

Five petitions, addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General by the Wairarapa Catchment Board in pursuance of section 141 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act, 1941, praying for the abolition of the Ahikouka, Kahutara, South Wairarapa, Te Ore Ore, and Waiohine River Districts as from the 31st March, 1950, were referred to the Commission for consideration. Prior to the submission of these petitions the Wairarapa Catchment Board had reported to the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council concerning the proposed abolition of these five districts, and had recommended that their functions be transferred to the Catchment Board. The Wairarapa Catchment Board had also indicated that it proposed to retain, in an advisory capacity, representatives from each of the river districts. The Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council supported the proposals.

After investigating the proposals, five provisional schemes were promulgated by the Commission on 4th January, 1950. An objection was lodged by a ratepayer in the Te Ore Ore River District concerning the question of the appointment of an advisory committee to the Catchment Board. It was pointed out in this objection that the functions of the Te Ore Ore River Board were exercised by the Masterton County Council, on which there was no direct ratepayer representation within the confines of the Te Ore Ore River District. The objection was investigated, and an undertaking was given by the Te Ore Ore River Board—*i.e.*, the Masterton County Council—that it would agree to a modification to enable direct ratepayer representation from the Te Ore Ore River District on the proposed advisory committee, in lieu of the appointment of the Chairman and two members of the Board in that capacity. The Catchment Board advised the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council that it had reserved the right, in respect of the Te Ore Ore River Board, to meet the position regarding direct ratepayer representation, and the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council stated that it had no reason to doubt that the Board would comply with the wishes of the Council. Reference had previously been made by the Commission to this particular question in a report issued following a public inquiry held in 1948. The views then expressed by the Commission were as follows:—

An important question raised by the River Board representatives was that the River Board members all resided in the district and all had an intimate knowledge of the problems at issue. They maintained with justification that this knowledge was valuable to the River Board and materially assisted in the maintenance work which the River Board undertook. We agree that this local knowledge is of considerable importance, but not of sufficient importance to outweigh the other advantages which will accrue if the Catchment Board is given control of the river. On the other hand, this local knowledge should not be entirely lost, and we therefore recommend that the Catchment Board give early consideration to the use of a local advisory committee from among the residents. In this way the local knowledge will not be lost to the Catchment Board.

The objector was advised as to the manner in which the matter had been dealt with, and five final schemes were promulgated on the 3rd March, 1950.

XI. FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED: INVOLVING A PUBLIC INQUIRY

ASHLEY, EYRE, KOWAI, OXFORD, AND RANGIORA COUNTY COUNCILS :
WAIMAKARIRI-ASHLEY WATER SUPPLY BOARD

Reference has previously been made to these local authorities under the heading of "Local Authorities in the Rural Areas of North Canterbury" (pages 26-40).

XII. FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED: NOT INVOLVING A PUBLIC INQUIRY

KAITUNA RIVER BOARD: TUMU KAITUNA AND TE PUKE DRAINAGE BOARDS

On the 3rd May, 1948, the Kaituna River Board referred to the Commission a copy of a resolution passed at a combined meeting of the Te Puke Drainage Board, the Tumu Kaituna Drainage Board, and the Kaituna River Board requesting the Commission to investigate a proposal to dissolve the three Boards and set up one authority