

These figures are impressive, and they demonstrate the tremendous appeal that dog-racing would have as a gambling medium if it were established on that basis in New Zealand.

379. The racing is at present on a strictly sporting basis. People who are interested in dog-racing maintain and race their dogs for the love of the sport and from it derive intense pleasure, as the Commission was privileged to witness at a demonstration in Napier which was generously organized for its benefit. The provision of amenities upon any adequate scale if attendances approximate what is expected would cost so much money that the profits of a totalizator are necessary for their establishment. The effect of this would very largely be to convert what is now a sport into what counsel for the association defined dog-racing as being in England—namely, a business. Whether this is in itself desirable or undesirable (and the Commission is not disposed to regard it as other than undesirable), the fact remains that if totalizator permits were granted for dog-racing, the volume of gambling in the Dominion would immeasurably increase, and it is impossible to estimate the direct and indirect detriments which might accrue from the attendance of large crowds on dog-racing tracks during evening hours.

380. The most potent argument in favour of the establishment of tracks with totalizator privileges is that it has presently the support of numerous people and would in a very short time have the support of an infinitely greater number of people. That it has and would have that support is undoubtedly true, but gambling upon dog-races is the introduction of gambling in a new form and in a form which it would be difficult to control. The members of the Commission are unanimous in the view that horse-racing in one or other of its two forms provides a sufficiently extensive gambling medium for all the purposes of the Dominion and that the establishment of a further gambling medium is unnecessary and undesirable. In this respect it is perhaps unfortunate from the point of view of those interested in dog-racing that they have arrived upon the scene late. The mere fact that they are late, however, must be decisive, for there are already sufficient gambling media in the country and it is not in the public interest that they should be augmented by the introduction of a new and excessively attractive form. The Commission cannot, therefore, feel its way clear to recommend the grant of totalizator permits for this form of competition.