

Waipori River and its banks up to Sawmill Creek ; with authority to make diversions, deepen and widen channels, erect levees and other protective works on private lands, to divert, raise, lower, or alter roads, bridges, and culverts where, in the opinion of the Trust, they interfere with the proper discharge of flood-waters : and generally to take such steps as the Trust may consider necessary or advisable to protect the district from flood-damage.

Further, proposals for all drains emptying into the river, all locks, tide-gates, bridges, ferries, wharves, &c., should be submitted to and approved by the Trust before being carried out. No planting or cutting of willows should be done except by authority of the Trust.

It is further recommended that all existing Acts in respect of either river-control works or drainage-works on the Taieri River and Taieri Plain below Outram should be repealed, and that all existing liabilities and rating in respect of such works already done or in course of execution should continue in force as at present, and the financial and administrative control of all such works be handed over to the River Trust to be formed as above described.

The Trust should have all the powers of a Drainage Board over the whole or any portion of the district.

River-improvement and flood-protection works should be considered by the Trust as entirely distinct from drainage-works, and separate loan, administrative, and maintenance accounts should be kept for each.

*Maintenance.*—The method of fixing rates for the purpose of paying interest and sinking fund on loans has been indicated under clause (2), reference 5 (*d*), and it is recommended that a separate rate be struck for maintenance charges only. For the estimated cost of maintenance, repairs, and flood-damage to works on the western side of the Taieri River, other than for maintenance or damage to the railway-works, the rate should be a uniform one on the unimproved value struck over the whole of the rateable area on the west side of the Taieri River. In like manner, for the maintenance of all works on the east side of the Taieri River, a similar but not necessarily an equal rate should be struck on all rateable lands in the district east of the river.

*Administration.*—The payment of general administrative charges that are of common interest to the whole district should be met by a uniform rate on the unimproved value over the whole of the rateable area.

The uniform maintenance rate would be fiercely objected to by the ratepayers on the upper plain, especially when their levees burst and the lower men were swamped, and there would be a large pumping bill. But if it could be established the uniform rate would pool the interests, and it would render the upper men quite as anxious about the safety and proper maintenance of the levees as the lower men. In any case, it would not be a heavy rate.

It should also be borne in mind that though at first under the uniform rate the incidence of taxation might bear unduly on the upper men, yet as the lower properties increased in value as a result of protection the lower men would (on revaluation) pay more and more, and so ease the burden on the upper men.

Your Commissioners are of opinion that no payment of compensation should be made for loss of riparian rights if such be interfered with.

*Allocation of Costs.*—With regard to the allocation of the costs of remedial measures your Commissioners agree with the recommendations of the 1917 Commission, on the grounds that in view of the national interests at stake, and particularly in view of the damage done to the rivers by mining and other operations, it would be equitable that a contribution from the consolidated revenue equal to one-third of the total cost of river-improvement and flood-protection works should be made.

Your Commissioners further consider that in the event of the Government subsidizing the cost of the works to this extent it should not be called upon at any future time to pay any maintenance charges or any compensation for flood-damage.

Regarding the contribution to be made by the Dunedin City Corporation (referred to on page 5 hereof), your Commissioners are of opinion that the contribution which the Corporation should make towards the work of protecting the Taieri Plain is that it should erect, with as little delay as possible, a new impounding-