

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## *The NZETC epub Edition*

This is an **epub** version of **The Home Front Volume I** by Author: from the **NZETC**, licenced under the **Conditions of use** (<http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-NZETC-About-copyright.html>).

For more information on what this licence allows you to do with this work, please contact [director@nzetc.org](mailto:director@nzetc.org).

The NZETC is a digital library based at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. We publish texts of interest to a New Zealand and Pacific audience, and current strengths include **historical New Zealand and Pacific Islands** texts, texts in Maori and **New Zealand literature**. A **full list of texts** is available on our website (<http://www.nzetc.org/>).

Please report errors, including where you obtained this file, how you tried to access the file and details of the error. Errors, feedback and comments can be sent to [director@nzetc.org](mailto:director@nzetc.org).

## *About the electronic version*

**The Home Front Volume I**

**Author: Taylor, Nancy M.**

**Creation of machine-readable version: TechBooks, Inc.**

**Creation of digital images: TechBooks, Inc.**

**Conversion to TEI.2-conformant markup: TechBooks, Inc.**

**New Zealand Electronic Text Centre, 2004  
Wellington, New Zealand**

**Extent: ca. 2400 kilobytes**

**Illustrations have been included from the original source.**

## *About the print version*

### **The Home Front Volume I**

**Author: Taylor, Nancy M.**

**Historical Publications Branch, Department Of Internal Affairs, 1986  
Wellington, New Zealand**

**Source copy consulted: Defence Force Library, New Zealand**

### **Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939–45**

## *Encoding*

**Prepared for the New Zealand Electronic Text Centre as part of the  
Official War History project.**

**The digital edition of this book was sponsored by Mary Weston, daughter  
of General Sir Howard Kippenberger who served as one of the Editors-in-  
Chief of the Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War.**

**All unambiguous end-of-line hyphens have been removed, and the  
trailing part of a word has been joined to the preceding line. Every effort  
has been made to preserve the Māori macron using unicode.**

**Some keywords in the header are a local Electronic Text Centre scheme  
to aid in establishing analytical groupings.**

## *Revisions to the electronic version*

**3 December 2004**

**Colin Doig**

**Added name tags around names of various people, places, and  
organisations.**

**31 August 2004**

**Jamie Norrish**

**Added link markup for project in TEI header.**

**2 August 2004**

**Jamie Norrish**

**Added funding details to header.**

**2 June 2004**

**Jamie Norrish**

**Completed TEI header.**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## *Contents*

[covers]

**Official History of New Zealand — in the Second World War —  
1939–45 — THE HOME FRONT p. i**

[frontispiece] **p. ii**

[title page] **p. iii**

**Foreword p. v**

**OFFICIAL HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND IN THE SECOND WORLD  
WAR 1939–45 p. viii**

**Preface p. xi**

**Contents p. xv**

**List of Illustrations p. xvii**

**Abbreviations p. xxi**

**Metric Conversion p. xxix**

**CHAPTER 1 — The End of Waiting p. 1**

**CHAPTER 2 — Impact of War p. 22**

**CHAPTER 3 — The First Moves p. 68**

**CHAPTER 4 — Response from the Home Front p. 133**

**CHAPTER 5 — Pacifism p. 171**

**CHAPTER 6 — A Dissenting Minority p. 209**

**CHAPTER 7 — Conscientious Objectors and Defaulters p. 244**

**CHAPTER 8 — Blood is Spilt p. 286**

**CHAPTER 9 — The Menace of Japan p. 314**

**CHAPTER 10 — War Comes to the Pacific p. 330**

**CHAPTER 11 — The Challenge is Accepted p. 372**

**CHAPTER 12 — Defence by the People p. 450**

**CHAPTER 13 — Russia and the War p. 574**

**CHAPTER 14 — The American Invasion p. 621**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## *Contents*

[covers]

**Official History of New Zealand — in the Second World War — 1939–45 — THE HOME FRONT p. i**

[frontispiece] p. ii

[title page] p. iii

**Foreword p. v**

**OFFICIAL HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939–45 p. viii**

**Preface p. xi**

**Contents p. xv**

**List of Illustrations p. xvii**

**Abbreviations p. xxi**

**Metric Conversion p. xxix**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## [COVERS]



*Official History of the Dominion  
of New Zealand* (1914-19)

THE  
NEW ZEALAND PEOPLE  
AT WAR

THE HOME FRONT

by  
NANCY M. GAYBAR

VOLUME I

LEGISLATIVE PUBLICATIONS BRANCH  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS



H. E. SHAW, GOVERNMENT PRINTER,  
WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND, 1945

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

OFFICIAL HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND – IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR –  
1939-45 – THE HOME FRONT

*Official History of New Zealand  
in the Second World War  
1939-45  
THE HOME FRONT*



# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## [FRONTISPIECE]



*Army personnel engaged in harvesting.*

**Army personnel engaged in harvesting**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

[TITLE PAGE]

*Official History of New Zealand  
in the Second World War 1939–45*

THE  
NEW ZEALAND PEOPLE  
AT WAR  
THE HOME FRONT  
VOLUME I

NANCY M. TAYLOR

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS BRANCH  
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS



V. R. WARD, GOVERNMENT PRINTER,

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND—1986 ©Crown Copyright Reserved 1986

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be produced by any  
means,

electronic, mechanical, electrostatic photocopying or otherwise, or  
stored in a

retrieval system, without the prior permission of the Government  
Printing  
Office.

ISBN 0-477-01259-0

Typeset in 12pt Garamond and printed on 85gsm Mataura Cream Opaque  
Printing. Book typeset, printed and bound at the **Government Printing  
Office,**

Mulgrave Street, **Wellington.**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## FOREWORD

### *Foreword*

**THIS** book is the final volume of the Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War. This fact in itself immediately conjures up sharply etched pictures of notable New Zealanders who were involved in the planning and production of that multi-volumed History: Prime Minister Peter Fraser, a man of large capabilities, who had led the country firmly and perceptively throughout the greater part of the war and who worked so hard for a just peace; Dr E. H. McCormick, who had been the archivist for the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force and who was both an innovator and a prime mover in most of the proposals that led to the political decision to have the Official History written; **Major-General Sir Howard Kippenberger**, a great New Zealander who uniquely combined the highest soldierly and scholarly qualities, and who was appointed Editor-in-Chief in February 1946; **Dr J. C. Beaglehole**, that most peace-loving of men who in his role as Historical Adviser to the Department of Internal Affairs had made a challenging team-mate for that Department's far-sighted head, Joseph Heenan, and who now made available to a small, soon to become dedicated, staff the highest precepts of scholarly performance; Professor F. L. W. Wood, always ready to wrestle with the many professional problems that continuously surrounded a project of such size and who himself wrote the volume entitled *Political and External Affairs*, the only major title to be reprinted; **W. A. Glue**, who sub-edited—or indeed in some cases edited—the complete Official History with the exception of this final volume, a contribution which has often been overlooked.

It is into this context that this book must be fitted. The final plan for the Official History divided the work into four series. The major series, 'Campaign and Service Volumes', comprised twenty-four volumes (including an out-of-period volume *The New Zealanders in South Africa*,

1899–1902), covering in separate volumes the war in the **Pacific**, the major campaigns such as those in **Greece**, **Crete**, Egypt and on until the final North African campaign in Tunisia, and, in two volumes, **Italy**. It included volumes on medical and dental services, the Royal New Zealand Navy and the Royal New Zealand Air Force; three volumes covering the activities of New Zealanders with the **Royal Air Force**; and three volumes of documents that go far in revealing the political involvement of New Zealand in the war.

Then there is a series, 'Unit Histories', covering the units of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force in the **Middle East** and **Italy**, twenty-one titles in all. Histories of New Zealand units which had served in the **Pacific** were written under separate arrangement. In this series the regiments, battalions and companies are treated informally and in sufficient detail to do justice to those who served in them.

A third series, 'Episodes and Studies', in which there are twenty-four titles, was published with the aim of reaching a wide public with brief but carefully compiled and illustrated accounts of specific aspects of the war, such as life aboard a troopship, coastwatching in New Zealand and the **Pacific**, long-range desert patrols, aerial and naval combat, and so on. There is much good history in this series.

Finally there is the fourth series, 'The New Zealand People at War', of which two volumes, *Political and External Affairs*, by F. L. W. Wood, and *War Economy*, by J. V. T. Baker, are already published. *The Home Front*, to complete the series, is very much the story of a people at war, treating the people separately from the armed services which they supported so well, so skilfully, with both love and anguish, for six years of war.

When **Brigadier M. C. Fairbrother**, who had become Editor-in-Chief on **General Kippenberger's** death in May 1957, asked Wellington historian **Nancy Taylor** to undertake the research and writing of the 'social history', only two things were known for certain—that it was an enormous job and that **Mrs Taylor** was capable of doing it. Two

impressive publications already stood to her credit, for she had edited *Early Travellers in New Zealand* and the *Journal of Ensign Best*. But no one had any idea of the interaction between Industry, persistence, perception, professionalism, compassion and vision, and the sheer bulk of the material that she examined. Her thoroughness, together with the many demands of her private life, explain the time it has taken to produce this book.

**Mrs Taylor** has arranged in orderly sequence the events that press upon civilian existence in a time of war. Some of these events are important, even dramatic, some in their gradual unfolding of seemingly slight significance. Taken together they represent elements that constitute the day-to-day preoccupations of a nation at war. Looking back, after a lapse of some forty years, we are aware that life then was very different from life today, in domestic matters, in political affairs, in religion, education and in much else. Whether as a nation we have changed for good or ill may be a matter for debate, but no one will dispute that **Mrs Taylor** has set out, always with clarity and often with wit, the nature of life during the Second World War.

