

(3) This opinion as to the advantages of unified control is supported by the authorities responsible for the control of the Waitemata Harbour—namely, the Auckland Harbour Board, the Health Department, and the Marine Department. We were informed that the Harbour Board policy is that the North Shore area should be under one sewerage authority and that it would prefer that that authority should be the same authority as is responsible for the district south of the Waitemata Harbour—namely, the Metropolitan Board. Dr. Maclean, of the Health Department, pointed out that the North Shore boroughs are at present discharging into the Waitemata Harbour or Rangitoto Channel either crude sewage or septic-tank effluent, and he expressed the opinion that the resulting pollution has to a large extent been overshadowed by the effect of the greater quantity of sewage discharged from the Orakei outfall. He stated that the Health Department considered that as soon as the Orakei outfall ceases to function it is very desirable that the situation at the North Shore should be remedied, and while the Department would be satisfied provided the sewage receives adequate treatment, it is considered that combined treatment in one undertaking would make for greater efficiency and reduced cost. Mr. D. F. Hobbs, the Senior Fishery Officer of the Marine Department, who gave evidence on behalf of the Department, agreed with the view that it was preferable that there should be unified control of sewage disposal.

(4) It will be observed that all the North Shore boroughs and the Waitemata County Council support the principle of unified control for the area, but they are all opposed to the area being brought under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board (subject to the reservation made by the County Council).

(5) We have already explained that Mr. Watkins recommended the adoption of this principle, and his proposals were approved by the Committee appointed by the Minister of Health and also by Messrs. Hart and Borrie and by the 1937 Commission of Inquiry. Both Mr. Porter, the present Chief Engineer to the Board (who gave evidence on this part of the inquiry in his private capacity as a resident and ratepayer of the Waitemata County), and Mr. R. P. Worley, Consulting Engineer to the Takapuna and Birkenhead Boroughs, were in favour of unified control.

(6) It would appear that there is a fear on the part of the North Shore local authorities, or, at any rate, some of them, that if the North Shore area is brought under one authority at the present time, and especially if that authority is the Metropolitan Board, there is a risk that an elaborate scheme involving an unreasonable financial burden on the area will be undertaken. We consider that there is no justification for this fear. It was realized by Mr. Watkins and by the Drainage Board when the 1931 proposals were formulated that it would not be practicable or advisable to carry out the North Shore part of the proposals for some years. If a separate drainage authority is constituted, the local authorities should be able to ensure that a scheme beyond their resources is not adopted. Even if the North Shore area is added to the Metropolitan District and brought under the Metropolitan Board, it is, in our opinion, highly improbable that the Board would undertake a scheme which the local authorities oppose and cannot reasonably finance, especially if, as we think should be provided, they are required to bear the expense without assistance from the other parts of the district. It should be observed that Mr. Porter holds the opinion that there should be delay in undertaking a comprehensive scheme until the area is capable of bearing the expense, and we consider that this opinion is sound and should prevail.

(7) We consider that the North Shore boroughs and the portions of the Waitemata County previously referred to should be combined into one area for drainage purposes.

FORM OF DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

63. (1) If the principal of unified control is accepted, it becomes necessary to consider whether there should be a separate drainage authority for the North Shore area or whether the area should be brought under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board.