effect a separate local authority, managed by a separate board of directors, and, although the county assumes general responsibility, the actual position in many cases is that the riding members frequently become governing authorities in their own ridings. In so far as riding finance is concerned, the majority of the counties in New Zealand, 81 in all, have abolished riding accounts, and in each instance the county as a whole has developed with the expenditure of funds where considered most necessary. No doubt access and modern transport have done much to obviate the necessity for the maintenance of the riding system, and it is now recognized that the richer portions of a county have some responsibility for the development of the poorer areas.

The membership of local authorities represented at the inquiry totalled 84, some of whom represented certain county areas not under consideration from the metropolitan point of view, but in comparison with a city such as Wellington it did appear to be an excessive number. In the case of the Wellington City Council, its affairs, including transport, drainage, electricity, and milk treatment and distribution, are administered by fifteen Councillors and the Mayor.

Staff

Facts were obtained concerning the staff of the various local authorities represented at the inquiry. The total number employed was 1,886, and of that number 88 per cent. of those employed by the territorial authorities were employed by the Christchurch City Council, but, including the staffs of the Christchurch Drainage and Tramway Boards, the figure for the city was 51 per cent. of the total. The Drainage and Tramway Boards were both fully staffed, technically and administratively. So far as the territorial authorities were concerned, apart from the city, Riccarton Borough employed a full-time joint civil and electrical engineer, who also carried out the functions of Town Clerk. None of the counties had a qualified engineer on a full-time basis, but two of them utilized the services of a consulting engineer when necessary. While this is understandable in the light of the financial capacity and general needs of the respective authorities, in the case of Waimairi, it was difficult to appreciate. This county did not appear anxious to extend its responsibility, and was prepared to hand over certain of its internal drainage systems to the Drainage Board, whereas this function is normally undertaken by a large number of counties.

In so far as staff in the various authorities was concerned, it is a natural tendency for opposition to arise in regard to proposals such as the city put forward. However, the position was clarified, and an undertaking was given by the City Council, which is understaffed, that the staffs of the bodies sought to be incorporated would be taken over.

Financial Structure

During the course of the inquiry consideration was given to the financial structure of the various local authorities. Such matters as the present rate revenue of the various authorities, which forms the major basis of their general financial structure, was considered, and the resultant burden to the over-all community was analysed. This, in the particular financial year reviewed, totalled some £758,335, which covered both territorial and *ad hoc* authorities. In the latter case the two authorities examined were the Drainage and Tramway Boards, whose rate levies collectively totalled £199,320. The questions which we felt deserved consideration and which arose out of this analysis, were as follows: first, the financial stability of the various local authorities as at present constituted; secondly, the ability of each to expand its activities so as to provide for proper urban services at reasonable costs; thirdly, as to whether any change in the constitutional and technical structure would detrimentally affect the stability of the remaining authorities; and, lastly, whether any change would react to the financial disadvantage of the rate-payers of the area as a whole. Consideration was also given to the present and proposed loan liability of each of the authorities. Figures were submitted and considered, which indicated the effect of a combination of the various territorial authorities, by a spreading of the rating burden over the areas proposed by the City Council as one administrative unit.

The rates levied by the Christchurch City Council to meet annual loan charges are, on the incorporation of any area in the city, spread over the new area. Those already levied on the area being incorporated are likewise spread over the city.

The incidence of rating, particularly where different systems are in existence, affects each individual ratepayer advantageously or otherwise, but it was evident that the incorporation of the areas proposed in the city would relieve as a whole the Christchurch and Riccarton ratepayers, and would impose additional burdens on the county areas in a varying degree in each instance. This increase, when related both to the counties and the Borough of Riccarton, would be spread more equitably when it is considered that the city ratepayers are already providing, in so far as certain general amenities are concerned, for the whole of the metropolitan area, and also when consideration is given to the fact that the increase represents less than a fair proportion of the additional costs met by the

city ratepayers. There appeared to be no doubt that the financial position of each was affected materially, according to the extent to which services and amenities were provided. These, in the main, were lacking, when compared with those of the city, from a general community point of view. This comment is not in any way a reflection on the past efforts of various Councils, but it does indicate the concentrated effect of demand and the obligation to make adequate provision by the major local authority—the City Council. We were of the opinion that unification of functions and territory was definitely in the interests of the population in the Christchurch Metropolitan Area. To support this view the cases of the comparatively recent additions to the city of New Brighton and Sumner were examples of an over-all authority being able to use its financial capacity, technical and administrative ability, and staff and plant for the immediate benefit of these districts. We have no doubt that similar benefit will inevitably accrue to other areas on incorporation in the city.

Boundary Adjustments

A further fact which raised the need for considering the question of stability of boundaries was that continual piecemeal additions were being made to the city from the adjacent territorial authorities. This frequent tinkering with local-body boundaries is obviously undesirable. In recent years the position became more accentuated, as indicated by the fact that some twenty-five adjustments took place between the years 1939 and 1947, while there were six petitions for such adjustments considered by us during the course of the inquiry. These had been withheld previously, in order that they might be dealt with at the public inquiry. Prior to the passing of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, each petition would have involved the setting-up of a separate Commission in terms of the Municipal Corporations Act. The position had become so aggravated that any form of stabilization of boundaries as between the city and the adjoining counties had not been possible, and it was apparent that the time had arrived for such a stabilization for, in our opinion, approximately twenty-five years. The Commission, therefore, had to consider not only existing urbanization which has taken place in areas adjacent to the boundaries of Christchurch, but also the trend of such development, and the extent to which it could reasonably be estimated that it would take place during that period.

Clearly such reorganization will not only stabilize the position territorially, but will also provide for long-term permanent development, so far as services and amenities are concerned, and at the same time give stability to the county administration.

Although each of the proposed territorial adjustments affecting the four counties concerned posed different problems, they were very closely allied in so far as the community as a whole was concerned. Both the Halswell and Paparua County Councils were in agreement substantially with the proposals.

Substantial opposition came from both the Waimairi and Heathcote Counties, particularly from the two highly urbanized areas of Fendalton and Cashmere. The question of the absorption of Riccarton Borough, comprising an area of some 728 acres, wholly built up, and one mile from the centre of the city, gave rise to considerable opposition from the Borough Council. From the late "nineties" until 1911 the question as to whether Riccarton should be constituted as a separate borough had been strongly advocated by some, and just as strongly opposed by others. A Commission which sat latterly on the question, although unable to find that the area was suitable for municipal control, considered that the internal facilities for drainage and municipal control would be improved by incorporation of the area in the city. A few months later, when the question was again the subject of a petition, a Commission, comprising the same personnel, recommended that the district was suitable for municipal control. The question of the continuation of Riccarton as a borough has during the years frequently been the subject of local discussion, and in 1945 a poll of the ratepayers was held to determine the question.

The poll resulted in a decision to retain the existing status, the majority being very small. An exhaustive preliminary investigation into the affairs of the borough was made by the Commission, and although it was apparent that the borough was efficiently carrying out such functions as it administered other matters merited consideration. Such questions as the necessity for a high-pressure water-supply, fire protection, and the sharing of costs of amenities provided by the city ratepayers must outweigh purely parochial considerations. The fact that on incorporation in the city the rating position would be advantageous to the Riccarton ratepayers, and that the special rates for loan charges would, taking some 52 per cent. of the area, be less, were significant factors which indicated some relativity in economy of a major authority compared with one of minor standing. In so far as electricity was concerned, it appeared that there would be little difference in the charges on incorporation in the city.

With the proposed adjustment of the county areas, if Riccarton remained a separate entity, it would be an island within the city, and would, as a separate authority, raise difficulties in regard to the administration of drainage, sewerage, and transport, which are at present administered by the two separate *ad hoc* authorities.

Due consideration was given to the incorporation in the City of lands at present used for farming purposes. However, where potential urban development would be likely to continue to take place, we were of the opinion that these areas should form part of the city. In the intervening period, until the urban development took place, such farming areas would, in terms of the Urban Farm Lands Rating Act, 1932, be entitled to relief. The City Council already had a separate rating roll for this purpose, so far as its existing area was concerned.

A substantial farming area, formerly in the Borough of Sumner, but incorporated in the city in 1945, was considered with a view to its exclusion from the city and its inclusion in the County of Heathcote.

Community of Interest

During the course of the inquiry the term "community of interest" was discussed, and it was apparent that most witnesses misconceived its true meaning in so far as local government was concerned. We are of the opinion that "community of interest" must be construed as relating to those services and amenities provided by local authorities which are available to the people as a whole; such matters, for instance, as traffic control and parking requirements in the centre of a city, over-all planning and location of zones for various types of development, the provision of open spaces throughout the metropolitan area, and the construction and maintenance of adequate transport routes to enable the business of the area to be carried on effectively. The more localized aspects related to this term, such as interest in local affairs, churches, clubs, Plunket Societies, and so on, would not be affected in any way should there be a change in the system of local government.

District Committees

In order to preserve, as far as possible, local interest in matters affecting any particular locality, consideration was given to the establishment of local district committees. These committees, given statutory recognition and certain powers of administration connected with purely local matters such as parks, reserves and halls, would tend to strengthen interest in matters of a purely local nature. Although perhaps not an entirely comparable case, the Commission, at one of its earlier inquiries relating to the amalgamation of the six northern hospital districts, made a similar recommendation for the constitution of local or district committees for each hospital, and this recommendation has been given statutory recognition. We are definitely of the opinion that the fostering and maintenance of local interest is very desirable.

