

of a total of 1,091 acres was referred to the Local Government Commission on the 20th June, 1947. A preliminary investigation was undertaken by the Commission's investigating staff, and the Commission decided to hold a public inquiry at Howick on the 14th June, 1948.

It was evident that, consequent upon a poll which resulted in the alteration of the system of rating from the capital to the unimproved value as from the 1st of April, 1947, there was a much heavier burden placed on certain farm lands to the south and west of the town district. In order to alleviate the position, the Town Board had prepared an Urban Farm Lands Rating Roll, no doubt with a view to relieving what the petitioners believed to be an unjust and unfair rating burden.

At the commencement of the inquiry counsel for a number of the petitioners stated that there had been a conference between the petitioners and counsel for the Howick Town Board, as the result of which an arrangement had been made which would most likely satisfactorily determine the questions at issue. The Commission accordingly adjourned the inquiry *sine die* to enable the arrangement to be carried out.

(3) TAURANGA ELECTRIC-POWER DISTRICT: TE PUKE BOROUGH

The Tauranga Electric-power Board referred for the approval of the Commission the question of the amalgamation of the Te Puke Borough Council's electrical undertaking with the Board. As section 13 (3) of the Local Government Commission Act, 1946, prevents the Commission from transferring the whole or any part of any trading undertaking or of any functions in relation thereto from any local governing authority (County Council, Borough Council, or Town Board), except upon the union, merger, or abolition of the district of the local governing authority, the matter was outside the jurisdiction of the Commission, and accordingly no action was taken.

(4) TE KUITI FIRE DISTRICT

As the result of an application made on the 24th August, 1948, by the Te Kuiti Borough Council for the constitution of a fire district for the borough, a preliminary investigation was carried out.

It was ascertained that the existing fire-protection organization, a volunteer brigade, although of average standard of efficiency, was far from satisfactory on account of the fact that the local authority had to meet the whole of the expenditure from rates. It was accordingly decided by the Commission that a fire district should be constituted, and a provisional scheme was issued for this purpose on the 16th February, 1949.

(5) TUMU-KAITUNA AND TE PUKE DRAINAGE DISTRICTS AND KAITUNA RIVER DISTRICT

The River District of Kaituna and the Drainage Districts of Tumu-Kaituna and Te Puke requested the Commission to investigate a proposal to dissolve the three Boards, and to constitute one authority to administer the land-drainage and river-control works within the area affected by the lower reaches of the Kaituna River, together with such further areas as the Commission should decide to be included, for the purpose of obtaining the maximum benefit and control in the lower reaches of the river and the land draining into it. The matter will be proceeded with on receipt by the Commission of a detailed report from the Engineer to the Boards.

(6) HERALD OR PINE AND RANGITOTO ISLANDS

The question of incorporating these two islands, which are situated in the Waitemata Harbour, within the territory of an existing local authority was referred to the Commission. As neither of the islands was subject to rating for hospital purposes, and as it was evident