

REPORT

I. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONNEL

THE necessity to redraw the boundaries of many local authorities in the Dominion has been recognized for several decades, and on a number of occasions Parliament has been asked to provide machinery to achieve this object. Until 1944, however, no exhaustive survey of local government in the Dominion had been attempted. In that year the House of Representatives appointed a Select Committee charged with the responsibility of surveying existing conditions and making recommendations to Parliament as to any necessary changes.

The report of this Committee was presented to the House in October, 1945. It covered a wide variety of topics, but in terms of the necessity for some redrawing of administrative boundaries of local authorities the report contained an unqualified recommendation that reform was urgently required. It then proceeded to consider the machinery by which such reform could be implemented, and stated that the detailed investigations which were necessary were so extensive as to require a body to devote its full time thereto for a considerable period. It accordingly recommended the setting-up of a Local Government Commission, a permanent institution, charged with the responsibility of investigating local-government boundaries in the Dominion and of recommending such changes as may be considered necessary.

In so far as this latter proposal is concerned, Parliament in 1946 approved of the Local Government Commission Act, which gave legislative sanction to the setting-up of the Local Government Commission. The Act provided that the Commission was to consist of a Chairman, who was required to have the qualifications necessary for appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court, and who "as to tenure of office, salary, emoluments, and privileges would have the same rights and be subject to the same provisions as a Judge of the Supreme Court"; the second member was to be appointed by the Governor-General in Council, and was required to have a "special knowledge of local government"; two further members were to be appointed "from a panel of persons nominated by the nominating Associations each of which Associations may from time to time nominate one person for that panel. One of the persons appointed shall be a person having special knowledge of urban local government and the other shall be a person having special knowledge of rural local government."

By Proclamation of the Governor-General dated 28th January, 1947, the following Associations were declared to be nominating Associations for the purposes of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946:—

The Municipal Association of New Zealand (Incorporated).

The New Zealand Counties' Association.

The Electric-power Boards' and Supply Authorities' Association of New Zealand.

The Hospital Boards' Association of New Zealand.

The Harbour Boards' Association of New Zealand.

On the 30th January, 1947, the various nominating Associations were requested to exercise their rights under the section above referred to of nominating one member each for a seat on the Commission. Subsequently a communication was received signed by the Secretary of each of the above nominating Associations in which it was indicated that Mr. J. W. Andrews was nominated by the Municipal Association of New Zealand, the Harbour Boards' Association of New Zealand, and the Hospital Boards' Association of New Zealand. Mr. Andrews' nomination also had the support of the New Zealand