

To His Excellency the Governor-General of the Dominion of New Zealand.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

1. We, the Commissioners appointed by Your Excellency to inquire into and report upon the treatment and disposal of sewage in the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage District, have the honour to submit our report.

2. The Commission entrusted to us directed that we should inquire into and report upon the following matters:—

- (1) What sewerage, sewage treatment, and sludge-disposal scheme is most suitable to be adopted for the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage Board.
- (2) Whether the utilization in the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage District of sewage by a composting or any other process is desirable in the public interest.
- (3) What, if any, amendment of the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage Act, 1944, or of any other legislation, is necessary or expedient in order to direct or authorize the employment of the scheme recommended by you for adoption by the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage Board.
- (4) Whether the methods of treatment and disposal of sewage at present employed for the Boroughs of Northcote, Birkenhead, Devonport, and Takapuna are the most suitable, and if not, what alternative methods should be adopted.
- (5) What, if any, legislation is necessary or expedient in order to direct or authorize the employment of any alternative method of treatment and disposal of sewage recommended by you to be employed for the Boroughs of Northcote, Birkenhead, Devonport, and Takapuna.
- (6) And, generally, upon any other matters arising out of the premises which may come to your notice in the course of your inquiries and which you may consider should be investigated in connection therewith, and upon any matters affecting the premises which you consider should be brought to the attention of the Government.

3. We were required by the Commission to report our findings and opinions on the aforesaid matters, together with such recommendations as we should think fit to make in respect thereof, not later than the 7th April, 1949, but by Warrants issued under the hand of Your Excellency and the Seal of the Dominion on the 7th April, 1949, the 6th May, 1949, and the 22nd June, 1949, the time was extended to the 30th June, 1949.

4. We held our first public sittings on the 7th March, 1949, and excepting for brief adjournments made from time to time at the request of persons or public bodies concerned in the matters under inquiry public sittings were held continuously until the 7th April, 1949. All such public sittings were held at Auckland.

5. Shortly after we commenced our inquiry Mr. V. R. Meredith, Crown Solicitor at Auckland, was appointed by the Government to assist the Commission generally, and we had the benefit of his assistance until the conclusion of the public sittings. We also had the assistance throughout the inquiry of counsel representing the interests principally concerned—namely, the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage Board (Mr. A. K. North, K.C., and Mr. H. J. Butler), the Auckland and Suburban Drainage League (Mr. E. J. V. Dyson, Mr. T. C. Webster, and Mr. G. T. Donne), and the Auckland Harbour Board (Mr. H. E. Barrowclough and Mr. J. D. Lethbridge)—and also of counsel representing local authorities and other public bodies, companies, and persons who were concerned with various aspects of the inquiry. In addition, representatives of several local authorities, the Federated Farmers (Auckland Branch), and other interests took part in the proceedings. We are indebted to counsel and the other representatives for their assistance.

6. During the course of our inquiry, 58 witnesses appeared and personally gave evidence before us. Counsel representing the various interests and also any persons who were present and had an interest in the inquiry were given the opportunity of putting questions to these witnesses. The oral evidence as recorded comprises 1,179 typed foolscap pages. In addition, written statements were received from various persons