

PART I.—PRELIMINARY

1. For various reasons beyond our control some delay occurred before the Commission was able to begin its work. The first sitting—a private one—was held at Auckland on the 8th November, 1946. At that sitting questions of procedure were discussed and an itinerary settled. The first public sitting was held at Wellington on the 5th February, 1947. The principal parties concerned then asked for an adjournment in order to give them further time to prepare their cases. That they should have such time seemed to the Commission both desirable and advantageous as it was anxious to secure the greatest measure of help that any party could afford it. The Commission therefore adjourned to the 4th March, 1947, and on that day the taking of evidence at Wellington commenced; thereafter many witnesses were called and examined at a number of places throughout New Zealand.

2. The Commission adopted the policy of making itself as readily available and as easy of access as possible to any one desirous of giving evidence before it or of making representations to it. This necessitated the holding of more than one sitting at Wellington and Auckland and the holding of sittings at New Plymouth, Napier, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill. Notice of the time and place at which each sitting was to be held was previously publicly advertised, and members of the public were invited to attend and give evidence. An endeavour was made, as far as possible, to encourage the tendering of testimony and the making of representations by private individuals as well as by interested organizations. By this means it was hoped to learn the views, opinions, and wishes of "the man in the street." However, with the exception of persons holding emphatic views in favour of or against gambling, few people expressed any desire to be heard or made any representations to the Commission. This was somewhat disappointing, as it was hoped that we might have had the advantage of the views and experience of individuals or organizations who might be regarded as more impartial or at least as less partisan than those presenting formal cases. Nevertheless, some helpful evidence was given by individuals who did appear before us.

3. In addition to taking evidence and entertaining representations, oral and written, we sought to inform our minds upon all relevant topics by all means available to us. We thus read with care all such books, essays, brochures, and other writings as were in point and available to us. In particular, we studied with care the interim and final reports of the English Royal Commission on Lotteries and Betting of 1933, the