After careful consideration of the voluminous evidence presented to us, we were of the firm opinion that the system of local government at present operating in the Christchurch Metropolitan Area was both unsatisfactory and uneconomic, and did not provide for the full benefits of the various services being co-ordinated over the whole area. A reorganization scheme was accordingly promulgated, and we believe that implementation of the scheme will result in a combination of efficiency and true economy in the local government of the area.

(2) OROUA COUNTY : FEILDING BOROUGH

Reference was made in the annual report of the Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1948, to the proposed alteration of boundaries of the Feilding Borough, resulting from two petitions which had been received from ratepayers in two areas of the borough praying for their exclusion and inclusion in the County of Oroua, on the grounds that their properties were unsuitable for residential development, and were in fact, farm lands, more suitable for county control.

The Commission had formally opened the inquiry in Feilding on 27th of February, 1948, but as the whole question of the prospective development in the borough required further investigation the hearing was adjourned until the 23rd of April.

The areas the subject of the petitions comprised 309 acres. One of the areas had been the subject of a previous inquiry by a Commission set up in 1941 under the Municipal Corporations Act which had reported that the area was suitable for municipal control and should not be excluded.

Over the years some outlying rural areas, which formed part of the borough when constituted, had been excluded, and included in the County of Oroua.

The areas owned by the petitioners were provided with some borough amenities, and certain relief had been given under the Urban Farm Lands Rating Act, but they considered that their rates were out of proportion to the amenities supplied. The petitioners were also concerned at certain proposals to expend considerable sums of money for improvements to the water and sewerage services, which would involve them in a very heavy rating burden.

The principal question at issue was the potentiality of the areas for building purposes, and as this trend was, in their opinion, unlikely to take place in their localities it was considered to be a sound reason for their exclusion.

Both the Feilding Borough and the Oroua County opposed the petitions.

The Borough Council rebutted the claim made that the two areas were not likely to be used for residential purposes, and considered that if sections were made available for this purpose they would be taken up immediately. It was evident during the course of the inquiry that no adequate survey of potential development in the borough had been undertaken, and it was apparent that there was no real appreciation of the necessity for a town-planning scheme to provide for orderly development. Further, there seemed to be inadequate control in regard to subdivisions. In order to prevent what appeared to be partial urban development in the county adjacent to the borough, the Commission considered that immediate steps should be taken to prepare a town-planning scheme, when there would be a much stronger case for considering an adjustment of boundaries. The preparation of such a scheme would also have the effect of preventing future haphazard growth, with consequent additional cost to the ratepayers, resulting from scattered and unco-ordinated development.

The Commission accordingly decided that until such a scheme was available the areas should not be excluded from the borough.

(3) WHAKATANE : OPOTIKI COUNTIES

An inquiry was held by the Commission at Whakatane on the 30th April, 1948, in respect of the adjustment of boundaries of the above two counties. This arose out of a petition by the Whakatane County Council dated 23rd September, 1947, which was supplemented by a petition by certain residents in the Opotiki County praying that certain areas of land should be transferred to the County of Whakatane. The areas were situated on the eastern boundary of the Whakatane County, and on the Ohiwa Harbour near Wainui Road, which forms the boundary between the two counties.

The over-all proposal was opposed by the Opotiki County Council, which submitted a counter-proposal for the exclusion of a smaller area. This included the Ohiwa Peninsula and the land between Wainui Road and the Ohope Beach. The inquiry was necessary on account of the fact that the two counties were unable to reach agreement on the matter.

The evidence of the petitioners substantiated the fact that their community of interest lay with Whakatane rather than with Opotiki. As the whole of the Wainui area was essentially one, it was considered that the control should be undertaken by one local authority. Ohope Township, at present wholly within the Whakatane County, showed definite indications that it would extend into the Opotiki County in the near future, and it was considered undesirable that there should be any division of the area of the present township between the two local authorities.

There were certain proposals submitted by the Whakatane County in regard to the provision of a wharf at the southern shore of Ohiwa Peninsula. This installation would be solely for the benefit of Whakatane, and it was considered that it should therefore be under the control of that County Council. There was some conflict in regard to the question of community of interest which was raised by the Opotiki County Council, in view of the fact that cream-supplies were transported to Opotiki and certain of the residents did in fact conduct their commercial activities there. The opinion was expressed that, if the Wainui district was to be treated as one, the Whakatane portion should be transferred to Opotiki. As this, however, was not a matter within the scope of this particular inquiry, the Commission did not express an opinion on the merits of that claim, which would require further consideration by the respective local authorities. The Commission decided that the area between Wainui Road and Ohope Beach, including the Ohiwa Peninsula, should be transferred from the County of Opotiki and included in the County of Whakatane.

(4) ROTORUA : TAUPO COUNTIES

An application was made by the Rotorua County for an extension of its boundaries to include approximately the whole of the Taupo County lying north of the Waikato River between its junction with the Whangapoa Stream in the west, its junction with the Waiehu Stream in the east, and with the Kaingaroa State Forest blocks lying in the extreme east of the county. A small portion of this area is occupied by New Zealand Forest Products, Ltd. The balance of the Reporoa Block has been settled during the past twenty-five years. That portion of the Ngakuru Block in the north, which is in the Taupo County, and occupied by farmers in large areas in the east of the proposed additions, is being developed by the Lands and Survey Department for future settlement.

It may be mentioned that the Taupo County is one in which the Counties Act, 1920, does not operate. The only rates derived from the area are those in regard to hospital rating, collected by the Valuer-General.

As a consequence, occupiers of land were not responsible for the construction or maintenance of roads and bridges in the locality, this being undertaken by the Ministry of Works. During the past two decades farmers in the Reporoa Settlement have had considerable difficulty in farming the land, due to the absence of a suitable water-supply and the general problems of soil content. From evidence submitted it was apparent

to us that, despite the former difficulties, and although a satisfactory water-supply is still lacking, there was no doubt that the area was self-supporting, and the settlers were in a position to assume some responsibility for their own territorial local government.

Two local-governing authorities had been established in the district in previous years—a Drainage Board and a Rabbit Board. The Rotorua County Council expressed the opinion that it would experience difficulty in administering the area owing to the future rating potential and its present shortage of plant. Endeavours were being made by the County, however, to obtain an increase in its over-all rate levies to cope with the general work in the county. The Commission's decision provided for the inclusion of the Reporoa Settlement in the Rotorua County.

In so far as the Ngakuru Settlement was concerned, approximately half the settlement was in the Rotorua County, and there were a number of settlers to the south of the arbitrary line which formed the boundary between Rotorua and Taupo Counties. There appeared to be no real justification for these settlers being exempted from rates, although it was pointed out that they had agreed to maintain their own roads. With adequate plant facilities, the Rotorua County Council could accept responsibility for the area. It was accordingly found that this area should be incorporated within the latter authority's district.

As to the large area on the eastern side of that portion of the Taupo County which was under consideration, the Lands and Survey Department is at present developing this, and as it was evident that there would eventually be subdivision it was considered that the settlers should in future share the burden of costs in so far as the county was concerned. At present the area would produce no revenue for the county, but roads were being constructed and maintained by the Department, and in view of the Government's policy to make grants in lieu of rates where areas were farmed and produced profits there was justification for the inclusion of the area. There was little doubt that the district, when settled, would support a very large increase in population, and it was considered desirable that the area should come under the control of a local authority which could exercise suitable control in the interim period. Although the application of the Rotorua County Council was for an extension southward as far as the junction of the Waihou Stream and the Waikato River, investigations revealed that the adjacent private Kaingaroa Forest No. 2 area, in private ownership, was being farmed, and we therefore considered that this area of 13,126 acres, approximately, should be included in the county.

(5) NELSON CITY : WAIMEA COUNTY

At the same time as the question of the merger of the Tahumanui Town District in Nelson City was under consideration at the public inquiry held in Nelson on 3rd August, 1948, a proposal to include in the city a portion of the Stoke Riding in the Waimea County, and a small area known as Wakapuaka Road, to the east of the city, was considered. The inquiry arose as a result of an application by the Nelson City Council for the preparation of a reorganization scheme in respect of the city and its neighbouring districts.

The area in the Stoke Riding extended from the Nelson City boundary to that of the Borough of Richmond. The Stoke area comprised some portions which were urbanized, but which were, in general, occupied principally for fruitgrowing and small farms. Between the city boundary and the first substantial urbanized area there was a distance of approximately one and a half miles of purely rural land, which evidence revealed would not be developed for urban purposes for a considerable period. It was evident that the Waimea County Council was adequately administering the local government of the area, and an extra urban plan was submitted showing the purposes

for which the area had been zoned. An agreement had been entered into with the Nelson City Council for a supply of water to the area. In so far as drainage was concerned, any system would, of necessity, have to be considered independently from that of the city.

The residents in the area were, to a large extent, employed there, and not in the City of Nelson, and we were of the opinion that the area could not be considered as a "spill-over" from the city. In so far as future development of the city was concerned, it was indicated during the course of the inquiry that it had ample building-sites available for future population. We were therefore unable to agree to the inclusion of the major portion of the Stoke Riding in the Nelson City. There was, however, a small area adjacent to the southern boundary of the city, in respect of which there was agreement between both authorities regarding its inclusion, and we were informed that this area was already being developed by the Housing Construction Division of the Ministry of Works, and could be supplied by the City Council with all the services necessary. We therefore concluded that this area should be included in the city.

Referring to the Wakapuaka Road area, this was substantially urbanized, and as it was already supplied by the city with gas and water, and was in urgent need of drainage and adequate sewerage facilities, we provided for its inclusion in the city.

