

be jealously guarded against, and the authorities should err on the side of caution in considering any proposal which even remotely was likely to restrict water facilities. The 86 ft. clearance provided in the design of the proposed bridge was totally insufficient when the size of present-day vessels was considered. On account of the present tendency to increase the size of vessels the horizontal clearance should be at least 400 ft.

Mr. V. R. Meredith, counsel for the Waitemata Bridge Inquiry Protection Association, submitted statutory declarations covering a report on the Bridge Inquiry, Second Narrows, Vancouver ; a declaration by C. H. Webster *re* Vancouver population and statistics ; a declaration by S. J. Remnant *re* number of motor-cars in Vancouver ; a declaration by E. Brydone-Jack *re* tariff and tolls, Second Narrows Bridge ; a declaration by Percy Ward giving particulars of Second Narrows Bridge—Auditor's Report and Balance-sheet, Second Narrows Bridge, to 31st December, 1927 ; Auditor's Report and Balance-sheet, Second Narrows Bridge, to 31st December, 1928 ; Report by Manager and Analysis of Operations of Second Narrows Bridge to 31st December, 1927 ; Report by Manager and Analysis of Operations of Second Narrows Bridge to 31st December, 1928. The statements put in showed that the Second Narrows Bridge at Vancouver was built for approximately 1,916,000 dollars, of which 1,189,136 dollars was found by various Governments—Dominion, State, and local. The balance-sheets showed losses for the years ending December, 1926, and December, 1927, and an apparent profit of 13,506 dollars for 1928. The interest paid amounted to £48,790, which was under 2·5 per cent. on the cost of the bridge. The daily average of persons using the Vancouver Bridge for the year ending December, 1928, was 6,419, and vehicles 2,709. The proportion of trucks to motor-cars was 1 to 6·4. It has been suggested that any deductions drawn from the construction and operation of the Vancouver Bridge might be taken as a fairly safe guide as to what would happen in Auckland.

Mr. A. Harris, M.P. for Waitemata, advocated the raising of a special loan by the Government for the construction of the bridge : the Main Highways Board to pay interest upon the same ratio as was its custom for bridges exceeding £10,000 in cost ; the users of the bridge to find the balance of the interest, plus two-fifths of the cost of maintenance, and sinking fund at 1 per cent. to liquidate the cost of the bridge in 36½ years, by way of tolls. He would advocate the expenditure of a sum up to £1,500,000 on the bridge, if the funds were obtained as suggested. He did not think that the four North Shore boroughs should provide the whole cost of the bridge, but that Auckland should contribute materially, also the back country.

The Hon. J. B. Donald, Postmaster-General (formerly head of Messrs. A. B. Donald and Co., Auckland, and one of the earliest members of the Auckland Harbour Bridge Association), strongly advocated the construction of a bridge, contending that within five years of its completion the population of the North Shore would be doubled. Fruit and produce, if grown in that area, could be brought in approximately a month earlier than was possible on the southern side of the harbour. An increase of population on the North Shore would tend to an increase in business in the city. The bridge would be a payable proposition. Though it had been suggested that it would cost £800,000, in his opinion if it cost £1,500,000 it would be well worth while. On good authority he knew that there was one firm which would build the bridge without any security, expecting the bridge to return it 6 per cent. over a period of, say, twenty years, and even then the tolls would not be as high as those on American toll bridges. As a result of the construction of the bridge all the land from Waiwera to Takapuna might increase tenfold in value. Those who would benefit should contribute towards the cost of construction and maintenance. Auckland would benefit indirectly as well as directly, but not so much as the North Shore ; still, Auckland should be prepared to accept its share of the liability. The rate which the city would be prepared to pay would not be very heavy, but for the benefit of the whole community the city should pay some proportion if there were a loss on the bridge. Tens of thousands of acres behind Takapuna would be brought into cultivation, which at the present time were lying idle. That land could be used for cropping, but it was not profitable to use it without fertilizers.