

## General.

## SCOPE AND REPORT.

The hearing was a lengthy one, occupying approximately six weeks. The recorded notes of evidence occupy 665 foolscap pages. We have studied the whole of that evidence, but we have not considered it necessary to deal, in our report, with all the matters and points raised by it. We think, however, that we have dealt with all that enables us fairly and reasonably to answer the questions which Your Excellency submitted to us. Our aim has been threefold: firstly, to deal with all charges of maladministration; secondly, to inform Your Excellency on all salient and essential features of the present transport problem in Auckland; and, thirdly, to make a useful suggestion for the solution of that problem.

## AUCKLAND CITIZENS COMMITTEE AND THE "METROPOLITAN BOARD."

Evidence was given before us of the activities of a voluntary association known as the Auckland Citizens Committee. Several gentlemen of standing in the community gave evidence, either as representatives of this body or in support of its views, and this evidence we found useful. The objective of the Citizens Committee is the formation of what they describe as a Metropolitan Board. It is based on a recognition of the evil results of the present system, whereby numerous boards and authorities are created, each to deal with a separate regional service in a district which is already under control of numerous local municipal bodies. The evidence relating to this movement and ideal will be found in those pages of the Book and Notes of Evidence which contain the depositions of Mr. E. H. Potter, Mayor of Mount Eden; Mr. W. J. Holdsworth, Chairman of the Auckland Power Board; Mr. L. A. Eady, a member of the Auckland City Council and of the Tramways Committee; Mr. A. G. Lunn, merchant, and past president of the Auckland Chamber of Commerce; Dr. E. P. Neale, secretary of Chamber of Commerce; and Mr. T. Bloodworth, ex-member of Auckland City Council and Tramways Committee, member of the Auckland Power Board, and a representative witness on behalf of the Citizens Committee. These gentlemen satisfied us that they had given a great deal of time and thought to the subject, and had voluntarily undertaken propaganda work with a view to educating the public on the evils of the present system of diversified and disjointed control.

The opinions contained in their evidence agree closely with our views herein contained of the shortcomings of the present methods and tendency. Their proposal to meet and overcome these evils is the creation of a Metropolitan Board which is designed to take over the functions and powers of all *ad hoc* authorities in this district operating and controlling regional services and facilities. The movement is a comparatively new one, and preliminary work is all that has been done. We are here referring to the project because the scheme propounded was an interesting one, and a good deal of time was devoted to its exposition.

The witnesses were agreed in their statements of the evils of the present system and in their adherence to the ideal of unified control. It became apparent to us, however, when we pressed for details of constitution and powers, that their joint deliberations had not carried them that far; because, as the recorded evidence will show, there was a great contrariety of opinion—in fact, they were mutually destructive of each other on these points. We view that fact, however, at the present stage, as unimportant. The important thing is that evidence was adduced from a body of responsible well-informed citizens who are working towards the ideal of civic unity and are satisfied that their efforts will tend to the fulfilment of the hopes that we have herein expressed.

In the case of two of the witnesses, for instance, we led them to the logical conclusion of their scheme with some attention to detail, and each admitted that it involved the eventual disappearance of the present local bodies and the institution of a bicameral form of self-government for Greater Auckland.

We are satisfied that that ideal must be attained, and when it is, it does not much matter what name is given to the civic authority that embodies and administers the ideal. In this connection we call attention to the evidence of Mr.