(6) WHANGAREI BOROUGH: WHANGAREI COUNTY

A petition dated 8th August, 1947, was lodged by the Whangarei Borough Council praying that certain areas should be included in the borough and excluded from the County of Whangarei. Following preliminary investigations, the Commission decided that at the same time as this matter was dealt with the question of the incorporation of the Town District of Kamo in the Borough of Whangarei should be considered. The inquiry was held at Whangarei on 29th June, 1948.

The county areas under consideration were to the south-east, west, and north-west of the existing borough boundaries. The rapid extension in the Borough of Whangarei, and the need for the provision of future areas for extension, was the basis of the Borough Council's proposals. It was considered that it was desirable to incorporate these areas, in order that future development could be co-ordinated with the town-planning requirements and development of services in the borough.

As to the south-eastern area, this was owned, substantially, by the Railways Department, which offered no objection to its incorporation, and there appeared to be no doubt that it formed part of the urban area of Whangarei. As to the area to the west of the borough, this was already a protrusion into the borough's district, and as the Council had already planned a by-pass road to traverse the area, and residential development was taking place, it was considered desirable that it should be included.

The third area, to the north-west, comprised market-gardening properties and a golf-course, but evidence presented to the Commission indicated that it would be developed as a residential area. It may be mentioned that the general trend of development in the borough was in a northerly direction, and would extend still further into the adjacent Town District of Kamo. Although certain properties in these northern areas were used for market gardening or for nursery purposes, the provision of an Urban Farm Lands Rating Roll would give relief in regard to urban rates which were levied following their inclusion in the borough. A substantial portion of this particular area was being used as a golf-course, and although it was not intended to subdivide the area we were of the opinion that the demand for building sites, and the rateable value which would tend to steadily increase, would ultimately lead to its subdivision. In the interim it was possible to obtain a substantial reduction in rates owing to the area being used purely for sport.

This was one instance where agreement had been reached by the electric-power supply authorities regarding an adjustment of boundaries of the county areas to be incorporated in the borough. The Power Board had, by agreement, undertaken to transfer that portion of its supply district to that of the borough, and this adjustment was provided for by the Commission.

(7) PALMERSTON NORTH CITY: KAIRANGA COUNTY

An inquiry was held on 22nd September, 1948, into the question of the extension of the boundaries of Palmerston North City. This case was not unlike that of Whangarei and Hamilton, where rapid increases in population had accentuated the need for additional areas for urban control. There was a steady growth of population in Palmerston North, increasing over a period of twenty-four years by almost 10,000. A total of 1,737 homes were erected during the years 1939-1948, of which 1,014 were privately built and 723 erected by the Housing Division of the Ministry of Works.

This steady development had culminated in Palmerston North City asking for an extension of its area before extensive urbanization took place in the areas contiguous to the city. The Council had proposals for extensive sewerage and water reticulation schemes in relation to these areas, and also a planning scheme which it was desired should be co-ordinated with that of the city. The extensions as planned depended very materially on the proposed railway deviation. In order that the area could be planned and developed progressively, and in accordance with the subdivisional standards prescribed by the City Council, it was considered essential that the area should be brought into the city as soon as possible.

The areas considered were generally to the north-east, west, and south-west of the city's boundaries in the Kairanga County, and, after deduction of land used for the aerodrome, railway property, Crown land, and roads, it was estimated that the land finally available for development was 1,570 acres. From this area allowance was made for estimated areas of 319 acres for industry and 322 acres for subdivisional roads and reserves, leaving a net area available for housing purposes of 929 acres. This area, it was considered, would provide for a population of some 16,700 people. After taking into consideration the area at present available in the city, some 939 existing building sites for a potential population of 3,600, there would be provision for an additional population of some 20,300 persons.

In view of the recent rapid growth in the city it was considered that adequate provision should be made for future needs.

Our decision hinged on the following factors:

- (i) The potential population of the city in twenty years' time:
- (ii) The capacity of the city, with its existing area, to absorb further population:
- (iii) The direction in which the city was likely to extend, and the extent of that expansion.

In dealing with the proposed extension it was considered necessary to provide for future industrial requirements, and evidence as to suitable areas therefor was taken into consideration. In accordance with possible decentralisation of industry, and in view of the location of Palmerston North as a growing commercial and distribution centre for a large and increasingly important rural district, we were of the opinion that it was desirable that the area finally determined for incorporation should be adequate for the next twenty years.

Having regard to the very limited capacity for future needs within the existing city and the desirability of making adequate provision for future services, we considered that the extensions eventually provided for were essential, while evidence substantiated the fact that the areas incorporated for industrial, recreational, and residential requirements were necessary.

One of the major difficulties regarding the incorporation in urban areas of areas which are at present rural in character was dealt with very fully at this inquiry. This was the question of the increased rating liability on properties being used for farming purposes. The Palmerston North City Council dealt with the position in a most reasonable manner, and submitted evidence which indicated that it had decided that the farmer should not, by reason of the incorporation of his land in the city, be placed in any worse position, unless additional expenditure was necessary to maintain and develop the existing roads in the area or increased amenities were provided. It was proposed to meet the position by relief under the Urban Farm Lands Rating Act, 1932.

The question of electricity supply in the areas proposed for incorporation was raised, as had been the case in a number of inquiries. The Manawatu-Oroua Electric-power Board supplied the areas in question. It was evident that, owing to certain major technical difficulties, considerable expenditure would be involved if the areas were transferred to the city's area of supply, while there would be no compensating advantage to the consumers, and we accordingly decided that the *status quo* should be maintained.

Although the Commission decided to include in the city an area which did not form part of the city's proposals, a substantial reduction of the areas actually proposed for incorporation was made.

(8) HAMILTON CITY : WAIKATO AND WAIPA COUNTIES

Following receipt of an application in February, 1948, from the Hamilton City Council requesting that consideration be given by the Commission to the extension of the boundaries of the city, a public inquiry was held in Hamilton on 7th September, 1948. The areas involved in the Waipa County were generally to the north and south-west of the existing city boundaries, and those in the Waikato County were generally to the south-east, east, and north-east of the city boundaries. There was evidence that a very rapid growth of the population of Hamilton had resulted in a considerable "spillover" into the adjacent counties, and the question of the extension of its boundaries had been under consideration by the local authorities in that area for a considerable time. An acute housing shortage in the city indicated that this trend would continue for some considerable time, and there were also indications that the population growth would continue at a comparable rate.

In two of the areas in particular the Housing Division of the Ministry of Works had acquired substantial areas, and building activities had been proceeding for some time. This was a further indication of the lack of suitable residential sites within the city. There was evidence that the Railways Department proposed constructing a locomotive workshop to the north-west of the city beyond Lake Roto Kaeo. This necessitated the inclusion in the city of a suitable adjacent area for co-ordinated residential development, and it was stated by the Housing Division that negotiations were proceeding to acquire land for this purpose. It was evident that it was necessary to install a sewerage system in the various areas to cope with the rapidly increasing urbanization, and certain of the areas had been receiving a supply of water from the city, as well as fire protection from the city's brigade. The financial aspects of the city's proposed development expenditure, and also those of the individual ratepayers, were thoroughly examined, and it was considered by the Commission that, despite certain difficulties, the city, if extended, would as a whole benefit materially by the inclusion of additional areas.

After careful examination of all relevant factors, we decided that the areas proposed by the city for inclusion were not sufficient and would not satisfactorily solve the problems associated with the area as a whole. It was accordingly found necessary to enlarge the city's proposals.

The question of community of interest between the city and the urbanized portions of the county which were under consideration arose, and it was evident that, both socially and economically, they formed part of the City of Hamilton, and ought to be

planned, developed, and co-ordinated with the city. Although some services had been provided in the areas by both County Councils, it was desirable that the areas should be administered as part of an urban unit of local government. The County Councils were generally in agreement with the city's proposals, although the Waipa County Council was of the opinion that further extensions than those envisaged by the City Council should be made.

It was finally decided that the areas in the Waikato County, generally known as Hillcrest, Enderley, and Fairfield, should be excluded from the county and included in the city, and that the Macroa area, together with a substantial addition determined by the Commission, as well as the Melville district in the Waipa County, should be incorporated. As it was evident that there was a rating problem in regard to farm land, we recommended that a suitable roll be prepared to provide for rating relief in terms of the Urban Farm Lands Rating Act, 1932.

(9) PAPATOETOE BOROUGH: MANUKAU COUNTY

A petition was received from certain of the residents in the Manukau County adjacent to the Borough of Papatoetoe praying for the exclusion from the county and inclusion in the borough of certain areas.

A public inquiry was opened on 1st March, 1949, at which the Papatoetoe Borough Council submitted proposals to include in its district an area totalling approximately 1,432 acres of land, and lengthy evidence was heard for and against the proposals.

The decision of the Commission has not, as yet, been issued.

(10) TAURANGA BOROUGH: TAURANGA COUNTY

On the 14th May, 1948, the Tauranga Borough Council forwarded to the Commission an application from certain ratepayers in the Otumoetai area of the Tauranga County that their properties be included in the Borough of Tauranga. The Tauranga Borough intimated that it was prepared to assist the petitioners, while the Tauranga County Council, which had been approached by the petitioners, agreed that an inquiry should be held although neither supported nor opposed the proposal.

