

to be placed on the press. I said to him, "You can please yourself, but I've instructions from the Army that no persons are to be hanging round the radio van." He said, "What about interviewing people coming down off the mountain?" I said, "You can please yourself."

Constable Roscoe says, when the pressman was objecting to his refusing permission without a pass and the pressman said it was private property, he did not, when asked what his authority was, say "I will throw you out or put you under arrest." He says he never said anything of the sort. When it was put to him that "The two reporters swear to that," he answered, "They can swear what they like; I say it is an untruth."

The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Madden, said that on Saturday he had a conversation with Constable Phillips at Ohakune early in the morning over the phone. The constable had phoned him and asked for authority to close the track up from Horopito to the mountain as they expected there would be many sightseers and others about the place and they were afraid they would impede the search party and also they might be going up the mountain and be lost and cause further trouble. He did not give an immediate answer; decided to mention the matter to the Acting Prime Minister, who was Acting Minister of Police. He rang up the Minister, and he agreed that the local police and Army authorities should be given authority to take whatever steps they thought necessary in the direction of controlling part of the mountain-track. He then telephoned Constable Phillips that information. He says on the Saturday morning following those conversations Mr. Nash communicated with him about a Press Association message which had appeared in the paper that morning. Mr. Nash said that complaint had been made to him that there was some obstruction to the press in carrying out its duty in obtaining news and so forth at the scene of the search. He said it was not intended that the press should be impeded in any way in carrying out their ordinary duties, and he asked me to get in touch with the police at Ohakune and inform them the pressmen were to be permitted to go up the mountain-track if they wished and to carry out ordinary inquiries in regard to getting news of search operations. Mr. Nash made it quite clear there was to be no interference with the press. I had no previous knowledge there had been any. I told him so. I told him that complaints had been made to the Acting Prime Minister, and I told him that the authority for closing the track did not apply in respect of pressmen, who should be allowed to use the track and should not be interfered with in any way in carrying out their work. Constable Phillips explained the steps which had been taken for closing the track and issuing of permits. After speaking to Constable Phillips much later that night I spoke to a pressman who was in the police-station at Ohakune. Later that night he also had a conversation with a pressman in the station. I cannot recollect the name of the pressman. The substance of my conversation with him was that I asked him what was the trouble with regard to the press, and he said that as far as Ohakune was concerned there was no trouble whatsoever, that they were very grateful to the police there for what they had done for them and the facilities they had afforded them. In the instructions given by me to Constable Phillips on the Saturday morning authorizing the controlling of the Cowern's Mill area there was no mention whatever of the press; none at all. My Department at no time originated any instruction as to withholding information from the press. I am not aware that there was any understanding expressed or implied that information should be withheld from the press as to the discovery of the wreck, in order that it should be first announced in Parliament.

The letters sent by the *Taranaki Daily News* to Senior Sergeant Taylor and Constable Phillips are in identical terms as follows:—

Relative to the recent search for the airliner Kaka and subsequent rescue operations I desire to express to you on behalf of our literary staff our deep appreciation of the co-operation and assistance you rendered our reporters. Although we experienced difficulties elsewhere our men have told me that no one could have been more helpful than you were, not only on this occasion but at many previous times and I want to assure you that we are very grateful for your help.