

*His Worship:* Not at all.

*Mr. Gray:* Or the contrary? I think, then, on the question of censorship, even supposing the answer to be in the affirmative—supposing the Chief Postmaster is in a position to give the information—the answer will not tend to show one way or the other. That being so, your Worship, I submit it is not relevant to the inquiry, apart from the question of authority.

*His Worship:* Again I say I will allow the question to be put. I have got to make certain findings to His Excellency. I have not the faintest idea what the answer will be.

417. *Mr. Ostler* (to witness).] You have told us already the box of the Catholic Federation is not subject to censorship?—That is so.

418. Is there any Catholic organization whose correspondence is subject to censorship in Auckland?—

*Mr. Gray:* Your Worship said you were going to frame the question—you would allow a question in a particular form.

*His Worship:* I only did that with a view of limiting strictly the cross-examination by Mr. Ostler. I am not prepared to say his question is outside what was in my mind.

*Mr. Gray:* I wish to assure you I am not making this objection in the interests of the Post Office, but I do happen to know the views of the gentleman who advised the Censor in this particular matter, and it is only on that account I am asking your Worship to rule out any information as to the acts of the Censor.

*His Worship:* It does not give them any information. Here is a box that has been censored, and has correspondence in the interests of a particular body. They allege that the Censor is exercising censorship over their box in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church. Presumably the Roman Catholic Church has been free from any censorship of any sort whatever. I know the difficulty, Mr. Gray. I would rather the censorship had been kept out of this, because I feel I might make a mistake, but I do not think so in this case.

419. *Mr. Ostler.*] The question I ask is this: Is there any Roman Catholic organization in Auckland whose correspondence is censored in the Post Office?—I can hardly answer that in full, but I can say there is no Roman Catholic organization in New Zealand whose correspondence is censored in Auckland.

420. That will do. I will pass on. Is there any periodical or literature emanating from the Catholic Press which is censored in Auckland, such as the *Tablet* or the *Green Ray*?—

*His Worship:* Strange to say, touching that *Green Ray*, I have got a letter here I received only a few minutes ago. I will read it for what it is worth. [Letter read.]

*Mr. Ostler:* The *Green Ray* is printed for the proprietors by the Budget Limited, Bath Street, Dunedin, and published by Albert James O’Ryan at 167 Rattray Street, Dunedin. The issue I hold is the 1st June, 1917. The editorial is “Dr. Mannix—and some Others.” It starts off, “Dr. Mannix has said that ‘Murder is murder whether committed in Belgium or Ireland’”; and right through no one could read that paper without saying it is a paper printed in the interests of the Roman Catholics.

*His Worship:* I cannot say, but it is a curious thing this statement should be made when you say it is not correct. Ask the question, at any rate.

421. *Mr. Ostler.*] I will put it generally. Is there any Catholic periodical that is censored in the Auckland Post-office? Is the *Tablet* censored, for instance—they cannot disclaim responsibility for that—is that censored?—No.

422. Is the *Green Ray*?—No.

423. I have a paper which I do not claim to be a Catholic paper; it is a paper published in Australia called the *Woman Voter*. Ever heard of it?—No, I have not.

424. The most disloyal and seditious paper I have ever read. Can you tell me whether that is censored or not? I suppose you would have heard of it: do you know whether that paper is censored in the Post Office?—It is not.

*Mr. Ostler:* I believe it is edited by a lady named Miss Adela Pankhurst in Australia.

*His Worship:* We have it now from the Chief Postmaster that no Roman Catholic paper or organization is subject to censorship.

425. *Mr. Ostler* (to witness).] Have you made any inquiry in your Post-office in Auckland as to the proportion of Roman Catholics on your staff?—No.

426. I suppose you are ready to admit that there are a good many that are Roman Catholics?—I am not: I do not know.

427. You are not prepared to deny it?—No.

428. Has it not come to your knowledge that there has been friction between them and the Protestant members of your staff?—No.

429. Never?—No.

430. You have told us that the average of errors in the Post Office according to that return you prepared—by the way, have you put it in evidence?—is 0.0004?—The percentage of inquiries to the number of articles which passed through the Post Office.

431. That, put into a vulgar fraction, is one inquiry in every 2,500 postal packets?—

*His Worship:* You had better take Mr. Ostler’s arithmetic as being correct.

*Witness:* I take your figures, Mr. Ostler.

432. *Mr. Ostler.*] Do you observe that in this case the number of irregularities which we have alleged is between fifteen and twenty in 2,500?—No, not quite.

*Mr. Gray:* I do not make it fifteen or twenty. You supplied us with a list of nine empty envelopes, and three non-deliveries, and two late deliveries.

433. *Mr. Ostler.*] At any rate, I can show when the time comes the exact number. At any rate, you will admit, Mr. Williamson, the number of alleged irregularities in this inquiry is very much above the average?—The alleged irregularities, yes.