On the 7th October, 1948, an inquiry was held at Tauranga into the question of incorporation of the area of the Otumoetai Perinsula up to the Tauranga-Waihi State Highway, and the scope of the inquiry was extended by the Commission to include the area to the south of the highway, commonly known as the Judea area. On the evidence submitted on behalf of the petitioners we were of the opinion that there were no available or suitable residential building sites in the borough, and that substantial expansion would take place in the Otumoetai area. There was evidence to show that the borough was progressing rapidly, and that the population was steadily increasing, and would be likely to continue to do so. Although there was substantial objection to the petition, it was evident that there was a definite lack of urban amenities not only in the area, but in relation to the borough, and also that there was a disparity in the rates levied at present, those in the borough being less on urban properties than in the County.

The Mayor of Tauranga stated that there was likely to be extensive expansion of the forestry and timber industry in the back country, and, with possible industrial development and the provision of deep-water harbour facilities, an increase in population was likely to result.

The borough's contiguity with the Otumoetai area was established by the inclusion of the Judea area, which is co-terminus with the borough at its south-eastern extremity, adjacent to the point at which the Tauranga-Waihi State Highway enters the borough. The Otumoetai area itself has no direct communication with Tauranga Borough, on account of the Waikareao Estuary, which intervenes. It is understood that a proposal has been made for this estuary to be bridged.

The opponents of the application admitted that the Otumoetai area was rated disproportionately to other parts of the county, but they had made endeavours to induce the County Council to agree to a more equitable distribution of finance for the requirements of the area. They considered that the proposed addition to the borough was greater than was necessary for actual or potential population, and relied on the fact that the area was used extensively for the production of fruit and town milk-supply. In view of the development costs for the provision of amenities, they were of the opinion that the rates which would be necessary would in future exceed those at present levied by the county. They further considered that the borough's finances would be strained to cope with the problems which would emerge, and it was unlikely that the proportion of rates received from the area for general purposes would be sufficient for its requirements. It was also contended that the lack of access across the Waikareao Estuary made the centre of administration too far removed to provide adequate maintenance facilities, the distance being some five miles by road from the centre of Tauranga Borough.

After full consideration of the matter, the Commission decided to exclude the north-west corner of the Otumoetai Peninsula north of the railway-line, on the ground that there was no evidence of extensive urban development in that particular area, and also on account of its general usage for considerable fruitgrowing and other small-farming operations.

The second area, bounded on the west by the Otumoetai Road, on the north by the sea, and on the east by the Waikareao Estuary, and to a certain point to the south, had been subdivided for urban development, and it was likely to become highly urbanized. Its inclusion in the borough would necessitate urban standards being adhered to, and it was accordingly included. The third area considered was that south of the railway-line, and west of the Otumoetai Road, and generally south of the above area included. It was evident that it was being used, to a large extent, for farming purposes, and it was accordingly decided to include only a small portion of this area referred to previously.

The Judea area, adjacent to the Tauranga-Waihi State Highway, was already highly developed for residential purposes, and, with the exception of a portion to the south, is very suitable for subdivision. It was accordingly decided to incorporate in the borough the existing urbanized area, together with the potential urban area.

(11) ROTORUA COUNTY: ROTORUA BOROUGH

The area under consideration in this instance, generally known as the Hemo Gorge, is situated at the southern end of the borough, extends to both sides of the main road for approximately a quarter of a mile, and consists of Crown land. The road had not been sealed by the Rotorua Borough Council, due no doubt to the fact that the area was unlikely to become urbanized and was non-rateable. For some time past considerable pressure had been brought to bear on the Borough Council to bring the road up to State highway standards. In view of the fact that its transfer to the county would place the responsibility for its maintenance on the Main Highways Board, it was considered that this was the most equitable and practical solution of the problem. The Borough Council indicated, however, that it was prepared to seal the northern portion of approximately 25 chains, and had in fact already commenced preliminary work on it.

No objection to the proposal was made by the County Council, but it raised the question of potential damage from the reservoir and water-works situated above the road in the Arikikapakapa Recreation Reserve, as the borough's mains crossed the highway to the reservoir. It was submitted by the County Council that an indemnity should be given by the Rotorua Borough Council against any damage which might result from the water-works of the borough, and in deciding to include the area in the county the Commission made provision for an agreement to be entered into between the two local authorities indemnifying the county against any expenditure incurred as the result of such damage.

(12) MATAMATA : ROTORUA COUNTIES

A proposal that an area of approximately 16,000 acres in the Rotorua County on the western boundary should be transferred from the Rotorua County to the Matamata County Council was the subject of an inquiry held by the Commission on the 6th October, 1948. The land was mainly held by New Zealand Forest Products, Ltd., and the basis of the application was that the Rotorua County Council was unable to provide any effective services to the area on account of the fact that access was through the Matamata County. It was agreed that the rating revenue should, in equity, accrue to the benefit of the Matamata County. Although the two counties had agreed in the matter, it transpired that New Zealand Forest Products, Ltd., had not been informed of the proposal, and on this ground the county desired to retract from its agreement and allow the Commission to determine the issue.

We were of the opinion that, from every point of view, the community of interest of the area was with the Matamata County. Production from the area, together with supplies to it, would pass over this county's roads, and we accordingly decided to exclude the area from the Rotorua County, and include it in the Matamata County.

(13) REDWOOD RABBIT DISTRICT

This was the first public inquiry held by the Commission into questions affecting rabbit districts. It arose as the result of an application by the Rabbit Destruction Council for an extension of the boundaries of the Redwood Rabbit District for the purpose of including an area of approximately 59,850 acres which lay between the boundaries of the Waihopai, Awatere, and Redwood Rabbit Districts.

Following preliminary investigation by the Commission's investigating staff, the inquiry was held at Blenheim on 11th October, 1948. Considerable opposition to the proposed extension was expressed on behalf of farmers in the area, through their local branch of the Federated Farmers, on the grounds that the land-holders were in a position to control rabbits on their farms more effectively than the existing Rabbit Board. Control of rabbit-destruction was, in general, undertaken by seven Rabbit Boards in the Marlborough Province, and, with the exception of heavy bush country in the South Wairau Plains and two other small areas, most of the country is within their districts.

The Chairman of the Redwood Rabbit Board indicated that he was in agreement with the proposal, and maintained that the area was relatively heavily infested, while the existing district under the Board's control was being continually invaded by rabbits from the adjacent area. There was evidence submitted as to the number of rabbits that had been destroyed each year in that portion of the Board's district adjacent to the area proposed for inclusion, and it was apparent that the number was increasing considerably from year to year.

The Inspector of Stock of the Department of Agriculture also gave evidence in support of the proposal, and a return showing the result of the Board's activities over a period of twelve years indicated that for the year 1946-47 the number of rabbits-destroyed was between 16,000 and 17,000.

The individual property-owners agreed that there was rabbit infestation, but they considered that they were taking satisfactory steps to control it. The main issues which had to be determined were whether there was a problem of rabbit-infestation, existing or potential, and whether the problem could be dealt with more satisfactorily by the Board or by the individual landowners. There were definite indications that the contiguous area was a menace to the existing Rabbit Board's district, and the area as a whole could be more effectively dealt with if under the control of the Board. In general, it was our opinion that co-ordinated activity would be more satisfactory from every point of view and less costly in the ultimate.

The application for extension of the boundaries was accordingly granted.

(14) TAURANGA : ROTORUA COUNTIES

In January, 1948, the Rotorua and Tauranga Counties requested the Commission to investigate the question of an adjustment of boundaries between the two districts, and the Commission held a public inquiry into the matter at Rotorua on the 4th October, 1948. The basic reason for the proposal appeared to be that, like those of many counties in New Zealand, particularly the interior ones, the boundaries had been drawn in such a manner that they ignored geographic, topographical, and economic factors. Such boundaries as originally determined were often in inaccessible and undeveloped country, which produced little rating revenue. In those days counties had no real interest in such remote localities, and the exact location of the boundary line had very little significance. But as the areas developed over the years the lands became rateable, and the local authorities and the ratepayers in such areas became vitally concerned as to the position of such boundaries. Such matters as the responsibility for roads, for instance, particularly where they related to community of interest with another county, were of a major consequence. The economics concerned with their construction and maintenance, and ease of access from operational points, was, and still is, a determining factor in the fixation of boundaries. In this particular case the trend of development was from the Tauranga locality rather than an extension to the north from Rotorua. With one isolated exception, the economic and social activities of the settlers were centred more in Te Puke rather than in Rotorua, while there was evidence that in many cases settlers' produce was, and would continue to be, shipped or railed from focal points in the Tauranga County.

The particular area under consideration at the inquiry was land lying immediately south of the Rotorua-Tauranga boundary, and extending from the Whakatane County boundary in the east, to the Matamata County boundary in the west, some four miles wide in a straight line. This area was, for the purpose of the inquiry, divided into two, the Te Matai district extending practically from the Tauranga-Rotorua State Highway to the Matamata County boundary in the west, and the eastern district extending from the Rotorua-Tauranga State Highway practically to the Whakatane County boundary. In the case of the former there was agreement between the two Councils, and there was no doubt that, geographically and economically, the area should be included in the Tauranga County. In so far as the eastern district was concerned, the Councils had not agreed as to the ultimate determination of the area. The Chairman of the Rotorua County Council stated that his Council had no decided views on the question, but he put forward the views of the ratepayers of the district. He also agreed that the Rotorua roads had not been up to standard, mainly due to lack of plant, which was now on order, and lack of finance, which would be substantially rectified by the recent revaluation of the county. The case for the objecting ratepayers was conducted by counsel, who stated unequivocally that the settlers were concerned chiefly with the effect of the proposed change on the rating position. As to factors concerning community of interest, previously referred to, he was definitely in agreement.

