

409. Have you inquired from the Censor as to whether he has it?—No.

410. You see, it would naturally be held up and sent to the Censor as it was addressed to box 912?—It ought to have been.

411. You have made no inquiries from the Censor as to whether he has that letter?—No.

412. Rather strange. Did you have any other complaints or inquiries about empty envelopes, emanating from box 912, besides those of Mr. Elliott?—I do not recall any. It is possible, of course, that some of my officers may have dealt with such inquiries.

413. Surely you would know whether it was so or not. Do you mean to say that you have had no complaints brought to your notice of any other of these envelopes being empty?—I do not recall any at the present moment.

414. You say you do not recall any: does that mean to say there may have been and you have forgotten them?—No. In a large office such as ours, of course, the Chief Postmaster cannot deal personally with every matter brought in front of him.

415. There may therefore have been some other complaints which did not come to your knowledge?—Exactly.

416. His Worship has allowed me to ask this question, and I will put it in a very short and general form—

*Mr. Gray:* If this relates to the censorship, I hope your Worship will hear me before my friend assumes the question will be answered.

*His Worship:* I shall tell him the form in which the question should be put: are you aware of any censorship having been established in your office against any Roman Catholic correspondence addressed either to an individual priest or to any Roman Catholic organization?

*Mr. Gray:* I submit, with due respect, that question should not be put.

*His Worship:* Will you allow me first to quote the exact words of the Commission? [Clause quoted.] It seems to me to be a matter of inference, and inference only; and the other side to you are seeking to establish that, and if it can be proved that no censorship has been established—

*Mr. Gray:* I submit that the allegation—that the proof that censorship has been established over this box 912 will not necessarily allow questions to be asked as to whether censorship has been established over the correspondence of any other organization or individual. Your Worship is empowered to inquire into the allegation that this censorship has been established over this particular box—this particular box—in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church. Any evidence showing that it has been so established is admissible. Your Worship has had the evidence of the Solicitor-General showing the reasons which actuated him in giving the advice, and following upon it the genesis of this establishment. I say it is entirely irrelevant to inquire whether the censorship has been established over the correspondence of any other individual or organization, Roman Catholic or otherwise; and I submit your Worship is not empowered by the terms of the inquiry to allow any questions on that point. Part of the Warrant which your Worship has directs that “Nothing in the said Warrant . . . or in this present Warrant shall so operate or be so construed as to authorize any inquiry into the establishment, organization, authority, or practice of the system of military censorship existing in this Dominion during the present war, save so far as any such matters, being relevant to the inquiry authorized by the said Warrants, may be voluntarily and with due authority disclosed by officers of the said censorship in the course of that inquiry, and save also the inquiry hereinbefore expressly authorized as to the grounds on which such military censorship has been established over the correspondence of the persons using the post-office box aforesaid.” I submit, therefore, your Worship, that the evidence must, by the terms of the Warrant, be limited to evidence of the fact that a censorship was established over this particular box, and of the reasons which actuated the authorities—the Censor—in establishing that censorship; and that your Worship cannot inquire, having regard to the terms of the Warrant, into the censorship of anybody else. The matter is of very great importance, of course. I am not making this objection in the interests of the Post Office, because the Post Office has no connection with the censorship beyond such as has been disclosed: the Censor is not accountable to the Post Office, and the Post Office has merely to obey the directions of the Censor. I submit, therefore, that the question, even in the form your Worship put it, tends to admit inquiry into the censorship of other individuals, other organizations, and cannot be allowed by the terms of the Warrant.

*His Worship:* I have thoroughly considered the matter during the adjournment. I admit the position is not entirely free from doubt. I foresaw difficulties with regard to the limits of my inquiry into matters connected with the censorship; but I fail to see how a question like this can in any way affect the interests of the Empire, and that was the point in my mind very strongly indeed. I am quite free to say I am a very strong Imperialist myself. I would never admit for one moment, in the interests of anybody, any question which might in any way interfere with the interests of the Empire; but in this case it is quite different. This is the view I take—I admit the position is not clear from doubt: having to inquire into the censorship of this particular box, it having been alleged it has been established in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, it is perfectly legitimate to allow a question such as I propose to put, and allow anybody to make the inference they like. It does not follow that I will make that inference—that it has been allowed in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church. They must draw the inference whether it is peculiar or not—whether the censorship has been established in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church or otherwise.

*Mr. Gray:* Suppose it is established—if it can be established—that the correspondence of certain Roman Catholics is also subject to censorship, does it necessarily follow either that the prohibition imposed upon box 912 is in the interests of Roman Catholicism—