

58. Would you express your own opinion as to whether this clause in the Bill is a reasonable one—that there shall be an Appeal Board, to consist of one representative to be elected from each party, and the third person to be appointed by these two—that is, to hear disputes?—Yes.

59. Do you think that would be an unreasonable thing—I am asking you now as a private citizen?—It depends on the Board. With the Railway Board of Appeal I do not think it has been satisfactory. The teachers have a Board of Appeal which has worked fairly satisfactorily.

60. Do you consider this Board would act fairly to the men?—I have not thought the matter out sufficiently to give you a decided answer.

61. Do you remember the two strikes we had in Auckland?—Yes.

62. Are you aware that if a Board of Appeal had been in existence, in all probability those strikes would not have happened?—I am not prepared to say.

63. Do you not think that when the man was dismissed without sufficient cause, if a Board had heard the evidence it would have righted the case?—Personally I have no expression of opinion from the Council which I am representing, and I cannot give a private opinion. If I could I probably should be in favour of the Board.

64. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] How long were you on the Auckland Tramway Board?—Eighteen months on the committee. The committee was formed in 1907 to deal exclusively with tramway, electric, and water matters. In 1909 I was appointed Chairman of that committee, and have been on the committee since.

65. How long have you been a member of the Auckland City Council?—Over four years.

66. And you stated that you have a Traffic Inspector with an assistant?—Yes.

67. Those gentlemen have various other duties besides attending to the traffic?—Their duties are small, such as issuing licenses to vehicles and so on.

68. Tram-inspection is only part of their duties?—It is the principal part.

69. I think you stated they look after the interests of the Corporation and the people of Auckland satisfactorily?—Yes.

70. Do you know how many men were killed by the Auckland trams during the last eight years?—Speaking from memory, no.

71. How many cars have you got in Auckland?—Ninety-two in commission, and eight are going into commission directly.

72. You have about one-third of the cars which are running in the Dominion?—I do not know. If you said so I would accept it.

73. If your City Council and Inspectors had looked after the interests of the public of Auckland satisfactorily, do you think your one-third of the cars in the Dominion would kill more people than all the other cars combined?—Of course the Kingsland accident would raise the average very much, and that was outside the city. You must remember that the city has certain confines. Outside of those confines we have no power.

74. I am speaking of fatal accidents?—Quite a number of the accidents that you mentioned—in fact, I should say the greater number of them—were outside the confines of the city.

75. But if the Auckland system were thoroughly equipped—say, like the other systems of the Dominion—can you give us any reason why there have been so many fatal accidents in Auckland compared with the rest of the Dominion?—That raises a big question. You see, the plans of a car are sent down to the Government, and the car before it can be built must be approved of by the Government. You are referring, I suppose, to the brakes on the cars.

76. Not on this particular occasion?—Well, the Council have been advised that they have no right to interfere with the brakes—that that is a matter for the Government.

77. Do you license the cars?—We license the cars, but the construction of the cars is practically approved of by the Government.

78. But you say your Electrical Engineer advises you before you license them: did he advise you to license those cars?—So long as they are approved of by the Government—

79. Are you aware that the Government can only license cars after they are first built, and that we have no power to deal with them afterwards?—The Council has always been under the impression that the Government has the power, because all the plans have been referred to the Government. The present cars that are now going into commission have been approved by the Government.

80. But afterwards we have no power to deal with them?—I assume that the Government would look after the brakes and appliances, and the Council would expect that the Government did approve of them.

81. Before they were built or before we licensed them?—Those cars were built according to plan.

82. Do you think the cars are always the same as when new, or do you think they should be inspected periodically—the cars and the brakes?—Yes, it would do no harm.

83. What is your objection to the clause in the Bill?—The objection to the clause is the taking power away from the local bodies already vested in them. The Government have that power under the Public Works Act. You have the power vested in you.

84. That is, the power we want to take now under this Tramway Act. Were you in Auckland when the Auckland disaster took place?—Yes.

85. Do you know who the motorman was on that occasion?—No.

86. Do you know whether he was licensed by your Corporation?—I do not know. I followed the inquiry, but I could not give any expression of opinion about that.

87. Do you know whether that motorman had a license and had been driving a car only for a week or a fortnight?—I do not know. I cannot answer that question.

88. Does the Corporation license every motorman?—Personally I am under the impression that the man was not licensed.