The County Clerk for the Tauranga County Council indicated his Council's policy regarding expenditure of rates, stating that, although consideration had been given to revenue derived from rates in relation to expenditure in the area, the view was taken that those areas which needed developing at the expense of the more highly-rated lands adjacent to the State highways should share the cost of development in back areas, so that the wealth of the county as a whole could be increased progressively. It was undeniably recognized that attention must be paid to the backblocks settlers, as otherwise, if they depended on their rate revenue as a measuring-rod for expenditure on roads, they would remain undeveloped for a long time. We gave serious consideration to the rating liability of those settlers who expressed their objection to the inclusion of their lands in the Tauranga County, and went into the question as to whether the resultant increase in

rates would outweigh other basic considerations. There was no doubt, however, that these settlers were already using the roads and other facilities provided by the Tauranga County Council, while their neighbours over the boundary were paying for the upkeep of the roads in proportion to the valuation of their properties.

On the grounds of equity, it appeared to us that they should meet their fair share of these costs.

The evidence of Government Valuers who had recently undertaken a revaluation of the district, satisfied us that the values of the properties held by the objectors, would be lower if they had been in the Tauranga County, and it was accordingly recommended that the twenty-three properties concerned should be revalued prior to their transfer to Tauranga.

Statutory provision to enable this to be done is made in the Valuation of Land Amendment Act, 1933, as amended by section 3 of the Valuation of Land Amendment Act, 1945, and to enable sufficient time for the revaluation to be made we provided that the adjustment should not become operative until 1st April, 1950.

Following the Commission's decision, which included in the Tauranga County a greater area than that originally proposed by the local authorities, certain objections were received, based on the fact that new and material evidence was available. These objections were considered by the Commission, and it was found that the local authorities concerned had not properly appreciated the effect of the adjustment which had been agreed upon between them. As a result, and in the light of the new evidence, the Commission amended its decision. Certain basic principles, affecting boundary adjustments between counties, were discussed during the course of this inquiry, and we are of the opinion that in considering such adjustments counties should have regard to the following :—

- (i) Geographic factors, including the presence of such internal boundaries as well-defined mountain ranges and major rivers, and the topographical structure :
- (ii) Economic factors, including such matters as accessibility, location of roads, shopping facilities, and commercial centres, as well as community of interest.

(15) MATAMATA : TAUPO COUNTIES

An application was made to the Commission by the Matamata County Council that an area of the Taupo County north of the Waikato River and immediately south-east of the boundary of the Matamata County should be included therein. The major portion of the area is owned, and has been developed for afforestation purposes, by New Zealand Forest Products, Ltd. Access to the locality is via the main Taupo-Putaruru State Highway, which, to a large extent, passes through the Matamata County. The company's processing-plant is situated at Tokoroa, from which point all products from the area will be transported. The Matamata County Council stated during the course of the inquiry, which was held in Rotorua on 6th October, 1948, that the area in the Taupo County immediately adjoining its southern boundary has been developed for afforestation purposes, and the ultimate future usage of the area would be for farming. Although the company paid a substantial amount of rates to the county, and also maintained internal roads to the forestry areas, it used extensively the County roads, and the county considered that it was equitable for the area to be incorporated within its district.

New Zealand Forest Products, Ltd., opposed the proposal on the grounds that it already subsidized the funds of the county to compensate it for the use of county roads, and there was therefore no justification for its inclusion. As the ultimate development of the area would be for farming purposes, with the natural outlet through the county, the county maintained that the area should be incorporated with a view to co-ordinating future development in the county.

It may be mentioned that the Taupo County is a geographic entity, and is a county in which the Counties Act does not at present operate. Until recent years there have been no substantial settlements in the district, and practically no services could be expected from a local authority, should one be constituted. There was evidence that some agricultural development was taking place in the area north of Lake Taupo, while large-scale development was being undertaken by the Lands and Survey Department adjacent to Mangakino. There are also other large areas in the vicinity which are suitable for development for farming purposes.

We are of the opinion that when settlement takes place to any extent local-authority control should be instituted. In so far as the remainder of the portion of the area from Atiamuri westwards is concerned, the Matamata County Council will in future years have a strong claim to its inclusion within its boundaries. However, until such development takes place we do not consider there is justification for its inclusion in the county.

As, however, there were definite indications that large-scale development in the marketing of forest products would take place, we were of the opinion that an area comprising some 24,000 acres should be included in the Matamata County.

III. ALTERATION OF BOUNDARIES : NOT INVOLVING PUBLIC INQUIRIES

(1) WAIKOUAITI COUNTY : PORT CHALMERS BOROUGH

A petition praying for the alteration of the boundaries of the Borough of Port Chalmers by the exclusion therefrom of a certain area of land and its inclusion in the County of Waikouaiti was referred to the Local Government Commission on the 2nd March, 1948.

Neither the county nor the borough raised any objection to the proposed adjustment, and a provisional scheme providing for same was promulgated on the 21st July, 1948. No objections were received, and the final scheme was accordingly issued on the 31st August, 1948.

(2) WAIKOUAITI COUNTY : DUNEDIN CITY

The question of adjustment of boundaries in this instance was referred to the Commission by the Dunedin City Council. The area which it was desired to exclude from the city comprised some 2,300 acres in the upper part of the Leith water-shed. A considerable proportion of the proposed main outlet from Dunedin via the Leith Valley traverses the area in question, and investigations were made as to the effect of its exclusion and possible declaration as a main highway.

This aspect was referred to the Main Highways Board, which decided that it would raise no objection to the proposal. A provisional scheme was issued on the 18th October, 1948, and this was followed by the final scheme on the 20th December.

(3) WAIRERE : WAITOMO ELECTRIC-POWER DISTRICTS

The proposed adjustment of boundaries in this case was referred to the Commission by the State Hydro-electric Department, and involved the transfer of four outer areas from the Waitomo district to that of Wairere, and also the inclusion of two outer areas in the Wairere district. The Wairere Board obtained petitions under section 3 (3) of the Electric-power Boards Act, 1925, signed by not less than 25 per cent. of the rate-payers, and the necessary subsequent procedure to effect the proposed transfers and inclusions was followed.

The Commission was advised that the proposed alterations would have the effect of making a more rational division of territory between the two districts, and would at the same time provide for the inclusion of two outer areas.

Following advertisement of the proposed alteration of boundaries and inclusion of the outer areas, no objections to the proposal were received, and the Commission referred the matter to the State Hydro-electric Department for action in terms of the Electric-power Boards Act, 1925.

(4) KAIRANGA : PAHIATUA COUNTIES

The Valuer-General raised the question of the desirability of effecting an alteration of the boundaries of these counties, the purpose being to overcome a difficulty which had arisen in regard to valuation. The difficulty centred in the fact that, through a misdescription, portions of some of the areas were included in both counties.

As the adjustment was one of a machinery nature, and both County Councils were in accord with the proposal, the Commission approved of the adjustment in terms of section 24 of its Act, and referred the matter to the Department of Internal Affairs for action in accordance with the Counties Act, 1920.

(5) HAWKES BAY - CENTRAL HAWKES BAY ELECTRIC-POWER DISTRICTS

This adjustment involved the incorporation in the Central Hawkes Bay and Hawkes Bay Power Districts respectively of small areas of the Hawkes Bay and Waipawa Counties.

The purpose of the transfer, in the first place, was to regularize a local difficulty which had arisen through the Central Hawkes Bay Board having lines in this area of the Hawkes Bay County. As the Hawkes Bay Board could not conveniently take over this supply from the Central Hawkes Bay Board, this was the only satisfactory solution.

In the second place, there was a small area between a road and a river, the latter being the county boundary, and as the Hawkes Bay Board's lines followed the road as far as possible it was considered preferable for a continuous length of road to be one supply authority's territory rather than have a break for the short length of road in another authority's territory.

The necessary procedure provided by section 6 (1) of the Electric-power Boards Act, 1925, was followed by both Boards, and the Commission, in view of the circumstances, approved of action being taken by the State Hydro-electric Department in terms of the Electric-power Boards Act, 1925.

IV. CONSTITUTION OF NEW DISTRICTS

(1) WELLINGTON CATCHMENT DISTRICT

Reference was made to the constitution of a catchment district for Wellington, at page 19 of the annual report of the Commission for the year ended 31st March, 1948. The district proposed included the geographic County of Makara and a major portion of the Hutt County.

The Commission's provisional scheme was promulgated on the 24th April, 1948, but was the subject of objections on various grounds from the Borough Councils of Petone, Upper Hutt, and Eastbourne, the County Councils of Hutt and Makara, the Cities of Wellington and Lower Hutt, and the Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Inc.).

Subsequently, the Lower Hutt City and Petone Borough withdrew their objections, and a public hearing was held on the 30th August, 1948, to consider those remaining.

The Commission reserved its decision pending investigation of certain aspects of the position, and a final scheme has not yet been promulgated.

(2) WAIKATO CATCHMENT DISTRICT

An inquiry into the proposed constitution of a Waikato catchment district was held at Hamilton on the 9th June, 1948. The territorial local authorities concerned were the whole of the Counties of Waipa, Kawhia, Raglan, Otorohanga, and parts of the

Counties of Waikato, Piako, Taupo, Taumarunui, Waitomo, Franklin, Matamata, and Rotorua; the City of Hamilton, the Boroughs of Huntly, Te Kuiti, Te Awamutu, Cambridge, and Ngaruawahia, as well as the Town Districts of Leamington, Otorohanga, Tuakau, and Taupo. The Dependent Town Districts of Mercer, Kawhia, Te Kauwhata, Ohaupo, and Kihikihi were deemed, for the purpose of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act, 1941, to form part of the county in which they were situated.

