

1948
NEW ZEALAND

INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT CONFERENCE, BRUSSELS, 1948

REPORT THEREON BY THE HON. MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND TEXT OF REVISION
OF COPYRIGHT CONVENTION

Presented to the House of Representatives by Leave

THE last Conference of the International Copyright Union was held in Rome in 1928, in which New Zealand was represented by the late Mr. S. G. Raymond, K.C., of Timaru. A further Conference was held at Brussels in June of 1948, at which the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was further revised.

Arrangements were made by Government for Sir Harold Saunders, the Controller of Patents in England, who attended on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, to represent New Zealand also at the Conference. Sir Harold held largely a watching brief, but he was requested especially to press for the retention of the right of each country to retain the right to make its own provisions as to broadcasting, and in signing the Convention the New Zealand delegate made the following reservation :—

The New Zealand delegate accepts the provisions of Article 11 of the Convention on the understanding that the New Zealand Government remains free to enact such legislation as it may consider necessary in the public interest, or deal with any abuse of the monopoly rights conferred upon owners of copyright by the law of New Zealand.

In officially reporting on the proceedings, Sir Harold Saunders states, *inter alia*,—

Throughout the Conference there was a continual contrast between the extreme views of authors' rights as presented by France and other Latin American countries, particularly Spain, and the moderate view, taking account of the rights of Government (representing the public interest), publishers, and others. As the French had fifteen to twenty delegates and the Spanish delegate was very persistent, it was by no means easy to bring the discussion down to earth. The general report prepared by M. Marcel Plaisant, the senior French delegate, indicates in various passages, and particularly in the last paragraph, the reluctance of some of the countries to face reality.

In general, my brief from the New Zealand Government was in line with that from the United Kingdom Government. As New Zealand delegate I was appointed to the Committee on Applied Art, but I attended also all the meetings of the Committees of Radio Diffusion and on Photography and on Cinematography, on which Mr. Crewe was a member.

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May I say again how very happy I was to act a second time as delegate of the New Zealand Government at an International Conference.