

Many chassis frames and parts are badly corroded with rust and in some cases they are probably unsafe. Furthermore many parts are no doubt faulty and all such faults may not be detected even when the parts are examined, but may develop to the point of failure after a short period of use.

Under these circumstances we strongly advise that the Board should sell the vehicles in one lot and not individually and thus place the risk of faulty parts on the bulk purchaser. We feel that in the event of sale by the Government of individual trucks, there would undoubtedly arise, in quite a number of cases, the question as to whether the Government, being the seller to an individual, should assume moral responsibility for repairs and replacement of faulty parts even though the vehicles are sold "as is" and "where is." This aspect is actually borne out by our past experience.

If the selling of individual trucks should be decided upon then it is essential that the vehicles be separated and spaced out so that they can be viewed by prospective buyers and also in order that delivery of trucks to buyers can be given promptly and without damage to other trucks. As previously stated this spacing of trucks involves the use of a large area of ground for storage space, which is probably not available at Seaview, and also the provision of guards for the vehicles day and night.

If vehicles are to be sold individually 'in situ' this will mean that large numbers of prospective buyers will be climbing over and upon all of the trucks to pick out the best vehicles and much damage will therefore be done on all vehicles, and in the case of the Jeeps we feel quite certain Mr. Gillies will not allow buyers to clamber over and damage his G.M.C. trucks, in order that they may view the Jeeps.

Also in the case of individual truck sales buyers would want to take delivery of their vehicles practically simultaneously and with closely packed and double loaded vehicles the task of owners wanting to get vehicles from the middle or anywhere in a block of vehicles, all at the same time and with no room to work in, would be most difficult. In fact conditions would be chaotic and much damage to vehicles would result.

(Sgd) WILLIAM COOK, P.W. Dept.
26/4/46

(Sgd) H. BENGE, N.Z. Railways.
26/4/46.

(Sgd) W. P. WARNER, W.A.R.B.
26/4/46.

The General Manager said, "I arranged for the three valuers to see me. I conveyed to them the Prime Minister's instructions." (This is not quite correct—Warner was not present.) "I gave them the picture of what had happened. It was not necessarily known to them of the general arrangement whereby we had taken these vehicles over, and I went further and I did tell them that I have previously recommended to the Board that the valuation was impossible. I said, 'You have a tough job, go to it.'"

A critic might suggest that this was inviting the valuers to report in a certain direction. It must be said, however, in fairness to the General Manager, that he volunteered this statement, to which none of the others made reference, so I am disposed to regard it rather as the ill-advised remark of an opinionated individual quite satisfied with his own view. Cook and Benge proceeded to the park to make the valuation, and spent one and a half days in examination. It was asked could it have taken them one and a half days to decide that a valuation was impossible for the reasons given in their report.

The next day Cook prepared the report, and then Warner, who had inspected the vehicles at an earlier date, arrived and discussed the report with them for several hours, when it was adopted with minor alterations, Warner stating that method 3, clause (c), was inserted at his instigation.

Now the valuers were only asked to value, but took upon themselves to "strongly advise" the Board at some length on the question of bulk sale, which was purely gratuitous on their part.

The General Manager stated that was not part of their functions. They saw fit to write it into their report.

It was asked why this excess of zeal on their part unless to vindicate the General Manager?

And it is to be noted that this was all written into the report before the other two met Warner.

In assessing expert opinion it is well, where possible, to apply the acid test of actual fact, so I must again refer in detail to the valuation made by Gillies of the Dodges. He said, "We examined every Dodge. We got around and examined the tires, tried the