The book presents a carefully documented evidential account of what that life was all about. It is largely left to others to draw conclusions and to formulate social theories from the evidence. In her long and patient collection and presentation of so much material evidence, **Mrs Taylor** has shown herself fully entitled to be numbered with those other 'greats' evoked at the beginning of this Foreword.

I. McL. Wards

Chief Historian

Historical Publications Branch

29 November 1982

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## OFFICIAL HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-45

### OFFICIAL HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-45

#### Campaign and Service Volumes

- Gillespie, Oliver *The Pacific* (1952)  
A.
- McClymont, W. *To Greece* (1959)  
G.
- Davin, D. M. *Crete* (1953)
- Murphy, W. E. *The Relief of Tobruk* (1961)
- Scoullar, J. L. *Battle for Egypt* (1955)
- Walker, Ronald *Alam Halfa to Alamein* (1967)
- Stevens, Major-General W. G. *Bardia to Enfidaville* (1962)
- Phillips, N. C. *Italy, Volume I: The Sangro to Cassino* (1957)
- Kay, Robin *Italy, Volume II: From Cassino to Trieste* (1967)
- Anson, T. V. *The New Zealand Dental Services* (1960)
- Mason, W. *Prisoners of War* (1954)
- Wynne
- Ross, Squadron-Leader J. M. S. *Royal New Zealand Air Force* (1955)
- Stevens, Major-General W. G. *Problems of 2 NZEF* (1958)
- Stout, T. *War Surgery and Medicine* (1954)
- Duncan M.
- *New Zealand Medical Services in Middle East and Italy* (1956)
- *Medical Services in New Zealand and the Pacific* (1958)
- Thompson, Wing-Commander H. L. *New Zealanders with the Royal Air Force, Volumes I-III* (1953, 1956, 1959)

**Waters, S. D.** *Royal New Zealand Navy (1956)*  
*Documents Relating to New Zealand's Participation in the Second World War, Volumes I-III (1949, 1951, 1963)*

**The New Zealand People at War**

**Wood, F. L. W.** *Political and External Affairs (1958)*

**Baker, J. V. T.** *War Economy (1965)*

**Taylor, Nancy M** *The Home Front, Volumes I-II (1986)*

**Unit Histories**

**Dawson, W. D.** *18 Battalion and Armoured Regiment (1961)*

**Sinclair, D. W.** *19 Battalion and Armoured Regiment (1954)*

**Pringle, D. J. C. and W. A. Glue** *20 Battalion and Armoured Regiment (1957)*

**Cody, J. F.** *21 Battalion (1953)*

**Henderson, Jim** *22 Battalion (1958)*

**Ross, Angus** *23 Battalion (1959)*

**Burdon, R. M.** *24 Battalion (1953)*

**Puttick, Lieutenant-General Sir Edward** *25 Battalion (1960)*

**Norton, Frazer D** *26 Battalion (1952)*

**Kay, Robin** *27 (Machine Gun) Battalion (1958)*

**Cody, J. F.** *28 (Maori) Battalion (1956)*

**Bates, P. W.** *Supply Company (1955)*

**Borman, C. A.** *Divisional Signals (1954)*

**Cody, J. F.** *New Zealand Engineers, Middle East (1961)*

**Henderson, Jim** *RMT: Official History of the 4th and 6th Reserve Mechanical Transport Companies (1954)*

**Kidson, A. L.** *Petrol Company (1961)*

**Llewellyn, S. P.** *Journey Towards Christmas (1st Ammunition Company) (1949)*

**Loughnan, R. J. M.** *Divisional Cavalry (1963)*

**McKinney, J. B.** *Medical Units of 2 NZEF in Middle East and Italy (1952)*

**Murphy, W. E.** *2 New Zealand Divisional Artillery (1967)*

**Underhill, Rev M. L., et al.** *New Zealand Chaplains in the Second World War (1950)*

**Episodes and Studies**

**Volume Guns Against Tanks, E. H. Smith; Women at War, D. O. W.**

1: Hall; *Achilles at the River Plate*, S. D. Waters; *Troopships*, S. P. Llewellyn; *The Assault on Rabaul*, J. M. S. Ross; *German Raiders in the Pacific*, S. D. Waters; *Prisoners of Germany*, D. O. W. Hall; *Prisoners of Italy*, D. O. W. Hall; *Prisoners of Japan*, D. O. W. Hall; *Long Range Desert Group in Libya*, R. L. Kay; *Long Range Desert Group in the Mediterranean*, R. L. Kay; *Wounded in Battle*, J. B. McKinney

Volume 2: *Aircraft Against U-boat*, H. L. Thompson; *Early Operations with Bomber Command*, B. G. Clare; *New Zealanders in the Battle of Britain*, N. W. Faircloth; *Leander*, S. D. Waters; *Malta Airmen*, J. A. Whelan; *Takrouna*, I. McL. Wards; *Coast watchers*, D. O. W. Hall; *The RNZAF in South-East Asia, 1941-42*, H. R. Dean; *'The Other Side of the Hill'*, I. McL. Wards et al.; *Special Service in Greece*, M. B. McGlynn; *Point 175*, W. E. Murphy; *Escapes*, D. O. W. Hall

(These 24 booklets were first issued as individual publications, 1948-1954.)

All titles were published at **Wellington**, those before 1966 by the **War History Branch**, Department of Internal Affairs, the remainder by the **Historical Publications Branch**.



# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## PREFACE

### *Preface*

**NEW Zealand has industriously recorded its participation in the Second World War. Forty-four solid books about the forces, accounts of army, navy and air force operations, of medical matters and prisoners of war, of special military units, are rounded off with 'The New Zealand People at War', a series of three titles on civilian aspects. Professor F. L. W. Wood's *Political and External Affairs* (1958) and J. V. T. Baker's *War Economy* (1965), close-packed mines of information, perception and assessment, have long proved their worth. Stragglings up years behind, but closely linked with both, *The Home Front* seeks to cover areas which may have been touched upon but were not dealt with. The term 'grass-roots' inevitably, if presumptuously, comes to mind in this attempt at a social history of a community during six years when its main energies were directed to war. Despite the comprehensive treatment, readers will certainly think of things that are untouched. The social elements of history invite almost limitless exploration, illustration and qualification. Even two volumes impose stringent limits: the original draft was cut by about 150 000 words. Most of this pruning was healthy condensation and trimming of illustrative detail, but a few background pieces had to join the scrap-pile. The topics treated and the extent of the treatment are to some degree subjective; another person could have produced a very different account. I have felt throughout that I have merely scratched the surface and further material will certainly be found to cast new light on dim or unknown places. I hope that this is but a start on the social history of New Zealand in the Second World War and that others will pursue further the many enticing topics merely touched on here, let alone those untouched.**

**Newspapers were a main source, and the liberal access that I was given to those held by the *General Assembly Library* has been vital. I am**

deeply grateful to successive Librarians, James Wilson, Hillas MacLean and Ian Mathieson, and their staffs, for use of this material and other assistance. In the war years, through the Press Association, many local reports appeared in very similar form in papers far from their starting places. Sometimes where a report of, say, a **Wellington** incident was first noticed in an **Auckland** paper, it may be attributed to that source if **Wellington** papers seen later showed much the same story. Occasionally, more distant papers even printed an extra detail or two; sometimes special correspondents gave a little more information. Investigative journalism had not arrived in New Zealand and the description of press censorship in the text indicates the limitations. But newspaper reports, editorials and correspondence taken together give something of the situation as presented to and understood by people at the time. In many cases, information now available from official sources has filled in the gaps and, wherever possible, events are depicted more as they really happened than as wartime restrictions permitted people to perceive them. Nevertheless, it has been part of my purpose to make clear both versions.

I am deeply grateful to Michael Hitchings and his staff at the **Hocken Library**, University of Otago, for making the J. T. Paul Papers available most freely. The Alexander Turnbull Library, under A. G. Bagnall and J. E. Traue, has been very helpful, as always. **National Archives**, under the late John Pascoe and Judith Hornabrook, assisted me greatly in lending the relevant narratives prepared by the **War History Branch** and in producing records of departmental war effort. From the latter I am sure that future and more specialised histories will find much that space would not permit to be probed here.

