

with that. Part VIII is a machinery clause for regulations for newer types of vehicles, when they come in. That is necessary, too. Part IX, I think, only affects Invercargill. There is a tramway law which says that before a tramway-man can become a driver he must have been a conductor, and this amendment is therefore necessary for one-man trams. Part X establishes uniformity in control of drivers' licenses—that is, that all drivers' licenses shall be dealt with through one channel. It will not be competent for a man to be turned down in Wellington, for instance, and then go to some small county and get his license from a man who does not know how to drive a car himself; and it will also prevent Inspectors being put on in future by counties and get their salaries out of the fines they secure. Out of these ten Parts in the Bill, the two I have not dealt with are apparently the contentious ones, and I would like to deal with them.

*Mr. Williams.*] Contentious from your point of view?—No; I think, from various points of view. We believe that they are being mainly opposed by local bodies. In fact, so far as I know, the local bodies are the only people opposing them.

*The Chairman.*] What part are you referring to?—Part III. In this connection I would like to say quite definitely that the motor service proprietors—and we represent here to-day over 90 per cent. of them—are definitely opposed to any system of licensing by the present licensing authorities, or any extension of the present system. That is, if this Bill were amended in the form that the local bodies want it amended, we are opposed to it. We will accept the Bill as it stands, and urge that it should be put through as it is, because the system of licensing that the Bill incorporates is calculated to give satisfaction. It is a very fair system, and if any amendment is suggested, leaving the power in the hands of the present licensing authorities, we are opposed to it. The system proposed in the Bill is impartial, and an expert committee is suggested. The present control is unsatisfactory. Take the Wellington City Council for instance: how can it expect to be a licensing authority for a run which might go through to New Plymouth; and how are we going to get on with all the other local bodies through whose districts we run? The same applies on many other services, some of which are running for hundreds of miles every day; and no single local authority is competent to exercise controlling rights for a license of that sort. On the local bodies that are now operating and granting licenses under the Motor-omnibus Act we see a lack of expert knowledge. In that connection I may say I was appointed to the Transport Appeal Board for the Canterbury District, and am still a member. The Christchurch City Council is the licensing authority in that district, and out of twenty appeals brought forward by private owners, and some by the Tramways Board, nineteen decisions were reversed, and only one upheld. That, I say, proves a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. Ninety-five per cent wrong is a very bad average.

*Mr. Murdoch.*] What district?—Canterbury: No. 10.

What does it embrace?—The whole of Christchurch and within about thirty miles of the city. It has to be understood that City Councils are bodies politic. They are elected on a platform—may be representing a citizens' association, labour, or something else—and are pledged to a certain line of action, and in exercising their judgment on a matter of that sort they do it according to the party platform and not according to law, and that is why in Christchurch so many of the decisions I have mentioned were wrong. The licensing authority proposed in this Bill is a body of experts, and the weaknesses I have mentioned will be obviated under a system of that sort, so that the Board proposed is likely to give satisfactory results. Briefly, speaking from memory, the Board proposed is a Chairman, nominated by the Government, and presumably a Judge; another nominee of the Government, acting in the interests of the public, who must have a knowledge of transport; one member each nominated by the counties and municipalities; and a fifth member nominated by public bodies operating transport. Private owners have no representation. However, the Board would be a body of experts, they would know what they were talking about, and we would not have 95 per cent. wrong decisions. The Appeal Board is almost similarly composed, and it does give representation to motor-service proprietors. We claim, therefore, that the licensing authorities proposed are infinitely better than the present control. The compensation provision in that Part is also creating a little concern. The Motor-omnibus Act provided that there would be no compensation for goodwill, and I think you will agree with me that that is very unfair. We say that any service established should be paid for, including pioneering, publicity, developmental work, or anything of that nature. A man starts a motor service, and it may two or three years before he is showing any profit. He may be working at a loss all that time, but he knows what he is working for; but if he has to give up the service it means that he cannot get anything for that developmental work. We say that any value that is established should be paid for. We are not saying that a man should be able to claim some ridiculous figure for goodwill to which he can establish no right, but we are saying—and the Bill provides for it—that whatever amount the Compensation Court decides is adequate for his loss of business he shall receive, and that is all we are asking in that connection. On the point of compensation, no claim is allowed for a license. The actual holding of a license does not entitle a man to anything, as there is no obstacle in the way of an additional service being placed on any route if proved necessary. Under the Bill prior rights are given to municipalities substantially within their own boundaries—that is, in the event of a new route being required in a city, the local body operating the trams and buses would have the prior right to that service. That deals with Part III. With regard to Part VI, the Main Highways Board representation seems to have created some little stir. We commend this clause along with all the others. There is certain alteration in the representation, and we are quite in accord with that. We say that if there is going to be any amendment it should be in the direction of providing representation for commercial interests. At present it is proposed that an additional representative would be nominated by the motor unions and approved of by the commercial interests. It is quite possible, if the motor unions had the right to appoint that man, that he may not be acceptable to the commercial interests. If, therefore, any change is being made, we say that any amendment should include the commercial interests by giving