

Hours.

- 1709 Advised the Office of Minister of Defence that, from observations from the air, it is unlikely that the search party will reach the scene of the crash to-night.
- 1725 Message from Karioi to Ohakea information Wellington. Attention Officer Commanding flying. Request marker-chutes be dropped on snow face at least 500 ft. above wreckage to be visible to ground party and assist them in locating aircraft. Recommend be done first light.
- 1740 Navy Tower and Ohakea Tower being kept on watch until there is no possibility of Auster aircraft taking off if search party need it.
- 1829 Karioi maintaining listening watch all night on 4750 kilocycles and maintaining link with Ohakea receivers.
- 1851 Flight Lieutenant Ormarod, Whenuapai, rang to say they have a motley selection of stretchers and that they have 15 light-weight type (24" x 6" when folded). They suggested that this type is most suitable for dropping from small aircraft. Also the number they have does not provide the necessary percentage of wastage in the drop, and suggest Ohakea procure some.
- 1940 Director of Civil Aviation rang and requested if Ohakune police are contacted, to make inquiries from them *re* arrival of Civil Aviation Branch party.
- 1958 Signal from Karioi: Following received by ZL-2MP from ground party at Horopito (stop) Relayed here by phone (stop) Quote Located at foot of Cascade Falls (stop) Found two parachutes (Stop) Request aircraft drop more food (stop) Lighting fire Unquote.
- 2015 Message to Karioi: Inform Flight Lieutenant Jacobsen we are unable drop supplies to ground party at night but will do so at first light, weather permitting. The stretchers will be flown in when requested. We anticipate this to be 0800 to-morrow—weather permitting.

There is only one entry which indicates that instructions from Wellington could be the cause of the restrictions reporters claim to have encountered at Ohakune, Horopito, and Cower's Mill. That is the entry recorded at 1456—that is 2.56, on Friday, the 29th. It reads as follows:

From Deputy Director of Civil Aviation. Police at Ohakune to be instructed as follows: Authority Prime Minister's Department. Before any information is given out *re* results of ground party operations details are to be given to National Airways Corporation and Mr. Nash personally.

Without for the moment questioning the propriety of this instruction, or the interpretation to be placed on it, I cannot help regretting that the source from which it came could not be ascertained. From some evidence I think that when the two Ministers and Air Department officials discussed matters on the occasion of the Ministers' visit to the control room on the preceding Tuesday morning, something was said concerning information about news as to the fate of the occupants of the plane being first of all relayed to next-of-kin. I think, under the circumstances, it was only natural that some provision would have been made to give information to the next-of-kin before it was made public. That that information might not come to hand till some time after the location of the plane was made public may have escaped notice. It may have been thought that that information would have been available to next-of-kin much sooner than was actually possible and before even the announcement of the plane's location was made public. The official in charge of the Prime Minister's Department denies any such instruction from that Department. Nevertheless, the Superintendent of Police wrote to the Commissioner of Police, Wellington as follows:—

Missing Lockheed Electra plane: Prime Minister's Department has instructed the Air Department that any information coming to hand concerning the recovery of bodies, &c., must not be given out until the information has been given to the Hon. Mr. Nash and to National Airways Corporation. This information instruction is being relayed from police Wellington to Ohakune police. Air Department will advise telephone 47-000 of any developments including any progress report received.

At the foot of the letter there is added—

Copy to Inspector for Senior Sergeants. Copy to District Office to telephone Ohakune. Telephone 51.

K. S. Nelson, Constable, T1225, wrote to the District Clerk, Wellington:—

Contents of the above message have been phoned to the Ohakune police at 3.10 p.m. on 29/10/48. Message was taken by Constable Phillips.