I thank the Department of Labour for the use of an MS register of strikes. I am indebted also to all the people who responded to an appeal made in the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* in 1969 for ration books and recollections. The ration books formed a mosaic evoking domestic limitations that are hard to imagine or even remember when shops are crammed. Of the recollections, a few quoted directly are acknowledged

**in the footnotes; all of them added to my understanding and, often invisibly, have helped to shape presentation. Because so many are thus hidden, I have not included in the list of sources used those actually quoted.**

**Special thanks go to the late Reverend Ormond Burton, who gave much information and illumination on the pacifist movement, and to Professor J. R. McCreary, who read over and added to the section on conscientious objectors. Janet Paul's guidance in the piece on painting was almost the writing of it.**

**Finally, most profound thanks are due to the Historical Publications Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs. Penelope Wheeler is entirely responsible for the biographical footnotes, apart from a great deal of diligent typing and general editorial work. Ian Wards, as editor, has been infinitely patient, stimulating and exacting in the search towards clarity, accuracy and proportion. Adequate thanks are impossible, but it should be known that he has knocked out a great many faults and bulges, demanded checks, encouraged, worked over problems, and polished everywhere, his zeal lit always with understanding and humour. Any merits are much of his making.**

**Special thanks also go to Ian McGibbon, the current Chief Historian, and proofreader Maree McKenzie for their exacting labours in seeing the work through the press, and to the Government Printing Office staff for their contribution to the production of this book. The index was compiled by Debbie Jones.**

**N. M. T.**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CONTENTS

### *Contents*

	<i>Page</i>
<b>FOREWORD</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</b>	<b>xvii</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xxi</b>
<b>METRIC CONVERSION</b>	<b>xxix</b>
 <i>Volume 1</i>	
<b>1 The End of Waiting</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Impact of War</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>3 The First Moves</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>4 Response from the Home Front</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>5 Pacifism</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>6 A Dissenting Minority</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>7 Conscientious Objectors and Defaulters</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>8 Blood is Spilt</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>9 The Menace of <b>Japan</b></b>	<b>314</b>
<b>10 War Comes to the <b>Pacific</b></b>	<b>330</b>
<b>11 The Challenge is Accepted</b>	<b>372</b>
<b>12 Defence by the People</b>	<b>450</b>
<b>13 <b>Russia</b> and the War</b>	<b>574</b>
<b>14 The American Invasion</b>	<b>621</b>
 <i>Volume II</i>	
<b>15 Manpower is Directed</b>	<b>663</b>
<b>16 The Shoe Pinches</b>	<b>742</b>
<b>17 More Shortages</b>	<b>797</b>
<b>18 Aliens</b>	<b>851</b>
<b>19 Censorship</b>	<b>886</b>
<b>20 Camp Followers</b>	<b>1014</b>
<b>21 Women at War</b>	<b>1053</b>
<b>22 Education</b>	<b>1116</b>
<b>23 The Arts Survive</b>	<b>1183</b>

**24 Victory at Last**

**1219**

**SOURCES**

**1297**

**INDEX**

**1309**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### *List of Illustrations*

**PHOTOGRAPHS (all held by the [Alexander Turnbull Library](#))**

*Frontispiece*  
**Volume I**

**Army personnel engaged in harvesting. *War History Collection***

*facing p.*  
**194**

**Peter Fraser. *Reeds Collection***

**Conscientious objectors. *War History Collection***

**Conscientious objectors in a detention camp.**

**Liberty Loan poster. *Gordon Burt Collection***

**Draught horses in Awatere Valley, [Marlborough](#), 1945. *War History Collection***

**Sheep droving in the Wairarapa. *War History Collection***

**Parliament grounds dug up for air raid shelters, 1941. *War History Collection***

**Entrance to an air raid shelter in Parliament grounds. *War History Collection***

**Hutt Road, showing headlight restriction notices, 1943. *Evening Post Collection***

**Installing blackout curtains. *War History Collection***

**Race meeting at [Trentham](#), March 1943. *War History Collection***

**Soldiers working on the waterfront at [Auckland](#). *War History Collection***

**The Somes Battalion, [Home Guard](#), on a route march from [Petone](#) to [Eastbourne](#), 1943. *War History Collection***

*facing p.*  
**418**

**Sir Apirana Ngata. *S. P. Andrew Collection***

**J. G. Coates. *War History Collection***

**Peter Fraser with New Zealand servicemen in England. *War***

***History Collection***

**A school air raid shelter at [Devonport](#), [Auckland](#). *War History Collection***

**An air raid shelter under construction, [Auckland](#), April 1942. *War History Collection***

**Four St John ambulance nurses at the opening of the Centennial Memorial meeting house, Tawakeheimoa, at Te Awahou. *Pascoe Collection***

**EPS personnel practice first-aid.**

**Maori section of the Women's National Service Corps on parade.**

**Women's National Service Corps digging trenches. *War History Collection***

**Home Guardsmen. *Evening Post Collection***

**Men of the Elmwood Home Guard prepared for work on defences, December 1941. *War History Collection***

**Crib (snack) time in a wet mine, Stockton, 1944. *War History Collection***

**Denniston, 1945. *Pascoe Collection***

**[United States](#) troops at [Paekakariki](#), 1942. *War History Collection***

**[United States](#) marines lined up with their mess gear, [Paekakariki](#), 1943. *War History Collection***

**Polish refugees, 1945. *Pascoe Collection***

**Free apples for school children. *War History Collection***

***Frontispiece*  
*Volume II***

**National Savings poster.**

***facing p.*  
*866***

**Waste metal collection. *War History Collection***

**Glass and paper conservation. *War History Collection***

**A winchdriver unloading war material, 1943. *Pascoe Collection***

**Soldiers building a haystack, [Hamilton](#), 1944. *War History Collection***

**Ration books being issued by the Post and Telegraph Department at [Auckland](#), April 1942. *War History Collection***

**A ration book page**

**The Coast Watching Station at Oteranga Bay, only accessible by horse, 1943. *Pascoe Collection***

**Patriotic poster designed by the Governor-General, Lord Galway. *Evening Post Collection***

**Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt talking to Mrs Janet Fraser at **Auckland** Airport, 1943. *Pascoe Collection***

**Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt and J. T. Paul, Director of Publicity, at **Government House**, 1943. *Pascoe Collection***

**Girl Guides in **Auckland** making camouflage nets. *War History Collection***

**Aircraft construction at the de Havilland plant in **Wellington**, 1943. *War History Collection***

****Red Cross** supplies being loaded at Wellington Wharf. *War History Collection***

**Gift food being loaded for despatch to **Britain**, January 1948. *War History Collection***

**A munitions factory, 1943. *Pascoe Collection***

**Manufacture of helmets. *Gordon Burt Collection***

*facing p.*  
**1090**

**A member of the Women's Land Service holding a lamb for tailing at **Porangahau**. *War History Collection***

**Battledress being manufactured at Cathie & Sons Ltd. *War History Collection***

**Aircraft being constructed. *War History Collection***

**Grenade making at **Christchurch**. *War History Collection***

**Cabbages grown by the Department of Agriculture for use by United States forces, **Levin**, 1943. *War History Collection***

**A **Levin** vegetable farm, producing vegetables for reciprocal lend lease. *Pascoe Collection***

**Cabinetmakers at work at the Disabled Servicemen's Centre, Christchurch. *War History Collection***

**Motor tow-boats built in **Auckland** for the **United States** armed forces being launched in 1943. *War History Collection***

**Loading rounds into ammunition clips at the Colonial Ammunition Company's factory, **Hamilton**, 1944. *War History Collection***



**Woman tram conductor, Wellington, 1943. *War History Collection***

**A stack of stripped flax fibre ready for the manufacturing process with a flax bush in the foreground, Foxton, 1945. *War History Collection***

**New housing estate, Naenae, 1944. *Evening Post Collection***

**Celebrating VE Day, Lambton Quay, Wellington, 8 May 1945. *War History Collection***

**Canadian sailors in Wellington on VJ Day, 15 August 1945. *War History Collection***

**The return of the 28th (Maori) Battalion, Wellington, 1947. Two kuias express grief for the relatives of soldiers who died overseas. *War History Collection***

**Soldiers' cemetery, Karori, Wellington, 1944. *War History Collection***

## **DOCUMENTS**

	<i>page</i>
<b>Permit for Railway Journey</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>Red Cross leaflet</b>	<b>485</b>
<b>Evacuation card</b>	<b>539</b>
<b>Approval notice for application for pair of gumboots</b>	<b>774</b>
<b>CARTOONS (all by Minhinnick, <i>New Zealand Herald</i>)</b>	
<b>'Westfield Aftermath'</b>	<b>384</b>
<b>'To be, or not to be'</b>	<b>411</b>
<b>'Moon-struck'</b>	<b>412</b>
<b>'Here———There'</b>	<b>414</b>
<b>'Shrunk in the Wash'</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>'The Ins and Outs'</b>	<b>492</b>
<b>'Reply Paid'</b>	<b>610</b>
<b>'They say she knows where there's some wool!'</b>	<b>763</b>
<b>"Come and get it!"</b>	<b>782</b>
<b>'Austerity Christmas'</b>	<b>794</b>
<b>'Buttercuts and Dazes'</b>	<b>819</b>
<b>'We Have no Pyjamas To-day'</b>	<b>844</b>
<b>'Simple Blackout Hints, No. 163'</b>	<b>910</b>
<b>'Prisoner of War?'</b>	<b>943</b>



# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## ABBREVIATIONS

### *Abbreviations*

<b>A to J</b>	<b><i>Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives</i></b>
<b>ad</b>	<b>advertisement</b>
<b>admin</b>	<b>administration</b>
<b>Admlty</b>	<b>Admiralty</b>
<b>aet</b>	<b>aged</b>
<b>AEWS</b>	<b>Army Education and Welfare Service</b>
<b>Aff</b>	<b>Affairs</b>
<b>AIF</b>	<b>Australian Imperial Force</b>
<b>ANZUS</b>	<b>Australia–New Zealand– United States</b>
<b>App</b>	<b>Appendix</b>
<b>Assn, Assoc</b>	<b>Association, Associated</b>
<b>ARP</b>	<b>Air Raid Precautions</b>
<b>ASRS</b>	<b>Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants</b>
<b>Asst</b>	<b>Assistant</b>
<b>ATC</b>	<b>Air Training Corps</b>
<b>ATL</b>	<b>Alexander Turnbull Library</b>
<b>AUC</b>	<b>Auckland University College (now University of Auckland)</b>
<b>Auck</b>	<b>Auckland</b>
<b>Aust</b>	<b>Australia</b>
<b>b</b>	<b>born</b>
<b>BBC</b>	<b>British Broadcasting Corporation</b>
<b>b'casting</b>	<b>broadcasting</b>
<b>Bd</b>	<b>Board</b>
<b>BEF</b>	<b>British Expeditionary Force</b>
<b>BEM</b>	<b>British Empire Medal</b>
<b>BHS</b>	<b>Boys High School</b>
<b>BMA</b>	<b>British Medical Association</b>
<b>br</b>	<b>Branch</b>
<b>C &amp; P</b>	<b>Censorship &amp; Publicity</b>
<b>Cab</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>

