

*Mr. Gray:* But not the extent. Mr. Salmond has given the reason, and Mr. Morris has explained that the instruction was that all matter should be submitted to the Censor as it was impossible to distinguish literature from correspondence.

129. *Mr. Ostler:* There is a minute on that file signed by yourself ordering the censorship over the correspondence?—Yes.

130. You say that the Solicitor-General told you to do it?—That is so.

131. Can I see the authority on that file?—Any question affecting the Censor must be referred to him.

132. You refuse to show the order under which the censorship was placed over this correspondence?—That is for Mr. Bishop to say.

*His Worship:* It is not for me to say.

*Mr. Gray:* I take it upon myself to say that we cannot question the Censor. We have shown the genesis of the censorship.

*Mr. Ostler:* The Solicitor-General has given us a reason why he established a censorship over the literature of this box, but he has given no reason why he established a censorship over the correspondence, and that is what your Worship has to inquire into.

*Witness:* May I point out that it would be impossible to determine the question unless we stopped all the literature.

133. *Mr. Ostler:* You know that sealed letters are held sacred in the Post Office?—The Post Office does not determine any questions of this kind; they hand the letters to the Censor.

134. Is the Post Office going to produce the authority of the Solicitor-General upon which they opened that correspondence? There are directions of the Solicitor-General which he hid from us. He took very good care not to refer to any directions except those which he produced——

*Mr. Gray:* Mr. Salmond did not suppress or hide anything, or decline to disclose anything, except when he stated that Mr. Ostler was travelling beyond the scope of the inquiry.

*His Worship* [after quoting from the amended order of reference in regard to the question of censorship]: It seems to me that I have no power to order the production of this particular document.

135. *Mr. Ostler:* I would like your Worship to make a note of that, in case you decide that you have the power. (To witness.) You stated that you wanted nothing hidden?—Yes.

136. Do you not consider your action somewhat inconsistent with that statement?—No, because it affects matters which are purely for the Censor.

137. Mr. Waters said, "I hardly think this is a case in which correspondence addressed to the offender should be forbidden passage through the post." Who is the offender?—I do not know, unless he means box 912.

138. Can you tell us whether the Solicitor-General's instructions to you were in writing?—Yes.

139. You have told us that you did not know the religious denomination of any of the men in your Department?—I said I did not seek to know. It would be incorrect to say that I did not know in some cases. In cases where I am personally acquainted with men I may know.

140. Your testimony as to the number of Roman Catholics in your Department would be of little value?—Very little indeed.

141. Would you say that you have no reason to believe the charge that your Department is being crowded with Roman Catholics?—As I do not inquire, how should I know?

142. Therefore your evidence on that question does not cut much ice?—No; but if there are as great a number of Roman Catholics in my Department as you state, then there must be a greater number of Roman Catholics who are eligible than other denominations. Mind, I only suggest that.

143. I suppose men in subordinate positions are not in the habit of addressing their grievances to you?—I have never refused any officer of my Department an opportunity of discussing any matter affecting the service.

144. But not outside your Department?—No.

145. Then, you would not be in a position to know or hear of any dissatisfaction on the grounds of the number of Roman Catholics in the Service?—Except that it might come to me in the way of gossip.

146. I suppose that a high position such as yours is surrounded by so much awe that the ordinary gossip would not reach you?—I do not know that there is so much awe about the position.

147. But you do not know that the dissatisfaction does not exist?—No.

148. How is it that there was no censorship over box 912 from December, 1916, to March, 1917?—If there was not, it was because of the neglect of those responsible.

149. *Mr. Gray:* Are you in a position to say that there was no such censorship?—No. That would be better known in the Auckland office.

150. Your objection to producing the document relating to the Censor is based upon the ground that it relates to a matter over which you have no control?—Yes.

*Mr. Ostler:* It is on the Post-office file.

151. *Mr. Gray:* Of course; they have to get directions. I understand there are two classes of censorship, telegraphic and postal?—Yes.

152. Is it not a fact that the Postal Censors are men selected because of their familiarity in dealing with a great deal of correspondence?—I believe that is the case. If you refer to section 27 of the Post Office Act you will find that the Governor has authority to employ Post Office officials. I believe that is why the Postal officers were employed.

153. It was a question of the most suitable men?—Yes.

154. Is there any interference with the man in the exercise of his duties?—None.