

PART I.—INTRODUCTION

1. There have been two changes in the personnel of the Commission. Before we commenced to take evidence, Mr. Thomas Jordan resigned, and on the 6th April, 1945, Mrs. Bella Fernie Logie was appointed a member of the Commission. On the 21st February, 1946, the Rev. J. Thomson Macky died. His death caused us the deepest regret on account both of his personal qualities and of the active part he had taken in the inquiry. Mr. Macky had also prepared for the Commission an index of the evidence and of counsels' addresses, which is very complete and has proved indispensable in the preparation of this report. Mr. Macky's death occurred after the close of the evidence, and his place was not filled.

2. Throughout our inquiry we have had the assistance of Mr. J. D. Willis, counsel appointed by the Government, to assist the Commission. Messrs. H. F. O'Leary, K.C., P. B. Cooke, K.C., and I. H. Macarthur appeared to represent the National Council of the Licensed Trade. They stated that they represented the great majority of the members of that organization. Messrs. F. C. Spratt and R. Hardie Boys appeared to represent the New Zealand Alliance. During the course of the inquiry other counsel (twenty-four in all) appeared to represent persons or organizations concerned with some particular aspect of our inquiry.

3. We record our deep appreciation of all the assistance we have received. We were much indebted to the counsel who appeared regularly throughout the sittings. They had to deal with a great mass of evidence under pressure of time in order to keep the members of the Commission, who came from different parts of New Zealand, continually occupied. We were particularly indebted to the counsel appointed to assist the Commission, Mr. J. D. Willis, who had the main burden of maintaining the flow of evidence. His power of work and his ability were equal to all demands upon them.

We acknowledge also the excellent work done by the staff of the Commission. We do not think we could have been better served. Our Secretary, Mr. A. B. Thomson, LL.M., by his efficiency and organizing ability has ensured the smooth running of the Commission and the careful and accurate production of the record. He has also assisted, with care and skill, in the collation of the evidence for the preparation of this report. Our staff of typistes (Mrs. Worboys, Miss Will, and Miss Eadie), by their combination of accuracy with speed, and by their devotion to duty, have produced, we venture to think, a record which, on the whole, despite its volume, is admirably complete and correct. We express our thanks also to the other members of the staff for their efficient work.

We acknowledge also the great assistance we have received from those Stipendiary Magistrates and Judges of the Native Land Court, who have given us freely the benefit of their experience; from the Commissioner of Police and the members of the Police Force, who have given evidence and who also undertook extensive inquiries on our behalf, including a report upon the condition of all the hotels in New Zealand; from the officers of the various other Departments of Government and, in particular, of the Justice Department, the Native Department, and the Land Registries, who went to much trouble to collect information for us; from the Licensing Committees, who answered an extensive questionnaire prepared by the Justice Department; from members of the licensed trade, who answered our questionnaire and who gave evidence which must have taken them much time and trouble to collect and arrange; from the representatives of the New Zealand wine industry, who presented their case to us in a very complete form; from the New Zealand Alliance, which, through its Superintendent, supplied us with a great deal of information and freely presented its viewpoint; from the churches, some of whom held special conferences to deal with the matters in issue before us, and who gave much time and thought to the presentation of their respective cases; from women's organizations, clubs, Maori committees, and groups of citizens, who also took much trouble to collect their evidence and to present their points of view; and from the many individuals who stated their views.