<b>Canty</b>	<b>Canterbury</b>
<b>CAS</b>	<b>Chief of the Air Staff</b>
<b>CB</b>	<b>Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath</b>
<b>CBE</b>	<b>Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire</b>
<b>CBS</b>	<b>Columbia Broadcasting System</b>
<b>CIGS</b>	<b>Chief of the Imperial General Staff</b>
<b>CGS</b>	<b>Chief of the General Staff</b>
<b>CH</b>	<b>Companion of Honour</b>
<b>Chanc Exch</b>	<b>Chancellor of the Exchequer</b>
<b>Chap</b>	<b>Chaplain</b>
<b>Chch</b>	<b>Christchurch</b>
<b>chmn</b>	<b>chairman</b>
<b>C-in-C</b>	<b>Commander-in-Chief</b>
<b>cmdr</b>	<b>commanding officer</b>
<b>CMG</b>	<b>Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George</b>
<b>Cmssn</b>	<b>Commission</b>
<b>Cmssnr</b>	<b>Commissioner</b>
<b>cmte</b>	<b>committee</b>
<b>Cncl</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>CNS</b>	<b>Chief of Naval Staff</b>
<b>Co</b>	<b>Company</b>
<b>Col</b>	<b>Colonel, colonial</b>
<b>Conf</b>	<b>Conference</b>
<b>Co-op</b>	<b>Co-operative</b>
<b>Corp</b>	<b>Corporation</b>
<b>CORSO</b>	<b>Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas</b>
<b>COS</b>	<b>Chiefs of Staff</b>
<b>CPS</b>	<b>Christian Pacifist Society</b>
<b>CSI</b>	<b>Companion of the Order of the Star of <b>India</b></b>
<b>CStJ</b>	<b>Companion of the Order of St John of Jerusalem</b>
<b>CUC</b>	<b>Canterbury University College (now University of Canterbury)</b>
<b>C'wealth</b>	<b>Commonwealth</b>
<b>d</b>	<b>died</b>
<b>DCM</b>	<b>Distinguished Conduct Medal</b>
<b>DBE</b>	<b>Dame of the British Empire</b>

<b>Def Dep</b>	<b>Defence Deputy</b>
<b>Dept</b>	<b>Department</b>
<b>DFC</b>	<b>Distinguished Flying Cross</b>
<b>DHS</b>	<b>District High School</b>
<b>Dir</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Div</b>	<b>Division</b>
<b>Dom</b>	<b>Dominion</b>
<b>DSIR</b>	<b>Department of Scientific and Industrial Research</b>
<b>DSM</b>	<b>Distinguished Service Medal</b>
<b>DSO</b>	<b>Distinguished Service Order</b>
<b>Dun</b>	<b>Dunedin</b>
<b>Ed</b>	<b>Editor</b>
<b>ED</b>	<b>Efficiency Decoration</b>
<b>Educ</b>	<b>Education, educated</b>
<b>EFS</b>	<b>Emergency Fire Service</b>
<b>EPS</b>	<b>Emergency Precautions Scheme</b>
<b>Exec</b>	<b>Executive</b>
<b>Ext Aff</b>	<b>External Affairs</b>
<b>FCIS</b>	<b>Fellow of Chartered Institute of Secretaries</b>
<b>fdtn</b>	<b>foundation</b>
<b>Fedn</b>	<b>Federation</b>
<b>FNZIE</b>	<b>Fellow of New Zealand Institute of Engineers</b>
<b>FoL</b>	<b>Federation of Labour</b>
<b>FRAM</b>	<b>Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music</b>
<b>FRCS</b>	<b>Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons</b>
<b>FRS</b>	<b>Fellow of the <a href="#">Royal Society</a></b>
<b>GBE</b>	<b>Knight Grand Cross of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire</b>
<b>GCB</b>	<b>Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath</b>
<b>GCIE</b>	<b>Knight Grand Commander of the Indian Empire</b>
<b>GCMG</b>	<b>Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George</b>
<b>GCSI</b>	<b>Knight Grand Commander of the Star of <a href="#">India</a></b>
<b>GCVO</b>	<b>Knight or Dame Grand Cross of Royal Victorian Order</b>
<b>Gen</b>	<b>General</b>
<b>GGNZ</b>	<b>Governor-General of New Zealand</b>
<b>GMT</b>	<b>Greenwich Mean Time</b>

<b>GOC</b>	<b>General Officer Commanding</b>
<b>Gov Gen</b>	<b>Governor General</b>
<b>Govt</b>	<b>Government</b>
<b>HC</b>	<b>High Commissioner</b>
<b>HoC</b>	<b>House of Commons</b>
<b>HoL</b>	<b>House of Lords</b>
<b>Hon</b>	<b>Honourable, Honorary</b>
<b>HoR</b>	<b>House of Representatives</b>
<b>HQ</b>	<b>Headquarters</b>
<b>IA</b>	<b>Internal Affairs</b>
<b>i/c</b>	<b>in charge of</b>
<b>IGS</b>	<b>Imperial General Staff</b>
<b>ILO</b>	<b>International General Staff</b>
<b>Imp</b>	<b>Imperial</b>
<b>IMTFE</b>	<b>International Military Tribunal for the Far East</b>
<b>Indep</b>	<b>Independent</b>
<b>Inf Bde</b>	<b>Infantry Brigade</b>
<b>Inst</b>	<b>Institute</b>
<b>Int Aff</b>	<b>Internal Affairs</b>
<b>ISO</b>	<b>Imperial Service Order</b>
<b>ISS</b>	<b>International Student Service</b>
<b>JP</b>	<b>Justice of the Peace</b>
<b>KBE</b>	<b>Knight Commander of the British Empire</b>
<b>KC</b>	<b>King's Counsel</b>
<b>KCB</b>	<b>Knight Commander of the Bath</b>
<b>KCMG</b>	<b>Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George</b>
<b>KG</b>	<b>Knight of the Order of the Garter</b>
<b>KStJ</b>	<b>Knight of the Order of St John of Jerusalem</b>
<b>Kt</b>	<b>Knight Bachelor</b>
<b>Lab</b>	<b>Labour</b>
<b>Lib</b>	<b>Liberal</b>
<b>LIB</b>	<b>Bachelor of Laws</b>
<b>LM</b>	<b>Legion of Merit</b>
<b>LoN</b>	<b>League of Nations</b>
<b>LRC</b>	<b>Labour Representation Committee</b>
<b>Lt</b>	<b>Lieutenant</b>
<b>MA</b>	<b>Maori Affairs</b>

<b>MBE</b>	<b>Member of the Order of the British Empire</b>
<b>MC</b>	<b>Military Cross</b>
<b>memb</b>	<b>member</b>
<b>Meth</b>	<b>Methodist</b>
<b>mngr</b>	<b>manager</b>
<b>MHR</b>	<b>Member of the House of Representatives</b>
<b>MICE</b>	<b>Member of the Institute of Civil Engineers</b>
<b>mid</b>	<b>Mentioned in Despatches</b>
<b>Min</b>	<b>Minister</b>
<b>Miny</b>	<b>Ministry</b>
<b>MLA</b>	<b>Member of the Legislative Assembly</b>
<b>MLC</b>	<b>Member of the Legislative Council</b>
<b>MM</b>	<b>Military Medal</b>
<b>MP</b>	<b>Member of Parliament</b>
<b>MS</b>	<b>Manuscript</b>
<b>Nat</b>	<b>National</b>
<b>NBS</b>	<b>National Broadcasting Service</b>
<b>NCO</b>	<b>non-commissioned officer</b>
<b>NS</b>	<b>National Service Department</b>
<b>NZANS</b>	<b>New Zealand Army Nursing Service</b>
<b>NZBC</b>	<b>New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation</b>
<b>NZBS</b>	<b>New Zealand Broadcasting Service</b>
<b>NZCPS</b>	<b>New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society</b>
<b>NZEF</b>	<b>New Zealand Expeditionary Force</b>
<b>NZEI</b>	<b>New Zealand Educational Institute</b>
<b>NZFU</b>	<b>New Zealand Farmers' Union</b>
<b>NZLA</b>	<b>New Zealand Library Association</b>
<b>NZLS</b>	<b>New Zealand Library Service</b>
<b>NZMC</b>	<b>New Zealand Medical Corps</b>
<b>NZPA</b>	<b>New Zealand Press Association</b>
<b>NZPD</b>	<b><i>New Zealand Parliamentary Debates</i></b>
<b>NZRB</b>	<b>New Zealand Rifle Brigade</b>
<b>NZRSA</b>	<b>New Zealand Returned Services Association</b>
<b>NZU</b>	<b>University of New Zealand</b>
<b>NZWWU</b>	<b>New Zealand Waterside Workers Union</b>
<b>OBE</b>	<b>Officer of the Order of the British Empire</b>

