

(2) *Counties*

On 25th, 26th, and 27th July, 1945, the Conference of the Counties Association was held in Wellington. The Conference was officially opened by the Minister of Internal Affairs (Hon. W. E. Parry), and a representative of the Department attended the proceedings. Remits regarding activities of the Department were subsequently submitted and replies thereto were forwarded to the Association.

The boundaries of several counties were altered by the exchange of areas of land during the year, these being Waikohu and Opotiki, Whangarei and Bay of Islands, Clutha and Southland, and Waikohu and Uawa. The Waitemata and Ohinemuri County Councils took advantage of the new provision contained in section 16 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1945, and obtained authorities for the expenditure of moneys on the preparation of informative booklets. The Rangitikei County Council obtained authority to levy rates on a uniform scale in a drainage area of the county. A loan was authorized under section 7 of the Local Bodies' Finance Act, 1921-22, for the Geraldine County Council. The Bruce County Council passed a special order under the authority of the Counties Amendment Act, 1931, abolishing the system of separate riding finance. This made a total of eighty County Councils to avail themselves of that legislation.

Mr. Dawson E. Crisp was reappointed as County Commissioner for the Matakaoa County. In the month of January, Mr. A. G. Harper, Assistant Under-Secretary, visited the county and met the Councillors and many of the residents. Many matters of interest to the settlers were discussed. It was evident from the discussions that the Council and settlers desired to retain Commissioner control for a further term. Matters in this county are progressing satisfactorily under present arrangements, but it is evident the position will have to be watched carefully for some time to come.

(3) *Town Districts*

The Road District of Taupo, which was originally constituted by special Act, has developed considerably in recent years, and approaches were made to the Department to have the status altered. At the request of the Road Board an officer visited Taupo to discuss the proposal with the Board and attend a public meeting called for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the residents. The latter meeting passed a unanimous resolution in favour of changing to town-district status, and a provision was subsequently inserted in the Local Legislation Act, 1945, authorizing the issue of a Proclamation altering the status of the district. The Proclamation was duly issued on 13th March, 1946, and Taupo became an independent town district as on and from 1st April, 1946. The Town District of Takaka was declared an independent town district.

A number of advances were made for the constitution of new town districts. In view of Government policy in regard to the creation of new local authorities and the recommendation of the parliamentary Committee on local government that a permanent Commission on local government be constituted, the proposals were not favourably considered.

(4) *Drainage Districts*

The Drainage District of Reporoa was reconstituted, and authorities were granted for the Board to rate on a uniform scale pending the classification of the district, and to incur an overdraft in terms of section 3 (5) of the Local Bodies' Finance Act, 1921-22. The boundaries of the Christchurch Drainage District were altered on two occasions by the inclusion of areas. The boundaries of the Hauraki Plains West Drainage District were also amended by the inclusion of an area.

(5) *River Districts*

The Motueka, Palmerston North, Dipton, Opio, Inter-Wanganui, and North Rakaia River Districts were abolished as the result of petitions presented in terms of sections 141-142 of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act, 1941. The river-control work in those areas will now be undertaken by Catchment Boards set up under this Act.