

As the inquiry proceeded, it was evident that the Manukau County Council had, as far as had been reasonably possible under the legislation under which it operated, assisted very materially in the development of the built-up areas adjoining the Borough. One witness for the County Council stated that the Counties Act was deficient in the matter of providing for full effective control of urban areas, whereas the Municipal Corporations Act gave adequate powers in this respect. So long as there is this deficiency in the Counties Act, more particularly in relation to urbanized areas adjoining urban authorities' districts, we consider that the only satisfactory form of control of such areas is by a municipal authority under the Municipal Corporations Act.

Until such time as finance, in particular, for the administration of such small areas can be retained in separate accounts, and adequate powers are given to counties to enable them to administer such areas, the difficulties which are being experienced in this regard must remain. The relationship of the Manukau County to the metropolitan area of Auckland therefore raises more serious issues as to the future control of such areas, and the apprehension expressed by the Manukau County Council as to whether urban development should be encouraged is indeed justified. Clearly a County Council must experience considerable difficulty in meeting the demands of residents who are fully aware of the services and amenities provided in urban areas, and the demands for such services must inevitably tend to increase, thereby accentuating the financial difficulties resulting from a combination of rural and urban areas in a county.

Although the Manukau County, which covers an area of 240 square miles, has an efficient and highly qualified and experienced staff and has modern plant available with which to undertake work which is normally necessary, and although it may possibly be able to meet the needs of concentrated populations in urban pockets in the county, there are certain inherent legal difficulties which cannot be overcome.

The desire, for instance, for adequate representation, municipal standards, building control, and localized amenities such as water, sewerage, footpaths, sealed streets, and kerbing and channelling, creates difficulties regarding the provision of finance in smaller pockets forming parts of rural ridings. Another difficulty under the present set-up is to provide closer administrative contact with closely settled areas, and this doubtless accentuates the desire for local control.

We formed the opinion, however, that in a wider sense, and under the existing conditions, the county was doing all that could reasonably be expected of it to meet the problem in its compact partly urbanized areas, but it was evident that its efforts were insufficient when compared with the facilities which could be provided by an urban authority.

Evidence was submitted at the inquiry by the Auckland Metropolitan Town-planning Organization, and although this was of a general nature and referred more to potential urban development in relation to the borough and adjoining areas than to those particular areas which we considered were suitable for inclusion in the borough, it again brought to our notice the need for planning control, both town and extra-urban, to prevent what appeared to us to have developed in this area, an "over-sprawl" from the Papatoetoe Borough.

The continued subdivision for residential purposes of small farms in county areas adjacent to urban areas is, in our opinion, undesirable, particularly when, as in this case, areas within a borough are not being subdivided. The ultimate cost of providing services and amenities to a widely scattered area creates an undue burden in future years.

The national necessity of retaining rural areas which are suitable for the production of primary produce for large metropolitan populations, particularly where these areas are within easy reach of such urban agglomerations, cannot be stressed too strongly.