<b>OC Off</b>	<b>Officer Commanding Officer</b>
<b>OM</b>	<b>Order of Merit</b>
<b>ONS</b>	<b>Organisation for National Security</b>
<b>Oppos</b>	<b>Opposition</b>
<b>Orch</b>	<b>Orchestra</b>
<b>OU</b>	<b>Otago University (now University of Otago)</b>
<b>Oxon</b>	<b>Oxford University</b>
<b>P &amp; T</b>	<b>Post and Telegraph</b>
<b>Pac</b>	<b>Pacific</b>
<b>Parly</b>	<b>Parliamentary</b>
<b>PC</b>	<b>Privy Councillor</b>
<b>PEN</b>	<b>Poets, Playwrights, Essayists, Editors and Novelists</b>
<b>PM</b>	<b>Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Department</b>
<b>PMG</b>	<b>Postmaster-General</b>
<b>POW</b>	<b>prisoner-of-war</b>
<b>PPU</b>	<b>Peace Pledge Union</b>
<b>Pres</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Presby</b>	<b>Presbyterian</b>
<b>PRO</b>	<b>Public Relations Officer</b>
<b>Prof</b>	<b>Professor</b>
<b>PSA</b>	<b>Public Service Association</b>
<b>pt</b>	<b>part</b>
<b>PWD</b>	<b>Public Works Department</b>
<b>QC</b>	<b>Queen's Counsel</b>
<b>QM</b>	<b>Quartermaster</b>
<b>QMG</b>	<b>Quartermaster-General</b>
<b>RAF</b>	<b>Royal Air Force</b>
<b>Rehab</b>	<b>Rehabilitation</b>
<b>rep</b>	<b>representative</b>
<b>Rev</b>	<b>Reverend</b>
<b>RFC</b>	<b>Royal Flying Corps</b>
<b>RNAS</b>	<b>Royal Naval Air Service</b>
<b>RNR</b>	<b>Royal Naval Reserve</b>
<b>RNVR</b>	<b>Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve</b>
<b>RNZAF</b>	<b>Royal New Zealand Air Force</b>
<b>RSA</b>	<b>Returned Services Association</b>



<b>Rt</b>	<b>Right</b>
<b>RTA</b>	<b>Railway Trades Association</b>
<b>Sec</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>SM</b>	<b>Stipendiary Magistrate</b>
<b>S Mil Cmd</b>	<b>Southern Military Command</b>
<b>Soc</b>	<b>Society</b>
<b>SSDA</b>	<b>Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs</b>
<b>Superint</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>
<b>Ty</b>	<b>Treasury</b>
<b>TEAL</b>	<b>Trans-Empire Air Line</b>
<b>TV</b>	<b>Television</b>
<b>UKHC</b>	<b>United Kingdom High Commissioner</b>
<b>UN</b>	<b>United Nations</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>United States of America</b>
<b>USSR</b>	<b>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</b>
<b>UNRRA</b>	<b>United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration</b>
<b>VAD</b>	<b>Voluntary Aid Detachment</b>
<b>VC</b>	<b>Victoria Cross</b>
<b>VD</b>	<b>Volunteer Decoration, venereal disease</b>
<b>Ven</b>	<b>Venerable</b>
<b>vol</b>	<b>volume</b>
<b>VUC</b>	<b>Victoria University College (now Victoria University of Wellington)</b>
<b>WAAC</b>	<b>Women's Auxiliary Army Corps</b>
<b>WAAF</b>	<b>Women's Auxiliary Air Force</b>
<b>WCC</b>	<b>Waterfront Control Commission</b>
<b>WDFU</b>	<b>Women's Division of the Farmer's Union</b>
<b>WEA</b>	<b>Workers' Education Association</b>
<b>Wgtn</b>	<b>Wellington</b>
<b>WHF</b>	<b>War History File</b>
<b>WHN</b>	<b>War History Narrative</b>
<b>WRNZNS</b>	<b>Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service</b>
<b>WVS</b>	<b>Women's Voluntary Services</b>
<b>WW</b>	<b>World War</b>
<b>WWSA</b>	<b>Women's War Service Auxiliary</b>
<b>Yearbook</b>	<b><i>New Zealand Official Year-book</i></b>

**YMCA**      **Young Men's Christian Association**

**YWCA**      **Young Women's Christian Association**

**Note regarding newspaper material cited in footnotes: where no pagination is given the citation is from the editorial.**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## METRIC CONVERSION

### *Metric Conversion*

Since 1960, most countries in the world, including New Zealand, have converted from varying methods of measurement to the *Système International d'Unités* (SI). The traditional English system for money and measurement denominations has been retained in this book, in keeping with the sources used and with the other volumes of the Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War series.

The following information is supplied for conversion purposes:

### *Money*

**One pound (£1) (20 shillings) = 2 dollars (\$2)**

**One shilling (12 pence) = 10 cents**

**One guinea (21 shillings) = \$2.10**

### *Linear*

**One mile (1760 yards) = 1.609 kilometres**

**One yard (3 feet) = 0.914 metres**

**One foot (12 inches) = 30.48 centimetres**

**One inch = 2.54 centimetres**

### *Square measure*

**One square mile (640 acres) = 2.589 square kilometres**

**One acre (4840 square yards) = 0.404 hectares**

**One square yard = 0.836 square metres**

**One square foot = 929 square centimetres**

### ***Cubic (liquid) measure***

**One gallon (4 quarts) = 4.546 litres**

**One quart (2 pints) = 1.136 litres**

**One pint = 0.568 litres**

### ***Cubic (material) measure***

**One cubic yard = 0.764 cubic metres**

**One cubic foot = 0.0283 cubic metres**

**One cubic inch = 16.397 cubic centimetres**

### ***Weight***

**One ton (2240 pounds) = 1016 kilogrammes**

**One hundredweight (112 pounds) = 50.802 kilogrammes**

**One pound (16 ounces) = 453 grammes**

**One ounce = 28.35 grammes**

### ***Horsepower***

**One horsepower = 0.746 kilowatts**

### ***Temperature***

**32° Fahrenheit = 0° Celsius (freezing point)**

**212° Fahrenheit = 100° Celsius**

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

# CHAPTER 1 – THE END OF WAITING

## CHAPTER 1

### *The End of Waiting*

*3 September 1939*

**THE** years of waiting were over, the years of uneasiness, when newspapers had reported crisis after crisis till readers were numbed by the repetition of violence, confused by the welter of assertions, negotiations, shifts of policy. From the complicated and faulty weaving of the dictators and diplomats had emerged a gloomy pattern—the aggressors seemed always to get what they wanted, pushing back the so-called victors of the Great War and gaining at every move in strength of purpose, actual power and barefaced lack of scruple. Now New Zealand was at war because of German demands for Polish territory, and it did not seem fantastic. Almost it seemed inevitable. Shocked dismay was mingled with relief that the restless, anxious peace was ended, and the terrible excitement of war was at hand.

How much New Zealanders felt or failed to feel about the war-presaging events of the Thirties was largely determined by their sense of being remote in the world and small in the British Commonwealth, but also and very strongly by what was happening at home. The effect of the Depression of 1930–5 was wide, deep and cauterising. At its worst, in October 1933, there were 79 587 men registered as unemployed,<sup>1</sup> while it is calculated that more than 100 000 could have been so classified,<sup>2</sup> to say nothing of women, in a total population of 1 539 500.<sup>3</sup> The Depression story has been told so often, sometimes poignantly, sometimes with weary repetition, but familiarity should not dull awareness of it when the war that followed is considered. For many New Zealanders the Depression was a worse time than the war. They found the limitations of the creed that if a man works hard he can always get along, but belief in the creed was still strong enough to cause deep shame and bewilderment. So many people knew the humiliation of farm or business failing, of being rejected by employers, of seeing their families in want; so many others lived in fear of these things. So many

knew the uselessness of relief work, the cold and mud of labour camps, the tyranny of bosses conscious of labour queues, the tragedy of a lost shilling. So many women would never forget the dreariness of worn-out clothes, of meals monotonous and poor, of crowded living in dingy rooms. So many had feared to help their neighbours' want lest they need every penny themselves, yet been ashamed of their caution. Behind the smashed windows of Queen Street lay a deal of ignoble suffering.

The Depression deepened very steeply the division between classes, and was to make many workers suspicious lest the bosses should steal a march against them under cover of the war. Meanwhile, in the Thirties, it blunted concern for more remote troubles. By 1936 prices were improving and the Labour government accelerated recovery with State spending and organisation. People were absorbed in housing and pension schemes, in working hours, wages, the cost of living, farming prices; they were catching up on the bad years, improving their homes and furniture, buying blankets and china and clothes and radios and cars, bent on climbing out of a local hell into a local heaven. There were others, appalled at finding the country in the hands of a rash, experimental government, who foresaw local disaster, a chaos of socialisation and financial ruin; the enemy at home absorbed their anxious fears, their political activity. Both sorts read of invasion and political violence in **China**, Abyssinia, **Spain**, as they might have read a serial, though no serial would be so disjointed or contradictory. Few read anything except the daily papers, and the opinions they derived therefrom were coloured by a variety of existing attitudes—their attachment to **Britain**, their sense of colonialism or of independence, faith in the League of Nations, fear of Communism, fear of Fascism. Generally, however, New Zealanders shared one attitude, and shared it with a good many other countries—they wanted peace, and they did not want to pay for it with money or with men.

It is a truism now that the seeds of the new conflict were sown in the treaties of 1919 and began to germinate in October 1931. Then, **Japan** having invaded **Manchuria**, the member states of the League,



each preoccupied with its own economic problems and not guessing how Japanese aggression would grow on success, considered its own chances of advantage and collectively they did nothing. It was the beginning, the sketching in of the pattern that was repeated implacably, with details different and freshly distressing, during the next eight years, each precedent building up in individual minds a sense of bewildered, helpless connivance—‘It’s wrong, but what can we do?’

When **Hitler**<sup>4</sup> came to power in 1933, attacked trade unions and Jews and began to build up armaments and national spirit, the sense of war in the world grew stronger for New Zealanders. **Japan** was remembered as an ally; **Germany** was a familiar foe. Thereafter many, as they read the newspapers, felt that they would some day have to finish the fight begun 20 years before; in the small boys’ battles the enemy were always Germans.

