

Then your Council has come to a considered opinion, and what is that considered opinion?—My Council is thoroughly in accord with the decision of the Railway Department to shift the station to the proposed site where they could give additional facilities to the people of the county.

And I suppose the Commission may take it, in coming to that decision or to that opinion, the members of the County Council have been actuated mainly by the consideration of what they think are the needs of the people of the county?—Yes.

Do you not want to express some view as to the suggested Levin—Greatford or Marton deviation—are the local bodies in favour of it?—We are all strongly against it.

You say both local bodies are of a certain opinion, and what is that opinion?—They are strongly against the Levin—Greatford Railway.

So that the Commission may assume that the whole of Foxton is not in favour of the deviation?—The Foxton Harbour Board is not unanimous—there is one exception upon the Board.

There is a minority of one in favour of the Levin—Greatford deviation, and he happens to be the Mayor of Levin?—Yes.

What is the constitution of the Foxton Harbour Board?—You mean, who are the members?

Yes?—There are representatives of the Kairanga County Council, the Feilding Borough —

Who represents the Feilding Borough?—Mr. Clapham.

Who represents the Kairanga County Council?—I represent that body.

What other members are there?—The Mayor of Levin. Then there is Mr. Barber.

What district does he represent?—He represents the Manawatu district.

What is his opinion?—He is against the proposed deviation.

A number of those members have expressed their opinion because it will have some effect on the traffic round here—is that not so?—That is so.

Would it not to some material extent decrease the congestion that exists at the present time in Palmerston North?—You mean the Levin—Greatford route?

Yes?—It may to a certain extent.

What you chiefly want the railway-station removed for, or in favour of its removal to the site proposed by the Railway Department, is to improve the facilities for handling traffic?—Yes.

If they can improve the facilities without removing the station and at a less cost, would that not suit you as well?—No. The majority of the people of the County of Kairanga do their shopping in Palmerston North, and the level crossings are a source of danger to those people. I have also another objection, and that is with regard to the frontage to several farms in my county along the line from Rongotea Road. The railway-line runs in front of several farms, the only access to those farms being over the railway.

Must it not do that in a great many other places—it obviously does that all over New Zealand?—I do not think that is so.

There are many places where the railway runs alongside the road?—Not right up against the farms.

Now, in the first place you have to consider that the railway has to go by the nearest route. The road, where possible, will follow the nearest route?—That is so.

The alternative is to cut the farms in two: which would you prefer?—What do you mean, exactly?

You have either the train at the back of your farm or at the front of it?—I would rather have the train at the back of the farm rather than in the front.

You know there is a lot of valuable land lying south from Pascell Street, at the foot of Cuba Street, right down through to Kairanga Road, and beyond it alongside which the railway runs, does it not?—Yes.

If the railway-yards could be built there, do you not think that would be a greater improvement and would be less expensive than building the station in the vicinity of Rangitikei Line?—I do not think there would be any improvement in the present system, because the trains would still have to go through the town.

JOHN LLEWELYN MORGAN sworn and examined.

*Mr. Myers.*] You are Stationmaster at Palmerston North, are you not?—Yes.

A position which you have held for how long?—For fifteen months.

When you came here, Mr. Morgan, how would you describe the traffic at Palmerston North—would you say it was heavy traffic?—Yes, very heavy.

I just want you to take the position as it was then: if there is no more traffic than there was when you arrived here fifteen months ago, do you think that the present facilities would be sufficient to meet the traffic and enable you to carry the business of the Department on in a proper way?—Absolutely no, sir.

Since that time, you have told us, the facilities were not sufficient. Since that time how has the volume of traffic been—has it increased or decreased?—It is increasing, I might say, every month, sir.

Take the current year as against the preceding year: can you give the Commission any idea of the ratio in the increase of volume of traffic during this year?—In wagons only, do you really mean?

Give the information any way you like—you can give it in various ways if you like?—Roughly speaking, the volume of wagons handled for three weeks of this year was from 1,452 per day to 1,886 per day. That is an increase of about 6 per cent. for last year in the corresponding number of vehicles.

Is that a fair test?—That is a fair test. I would like to say that we would have handled more than that if it had not been for the labour troubles.