

at present private bus and car services are under no obligation to render statements annually of their finance. This should be provided for in the Bill. In fact, the Bill, in our opinion, should be delayed until such statements are obtained, and properly audited balance-sheets should have been provided before this Bill was drafted, and my association ask that it be postponed until this information is obtained. There are other matters, too—with regard to Appeal Boards, for instance: as to whether they should not be controlled by a Judge or Magistrate, who should preside in regard to them all. We hold that these Boards should be made non-party; that they should be taken outside the motor interests and the Council interests—that they should be non-party Boards.

*Mr. Sullivan.*] That is the Transport Appeal Board, you mean?—Yes. With regard to the ancient rights of roadways, I would like to have said something, but time will not permit me to go into that. I may say, in conclusion, that the best solution that I can imagine is that if the Bill gave protection to tramway routes, and gave free rights to the buses or other services to compete elsewhere, it would be much better for the country. All we want in Wellington is protection for the tramway services. We object to the buses competing with our tramway routes. You can have bus competition elsewhere as much as you like. If you give that, it will do away with any question of goodwill and simplify the whole of the Bill. Finally, I may say that the members of the Association, who only met for one day, were strongly of opinion that, although they did not have time to give full consideration to this matter, instructed me that when I appeared before the Committee I should urge very strongly that the Bill should be postponed until next year, so that all parties could have an opportunity of going thoroughly into it, and then other questions connected with the Bill could also be brought down.

*Mr. Mason.*] You talked about taking away the powers of local bodies. Do you suggest that there should be different by-laws, with different limits of speed, and so on?—Oh, no; not in matters like that. It is quite right to codify all such matters, but leave the administration to the local bodies.

*Mr. Broadfoot.*] Suppose private enterprise creates a traffic for itself, and then a municipality decides to put in a tramway service to that area, would you think it a fair thing to allow that man any goodwill?—I think the fact that he has received a permit to run there without competition has given him a concession, and when the time has come for the tramway to be laid down the chances are that, whether he was running there or not, the tramways would have gone ahead, but by giving him the goodwill rights you are stopping the development of the tramway system.

*Mr. Sullivan.*] Do you want the Bill, or would you sooner it was not passed?—I would sooner this Bill was not passed.

Do you think that you and your executive represent the general body of public opinion on the question so far as the municipalities are concerned?—I am very sure of it. I have never seen such unanimous decisions at our meetings as there were over this matter.

Are you sure of those figures as to the £3,567 this Bill will impose on the Wellington City Council by way of heavy-traffic fees?—Yes; I got them from the various officers.

*Mr. Sullivan.*] The Christchurch figures, I think, were only £450 to £500, and I was wondering how the high figure of £3,567 came about.

*Mr. Ansell.*] In your opening remarks you referred to the constitution of the Transport Board, and you say you want further representation. Can you give the Committee an idea of the original constitution of the Transport Board?—What do you mean by “original constitution”?

An alteration was made by the Minister appointing an extra motor representative. What was the original constitution of the Board?—I cannot say that. I know there was an additional motor-car representative—one for the North Island and one for the South.

So far as I can remember, there were members representing heavy-traffic omnibuses, service cars, motor-dealers, motor labour, motor association, one for the counties, and one for the municipalities?—I think that was the original constitution, and the only addition was in the motor representatives.

What I am driving at is the constitution of the Board, so that we can get an idea of the Bill from the point of view of the interests involved. You say that further representation is refused to you. What did you suggest to the Minister?—We asked for an additional representative from the Municipal Association, and the Counties Association did likewise—one each. Even then we would be in a minority.

That was refused?—Yes.

In regard to the proposal in the Bill repealing the Public Works Act in regard to the present limitation of loads, which, as you are probably aware, is 10 tons for a four-wheeled vehicle and 15 tons for a six-wheeled, if that is abolished how will it affect your roads?—That is just what we do not know. We hold that it should be distinctly specified by statute what these loads are to be, otherwise there will be no holding the matter at all. We may put down, say, 3 in. of bitumen to-day, and next year the axle-load may be increased, which would render that quite ineffective.

*The Chairman.*] What you want is that the weights should conform to the nature of the construction?—Unquestionably; and the local bodies should either have a say in what those loads are to be or it should be distinctly specified in the statute what the maximum loads are to be. At the present time that is laid down, and we know where we are. It means 10 tons for four-wheeled vehicles and 15 tons for six-wheeled. Now we are somewhat alarmed in case that loading is to be exceeded.

*Mr. Ansell.*] You look upon that as a serious matter?—Very serious.

In regard to your suggestion that Wellington City should be exempt from heavy-traffic fees on all its buses, how would you get over the difficulty if they ran outside?—If they ran outside they should be subject to the heavy-traffic fees.

How would you get over the difficulty? Would you stop them running outside?—Unquestionably. I may say that at present there are none which run outside.

If it applied to one city it would have to apply to all. In Dunedin the buses frequently run outside the city boundary. How would you get over that difficulty?—In cases where they run outside, the heavy-traffic fees should be imposed—that is, where a bus goes on to other people's roads.