

Preliminary action was taken in connection with the receipt of a number of petitions praying for the alteration of boundaries of districts. These petitions were in due course forwarded to the Local Government Commission for consideration, and following the issue by the Commission of final schemes under the provisions of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, the boundaries of the City of Hamilton and the Boroughs of Balclutha and Huntly were altered by the inclusion of areas of land previously under county control. The boundaries of the City of Dunedin and Borough of Port Chalmers were also altered by the exclusion of certain areas. The boundaries of the City of Christchurch and the Boroughs of Balclutha, Rotorua, and Waimate were redefined consequent on previous alterations of boundaries.

Preliminary action was taken with reference to a proposal to constitute the Town District of Otorohanga a borough. This proposal was referred to the Local Government Commission for investigation. As the Commission's finding was unfavourable, the proposal was not proceeded with.

The Foxton Borough Council was authorized to raise a loan under section 7 of the Local Bodies' Finance Act, 1921-22, for the purpose of meeting extraordinary expenditure. The Hamilton and Nelson City Councils were authorized to purchase certain areas of land on the instalment system. The Auckland, Invercargill, and Lower Hutt City Councils were authorized to publish booklets containing information and publicity regarding their respective districts. It is noteworthy that local authorities are paying more attention to public-relations work, and this promises to be a phase of local government which will develop. Members were appointed to Assessment Courts under the Urban Farm Land Rating Act, 1932, for the Boroughs of Carterton, Masterton, Mount Roskill, Patea, Rangiora, Stratford, Taihape, Takapuna, Upper Hutt, and Whangarei. Judges were appointed to the Assessment Courts for the City of Lower Hutt and the Boroughs of Rangiora and Upper Hutt. Members were appointed to the Assessment Court under the Rating Act, 1925, for the City of Lower Hutt, and Judges were appointed to the Assessment Courts for the City of Lower Hutt and the Auckland Districts.

By-laws of the Christchurch and Invercargill City Councils and the Te Awamutu Borough Council were confirmed under the By-laws Act, 1910. A Board of Appeal to consider an appeal against the refusal of the Wanganui City Council to approve a subdivisional plan for an area in the City of Wanganui was set up in terms of section 332 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1933.

As a result of a substantial increase in the general rates levied by the Upper Hutt Borough Council, certain ratepayers of the borough made representations to the Government and subsequently petitioned Parliament with a view to having legislation enacted to bring rating by local authorities within the stabilization policy of the Government. The petition was referred to the Department by the Local Bills Committee of the House of Representatives for examination and report, and the Department was also represented at meetings of the Local Bills Committee, while the petition was under consideration. The Committee, after hearing extensive evidence, made no recommendation.

As a result of representations made by the Municipal Association of New Zealand, the Government agreed to the New Zealand Standards Institute undertaking the work of preparing a Standard Code of General By-laws for adoption by Borough Councils. This Department is represented on the various Committees of the Standards Institute which have been set up to prepare such model by-laws.

(2) *Counties*

The twenty-third Annual Conference of the New Zealand Counties Association was held in Rotorua on the 16th and 17th June, 1948. The Conference was officially opened by the Hon. W. E. Parry, Minister of Internal Affairs, who addressed the delegates on local-government matters. In conjunction with the Conference, the annual Conference