

16. Have you any suggestions to make generally on the matters dealt with in the circular in which this is enclosed?

*Mongonui*—

Whangaroa North—That more power be given to Road Boards and less to the Councils, as this district is better able to carry out their own work than the County Council, if the Road Board here had their share of the public money, instead of allowing the Council to spend it for them. The district would be in a better position, as the Council neither make roads with the money nor maintain the through roads, but spend the money in new district roads, where there is no population.

Oruaiti—No answer.

Mongonui—This Board prefer Road Boards, as at present.

*Bay of Islands*—Would suggest that, in all questions where the financial interests of the county are involved, the county should have a voice in the matter.

*Whangarei*—

Kaurihohori—We would suggest that counties be abolished where Road Boards are elected, and the subsidies granted by Parliament be handed over to Road Boards; and more power given to Road Boards, enabling them to deal with local matters more thoroughly.

Mangapai—I think Road Boards should have power given them to alter roads on unfenced land without compensation, particularly where one road was given for another for the benefit of the district.

Maungakaramea—Road Boards should be elected in April. There are too many advertisements required in the Highway and Rating Acts. Notices posted in public places in the district would answer every useful purpose.

Ruatangata—In districts where Road Boards have been in existence, or where ratepayers, by petition, demand it, County Councils should be abolished. Road Boards to have the same powers as County Councils. It is suggested that authorized surveyors should be appointed for certain large districts—say, two for North of Auckland—whom the several District Boards might consult in all cases where the Public Works Act demands it, &c., without having to pay for their services out of the District Board's funds, but surveyors to be paid by Government for their work.

Waipu North—The Government should take over main lines, as that would prevent local differences from being brought to bear on what should be for the good of the country at large.

Whangarei—We would suggest that counties be abolished where Road Boards are elected, and the subsidies granted by Parliament be handed over to Road Boards, as under the Provincial Acts; and more power be given to Road Boards, enabling them to deal with local matters more thoroughly.

*Hobson*—Would suggest that the County of Hobson be immediately divided; that the division be 100,000 acres to each section. In consequence of the scattered and broken nature of the county and its several settlements this division would produce good results, and give greater satisfaction to ratepayers. That the question of division be left to the ratepayers, and decided by a poll.

*Rodney*—

Albertland North—No answer.

Komokoriki—No answer.

Matakana East—No answer.

*Waitemata*—

Devonport—No answer.

Devonport (W. H. Fenton)—None. I thoroughly indorse the sentiments contained therein.

Pukeatua—No answer.

Waitakerei East—Abolish County Councils and Assessment Courts, also taxing or rating improvements. It is a great barrier to the progress of the colony. Road Boards to hear appeals, as formerly.

Eden—No answer.

*Manukau*—

Awhitu—No.

Pokeno—Annual meeting of Road Boards to be held in April, instead of July.

Waipipi (A. Muir, jun.)—(1st.) Counties or Road Boards should not be allowed to expend more than their rates or borrow: for instance, a road Board may be composed of men who hold only a small leasehold; these men would go in for borrowing to any extent, and leave the district in a worse state than when they took office. (2nd.) No man should be qualified to stand as a member unless his rates amounted to over £5, or county members without his rates exceed £20. (3rd.) The valuation would always be better done by Road Boards than by Government. (4th.) I would also suggest that the Natives be allowed to deal themselves with their land in this district. (5th.) The Government lands in this district are too small to be dealt with.

*Waikato*—

Cambridge—We think that the practice of subsidizing local bodies from loans should be discontinued, and provision of a permanent nature be made for local requirements from the Land Fund, or property-tax, or both. The financial year throughout the colony should be made to terminate on 31st March. A Local Government Act should be passed, embodying all the Acts in existence made for local governing purposes, or at least a general Highways Act, with the boundaries of districts defined in the schedule, so as to obviate the necessity of producing in Court Provincial Acts and *Gazettes*, which are obsolete, and cannot be procured during the past ten years. The present mode of debiting counties with the cost of hospitals and charitable aid is not understood, is considered unjust to outside districts, and objectionable. It is presumed that the cost of treating a patient in the Auckland Hospital or Asylum, per annum or per day, has been ascertained; that being the case, each county and borough might be charged with the cost of persons admitted on the order of their Chairman, and for no more, leaving the local bodies the power to recover from those able to pay. In short, local bodies, as far as is practicable, should be given permission and power to manage their own affairs as to them seems best, the General Government retaining the power to interfere in case of negligence or mismanagement, but generally to confine themselves to matters of colonial and Imperial concern.

*Waipa*—That the election of Road Trus-

tees take place in April, in place of July. Approve of Public Trustee recovering rates from absentees. That the County Council in all districts where there are Road Boards have no executive power, merely be a legislative body: the different county works to be carried out by Road Boards in which works are situated, and be paid by Council. That Councils should, as far as possible, supersede the Colonial Secretary in Road Board business.

Mangapiko—Elections of Trustees should be held in April. There should be a column in the rate-book for arrears. Public Trustee should recover the rates on lands of unknown owners.

Ngaruawahia Town—Where Road Boards are in existence there is no necessity for the expense of County Councils. The expenditure of the Road Boards is under the immediate supervision of the Trustees, and they, being interested in having good roads, are more likely to get value for money expended; whereas in the case of counties the extent of district supervised by five Trustees would have to be looked after by one Councillor, and, owing to the time it would take, would likely be neglected. Sooner or later the necessity of paying Councillors would have to be recognized, but this would not be the case with Road Boards, the place of meeting being usually within a few miles of home. Were Councillors paid it would run away with a large portion of the rates in a poor district, and were they not paid the administration of local affairs would soon fall into the hands of the large property-holders, to the detriment of the poor man. Ratepayers should have an opportunity at certain periods, say every three years, commencing immediately after the passing of an Act, for the purpose of deciding whether they would dispense with County Councils or not; a clear majority being sufficient, and ratepayers having only one vote for this purpose. Main roads should be taken over by Government, when a good engineer could be employed to look after them, where several bad ones are employed at present. Road Boards to have the option of consulting such engineer at a fixed scale of charges.

Pukekura—That counties should in all districts where there are Road Boards be rather a legislative and controlling than an executive power, and should have power, in case of Road Boards neglecting their roads or other works, to call on them to show cause why such default is made, and, if required, proceed against them by indictment; that all Road Board accounts be returned to the County Council, and not to the Colonial Secretary, and that in all questions of Road Board management, as far as possible, the county should take the place of the Colonial Secretary; that, in addition to all license-fees raised in the county the County Council should be empowered to make requisition on the Road Boards within the county of a limited amount in the pound for strictly county purposes, but shall carry out no works except through the Road Board in whose district such county work may be;