The area of the proposed district was approximately 6,380 square miles, with an estimated population of 102,400 and a rateable capital value of £38,838,000. It embraced the whole of the drainage basin of the Waikato River, together with the basins of rivers and streams draining into the Raglan, Aotea, and Kawhia Harbours, as well as all other rivers and streams draining into the Tasman Sea from the Raglan Heads in the North to the drainage basin of the Marokopa River in the south, and also the catchments of all streams flowing to the western side of the Firth of Thames from the trig point Kohukohumu on the north to and including the Pukorohoro Creek in the south.

In submitting this application to the Commission the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council stated that the constitution of a Catchment Board in this area would result in minimizing of flooding, the drainage of swamp land, the prevention or mitigation of soil erosion, and the promotion of soil conservation.

It was claimed that there was considerable soil erosion in certain parts of the area, together with a potential problem on the erodable pumice lands. There were some twenty Drainage Boards in the area, over which a Catchment Board would have general supervisory control, sponsoring additional work, and co-ordinating their activities for the general good of the area.

Representations were made by counsel for one of the parties that, as certain of the urban local authorities in the proposed district would receive no direct benefit, but would be called upon to contribute towards the administrative rate, it was considered equitable that other urban authorities, not within the scope of the inquiry, and as far north as Auckland, which would receive indirect benefits in a similar way should be included in the proposed catchment district.

It was pointed out, however, that if this proposition were to be considered opportunity would have to be given for these other urban authorities to be heard on the question.

In adjourning the inquiry *sine die* to be brought on at one month's notice, the Commission indicated that it would give consideration to the question which had arisen—the inclusion of the Auckland Metropolitan Area in the proposed catchment district. Subsequently, the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council undertook to thoroughly investigate the catchment problem in the Auckland district, and further consideration will be given to the question when its report is received.

(3) BAY OF PLENTY CATCHMENT DISTRICT

As a result of a proposal by the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council to constitute a catchment district for the Bay of Plenty the Commission held a public inquiry at Whakatane on the 28th of April, 1948.

The district proposed embraced the catchments of all rivers and streams flowing into the Bay of Plenty, extending from Waihi in the west to and including the Waiaua River in the east, and comprised an area of 4,230 square miles, including the whole of the Counties of Whakatane and Tauranga and parts of Opotiki, Waikohu, Taupo, Rotorua, Matamata Counties, together with the Boroughs of Opotiki, Whakatane, Rotorua, Te Puke, Tauranga, and Mount Maunganui. The population in this area was estimated as 43,080 and the estimated rateable capital value as £17,160,000.

In certain areas there were serious existing erosion problems, and in others they were merely potential. In the former, long-term soil-conservation measures were necessary to minimize flooding of the plains and the filling in of stream-channels, while in the latter centralized control of land use with a continuous long-term policy was necessary. This question had been under consideration by the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council since 1945, when, following conferences with a number of local authorities, it was considered that two catchment districts for the area should be constituted.

Although there were differing views expressed at the inquiry by the various local authorities represented, in general there was agreement as to the desirability of the constitution of a catchment district.

One matter of considerable importance to rating authorities generally was revealed during the course of the inquiry. Administrative expenses of Catchment Boards are based on the rateable capital value, and the fact that some counties do not issue building permits results in capital accretions not being recorded to enable the Valuation Department to amend the valuation roll annually. As a consequence, where the capital-value system is used, such capital accretions do not bear rates until a general revaluation is made. This must react unfairly, particularly in regard to urban local authorities which issue building permits and are collectively within an *ad hoc* local authority's district. One large industrial concern in the district of one of the counties represented at the inquiry had effected capital accretions in recent years of upwards of £500,000, but the roll value of the property still stood at £500. This aspect, of course, not only affects Catchment Board rating, but also hospital rating, which is allocated on the basis of the rateable capital value in each local authority's district. This is a question which requires legislative action in order that the position may be generally rectified.

After giving consideration to all aspects of the position, the Commission found that one catchment district embracing all the territorial local authorities' districts previously referred to, should be constituted, and recommended a basis for representation of the various authorities on the Catchment Board. The main reasons for the Commission's decision in favour of one authority instead of two, were as follows:—

- (a) The area was a single geographic unit:
- (b) There would be unified control over several catchment areas of varying size by the grouping of rivers all flowing into the Bay of Plenty:
- (c) The size of the district—4,230 square miles—with a rateable capital value in excess of £17,000,000, would be large enough to ensure economy in administration, and also provide sufficient revenue for one Board:
- (d) The difficulty in obtaining adequately-trained technical staff:
- (e) The excessive demands on the time of Board members representing Government Departments if two Boards were constituted:
- (f) The economic use of plant, which is dependent on its continuous employment, this district presenting no obstacles to the easy movement of plant from one area to another.

A provisional scheme was promulgated, but as yet a final scheme has not been issued.

V. CHANGE OF STATUS

(1) ONERAHI TOWN DISTRICT

A petition addressed to the Governor-General praying for the declaration of the Town District of Onerahi as an independent town district was referred to the Local Government Commission in December, 1947, and on the 1st July, 1948, the Commission conducted an inquiry into the question at Whangarei. Prior to the hearing, the Com-

mission's investigating officers undertook an extensive investigation into the Town Board's position, in order that the Commission might be fully informed on the proposal. During the course of the inquiry it was evident that the Town Board was under a disability in regard to the application of the Drainage and Plumbing Regulations, and, in view of the increased number of buildings being erected, it was considered desirable that control should be exercised. However, as it was clear that the Onerahi Town Board had no power to adopt the regulations, the question was one for action by the Whangarei County Council. This aspect was the only reason advanced by the Town Board in support of its petition for independent status, and as immediately following the inquiry the Health Department, on the application of the Whangarei County Council, declared the district one in which the Drainage and Plumbing Regulations could be enforced, the Commission decided that there was no necessity for the declaration of Onerahi as an independent town district.

VI. AMALGAMATIONS OR FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED

(1) CHRISTCHURCH CITY—RICCARTON BOROUGH: CHRISTCHURCH DRAINAGE AND TRAMWAY BOARDS

Reference has previously been made to these local authorities, under the heading of "Christchurch Metropolitan Local Government" (pages 6-16).

(2) NELSON CITY: TAHUNANUI TOWN DISTRICT

An inquiry was held by the Commission at Nelson on the 3rd August, 1948, into the question of the inclusion of the Tahunanui Town District in the City of Nelson. There was evidence that in recent years there had from time to time been negotiations between the two local authorities with this object in view.

A partial water-supply system had been provided by the City Council, and extensions were undertaken from the resultant profits made from the sale of water in the district. One matter of prime importance to the Town Board was the question of the installation of a sewerage system, which had been estimated to cost some £47,000. In view of the housing development, the nature of the ground, and the use of septic tanks, there would be created in the near future a serious health problem. Both local authorities agreed that there was essentially an economic and social community of interest between the two communities.

While deciding to incorporate the town district in the city, the Commission recognized that there were certain difficulties to be overcome, and accordingly made the implementation of its decision subject to the following:—

- (a) A sewerage scheme was to be provided by the city as soon as possible:
- (b) A revaluation of the whole area was to be made, owing to both valuations being some years old, and the ratepayers of the city had recently decided by poll to change the system of rating from annual to unimproved:
- (c) Legislation was to be promoted to consolidate existing special rates over the whole of the combined area, in view of the burden which would be placed on the ratepayers of the city in providing a drainage scheme for the town district.

(3) WHANGAREI BOROUGH: KAMO TOWN DISTRICT

An inquiry was held by the Commission at Whangarei on the 29th June, 1948, and the days following, into the question of the incorporation of the Town District of Kamo within the Borough of Whangarei. The Whangarei Borough Council did not advance the question, but was seeking certain extensions of its boundaries, and the Commission considered that it was an opportune time to investigate the position in view

of the fact development in the borough was rapidly extending towards Kamo. There were also indications that the Kamo Town Board realized that not only was its future bound up with that of Whangarei, but in time it would be incorporated in the borough. The question at issue in the minds of the Town Board, however, was whether that time had arrived. There was evidence to show that a considerable number of residents in Kamo were employed in Whangarei, and that there was little employment for Whangarei people at Kamo. The Housing Division of the Ministry of Works was undertaking extensive developmental works up to the northern boundary of the Whangarei Borough, and it appeared inevitable that there would be a "spill-over" into the Kamo Town District. A comparison of the rating position in the two districts revealed that there was little, if any, difference between them. It was evident that the future development of the sewerage system would, subject to agreement by the Whangarei Borough, link up with the latter authority's system. The main sewer was to be constructed by the borough in the near future, and this could be constructed with sufficient capacity to take sewage from the Kamo Town District. The Commission considered that there was no doubt that the Kamo Town District was economically and socially a part of Whangarei, and it was apparent that the district would receive considerable advantages if it were planned and developed in relation to Whangarei. There would be no loss of services or local community of interest which had developed in the town district, and there would be a distinct gain resulting from the availability of engineering and technical services administered by fully-qualified officers. The Commission accordingly decided that the town district should be absorbed in the Whangarei Borough, but recommended that no change be made at the present time in respect of the electric-power supply, which was under the control of the North Auckland Electric-power Board.

VII. ABOLITIONS

- (1) CHRISTCHURCH DRAINAGE DISTRICT
- (2) CHRISTCHURCH TRAMWAY DISTRICT

Reference has previously been made to these districts under the heading of "Christchurch Metropolitan Local Government" (pages 6-16).

