

May I point out to you, Mr. Clausen, that you are "fencing." Now answer the question?—I cannot remember that. I have been out of the Council for nine years now.

I do not care if it is eighteen years?—The question of closing Cook Street came up so often in the Council.

Do you not know that the closing of Cook Street also involved the loss of your siding?—I never knew that.

Do you know that if Cook Street were closed now, and the scheme which my learned friend Mr. Luckie is asking us to adopt were adopted, it would mean the loss of your siding?—That is the first I have heard of it.

Supposing I told you that it would, would you still remain a member of the league and support it?—Yes.

Mr. Clausen, you surprise me a second time. So that even if you lost your siding you still prefer to have the railway-station where it is?—Yes.

Why—it would not matter to you?—I think it would be waste of money to shift it.

You are thinking of the public purse rather than of yourself?—I think a little of both.

Mr. Clausen, there is a drain, is there not, called the Kawau Drain?—Yes.

Where is this drain?—It runs right away from Boundary Road to Awapuni.

And does the water, or any of the water, which you say lies on this land in the neighbourhood of the proposed new station drain into this drain?—Yes.

Are you aware that the Borough Council is engaged in taking steps to straighten and widen that drain?—Yes, the upper reaches of it.

Mr. Luckie.] Where does the flood-water on Boundary Road come from?—When the Manawatu River rises it banks it up.

Do you know that the Oroua has anything to do with it?—Yes.

Have any efforts been made during the last ten years to get rid of that flood-water?—When I was in the Council we went up to inspect the property and found that nothing could be done.

And it still floods?—I cannot say.

Did you ever hear until Mr. Myers put it to you this evening that the closing of Cook Street meant the loss of your siding?—That is the first I heard of it.

Were you ever threatened with the loss of your siding during any of the negotiations with respect to the closing of Cook Street?—No.

Had this question of the loss of your siding anything to do with the closing of Cook Street?—No.

Would the closing of Cook Street involve the loss of your siding?—Not that I am aware of.

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JAMES ALFRED NASH sworn and examined.

Mr. Myers.] You are Mayor of the Borough of Palmerston North?—Yes.

How long have you held that position?—Thirteen years.

You are also, and have been for the last three years, a member of the House of Representatives for the district?—For two years.

I understand you wish to make a statement, Mr. Nash?—Yes. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the Commission, I did intend to make some reference to the proposed Levin—Greatford route, but, sir, I am going to leave that alone. I wish to submit to the Commission a photograph, and I want to ask you, sir, to be kind enough to allow me to take the photograph away to-night, because I am certain any proposal which comes before Parliament in regard to the Levin—Greatford scheme will, after members have seen what they will have to contend with, receive the same short shrift as it received during the last session. I want to make our position quite clear by saying that the Borough Council did not at any time approach the Railway Department in regard to the removal of the railway-station, but we made many complaints in regard to the level crossings, the shunting of trains in the Square, the whistling of trains, and all that sort of thing. The proposals were made to the Council, and they were purely departmental. The position was put before us very clearly, and we practically had the option of two things—one was the removal of the station, or the removal of that portion of the goods-marshalling yard, probably some four or five miles from the township. The Borough Council gave the matter consideration, and the members, with the knowledge they had of the working of the Railway Department here, came to the conclusion that they would not be justified in holding the matter up, and that in the interests of the town and the country it was desirable that the work should be carried out. We went further and had a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and with the business men of the town. We invited them to meet us and fully discuss the position. We were aware that there would be some cases of hardship, but let me say that some of those people who are the greatest advocates for the removal of the railway in view of the increased traffic are going to suffer as well as those who are raising objections at the present time. I may say that I have watched the progress of the Railway Department in this town for a period of over thirty-five years, and I remember the station when it was in the middle of the town. Eventually it was found necessary to remove it to its present position. Subsequently the Railway Department realized that the traffic was increasing, and in consequence they decided to acquire all the land that they could adjacent to the present station, and this was done. I would like to say a few words in connection with the scheme, known as the "Hiley scheme," which has been referred to during the sitting of the Commission here and also in Wellington. We never received the proposal which was submitted at the time as a scheme at all. The Council was, however, approached with a view to closing Cook Street. Now, sir, we had previously, or a previous Council before us, agreed to the closing of Pitt Street, and the question arose as to what would be the position in regard to the closing of Cook Street. We had numerous deputations advocating that there should be a