

inspection. It may be suggested that it will be difficult for some outside local bodies to examine these motorists; but it is submitted there is a simple answer to that—that any borough which is sufficiently strong to employ a man efficient to drive a motor-car should be made an examining authority to examine drivers. Any man who drives a car or who wants a license can easily travel to the point where he wants to be examined. Clause 17 provides that applicants for drivers' licenses may be required to make a declaration as to freedom from physical disability. This is for the protection of the public. We have no great objection to the clause, but the association desires to say that this regulation must be made elastic, as in many cases it is found that men suffering apparently from disabilities are able to drive competently, and a discretion should be exercised. Clause 18 deals with the time allowed for production of motor-drivers' licenses on request. We think this is satisfactory and fair, but we think that after the word "person" in line 29 the following words should be inserted: "Who is the holder of a current license."

*Hon. Mr. Veitch:* That is intended, of course.

*Witness:* Yes. As to clause 19, we agree with that, as also with clause 20. Clause 21: We agree with this, because the only procedure now is to get a rehearing before the Magistrate, and there is an element of doubt as to jurisdiction. With regard to clause 22, if the Commissioner of Transport is going to control the whole of that administration this clause is necessary; but if the local authority is going to control it, then it is not. Clause 23 empowers the Minister of Justice to compile a list of persons whose drivers' licenses have been endorsed or suspended, and of persons disqualified from holding drivers' licenses. I see no provision for publication of these lists, though the clause implies that they will be published. We agree with the principle of compilation of the list thoroughly, but we suggest that a new list should be made annually, and that this list should be gazetted. I think that was intended. There is provision for making a list in January, 1930, but no provision for supplementary lists.

*Hon. Mr. Veitch:* It is not intended to gazette.

*Witness:* Then it will not be available for the information of local bodies. We presume that this is information for the information of the public as well as for the Government, and we suggest that it should be gazetted. Clause 24 imposes restrictions as to motor traffic at railway-crossings, and we see no objection to it. We think the extension of the existing law is satisfactory. Clause 25 provides power to make regulations to control pedestrian traffic and traffic other than motor traffic. If the advisory Board is anything like the present Board, and its recommendations are as implicitly accepted by the Minister, the result of these regulations will be to give the motorist, if not the monopoly of the street, at least preferential treatment. Even under the existing law, as administered by some local authorities, the streets are not safe for pedestrians. The association views this clause with some alarm. They suggest that the local bodies, who at present control pedestrian and other traffic, are the persons having the local knowledge and most able to do so. In view of the tendency displayed in the present draft of the Bill to protect the interests of motorists, they feel that subclause (1) should be struck out. They have no objection to subclauses (2) and (3), except that a consequential amendment might be made in subclause (2) by striking out the words "the last preceding subsection," and inserting in lieu thereof the words "section thirty-six of the principal Act." Clause 26 gives the Minister power to disallow any by-law relating to motor traffic, or any other form of traffic in its relationship to motor traffic, on the ground that the subject-matter of such by-law should not be dealt with otherwise than by statute or by regulations of general application made under the Motor-vehicles Act. This is another step in the direction of centralization and bureaucracy. The association think that the Minister would be justified in disallowing local bodies' by-laws relating directly to motor traffic, but they think the words "or any other form of traffic in its relationship to motor traffic" should be struck out. Clause 27 empowers the Minister to carry out the work of erecting signposts at the expense of the local authority if the local authority fails to comply with regulations as to the section. At present it is proposed by the regulations to impose this duty on the local authorities. Most of the local authorities have resisted, and the Government has not been able to take action owing to the faulty drafting of the regulations. The faulty drafting will now be amended, and the legislation proposed in this clause will give the Minister absolute power to enforce this liability, which is regarded by most local authorities as an imposition. It is really a transfer of a liability from the Railway Department to the local authorities. Further, if the control of motor-vehicles is a national affair, then the erection of signs is also a national affair. The Government, however, seem to want all the powers, all the fees, and none of the liabilities. This is merely another screw in the imposition of liability of local bodies, and the local bodies feel that they have heavy enough liabilities at present. What with the charges in respect of unemployment and in other directions, things are coming to such a pass that all local bodies will be faced inevitably with the necessity of raising the rates, and some have done that already. Clauses 29 to 35, inclusive, deal with the questions of motor-omnibus districts and licensing authorities, and the Municipal Association would like to see the whole of them disappear. Clause 29 provides that the motor-omnibus districts will now be highway districts, and not the districts under the Motor-omnibus Traffic Act, 1926, which were confined to the main centres and the districts round them. Wellington will form part of the district consisting of the Hutt and Makara Counties and all the counties on the west coast up to Kiwitea. The other districts will be just as large. Clause 30 provides that persons carrying on services in areas brought within motor-omnibus districts by the last preceding section shall be entitled to receive licenses to continue such services. These are probably motor-omnibus services outside the motor-omnibus districts. These will be brought into some district if the new scheme goes through, and therefore their rights have to be preserved. Clauses 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35 deal with licensing authorities. The local bodies cease to be licensing authorities, and there are two sets of licensing authorities set up, with a new Appeal Board, called the Dominion Transport Appeal Board. There will be a licensing authority for each motor-omnibus district, consisting of