

be arriving. The constable made arrangements to close the road on the Sunday from Railway to Cowern's Mill. Early on Saturday morning received instructions from Sergeant Taylor at about 6 a.m., by radio message, to remain where I was. Colonel Pleasants arrived on Saturday morning about 9. Sightseers and other people had been arriving since 7.30. They started going up the track, including women. I told women they would not be allowed up there. I told the men if they would assist the search party they could go up, and they said they would go up and help with scrub-cutting gang when they arrived. None of these people before Colonel Pleasants came said they were pressmen. The women he stopped going up the track went out of the grounds and went away in a lorry. They were from some tramping club. On Colonel Pleasants arrival a message was conveyed to him that a message had been received through Prime Minister's Department that he was to take full charge of operations at Cowern's Mill. A sentry was placed at the gate. Colonel Pleasants and I had a talk as to necessity of passes or permits to be issued. Constable Phillips, of Ohakune, was telephoned that he should write permits giving authority for persons to enter the mill. During the morning some people arrived—some had tickets and were admitted; others did not have passes and were refused by the sentry. During the morning I had occasion to ask people to move away from the radio van. I was asked by Lieutenant Child and by Captain Slade-Jones to take that step. The people I asked to move away were both pressmen and civilians. During the morning I saw pressmen in the radio van. I actually saw pressmen with earphones up to their ears. This took place in the morning before dinner-time. When pressmen did not go away from the van I again went to them and requested him and his mate to go away. I believe this man's name is Wall and he runs a paper at Raetihi. I asked him to leave a second time. He said to me, "What authority have you anyway?" I said, "I am working under instruction of the Army, who are working in conjunction with the police, and I represent the police." He said, "The way they are running things any one would think there was a bloody war on." I said, "Anyway, have you a pass to come into this area?" He said, "Why, this is private property, anyway." I said, "If you haven't a pass and refuse to keep away from these vans as instructed you are liable to be arrested." He said, "Is this a secret service." I said, "Yes, very secret." Then he walked away, and I left him. He never produced a pass to me or said who he was, but I heard after he was a pressman. The pressman said to me, "That is just what I wanted to know. I just wanted to get things right." That was after I said to him it was very secret.

It was published in the *Auckland Star* on 1st November that I told, apparently Mr. McMillan, that I had received instructions from Wellington that no pressman was to approach the mountain. This is definitely an untruth. I had received no such instruction from Wellington. I met Mr. McMillan in Taumarunui the day previous, as a matter of fact. I knew him to be a pressman, and he was not stopped by or ordered by me to do anything. He could please himself what he did. The report says I refused the pressmen permission to move on. At no time did I tell the press they were not to move on. As a matter of fact, there are pressmen in this room I told if they wanted to interview anybody they could go up the track and interview them. While at Horopito I received no message from Constable Phillips that information was to be withheld until communicated to the National Airways Corporation and Mr. Nash. I received no instructions from any one at any time while at Horopito requesting me to withhold information from the press. I was concerned in no attempts to place restrictions on the press at Horopito apart from the general request that all people entering the mill were to have passes. Later on the Saturday a pressman informed me he had been having a conversation with Wellington. This occurred round about lunch-time. I could not place the pressman. He said he was a representative of the Press Association and that he had been in telephone communication with the Prime Minister's Department, Wellington, about the obstruction of the press from receiving information at Cowern's Mill or in the vicinity of the mountain. He told me he had received word no ban was