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

- (1) RABBIT DISTRICTS

In terms of the legislation passed in 1947 amending the provisions of the Rabbit Nuisance Act, 1928, the Rabbit Destruction Council was constituted. One of its functions is to make recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture for the constitution, alteration of boundaries, or union of rabbit districts. Investigations on these questions are undertaken by the Council, in conjunction with officers of the Department of Agriculture, and before action is taken in terms of section 29 of the 1947 amending Act the facts in each case are submitted to the Local Government Commission for its approval. A number of new rabbit districts have been constituted, and are referred to in the Appendix hereto.

In only one instance, where the question of the extension of the boundaries of the Redwood Rabbit District was under consideration, has it been necessary for the Commission to hold a public inquiry before determining the question.

- (2) MANUKAU COUNTY: HOWICK TOWN DISTRICT

A petition addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General from two-thirds of the electors of the Howick Town District praying for the exclusion from the Howick Town District and inclusion in the Manukau County of areas comprising 323 acres out

of a total of 1,091 acres was referred to the Local Government Commission on the 20th June, 1947. A preliminary investigation was undertaken by the Commission's investigating staff, and the Commission decided to hold a public inquiry at Howick on the 14th June, 1948.

It was evident that, consequent upon a poll which resulted in the alteration of the system of rating from the capital to the unimproved value as from the 1st of April, 1947, there was a much heavier burden placed on certain farm lands to the south and west of the town district. In order to alleviate the position, the Town Board had prepared an Urban Farm Lands Rating Roll, no doubt with a view to relieving what the petitioners believed to be an unjust and unfair rating burden.

At the commencement of the inquiry counsel for a number of the petitioners stated that there had been a conference between the petitioners and counsel for the Howick Town Board, as the result of which an arrangement had been made which would most likely satisfactorily determine the questions at issue. The Commission accordingly adjourned the inquiry *sine die* to enable the arrangement to be carried out.

(3) TAURANGA ELECTRIC-POWER DISTRICT: TE PUKE BOROUGH

The Tauranga Electric-power Board referred for the approval of the Commission the question of the amalgamation of the Te Puke Borough Council's electrical undertaking with the Board. As section 13 (3) of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, prevents the Commission from transferring the whole or any part of any trading undertaking or of any functions in relation thereto from any local governing authority (County Council, Borough Council, or Town Board), except upon the union, merger, or abolition of the district of the local governing authority, the matter was outside the jurisdiction of the Commission, and accordingly no action was taken.

(4) TE KUITI FIRE DISTRICT

As the result of an application made on the 24th August, 1948, by the Te Kuiti Borough Council for the constitution of a fire district for the borough, a preliminary investigation was carried out.

It was ascertained that the existing fire-protection organization, a volunteer brigade, although of average standard of efficiency, was far from satisfactory on account of the fact that the local authority had to meet the whole of the expenditure from rates. It was accordingly decided by the Commission that a fire district should be constituted, and a provisional scheme was issued for this purpose on the 16th February, 1949.

(5) TUMU-KAITUNA AND TE PUKE DRAINAGE DISTRICTS AND KAITUNA RIVER DISTRICT

The River District of Kaituna and the Drainage Districts of Tumu-Kaituna and Te Puke requested the Commission to investigate a proposal to dissolve the three Boards, and to constitute one authority to administer the land-drainage and river-control works within the area affected by the lower reaches of the Kaituna River, together with such further areas as the Commission should decide to be included, for the purpose of obtaining the maximum benefit and control in the lower reaches of the river and the land draining into it. The matter will be proceeded with on receipt by the Commission of a detailed report from the Engineer to the Boards.

(6) HERALD OR PINE AND RANGITOTO ISLANDS

The question of incorporating these two islands, which are situated in the Waitemata Harbour, within the territory of an existing local authority was referred to the Commission. As neither of the islands was subject to rating for hospital purposes, and as it was evident

that they were being occupied permanently by residents, the question as to whether they should be incorporated in the territory of a local governing authority, particularly in the case of Pine Island, is to be considered by the Commission in conjunction with the North Shore inquiry to be held in July, 1949.

(7) KIHIKIHI TOWN DISTRICT

The Commission inspected the Town District of Kihikihi with a view to considering its amalgamation with the Te Awamutu Borough, but until an over-all review of such authorities has been undertaken the question has been deferred.

(8) MANAWATU COUNTY : FOXTON BEACH AREA

An application was made to the Commission for the constitution of the Foxton Beach area as a town district. A large number of leases of the "Glasgow" type have been granted by the Foxton Harbour Board in the area, but the Board's endowment has been cut up into sections without any system of planning.

As no plans have been deposited in the Land Registry Office it has not been possible to register the leases. Until such time as this question has been attended to, and until the county, or such other local authority which may be constituted, is in a position to take over such roads as may be dedicated, the Commission has deferred the application.

(9) NEW PLYMOUTH HARBOUR DISTRICT

An application was made to the Commission to determine whether a reorganization scheme should be prepared in respect of the Board's district. The matter has been referred back to the Board's solicitors for further information.

(10) HUTT COUNTY : DAYS BAY AREA

An application has been lodged with the Commission in regard to the question of the inclusion of Days Bay in the City of Wellington. Pending investigation of the position, action has been deferred.

(11) AWATERE COUNTY

A trustee of the Mount Gladstone and Upcot properties in the upper Awatere area referred to the Commission the question of the Crown's liability for special rating on the Moleworth Station, and also the question of spreading the liability over the county generally. This matter was exhaustively investigated, but the Commission decided that it had no jurisdiction. The question as to the spread of liability was one of an administrative nature for consideration by the County Council, while the question of the Crown's liability was referred to the Department of Lands and Survey for consideration. It was subsequently learned that, although the Crown was held not to be liable, the Hon. the Minister of Lands had approved of the payment of an annual grant in lieu of special rates.

(12) TINWALD TOWN DISTRICT

As a result of the Ashburton County Council deciding to bring a belt of land approximately some two miles deep surrounding the Borough of Ashburton and the Town District of Tinwald under planning control, an application was made for an Order in Council to cover this area. It was ascertained that the Town Board had not taken any steps to bring its district under planning control as part of a comprehensive scheme, and as unco-ordinated and haphazard development would tend to take place, which would result in ribbon development in the town district, and as it was possible that commercial and industrial activities were likely to be established, the question as to whether certain areas of the town district should be included in the Ashburton Borough and the balance included in the county was referred by the Commission to each of the local authorities concerned for consideration.

Following a conference between the local authorities, the Tinwald Town District intimated that it was of the opinion that no change should be made at present, but referred the question to the Commission for its consideration. It has been decided to undertake a review of county boundaries in the area before further considering the application.

(13) GENERAL

A number of applications has been referred to the Commission in terms of section 24 of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, and we have agreed to action being taken in accordance with the appropriate enactment without recourse to public inquiries. Reference is made to these particular applications in the Appendix, pages (38) and (39).

IX. MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION

Although no definite fixtures have been made for future inquiries, the following matters are under consideration, and preliminary factual data has in some instances already been obtained by the investigating staff of the Commission.

(1) *Auckland Metropolitan Local Government.*—It has been decided by the Commission, in the first instance, to undertake a separate inquiry into the areas and functions of local government in the North Shore area before proceeding with the major question of the Auckland Metropolitan Area. Included in the scope of this inquiry are the east coast bays, situated within the County of Waitemata, together with certain other smaller areas, as well as the four Boroughs of Devonport, Takapuna, Birkenhead, and Northcote. The question of the inclusion of Herald or Pine and Rangitoto Islands within the territory of an existing local authority will also be dealt with.

Applications have been received by the Commission from the undermentioned authorities, but have been deferred pending consideration of the wider issues pertaining to metropolitan local government in Auckland :-

- (a) The constitution of the Mount Wellington Road District as a borough :
- (b) The constitution of the Glen Eden Town District as a borough.

(2) Consideration of the future control of electric-power supply in the Malvern, Banks Peninsula, and Springs Ellesmere Electric-power Districts.

(3) A suitable form of local government for the Tawa Flat - Porirua and Titahi Bay areas in the Makara County. This matter was referred to in our previous year's report, but was deferred until such time as certain of the parties had completed their investigations into the position. The collation of relevant information concerned principally the Ministry of Works, the Regional Planning Organization, and the Wellington City Council.

The Commission had decided before the close of the year that the inquiry should be commenced in May, 1949. Included within the scope of the inquiry is the future of the Johnsonville Town District, which is contiguous to the City of Wellington, together with certain other adjacent areas. Large-scale development has already been commenced by the Housing Division of the Ministry of Works in the Porirua and Titahi Bay areas, and private development is proceeding rapidly in the Tawa Flat area. The need for some suitable form of urban local government was raised by the Makara County Council.

- (4) A review of the counties in the Wairarapa district.
- (5) A review of the town districts in the North Canterbury district.
- (6) The constitution of a catchment district for the Waikato and such other areas as may be considered desirable for inclusion from the point of view of over-all administration.