But it was **Mussolini’s**<sup>5</sup> **Italy**, hungry for empire, that next thickened the war clouds, for **Italy**, despite the threat of sanctions by the League, attacked **Abyssinia** in October 1935. Laval’s<sup>6</sup> **France**, unwilling to risk a fight or a rapprochement of **Italy** and **Germany**, connived, though not openly or enough to satisfy **Italy**. The British government, though talking bravely of standing by the Covenant, was unprepared for war and determined to avoid it. It feared to drive **Italy** towards **Germany**; feared lest sanctions prove ineffective, which would make **Britain** the object of **Italy’s** hostility and contempt; feared lest they prove effective, when a desperate **Italy** might attack in the **Mediterranean** and **France** might forsake her ally. From present knowledge of the ineffectiveness of **Italy’s** armed forces, even years later, it seems astonishing that **Britain**, despite the lowered state of her forces in 1935, should so seriously have feared a fight with **Mussolini**; it seems probable that she also feared **Mussolini’s** fall and the chance of another communist state. Thus, palsied with considerations, **Britain** and **France** fumbled over the most important sanction—oil—and instead Hoare<sup>7</sup> and Laval in December proposed a settlement so generous to **Italy** that it was indignantly repudiated by both public and Parliament in

**Britain.** <sup>8</sup> There was more delay over the oil sanctions, while **Italy** pushed on with the war, occupying **Addis Ababa** in May 1936; and the world—with New Zealand modestly dissenting—accepted the *fait accompli*. <sup>9</sup>

In New Zealand, newspapers gave the dispute a leading place, starting several months before the actual fighting. There was a sincere attempt to settle a dispute with the League's machinery, New Zealand was represented at the League, and the long preliminaries gave time for attention to focus. All these were reasons why **Abyssinia** bulked much larger in New Zealand thinking than did later and more clearly ominous affairs with which it had no direct connection, which had lost the edge of novelty and happened far more swiftly. Generally reports were either colourless or sympathetic towards the Ethiopians, a few cartoons by Low <sup>10</sup> and Minhinnick <sup>11</sup> attacked **Mussolini**, and from time to time editorials advised that New Zealand must stand by her obligations to the League, even to armed force. There was talk of being involved in war, which led to realisation that New Zealand's armed forces were very small, its air power little more than **Abyssinia's**. There was wide disapproval of aggression, of gas and bombs dropped on defenceless people, disapproval tempered with some reluctant recognition of **Italy's** economic plight, plus a rather thankful sense of remoteness caused by the obscurity of international manoeuvring.

A few leftists bleakly saw the League's collective security and preservation of peace as preservation of the status quo by the nations already supplied with colonial markets and raw materials—'the only fight against war is the fight against capitalism'. <sup>12</sup> A few unions, while censuring **Italy**, firmly declared against being drawn into an imperialist war. <sup>13</sup> The Communist party at first declared that sanctions were the attempt of one set of exploiting powers to prevail over the other, and that **Britain** herself had designs on **Abyssinia** that might lead to general war; <sup>14</sup> but after **Russia** declared for collective security it found it 'necessary for all those who stand for peace to support the Soviet Union in the demand that sanctions be enforced', the Soviet being the only

power consistently and wholly on the side of peace, whereas a war led by **Britain** would be imperialistic. <sup>15</sup> In several centres— **Wellington, Napier, Palmerston North, Christchurch, Dunedin**—street demonstrations and meetings were held by the Communist party or the Movement against War and Fascism, or Hands off **Abyssinia** committees, and at the Italian consulates in **Auckland** and **Wellington** leaflets demanding that the war should stop were distributed. <sup>16</sup>

The Labour Party, still in opposition, had now replaced its hostility to war with belief in the League and collective security; Walter Nash, <sup>17</sup> for instance, said ‘those nations that carry out their undertakings can be completely effective without firing a shot’, but that if the British Empire were drawn into war New Zealanders should fight in sorrow for the good of the future. <sup>18</sup> The conservative government, made doubly chary by responsibility, instructed its League representative to collaborate very closely with Great Britain on sanctions, but stressed confidentially that public opinion in New Zealand would not endorse any measure that might call for the application of force. <sup>19</sup> In October, Parliament unanimously passed a bill that imposed economic sanctions and made it clear that any military sanctions would need further parliamentary action. The campaign that elected Labour to 53 seats out of 80 in November 1935 gave little space either to the war in **Abyssinia** or to general problems of defence and foreign policy. Neither party mentioned **Abyssinia** in its election manifesto—Labour stressed its support for the League and promised a foreign policy to promote international economic co-operation, disarmament and world peace, with open diplomacy and discussion and negotiation in Commonwealth relations; <sup>20</sup> the National party supported the League and stressed co-operation with the **United Kingdom**. <sup>21</sup>

In December, the new Labour government cabled that it was ‘quite unable to associate’ itself with the Hoare–Laval arrangements but tactfully agreed to keep silent about its views. <sup>22</sup> The press was divided, the *Otago Daily Times* of 20 December saying that these arrangements had met the merited condemnation of the world, while other dailies

voiced 'realist' opinions that sanctions were impractical, an experiment; that collective security was based more on despair than on reason; that Hoare was right in fact though wrong in method, and that the fiasco resulted not from his weakness but from the gap between popular aspirations and political reality.<sup>23</sup> This last view was echoed in the House on 15 May 1936 in a debate on foreign affairs<sup>24</sup> by the youthful **Keith Holyoake**,<sup>25</sup> who saw in the rejection of the plan 'evidence of the fact that public opinion does not keep pace with world events';<sup>26</sup> Forbes<sup>27</sup> and others of his party declared that the League had been tried as a preserver of the peace and found wanting; Labour members replied, dutifully but without much inspiration, that the League should still be supported.

'Sanctions failed' was inevitably the verdict in most minds. Stubborn idealists like Savage<sup>28</sup> might urge maintaining them<sup>29</sup> after **Italy's** victory, but even Savage knew that New Zealand's remoteness and its small trade with **Italy** made its objection pedantic, and he acquiesced in their general removal in July 1936.

In March 1936 while bombs were still falling on Abyssinia **Hitler**, seeing the League's feebleness, the coolness between **France** and Britain and **Italy's** estrangement from both, swiftly moved troops into the demilitarised Rhineland, in defiance both of **Versailles** and of the Locarno Pact of 1925, which last **Germany** had signed as a willing equal but which **Hitler** claimed was already violated by the Franco-Soviet treaty then being signed. With a gun in one hand and fresh guarantees of peace in the other he confounded his opponents, who had either to take him at his word or be prepared to fight—the routine that was to be repeated several times in the next three years. **France** and **Britain** spoke with separate voices. There were proposals and counter-proposals that changed nothing, and after the first headlines it became an affair of the diplomats.

The New Zealand government followed **Britain** closely—on 16 March they wrote that they 'entirely concur in the attitude of restraint' of the **United Kingdom** and while 'entirely appreciating the necessity of ending

the progressive deterioration in the value of international engagements', urged consideration of every possible means to avoid plunging the world into chaos. <sup>30</sup> Again on 6 April, after German counter-proposals that were unacceptable to **France**, they urged continued negotiations for the possible improvement of European relations, and without necessarily agreeing with the proposals advanced by **Germany** held that 'these must be considered seriously with a view to an ultimate Conference intended to establish procedure for the avoidance of conflict'. <sup>31</sup> The theme of hope in conferences that were never to be held was to be voiced again and again by the New Zealand government during the late Thirties; meanwhile they endorsed the restraint that seriously lessened French faith in **Britain** as an ally.

Newspapers disapproved the treaty-breaking, commended British calm, shook a reproving finger at **France** and generally gave **Hitler** the benefit of the doubt. The *Press* on 10 and 11 March noted the calm reception and held that the only way to prove **Hitler's** sincerity was to take him at his word; the *Otago Daily Times* spoke likewise. The *Dominion* on 9 March thought that what **Hitler** offered now, 'despite the breach of a bit more of the Treaty that bound **Germany**, is too valuable to be spurned,' and on 12 March said that all the world knew that but for earlier French intransigence, **Germany** might still be in the League, might still be a democratic state. The *New Zealand Herald* on 11 March was outraged at **Germany's** suggestion that it might now re-enter the League of Nations—'Could anything be more absurd, or more offensively presumptuous?'—but by 19 March was pointing out that a cynic could heave bricks at all the powers for their recent diplomatic pasts; even **Britain**, over Abyssinia, 'bore herself none too well'. There was also the comfortable possibility that the Rhineland march was **Hitler's** ruse to divert Germany's attention from her internal problems of food shortages and unemployment. <sup>32</sup> Since the League had failed to impose the crucial oil embargo on **Italy** it was manifestly unlikely to impose sanctions on **Germany**.

Hard thereafter came the civil war in **Spain**, beginning in July 1936

as an army revolt. In February a liberal government had been elected (with a majority of seats though not of votes), but its reforms were resisted by the land-owning classes, to which the police and the army adhered. Strikes, disorder, and reprisal killings followed, and **General Franco** <sup>33</sup> claimed to be upholding order and religion against anarchy. He also claimed to be leading a nationalist movement to save **Spain** from **Russia** which was organising and supporting the government—an exaggerated charge. Predictably, the most active groups on both sides were those with the most extreme political views, and it soon became a fight between Communism and Fascism. **Italy** and **Germany**, for future influence and to train and test their troops, equipment and aircraft, helped Franco from the beginning with arms, aircraft, soldiers and technicians, and in November 1936 recognised their protégé as the government of **Spain**. **Russia**, from mid-October 1936, sent arms and aircraft, and thousands of Communists and others from all over **Europe** went to fight in the communist-run International Brigade.

