

already reticulated—for instance, Mount Pleasant, Cashmere, and the Heathcote Valley in the Heathcote County, and portion of the Riccarton Borough. In the latter case technical witnesses submitted evidence at some length in regard to this matter. Riccarton Borough has had handed over to it a State housing water-supply system which covers a major housing area, and it was extending mains from this source with a limited coverage. Evidence was submitted to indicate that it intended developing an over-all water-supply system by independent pumping units in various parts of the borough to feed into the mains to provide adequate pressure. Development along these lines, it was indicated, would be carried out over a number of years out of revenue. At the present time a small portion of Riccarton Borough, at its southern extremity, is supplied by the city. The City Council maintained that, should the Commission decide to incorporate in the city areas to the west of Christchurch in the Waimairi County—e.g., Fendalton—it would be necessary to take a large main through the centre of the Borough of Riccarton from the city reservoir on the Cashmere Hills. An adequate supply could then be provided throughout the Riccarton Borough from this source.

One of the major questions at issue was the lack of control of underground supplies, and it was indicated that at present no such control can be exercised in any of the areas considered by the Commission. The promiscuous sinking of wells by private householders had caused some difficulty. The necessity for an adequate supply of high-pressure water for fire-fighting purposes was clearly indicated, and it was apparent to us that, without some satisfactory system to meet the over-all requirements of the metropolitan area, such protection could not be satisfactorily given.

An indication was also given that insurance premiums would, other things being equal, be reduced if areas were supplied with high-pressure water and brought within the Christchurch Fire District, which covers the same area as the City of Christchurch. The City Council intends establishing further reservoirs on the Port Hills, and is in fact at the present time constructing a major reservoir to meet present and potential requirements. An area known as New Brighton, which has been in the city since 1941, still remains to be reticulated, but the city maintains that this would have been done much earlier but for labour and supply difficulties during the war years. The position was at present being rectified, and work was proceeding for the reticulation of this area.

### *Constitutional Structure*

In considering metropolitan local government in the Christchurch area the constitutional structure of the existing authorities, and the resultant efficiency and economy of the area as a whole, was a factor of major consequence. It was apparent that both the *ad hoc* authorities, the Drainage and Tramway Boards, were constituted largely because there were in existence in 1876 and 1902 respectively a number of territorial local authorities, both urban and rural, over which the districts of these two authorities extended.

The need for such *ad hoc* authorities being superimposed over the area, with separate staffs and equipment, had been questioned during recent years, and it was apparent from the numbers of votes recorded in elections held that there has not been much public interest shown in them. In the case of the Drainage Board, only approximately 10 per cent. of the valid votes of electors on the roll were cast in 1944, and some 20 per cent. in 1948. The Tramway Board election figures were somewhat similar.

### *Rural Local Government*

The statutory powers of County Councils differ from those of municipalities, and in general deal with such matters as pertain to rural districts. When the Counties Act was first placed on the statute-book it was not considered that counties would govern large urban areas, although in recent years some consideration has been given to extending