

269 Did they acknowledge the necessity of glass fronts when the discussion was taking place in Parliament?—They did not express any opinion.

270. No opinion was expressed by the Council as a body?—Not by the Council as a body

271 Do you think the finding of the second Commission was justified?—Again I repeat that we do not express opinion on matters which we hold are distinctly matters for the Government. That is a matter for the company to fight out with the Government. What we should like to see is the question settled.

272. Do you know that a good many reforms have been introduced of late into the Auckland system?—Right along we have been insisting on it.

273. Do you think many of the reforms in this Bill have been anticipated by those reforms?—Again, as we have insisted on these matters we cannot see the necessity for the Bill.

274. Can you tell the Committee what the cost of the Auckland tramway system was?—No, I have not got the balance-sheet with me.

275 Would you say it was somewhere about £700,000?—The figures in my mind are £600,000.

276. In response to overtures from Mr. A. Myers, who was then Mayor, what was the same company offered for the concern?—I cannot tell you exactly

277 Would it be a million and a quarter?—It was over a million.

278. Do you consider that was a fair figure for a tramways system operating in the city?—They asked a certain price on business lines, and we were not prepared to give it. It was a case between buyer and seller

279 Would you be in favour of allowing the Minister of Public Works to have intermediate power, in case you found it necessary, to suspend the operations of some cars apart from the accidents?—If I understand aright, that power is in the Order in Council.

280. We have been instructed that there is only power when an accident has taken place?—Do you mean to say that the Minister should have power to send a particular car off because it is unfit to run?

281 Yes?—We exercise that power daily. The Government having established the kind of brake on the car, we say we have to keep the car up to that.

282. I understood you to say you did not accept any responsibility for the brake?—If the brake were out of order we would not license the car. After the car is constructed according to the Minister's requirements we take up the running.

283. How often are the brakes examined in the Auckland system by your Inspector?—Our Inspector is on it constantly. I do not know how often he may test a particular car.

284. There is no systematic inspection?—I know he has been in the sheds at 6 o'clock in the morning to see the cars before they came out.

285. Do you think the consent of the Public Works Department to the fitting of the brakes on the Auckland system would meet with the approval of the City Council?—We practically do not care which brake the Government order, so long as it is an efficient brake.

286. You believe your Council would be quite satisfied with the air brake?—I believe they would.

287 *Mr Nosworthy* ] Do you believe your present brake is as good as any brake you could have?—That is expert knowledge. I only know of results in my capacity

288. *Mr M Myers* ] You told Mr Poole that there have been reforms effected in the Auckland tramway management, and you stated that they had been demanded by the Auckland City Council?—Generally I did not mean to imply that the company have done nothing

289. Your observation only applies to some of the reforms?—Yes.

290. Are there not also reforms which have been instituted by the company?—Undoubtedly

291 In order to satisfy the convenience and safety of the public?—Undoubtedly

292. Well, to speak generally, have you found that the company is honestly endeavouring to maintain its service in Auckland in order to meet the requirements of the public both as regards its safety and convenience?—When the company entered on the service they did so with the knowledge of what were the average requirements of similar systems in other parts. In Auckland we went a little above that, and caught the company napping. When the company found they had an extraordinary service to deal with, they started, themselves, without pressure, to improve the service.

293. Is it your opinion that the company has been endeavouring honestly to satisfy the safety and convenience of the public?—Undoubtedly I say that, not only from the local management, but from the directors in London, who have sent out some of the most eminent men in the electrical world.

294. Do you remember Mr Little coming out?—Yes, Mr Little and Mr. Tegetmeier have been out.

295. Do you know that under the Deed of Delegation the Council retains full control for the purpose of keeping up the reasonable requirements of the traffic?—Yes.

296. Your streets in Auckland are wide?—Yes—in which the tramways run.

297 They are not wood-paved, are they?—No.

298. And they are not quite so good, except the centre portions, as the streets are in some of the other cities?—Taking the city and suburbs, the streets are not so good as those in Wellington.

299. For instance, take Symonds Street with the exception of about 19 ft. which is maintained by the Tramway Company, the other parts of the street are not particularly good, are they?—Oh, yes! Symonds Street is fairly good, but it is a macadamized road.

300. Do you find that, be the reason what it may, a lot of the traffic—and particularly the traffic that comes in from the country—will insist upon taking the centre of the street?—A lot of the trouble we experience is that the traffic will insist upon breaking up the channels; but it is true that a great deal of the traffic prefers the centre of the street.