

## APPENDIX B.—REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE NEW ZEALAND ROAD SAFETY COUNCIL AS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL.

### ADULT EDUCATION AND PROPAGANDA.

#### INTRODUCTORY.

Your Committee has held three meetings and, in addition, members have consulted individually with persons from whom valuable information was received. The Committee has considered ways and means of—

- Awakening the conscience of the people to the consequences of road accidents, and of securing the full and willing co-operation of the public in an effort to reduce, and if possible eliminate, such accidents;
- Educating the individual road-user regarding the requirements laid down by the law and by a reasonable standard of conduct in his relations to other road-users; and
- Inculcating in the mind of the individual a consciousness in which observance of the law and habits of caution and consideration will become second nature.

#### APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM.

We considered that we should not set out to suggest how a given amount of money should be expended, but that we should formulate a scheme which, if applied in full, will achieve the maximum results possible through education and propaganda, leaving it to the Council to determine the extent to which the scheme can be applied having regard to the funds that can be provided.

Extravagant expenditure is not suggested by your committee, but the Council may feel that somewhat heavy expenditure will be desirable and perhaps unavoidable. An attempt to conduct an educational campaign in anything but a thorough manner may be said to indicate an inadequate appreciation of the humanitarian and other social aspects of the problem, and of the substantial savings which can be made in hospital expenditure, pensions, insurance-costs, policing, and road expenditure.

The alternative to a thorough educational and propaganda campaign is that expenditure, heavier than need be under the several heads mentioned, must be maintained, and that the Courts must continue to punish. Remedial action through the Courts, even if it be preventive in character, is undesirable if it is avoidable, and we think this is a matter which should engage the thoughts of members of the Council. Many of those so punished will be persons whose offences are due to ignorance, apathy, thoughtlessness, or carelessness. It will not be a satisfactory condition if people are caused to feel that through fear of punishment they must observe restrictions which to them may seem unnecessary and which serve to irritate and antagonize them. We do not regard the repressive action of the law as a proper means of dealing with a question which affects the entire population. It is necessary as a background for the coercion of the recalcitrant, but the majority of people are decent people who will come voluntarily into line if approached reasonably.

The good will of the public is necessary, and it is most unlikely that effective co-operation can be brought about by the infliction of penalties, or while they remain one of the major forms of treatment. Moreover, the issue will tend to be, more so than in the past, one as between motorist and pedestrian or, what is perhaps worse, an issue as between the public and those responsible for the enforcement of the law, with the tendency on the part of motorists in particular to distrust and outwit police and traffic officers as the representatives of laws which restrict the freedom of the individual. We are of the opinion that every effort should be made to obviate such sectional distinctions and other undesirable psychological reactions.

As to the type of propaganda, we are agreed that appeals to the emotions by the use of gruesome propaganda are generally undesirable. The engendering of fear, with the reaction of daring or contempt of danger as a psychological reaction against fear, is likely to follow the use of gruesome propaganda. The keynote should be instruction and persuasion.

In the light of these general remarks we offer the suggestion that parsimony in expenditure upon education and propaganda may not be true economy, and that spasmodic efforts or a short-term programme cannot be expected to produce lasting results. We consider that the Council should visualize a long-range plan and, in order that it may be seen how effective educational and propaganda methods can be, that a systematic plan of operations for at least one year should be pursued, at the end of which time the desirability or otherwise of continuing action on similar lines can be ascertained in the light of the results achieved.

As time goes on, provided suitable educational methods are introduced in the schools, the necessity for adult instruction will become less. Although matters relating to education and propaganda for school-children are outside our province, we express the opinion that when looking at the future the Council should resolve to commence with the child.

#### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ADVERTISING AGENCIES AND COUNCIL.

We have discussed publicity measures with representatives of the principal advertising agencies, and we take this opportunity of referring to their readiness to act as one body and to co-operate in the formulation and the carrying-out of a comprehensive scheme. The agencies are desirous of contributing something to the campaign and are prepared to place their