

can see in regard to the Levin-Greatford deviation is that it would shorten the distance between the centres. The people living between Levin and Greatford have a tramway, and the district is fairly well served so far as railway facilities are concerned. The Kiwitea County Council is very much against this deviation being put through, and considers if any deviation takes place it should be put through to Kimbolton.

Has your Council considered the question of the railway facilities at Palmerston North and the proposal of the Railway Department to build the station accommodation elsewhere—say, at the Rangitikei Line?—They have not discussed that at the county meeting.

*Mr. Luckie.*] You approve of a reduction in the distance so long as it does not do any harm to your own district?—I did not say that.

You said that if there was to be any shortening of the line it should be put through Kimbolton?—I said the Council is of opinion that if any deviation takes place it should be put through Kimbolton, the reason being it would open up country.

You approve of that deviation?—I cannot say that I would.

Why not?—The only advantage claimed by this Levin-Greatford deviation, as far as I can see, is that it would shorten the distance from the centres. If that was the only object in view the line could be shortened by putting the deviation through Kimbolton.

And would you not object to that?—I did not say that I would not object to that.

Would you?—I am in favour of the line going where it is at the present time.

How long have you lived in the district?—It is the only district I have been in.

What position do you occupy in the Kiwitea County Council?—I am Chairman.

For how long?—About four months.

Surely you have considered the question as to whether or not you will support that deviation you have mentioned?—At the present time I would not support it.

Why?—I do not think it is the time to go into the question of a deviation at the present time.

Under normal conditions?—I would not say that I would.

Do you think that the people would support this deviation—that is, the people living in the Manawatu district, which forms portion of your county?—Mangaweka is not in our county.

Do you not think it would be an important advantage to them—on the Main Trunk line they are in favour of it?—I do not think so.

Why do you not think it is an advantage to shorten the route?—I do not think so in all cases.

You said the district that would be served by the railway if the Levin-Greatford deviation were constructed is well served at the present time by the tram?—That is all they require.

I suppose you leave Palmerston North to be the judge of what it requires, but you are not prepared that the other people should be the judges of what they require?—I did not say that. I suppose they would like to get rid of their tramway. I can assure you they would be very pleased to get rid of it.

I want to know why you have an opinion on one question and not on the other: why do you think it is best for them not to have communication?—They have very good railway communication.

Do you mean Foxton?—Yes. They are connected with Palmerston North.

*Mr. Marchbanks.*] Has there been any survey of the line you speak of, say, from Feilding to Mangaweka?—Yes.

By the Government?—Yes. It would have been approved, as far as I can understand, if it had not been for the Hon. Mr. Bryce. The Mayor of Feilding said in the course of his evidence that the Hon. Mr. Bryce had 300 acres, but he had actually 3,000 acres. The Hon. Mr. Bryce was one of the members appointed on that Commission at that time, but he would not have anything to do with it because of his land being interested.

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JOSEPH LINKLATER SWORN and examined.

*Mr. Myers.*] You are the representative of one of the neighbouring local bodies?—Yes; the Kairanga County Council, and also the Foxton Harbour Board.

You are Chairman of the County Council, are you not?—Yes.

And also Chairman of the Foxton Harbour Board?—Yes.

Have these two local bodies considered and expressed their views upon the two matters into which this Commission has been set up to inquire?—Yes.

Well, let us take first the question of the railway facilities at Palmerston North: what representation do these two local bodies, or either of them, desire to make to the Commission?—So far as Foxton is concerned in relation to harbour matters it does not affect it at all. With regard to the Kairanga County, I should like to say that it is essentially a farming district, and a great deal of produce is sent away from that district as well as a great deal of stock. We find that through the congestion at the station it is difficult very often to get our produce railed, and in consequence a good deal of time is wasted.

Does that apply both to inward traffic and outward traffic, or traffic only one way?—We are particularly interested in sending our produce outwards, but there are times when we import goods. With regard to the trucking-yards, I would like to say that we find them in a very bad position. In order to truck stock you have to be at the yards before any other traffic starts in the morning, otherwise you are in trouble, especially through shy cattle. Accidents have already occurred there, and a great deal of inconvenience is suffered by those who handle stock there.

*Mr. Luckie.*] I do not think those facts are denied?—We have to wait and untruck cattle—that is, show cattle—in the morning because we could not untruck stock when people are about.