

Board. The unanimous opinion of the motorists is that there should be only one Board and that it should be constituted as follows: (a) Two members to be appointed, with the approval of the Minister of Transport, on the recommendation of the executive body of the New Zealand Counties Association: (b) two members to be appointed, with the approval of the Minister of Transport, as representatives of owners of motor-vehicles: the Minister of Transport shall call for nominations for such appointments from incorporated societies or other organizations representing such owners: (c) three other members, one of whom shall be appointed as the Chairman of the Board. We consider that one Board, having a uniform policy right throughout New Zealand, would be much better than the suggestion contained in the Bill. We understand that in the past there has been some sort of a promise to the South Island that two Boards should be constituted; but the motorists in the South Island have now come to the conclusion that it would be much better to have one Board, but with an extra motorists' representative, and if you can see your way to have that included in the Bill it will give great satisfaction to the motorists.

*Mr. Williams.*] You make no reference to the South Island in that suggestion?—No.

I take it the trouble in the past has been that the South Island had no representative. It was a matter of chance who represented the motorists, but I believe that the representative on the Board has been a North Island man?—As a matter of fact, there was a member nominated, and the Minister approved of the one from the North. If the arrangement is carried out as we suggest, there is no question that the motorists would do as the counties have done, nominate one from the North Island and one from the South, and the motorists have sufficient confidence that they will look after the interests of all. Finally, we are strongly in favour of the Bill going on the statute-book. There is another matter—that is, with reference to clause 54. We are right up against that clause; but Mr. Wynyard will speak on that.

I take it that you are not in favour of any alteration to the Highways Board as at present constituted, except to put another motorists' representative on?—Yes, that is so. We are also in favour of clause 51 (4), that the term of a member of the Board shall be for three years.

With reference to clause 15, which relates to dealers' plates: have you anything to say as to that?—We have considered that. We understand the trade have asked for it, and we think it is quite fair.

At present they are used only for business purposes?—Yes.

*Mr. Ansell.*] With regard to drivers' licenses, you say you agree with the proposals as set out in the Bill. Who do you suggest should be the examining authority?—We consider that where the local authorities have efficient testing-officers it should be done by them, but I think you will agree that at the present time a lot of the officers of local bodies are not efficient. There are lots of cases where people in the trade will not send a new owner up to, say, the Wellington City Council for a test, because they put them through a harder test than they do at a place, say, like Petone. We consider the standard that a driver should undergo should be of a higher standard than at present.

With regard to the representation of motorists on the Highways Board, is it the general understanding that, although you have not asked for a direct representative for the South Island, the intention is that there shall be one representative from the North and one from the South?—Yes.

And do you think that member should be one representing the interests of private-car owners or trading interests?—Seeing that the number of private-car owners in New Zealand at present is so large, the proportion being 170,000 private cars to 30,000 commercial cars, we certainly think that the motor-associations should have some say in the nominations of these representatives. In the case of the commercial vehicles, the heavy-traffic fees do not go to the Highways Fund—they go to the local bodies; and the only taxation the commercial vehicles pay which goes to the Highways Fund is the petrol-tax, and the tire-tax, and the registration fee. And, in any event, a great number of the owners of the commercial vehicles are members of motor associations and are represented by those associations.

I take it that you agree to this clause on the distinct understanding that the appointees shall be approved by motor associations?—That is so.

Have you any engineering knowledge of the damage done to roads by different classes of vehicles. The statement has been made that heavy traffic does practically no more damage to certain classes of roads than a light car?—I think I can give you a case in point. Mr. Mason will know this, because I am referring to the Auckland Domain. There is an ordinary tar-sealed road, over which heavy traffic is not allowed to travel. It is only an ordinary light road tarred over. It has been in existence for years and years, and owners of private cars have ridden over it all that time without doing it any damage.

*Mr. Sullivan.*] That would be slow traffic, of course?—Yes; and the road looks little more than a footpath. It has had no attention, and was not specially prepared.

*Mr. Harris.*] At what speed do they travel there?—Fifteen miles an hour.

With regard to clause 51 and your suggested subclause (c)—“Three other members, one of whom shall be appointed as the Chairman of the Board”—you approve of that?—Yes.

You know that at present there are only six members?—Yes.

You would make it seven?—Yes.

It has been suggested that the commercial interests have a right to representation on the Board. Included in your association there are some commercial interests?—Quite a lot of commercial interests are members of the different associations. For instance, in the Auckland association they have decided now to have a special commercial badge. So many inquiries have been made for them that they have decided to have one specially struck for commercial vehicles. So the necessity for that shows that we have a lot of commercial owners as members of our associations—in fact, on the executive of two associations for some time there were heavy-traffic representatives.

And they are not pressing for direct representation on the Board?—No.