**Spain**, more than **Manchuria**, more than **Abyssinia**, disturbed the conscience of the world. In Britain Chamberlain, <sup>34</sup> determined not to be involved, anxious to placate **Italy**, and of course deeply opposed to Communism, was widely charged, even by some of his own party, with favouring Franco. New Zealand's Labour government joined in this criticism, urging adherence to League principles with persistence that must have seemed both priggish and impractical to the British government. On the League Council, Jordan <sup>35</sup> repeatedly urged that Franco should state his charges before the League, and doubted whether non-intervention did anything but handicap the Loyalists and strengthen the aggressors. Twice, in March and again in September 1937, New Zealand refused to be associated with shipping proposals which would have come near to granting belligerent rights to the rebels; and it did not officially recognise Franco's final victory in March 1939.

But if the New Zealand government's attitude abroad was definite, though limited, New Zealand people generally were confused. Only the leftists and Catholics were blessed with clear minds about **Spain**—for



Communists the Loyalists were clothed in righteousness, the reactionary Fascist villains must be fought and defeated. They repeatedly urged joint action with the Labour party, which firmly declined it. <sup>36</sup> *The Workers' Weekly* flamed about the Nazi menace, its child victims, and British wickedness. A few women knitted for the defenders of Madrid—they were flagging by March 1937—and a few hundred pounds slowly trickled in to the 'Spanish Aid Fund', forwarded through the Communist party in England. <sup>37</sup> On the other hand the Catholic Church in **Spain** backed Franco, and in New Zealand followed suit, with *Zealandia* and the *New Zealand Tablet* steadily denouncing the Communists. Many others, especially people of property or tradition, felt (like Churchill <sup>38</sup>) that their own class and values were assailed by the Spanish government; the term 'Communist' drew forth an almost natural hostility. Some did not feel secure enough in their jobs to risk even talking about Communism in an issue clouded and far away. It was very easy to remain ignorant.

Within the Labour party there were a good many cross-currents. British Labour, as the war went on, grew more and more hostile to Franco, his supporters and the Chamberlain connivance. 'The left became war-minded: the Spanish civil war mobilised the non-trade-union sections of the Labour movement as **Hitler's** brutalities had already begun to mobilise the trade unions.... Non-intervention and pacifism crossed over from the opposition to the government: "no-war" became the slogan, not of the left but of the right.' <sup>39</sup>

In New Zealand, Labour was the government. Was it distance, the responsibility of office, or the Catholic vote, that made New Zealand's Labour movement cooler than **Britain's**? Perhaps members of Parliament thought it was a matter for Cabinet, but very few gave any lead to Spanish support in their constituencies. The Spanish Loyalists had obvious claims on Labour principles and sympathies, but they were soon identified with Communism which many Labour people fervently distrusted as the rival that, claiming kinship, would creep into the Labour organisation and send it scattering in dissension. Nor did Labour prudence wish to alienate the sizeable Catholic vote—which was not a

factor in British politics. Still, many trade unions and a few party branches passed resolutions of sympathy (and took up collections <sup>40</sup>) for the Loyalists in their fight for democracy and freedom, and urged the New Zealand government to press for the removal of the arms embargo. Some of these resolutions were no doubt contrived by local Communists, but they must have been supported by some ordinary members. The Labour Party Conference of 1937 deplored foreign intervention and urged New Zealand to press for withdrawal of foreign troops. <sup>41</sup> The *Standard*, Labour's official paper, though it had few editorials on **Spain**, printed a good many pro-Loyalist photographs, and its column on international affairs from September 1936 until March 1938 (when its space was swamped by the pre-election campaign) had many sharp, far-seeing articles on Spanish issues and the diplomatic moves. It advertised a collection for relief of distress in **Spain** which opened on 3 December 1936 and totalled £951 on 11 May 1939, mostly from trade unions and party branches. Some of Labour's difficulties were perhaps indicated by the letter printed on 7 October 1936, attacking the unions for backing a 'horde comparable with the supporters of Barbarossa' and threatening the loss of Catholic votes; this brought forth other letters mainly opposed to it, with a statement from the *Standard* that the New Zealand Labour party had expressed no opinion on affairs in **Spain** and was not committed by resolutions of individual unions. <sup>42</sup>

Although the government in 1938 gave £2,000 to an international fund for the relief of Spanish refugee children of both sides, <sup>43</sup> only one or two members of Parliament joined in the few public protests against particular bombing outrages, and only a few were associated with the Spanish Medical Aid Committee. This body, which was soon labelled 'communist-front', started in **Dunedin** at the beginning of 1937. It raised, mainly through public lectures and showings of the film 'Defence of Madrid', about £4,000 which sent three nurses, an ambulance and a laundry truck to **Spain** between May 1937 and January 1939. <sup>44</sup> Only about a dozen New Zealanders actually took up rifles in **Spain**. A few others wielded ardent pens, mainly in the pages of the left wing journal *Tomorrow*, while the *Methodist Times* on 25 February 1939 said firmly



that its sympathies throughout were with the lawfully constituted government standing, with all its faults, for the more liberal and democratic elements in **Spain**. The general public in its daily newspapers had copious and often confusing news, through cables, photographs and editorials. Evidence that **Italy** and **Germany** were taking part was balanced by the predominance given to Russian designs, and held in poise by the inertia of the British government. The total effect was probably to accustom New Zealanders to the idea of war in the world, a faraway war, between two sets of objectionable people.

The same issues, more or less, were served up again in mid-1937 when **Japan** renewed her attack on **China**, where **Chiang Kai-shek's** <sup>45</sup> nationalist forces were then co-operating with Chinese communists in a programme of moderate reform and anti-Nipponism. **China**, a League member, went through the routine of appealing to the Covenant, but no basis for collective action could be found, though as usual Jordan spoke out in Geneva for principles and the lost cause. There was world-wide sympathy for **China**, many trade unions and other organisations advocating a boycott of Japanese goods. In New Zealand there was a curious conflict. The Watersiders Union and the Federation of Labour objected to loading scrap-iron and other material for war purposes on Japanese ships, in which protest they were joined by at least one Farmers' Union branch. <sup>46</sup> Importers, Chambers of Commerce and wool interests complained about one section of the community imperilling a valuable trade, and the Prime Minister declared that only the government had authority to decide where New Zealand would trade <sup>47</sup> but prohibited all scrap iron exports 'to protect New Zealand's steel industry'. <sup>48</sup> The Federation of Labour, anxious not to embarrass a Labour government, contented itself with this, with watching international trade union action, and with urging a personal boycott. <sup>49</sup> The *Standard* on 7 October explained that a New Zealand boycott, pitifully inefficient in itself, would involve the British Commonwealth, of which New Zealand was the least important unit, in international politics. Members of the Commonwealth who were helpless should leave the initiative to those who would bear the result of action. 'To pass

resolutions is one thing: to take sporadic, unorganised, unauthorised action is another.’<sup>50</sup> On 4 November an editorial said that any widescale boycott ‘may possibly result in our own pocket being hurt with a consequent injury to the pockets of our own workers. **Japan**, it is well to remember, buys a considerable quantity of our wool and... last year helped to raise prices to our benefit. Any boycott, effective or ineffective, will not improve our commercial or diplomatic relations with **Japan**, and though this may appear to be a materialistic viewpoint, it should be remembered that we live under a capitalistic system in a generally capitalistic world.’

The boycott was also frowned upon by a few intellectuals and pacifists who urged that it would act indiscriminately against all Japanese and, by proving foreign hostility and encirclement, strengthen the military party; also, **Britain** should first set her own house in order by sharing the empire acquired by earlier actions similar to those of **Japan**.<sup>51</sup>

In Europe, early in 1938, **Hitler** had declared that the German Reich reached out beyond its frontiers to ten million Germans in **Austria** and **Czechoslovakia**. His rapid seizure of **Austria** in March 1938 was swallowed with only a slight ripple of the world’s gullet. It was a swift decisive move, offering no scope for argument, and those concerned were ‘all Germans anyway’. Also, to some with knowledge of post-1919 **Europe**, in **Austria** both nationalism and economics made union with **Germany** inevitable. As early as 1934 an article in *Tomorrow* prophesied that in the long run ‘the Anschluss must come’.<sup>52</sup> Chamberlain’s government, by 1938, had quite turned from collective security to hope that a satisfied **Germany** would mean peace, until peace itself could be buttressed by British rearmament. It speedily recognised the take-over. New Zealand was not consulted about the recognition, and did not protest. The *Standard*, in one of its last articles on international affairs before immersing itself in local matters for the November election, wrote of the event itself and its reception.