- (7) The local government of the Kawhia County and adjoining districts.
- (8) The local government of the Borough of Waihi.
- (9) The local government of the Kihikihi Town District.
- (10) A proposal to alter the boundaries of the Raglan and Waipa Counties.
- (11) County government in the North Canterbury region. This involves some seventeen counties, two town districts, and the Waimakariri-Ashley Water-supply District, and is a matter which will be inquired into at an early date. The question arose as the result of boundary adjustments proposed by the Christchurch City Council in relation to the contiguous Counties of Heathcote, Halswell, Paparua, and Waimairi.
- (12) The constitution of the Borough of Motueka as a fire district.
- (13) A proposal that the Mount Maunganui Borough should be incorporated in the Borough of Tauranga, and that the functions of the Tauranga Harbour Board should be transferred to the Borough of Tauranga.
- (14) The constitution of the Town District of Havelock North as a borough.
- (15) The proposed abolition of the River Districts of Ahikouka, Waiohine, South Wairarapa, Kahautara, and Te Ore Ore.
- (16) A proposal to extend the boundaries of the Borough of Whakatane.
- (17) A proposal to constitute the Town District of Taradale as a borough.
- (18) The proposed adjustment of the boundaries of the Boroughs of Port Chalmers and West Harbour. Before proceeding with this particular matter the Commission is considering the question of review of the whole of the metropolitan local government at Dunedin.

X. STAFF

A number of changes have taken place in the staff of the Commission during the year under review. The former Secretary, the late Mr. F. B. Stephens, was appointed Assistant Under-Secretary to the Department of Internal Affairs in December, 1948, and the late Mr. J. F. D. Jeune assumed his position in an acting capacity. When the latter arrangement was made no appointment was made to fill the vacancy created on the investigating staff. Whilst returning from an inquiry held at Papatotetoe, the late Messrs. Stephens and Jeune lost their lives in the air crash at Waikanae on the 18th March, 1949.

The late Mr. Stephens had been associated with local government for many years, and his vast knowledge in this particular field, both in New Zealand and overseas, was of immense value to the Commission. Although, from a staff point of view, he severed his connection with the Commission in December last, he still continued to act as counsel representing the Department of Internal Affairs at the public inquiries held by the Commission. His ability, zeal, and exceptional knowledge of local government was outstanding, and the loss suffered by the Commission, the Public Service, and the community in general is an irreparable one.

The late Mr. Jeune had been associated with local government for many years prior to his appointment to the investigating staff of the Commission, and his knowledge gained both in New Zealand and overseas was also a valuable asset to the Commission.

The sudden passing of these two officers at a time when the work of the Commission had grown considerably has resulted in some difficulty being experienced in maintaining the rapid progress which the Commission desired. Immediate steps were taken to meet the staff position, and valuable assistance has been rendered by the Under-Secretary to the Department of Internal Affairs and the Public Service Commission. It is hoped that satisfactory replacements will be obtained in the near future.

We wish to place on record our appreciation of the untiring services rendered to the Commission by the late Secretary and Acting-Secretary, and to express our thanks to the other members of the staff for their loyalty and co-operation throughout the year.

XI. CONCLUSION

The work of the Commission has grown steadily and is becoming more widely known, both inside and outside local-government circles. Numerous inquiries on general matters affecting local government are received from day to day. Public interest in local affairs is becoming increasingly evident, and this has been assisted in no small degree by the press and the *National Journal* circulated among local authorities, to whom we desire to express our appreciation.

The presentation of the type of evidence which the Commission requires has become more widely known, and we desire to commend the steadily increasing co-operation which has been received from both members and officers of local authorities throughout the Dominion.

The relationship between the Commission and the Department of Internal Affairs, which is charged with the administrative aspects of local government, has been close and co-operative. A number of Government Departments have assisted the Commission in no small measure, particularly in regard to preliminary investigations and inquiries, and we desire to pay a tribute for the co-operation which has been, without exception, extended to us throughout the year.

We have made every endeavour to reach decisions for the benefit of the community as a whole, and, with due regard to efficiency and economy, to safeguard, as far as possible, the democratic rights and privileges of the individual, at the same time recognizing the need for reform which is so essential for the successful reorganization of the local-government system.

I. J. GOLDSTONE, Judge, Chairman.
J. W. ANDREWS, Commissioner.
W. C. E. GEORGE, Commissioner.
G. A. MONK, Commissioner.

H. E. N. WILKINS, Secretary.

April, 1949.

APPENDIX

	Date of Provisional Scheme.	Date Final Scheme Issued.	Date Order in Council Gazetted.
III.A. MATTERS DEALT WITH INVOLVING PUBLIC INQUIRIES IN TERMS OF SECTION 14 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION ACT, 1946			
<i>Alteration of Boundaries: Local Authorities</i>			
(i) Christchurch City, Heathcote County, Halswell County, Paparua County, and Waimairi County	..	..	..
(ii) Oroua County: Feilding Borough	<i>Status quo maintained</i>	..	..
(iii) Whakatane County: Opotiki County	1/9/48	10/12/48	..
(iv) Rotorua County: Taupo County	1/3/49	..	..
(v) Nelson City: Waimea County	29/9/48	..	..
(vi) Whangarei Borough: Whangarei County	27/10/48	23/2/49	..
(vii) Huntly Borough: Raglan County .. ..	..	4/5/48	2/9/48
(viii) Palmerston North City: Kairanga County	27/1/49	..	..
(ix) Otorohanga Town District: Otorohanga County .. ..	..	27/4/48	23/12/48
(x) Hutt River District	20/4/48	24/9/48	17/3/49
(xi) Hamilton City: Waikato County and Waipa County	7/12/48	23/2/49	31/3/49
(xii) Papatotoe Borough: Manukau County .. ..	..	..	..
(xiii) Tauranga Borough: Tauranga County	25/2/49	..	..
(xiv) Rotorua County and Rotorua Borough	24/2/49	..	..
(xv) Matamata County: Rotorua County	2/3/49	..	..
(xvi) Redwood Rabbit District	19/11/48	17/2/49	..
(xvii) Tauranga County and Rotorua County	28/2/49	..	..
(xviii) Matamata County and Taupo County	2/3/49	..	..
III.B. MATTERS DEALT WITH NOT INVOLVING PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND ACTION TAKEN IN TERMS OF SECTION 24, LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION ACT, 1946			
<i>Alteration of Boundaries: Local Authorities—continued</i>			
(i) Maungakawa Rabbit District and Kiwitahi Rabbit District	..	14/2/49	24/3/49
(ii) Waikouaiti County: Port Chalmers Borough	21/7/48	31/8/48	23/12/48
(iii) Waikouaiti County: Dunedin City	18/10/48	20/12/48	10/3/49
(iv) Waitere Electric-power District and Waitomo Electric-power District	Referred for action under section 6 of Electric-power Boards Act, 1925	..	28/10/48
(v) Kairanga County and Pahiataua County	Referred for action under section 14 of Counties Act, 1920	..	11/11/48
(vi) Hawkes Bay Electric-power District and Central Hawkes Bay Electric-power District	Referred for action under section 6 of Electric-power Boards Act, 1925	..	30/11/48
IV. CONSTITUTION OF NEW DISTRICTS			
(i) Wellington Catchment Board	20/4/48	..	..
(ii) Waikato Catchment Board	Adjourned <i>sine die</i>	..	..
(iii) Bay of Plenty Catchment Board	11/6/48	..	..
V. CHANGE OF STATUS			
(i) Onekahi Town District	<i>Status quo to be maintained</i>	..	..
VI. AMALGAMATIONS OR FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED			
(i) Christchurch City and Riccarton Borough, Christchurch Drainage Board, Christchurch Tramway Board	..	..	..
(ii) Nelson City and Tahunanui Town District	29/9/48	..	..
(iii) Whangarei Borough and Kamo Town District	27/10/48	23/2/49	..

APPENDIX—continued

	Date of Provisional Scheme.	Date Final Scheme Issued.	Date Order in Council Gazetted.
VII. ABOLITIONS			
(i) Manawatu-Oroua River District	26 4/48	.. .. .
(ii) Christchurch Drainage District
(iii) Christchurch Tramway District
MATTERS DEALT WITH NOT INVOLVING PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND ACTION TAKEN IN TERMS OF SECTION 24, LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION ACT, 1946			
<i>Local Authorities: Constitution of New Local Authorities</i>			
(i) Hokonui Rabbit District	Referred for action in terms of Section 29 of Rabbit Nuisance Amendment Act, 1947	20 5/48
(ii) Taieri Ridge Rabbit District	Ditto	16 9/48
(iii) Te Kuiti Fire District	16 2/49 .. .. .	.. .. .
(iv) Linnburn-Puketoi Rabbit District	Referred for action in terms of section 29 of Rabbit Nuisance Amendment Act, 1947	18 11/48
(v) Conway Rabbit District	Ditto	18/11/48
(vi) Buscot Rabbit District	2/12/48
(vii) Upper Waiho Rabbit District	2/12/48
(viii) Tokarahi Rabbit District	10/3/49
(ix) Ida Valley Rabbit District	10/2/49
(x) Wedderburn Rabbit District	10/2/49
(xi) Ashburton Gorge Rabbit District	10/2/49
(xii) Spray Rabbit District	10/3/49
(xiii) Omarama Rabbit District	24/2/49
(xiv) Otekaike Rabbit District	24/2/49
(xv) Wanaka Rabbit District	24/2/49
(xvi) Miller's Flat Rabbit District	10/3/49
(xvii) Mackenzie Rabbit District	24/3/49
(xviii) Waihopai Rabbit District
(xix) Hakataramea Valley Rabbit District
(xx) Pukaki Rabbit District	31 3/49
<i>Amalgamations</i>			
(i) Oroua Rabbit District and Kiwitea Rabbit District	Referred for action under section 29 of Rabbit Nuisance Act, 1947	27/5/48
(ii) Akitio Rabbit District, Pongaroa Rabbit District, and Puketoi Rabbit District	Ditto	4/11/48

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