

NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

(Incorporated)

Organised 1885

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"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

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"For God, and Home, and Humanity"

WELLINGTON, JULY 1, 1948.

SOME LIQUOR PROBLEMS

In view of the expected legislation on the issues to be placed on the ballot paper for the next Liquor Poll, it is encouraging and very interesting to note that there is a decided awakening of the Churches to the dangers involved and to their own responsibility in regard thereto.

The Presbyterian Assembly's Temperance Committee has issued a statement which clarifies the position thus:

"In view of the published statement that an endeavour is being made to design a ballot paper which would give the electors an opportunity to vote for Trust Control **applying to the retail trade only** the Committee makes the following statement:

"The recommendation of the Royal Commission on Licensing regarding the ballot paper contained the following—

"1,775. In view of the **substantial body of evidence** in favour of a vote upon corporate control of the whole trade, we recommend that the ballot paper for the national poll should be divided into two parts as follows:—

Part I

I vote for Continuance (subject to the vote in Part II).
I vote for Prohibition.

Part II

(To operate if Continuance is carried)

I vote for Corporate Control.

I vote against Corporate Control.

"In Part II we use the words 'I vote against Corporate Control' instead of 'I vote for Private Enterprise,' because, if Corporate Control is **not carried**, 'private ownership' would not be apt to describe a system which included the Invercargill Licensing Trust or the holding of a License by a City Council or Borough Council, if our recommendation in respect of these Councils is adopted.

"We heartily support this recommendation for a vote on the control of the **whole** trade and will organise the strongest possible opposition to any proposal to limit the vote to the retail trade only. In our view, such a proposal would deny the electors any real opportunity to authorise a test of the effectiveness of Trust Control, as it would leave the area of greatest influence and power still under the incentive of private profit. The Control must be over the whole trade, importation, manufacture, sale (wholesale and retail). Anything less would be no real test at all.

"We urge those who are framing the legislation to give effect to the Commission's recommendation based on a 'substantial body of evidence.'
"J. DOUGLAS SMITH, Convener."

Apropos of the same position the Minutes of the last meeting of the Alliance Executive contain the following paragraph:—

"The General Superintendent reported certain information regarding the trend in Liquor Legislation. It was certain a Bill would be introduced in the forthcoming session. It was proposed to change the Ballot Paper. Corporate Control was a second preference, but it eliminated reference to breweries, and apparently there was no provision for a vote on this issue. A Redistribution Board was to be set up, redundant licenses were to be cancelled, and in localities where they proposed a new license, a vote was provided on Trust or Private enterprise. This was considered **most unsatisfactory**, as the residents should be entitled to say whether they wanted any form of license or no-license. The period between polls was probably not being interfered with, but a referendum at the next poll would provide for a vote on sale of liquor during evening hours."

An article in the N.Z. "Herald" of June 12 tells of action taken by the Temperance Committee of the Baptist Union Auxiliary of Canterbury. In a letter sent to the Minister of Industries and Commerce, Mr. Nordmeyer, the following question is asked:—

"This auxiliary respectfully asks the Minister on what basis the licensing trade has been granted such greatly increased import licences for the importation of intoxicating liquors."

In a statement, the Rev. F. G. Reddell said: "Whereas the value of import licences since the war has been determined mainly by 1938 figures, except in the case of important things in the national economy, a very different story is apparent in the importation of wines and spirits, whose claim to importance in the national economy, must surely be hard to substantiate. The average annual value of wines imported in 1939-1946 was £64,527, but the value of wines imported in 1947 was £132,764, which was an increase of more than 100 per cent. The value of spirits imported in 1938 was £586,165, compared with £687,100 in 1947, an increase of more than £100,000. The total quantity of liquor imported in 1947 was 100,000 more gallons than in 1939.

"We believe that many perplexed commercial importers will be as interested as we are, both in this disturbing inequality and in the Minister's explanation of it," Mr. Reddell concluded.

Close to this article appears an advertisement of a brand of stout. It claims that the man who takes it maintains his strength, fortifies his health and keeps up his energy. "There is no doubt," the advertisement continues, "about its healthful properties." Then follows a list of the ingredients supposed to produce these results but no mention is made of the fact that their good qualities are neutralised and destroyed by the alcohol which is also there. "It is a grand vitaliser and body-builder—the ideal tonic for anybody 'off colour' or 'run down,' and for convalescents and the elderly."

What are we doing about this sort of thing? An organised campaign should be started at once—indeed it is well overdue. For statements like this to be shamelessly placed in prominent parts of the daily papers is a challenge calling for determination and energy in the response made by those who espouse the cause of Temperance.