

*The Chairman.*—The Commissioners would first like to hear expert evidence as to the efficiency of the brakes in actual service on the Wellington tramways and elsewhere. There have been a large number of tests of the magnetic brake in different portions of the world, and its stopping-power is well known; but what the Commission desires to know is what results have been attained by the use of this brake—as to its durability, efficiency, and reliability.

*Mr. O'Shea.*—I propose to call Mr. Cable on this point. Mr. Stuart Richardson, being a member of the last Commission which sat in Auckland, would prefer that the Commission see their way to examine Mr. Cable instead of himself. Mr. Cable, who is Assistant Electrical Engineer to the Wellington tramways, is familiar with the working of the magnetic brake in England. If the Commission desire to call Mr. Richardson, I would ask the Commissioners that, in view of the previous Commission, they strictly limit Mr. Richardson's evidence to his general opinion on the magnetic brake as working in Wellington.

*The Chairman.*—The Commission has decided that it will be necessary to call Mr. Richardson. The Commissioners do not consider the fact that he was a member of the last Commission affects the matter, as he is Engineer of the Wellington tramways, and the engineer of the Auckland Tramways Company has been called; and it is proposed to examine engineers of the other tramway systems of the Dominion. No reference to the finding of the last Commission will be permitted.

*Mr. O'Shea.*—I am not quite clear as to the attitude which the Wellington Tramways Employees' Union intend to take here, and I thought therefore it might be better if their evidence was given first, as I should like to know what evidence we shall require to call.

*Mr. Fitzgibbon.*—On behalf of the union I may say that we intend to take up a passive attitude. If there is any evidence called by the Corporation with which we are not in agreement, then we request the right to call rebutting evidence.

*The Chairman.*—If the union adopts a passive attitude it seems to be a very correct one. I do not think the union is much concerned in the collection of information as to the working of the magnetic brake by the Commissioners, but the union may be able to assist us. I understand, however, that the men here are not bringing forward any particular complaints against this brake.

*Mr. O'Shea.*—I propose to address the Commission generally on the attitude the Council takes up, and then to call Mr. Cable and other officers, with leave to call such further evidence in rebuttal of any statements made by the union as may be thought necessary. I may say that, as far as I can see, any conflict between us and the union is improbable if side issues are not brought in.

*Mr. Myers.*—I should like to ascertain what the position of the Auckland Tramway Company is so far as the Wellington evidence is concerned. The evidence called in Auckland, so far as the company is concerned, was confined to the question of what is the best brake, having regard to the conditions existing there, and the Commission had the opportunity after I left Auckland of making very exhaustive tests. The question I wish to put, and which the Commission may see its way to answer, is this: Is the evidence which the Commission desires to call with regard to the Wellington and Dunedin systems limited to those cities, or to the last clause of the scope of the inquiry, or does it have any immediate bearing upon the question as it exists in Auckland? The answer to this question may affect the attitude which may be taken up on behalf of the company here. We do not make any attack upon a particular brake or upon a particular system of tramways, but we desire to confine ourselves to the main question—namely, that of the best brake for the Auckland system.

*The Chairman.*—The previous Commission reported in favour of the use of the magnetic brake in Auckland. This Commission, when there, heard a considerable amount of evidence, and in the evidence which was led by yourself on behalf of the company statements were made to the effect that the magnetic brake was not a suitable one, having regard to Auckland conditions. Statements were made by witnesses that the magnetic brake had very serious faults when used on steep gradients and at high and low velocities. The Commission listened to the evidence which was led with regard to the superiority of the air brake and of the hand-brake, and also to the evidence which was brought forward against the adoption of the magnetic brake. The latter brake has been in use in both this city and Dunedin for some time, and for their full information the Commissioners are desirous of knowing what have been the practical results of its working, on ascertaining which we shall have before us evidence on which to base the Commission's report. We are asked to recommend legislation accordingly. Legislation will probably be brought down, and therefore Wellington and Dunedin must be affected by that legislation.

*Mr. Myers.*—I submit it is sufficient for us to show that the air and track brakes are not less efficient than the magnetic brake, and I would ask if the Commission is to give some indication as to whether it is really necessary—I do not mean at this stage—for the Auckland company to call further evidence. We called a considerable amount of evidence before, and I really think there would be no impropriety in the Commission acceding to my request at a later stage.

*The Chairman.*—All the Commissioners are endeavouring to do is to arrive at a sound basis on which to formulate their report, and the question of calling evidence must be left entirely in your hands. We are quite prepared, however, to hear any evidence which you may bring forward; but to give an intimation as to whether sufficient evidence is called would be practically to indicate the lines upon which the Commission's report is going to be framed. The Commission will, however, consider the point.

*Mr. O'Shea.*—In making my suggestion that the Commissioners might personally examine the working of the brakes under conditions which they could see for themselves, I was impelled by some of the statements in regard to the magnetic brake, that it cannot be worked on steep