

The proposal had not been finally considered by the associations comprising the unions by the 31st March, and the general question was further considered by the Road Safety Council at a later meeting, when a number of resolutions, summarized briefly hereunder, were passed:—

“All the main means of publicity should be availed of to an adequate extent and expert assistance should be utilized.

“There should be co-ordination of propaganda activities.

“There should be definition of responsibility as between the Government, local authorities, and automobile associations, and assistance given in the form of Government subsidy in respect of approved educational and propaganda measures of the automobile associations.”

Action upon these recommendations has not been completed, but a number of proposals for Government publicity of an educational nature are being put into operation early in the coming summer. These include radio and press publicity, the display of posters, and notices for tram-cars and buses. Action in other directions is also contemplated to the extent permitted by the funds provided on the estimates for the current year. Approval has been given for the appointment of a publicity officer to the staff of the Department.

#### (ii) TRAFFIC CONTROL.

During the year under review several important changes in traffic supervision have been inaugurated and as far as possible the Government's policy of unified control has been put into operation.

Owing to the pressure of other important legislation last session, Parliament did not have an opportunity of considering legislation relating to traffic-control. However, with the assistance and co-operation of the Main Highways Board, it was found possible to institute a temporary arrangement to give immediate effect to the Government's policy.

The Board at that time employed fifteen full-time Traffic Inspectors throughout the Dominion and subsidized the salaries and expenses of a further thirteen Inspectors employed by groups of local authorities. Twelve of these group Inspectors were added to the Board's staff, and fourteen additional new appointments were made, bringing the personnel up to forty-one.

Owing to the introduction of the State highways, with a consequent increase in the scope of the Board's activities, the Board suggested early this year that it would facilitate matters if the Transport Department assumed full control of the traffic-enforcement machinery, and offered to arrange the necessary finance until other arrangements could be made. The Department therefore took over control as from the 1st April, 1937. Since that date the personnel has been increased to forty-eight, by the appointment of five new Inspectors and by taking over one more county Inspector.

(a) *Transport Licensing Act, 1931, and Amendments.*—Now that it has its own staff of Inspectors the Department has been able to arrange a much closer supervision of transport generally. A good deal of attention has been paid to the question of working-hours of transport drivers and operators are now observing the regulations in a reasonable manner. The suppression of unlicensed services and the efficient control of the licensed operators has effected an all-round improvement in transport matters generally.

(b) *Motor-vehicles Act, 1924, and Amendments.*—The introduction of the six-monthly check on the mechanical fitness of motor-vehicles, combined with the more efficient enforcement of the Act and regulations generally, has brought about a noticeable improvement in road safety. Much remains to be done in this direction before the position can be regarded as being satisfactory, but every endeavour is being made to reduce to a minimum accidents due to faulty vehicles and dangerous driving. The Department's Inspectors are co-operating with racing clubs, sports bodies, and local authorities throughout the Dominion, and the efficient control of traffic at large public functions has been the subject of much favourable comment both from the press and the public.

The adoption of a uniform speed-limit of thirty miles per hour in all built-up areas and the abolition of all unsatisfactory local restrictions has made the task of enforcement easier, and the majority of drivers of motor-vehicles are expressing their appreciation of these changes by a better compliance with the legislation.

(c) *Traffic Regulations.*—The Traffic Regulations empower Inspectors to control all classes of road-users, and special attention is being given to cyclists and pedestrians, particularly in the larger towns. It is essential that all road-users should recognize their joint responsibilities in reducing accidents, and a system which limits its control to one class only cannot fully succeed.

(d) *Probation Scheme for Traffic Offenders.*—During the year Mr. E. D. Mosley, S.M., Wellington, instituted the practice of placing persons convicted of certain traffic offences on probation; a condition of the probation being that they attend a series of lessons arranged by the proper traffic authorities. The instruction comprises road safety and courtesy, traffic regulations, and other matters likely to improve their standard of driving.

(e) *Traffic Offences.*—Although it has been the Department's policy to educate and assist road-users as far as possible without resorting to prosecutions, a large number of breaches of the various Acts and regulations relating to traffic-control are still being detected. Prosecutions are undertaken in all cases where the offences show a disregard for public safety or where deliberate evasions of the legislation are apparent.