“No Danger of War” the posters said on Monday night. It had not

seriously been suggested, however cleverly the news had been displayed to give an effect of it, that war was imminent. **Hitler** had marched his troops into **Austria**, just as before he marched them into the Rhineland.... **Germany** acted this time when **France** was without a government, M. Chautemps <sup>53</sup> having resigned a day or two before and M. Blum <sup>54</sup> still being in the process of forming his new Cabinet. Saturday, as it invariably is, was the chosen day to cross the Austrian frontier. The stage management was incomparably fine, for during the week-end, when the time came to assess the repercussions, foreign feeling would have recovered its outraged balance. A decade ago it would have been hard to imagine such an occurrence not being the word for war. But a decade ago **Britain** was still chivalrous in the self-saving cause of "balance of power." Today it is almost ridiculous even to contemplate **Britain's** lifting a finger to redress the wrongs of a small country. Even the sight of **Germany** gathering strength at a furious rate is no pretext for action but only for added rearmament against the day when Fascist might is face to face with **Britain**. So that to mention war this week was simply an anachronism. <sup>55</sup>

Newspapers had headlines about ruthless Nazis, Jewish purges and the frantic efforts of Jews and liberals to leave **Austria**; editorials spoke of the lengthening Nazi shadow and the blatant hypocrisy of **Hitler**. But Count von Luckner, <sup>56</sup> on a round of public meetings at this very time, had in general a cordial reception, except from the Federation of Labour. He was well known for his exploits in 1917, when having got through the British blockade in a 2000-ton sailing ship disguised as a trader, he sank thirteen Allied cargo ships in the **Atlantic** and **Pacific**, the crews being all saved and sent ashore. He was wrecked in the **Fiji** group, captured and interned at Motuihi, **Auckland**; escaped, seized the scow *Moa* and made for the Kermadec Islands, where he was recaptured. Newspapers announced on 20 April 1937 that he was making a world tour in his new motor yacht *Sea Devil*, would visit **Australia** and New Zealand, and would 'engage in propaganda for German ideals'. <sup>57</sup> This provoked hostility from the Communists who from a German paper quoted von Luckner as saying, 'I am going as **Hitler's** emissary to the

youth of the world to win them for a better understanding of our new **Germany**. I will tell them of my private exploits during the war and the salvation of the Fatherland...None but criminals have been deprived of their liberty in **Germany** in order that decent Germans may live.’<sup>58</sup> A few trade unions<sup>59</sup> joined in urging that he be refused admission. Some private persons also objected, while others defended a very gallant gentleman;<sup>60</sup> the Acting Prime Minister, Fraser,<sup>61</sup> had no comment to make;<sup>62</sup> a respected trades union secretary advised reading *Areopagitica* and opposed exclusion on the grounds of freedom of speech,<sup>63</sup> a view shared by the Federated Seamen’s Union<sup>64</sup> and by *Tomorrow*.<sup>65</sup> A rising civil servant, Dr R. A. Lochore,<sup>66</sup> declared that he himself was one who had privately sought to persuade the Count to visit New Zealand, that the Count’s main object was to cement friendship between **Germany** and the Anglo-Saxon peoples. He would explain away the latter’s mercenary and selfish appearance on the one hand, and on the other show that Germans ‘are not the barbarians and sadists that fanatical war propaganda and its aftermath have so luridly depicted’. The press, Lochore said, constantly put the worst possible construction on news from **Germany**, while never before had Germans shown such cordial goodwill—‘I have repeatedly heard lectures on British ideals in **Germany**; I have delivered some on New Zealand ideals myself. For a week, in a camp of storm troopers we put in our mornings trying to analyse and understand the mentality of French and British.’<sup>67</sup>

Von Luckner’s lectures, which contained no propaganda, were very popular, especially in **Wellington** where he received a tremendous ovation and his talk was punctuated with clapping—this but a week after **Germany** had taken over **Austria**. The Federation of Labour, however, said that in **Germany** he had promised to preach the virtues of Hitlerism, sneered at his goodwill mission, and challenged him to public debate on Nazi ideology. This the Count declined, denying all political interest, but explaining that the labouring people were the great power behind **Hitler**, and that no other country had such wonderful labour organisations as **Germany**.<sup>68</sup> There were a few more newspaper letters,<sup>69</sup> mostly deploring the Federation’s bad manners; the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht

Club on 24 March honoured him with its burgee; <sup>70</sup> *Salient*, Wellington's university student paper, on 30 March printed a scathing interview. To sum up, it was mainly the Communists and the Federation of Labour who objected to his presence as a representative of a detestable regime; democratic feeling opposed exclusion, and many were ready to take the bluff sailor at face value—it was comfortable to think that there were decent Germans; most people did not concern themselves at all.

A few months earlier the area of commerce had shown similar unconcern. Late in 1937 trade and payments agreements were made with *Germany* rearranging the basis for existing trade, so that goods were directly exchanged for goods, not for credits. This caused New Zealand to take more German manufactures than before and send to *Germany* considerable quantities of butter and apples that otherwise would not have gone there. <sup>71</sup> In general the arrangements debated in the House on 6 October 1937 were received by the press with mild favour—enthusiasm was hardly to be expected for any Labour action. In Parliament there was some government expression of the view that Germans were good people themselves and that more direct trade might promote more friendly relations. The Opposition's criticisms were that the agreement was of little practical value to New Zealand, and might disturb the harmony of trade with *Britain*; only one member was opposed to trade with a Fascist country as such. <sup>72</sup>

Though in March 1938 *Germany* had expressly denied having any designs on *Czechoslovakia*, the last democracy in central *Europe*, by August the three million Sudeten Germans were the occasion for Reich demands which the Czech government, relying on joint treaties with *France* and *Russia*, refused. Chamberlain had admitted in March that if war broke out over *Czechoslovakia* it would not be limited to those with obligations—*Britain* would be involved. Out of the mists of diplomacy, war suddenly loomed frighteningly close, and *Britain* felt frighteningly unready for it. Chamberlain made his dramatic flights to *Germany* which culminated at *Munich* on 29 September and induced a not unwilling *France* to join in persuading the Czechs to accept partition,

induced **Hitler** to accept their sacrifice, and so clawed off the thundering shore. September 1938 was a month of world crisis, of frantic, confused preparation, of stunned waiting. New Zealand was largely anaesthetised, gripped by a hard-fought election in which foreign policy and defence had very little part. It was obvious that in the nearness of danger the Labour government, remote and small, would not re-utter the well-worn pleas for collective security; it merely thanked the British government for copious official information and earnestly hoped that Chamberlain's efforts would succeed. <sup>73</sup>

Newspapers nevertheless gave much space to the crisis, and for the first time **BBC** bulletins from Daventry were re-broadcast over the national network. People listened and talked, following the zigzag of successive ultimatums, negotiations and concessions, the details largely meaningless, from which two things at least seemed clear— **Hitler** was spoiling for a fight and Chamberlain was doing everything to dodge it. They realised that war threatened **Britain**, that they would follow **Britain** into it, and it was all too late and too far away to argue or protest. <sup>74</sup>

Thankfulness for peace was expressed in the first days of October by newspapers, and by public meetings in a few towns. At Auckland, led by R. Armstrong, <sup>75</sup> a city councillor, and at **Hamilton**, led by F. A. de la Mare, <sup>76</sup> there were also small public dissensions, tempering relief with disapproval of the methods used to obtain it. <sup>77</sup> It was not then fully apparent how dearly **Czechoslovakia** had paid for peace and the details of the **Munich** concession were understood by very few. **Hitler's** success could not, however, be mistaken and Peter Fraser, who had no wish to cloud his electioneering with foreign affairs, probably summed up widespread feeling by saying on 2 October, 'In certain aspects the dictators of the world largely had their way, but the calamity which threatened was terrible.... Everyone felt that a load had been lifted from the mind and heart, and all were thankful to Mr Chamberlain for saving the world from worldwide bloodshed.' <sup>78</sup>

It was not hard to be thankful for even a reprieve from war; but a few trade unions vigorously criticised appeasement, <sup>79</sup> while the



government somewhat guardedly linked its official thankfulness with hopes that settlement would prove a lasting safeguard of world peace founded on justice and order; <sup>80</sup> it did not think it necessary to comply with a British suggestion that Commonwealth prime ministers should congratulate Chamberlain himself. <sup>81</sup> The National party leader, Adam Hamilton, <sup>82</sup> congratulating the 'saviour of peace', hoped that his four-power agreement would forerun a more general peace-ensuring settlement, <sup>83</sup> while some other National members chided Labour for its dissident unions and its rather limp support of Chamberlain. <sup>84</sup> Both parties and the press—with a few bleak comments from *Tomorrow*—turned back to the November elections with renewed zeal.

**Munich** was accepted far more quietly by New Zealand's Labour government, that for years had advocated collective security, than by **Britain's** Labour and a section of her Conservatives. But British Labour was not in office, facing an election, nor preoccupied with installing Social Security and fighting the British Medical Association. The *Standard's* main utterance was a reprint of an article from the **Glasgow Forward** of 24 September headed 'Chamberlain: Hero or Traitor? Who dares to judge?', asking what war would achieve and listing its horrors, including the seeds of another war. 'Would **Hitler** doing the goose-step in **London**, and **Mussolini** astride the lions in **Trafalgar Square** be any worse than that?' And it declared there must now follow a bold and genuine peace conference to solve the problems of nationalities, raw materials and food, even at the expense of British imperialism. <sup>85</sup>

No such arrangement was attempted. In mid-March 1939 Germany took over the remainder of **Czechoslovakia** and imposed a trade agreement on Romania; Lithuania under pressure ceded Memeland; **Italy** in the general rush grabbed **Albania**. The German sights shifted to Danzig and the Polish corridor and the Nazi machine pressed hard against **Poland**. Chamberlain, now fully aware that **Hitler** could not be trusted or appeased, fearing that a sudden *coup* might within days neutralise **Poland**, fearing also that **Hitler** might strike west before moving further east and pushed both by the warlike section of his party

and by public indignation, made an astonishing about-turn; on 31 March **Britain**, with **France**, guaranteed **Poland** against aggression.

The New Zealand government, on 21 March, had reminded the British government of its desire for an international conference 'in the widest possible sphere' or at least 'for a conference of those nations which are opposed to aggression and which are now seeing the danger to themselves more clearly than ever before'; it pledged that New Zealand would play its full part 'should the occasion unhappily arise' in defence of the right against the brutalities and the naked power politics of aggressor states.<sup>86</sup> The British government appreciated these assurances but felt there was 'real difficulty' in arranging any form of general conference, pointing out that some states were determined on neutrality and those nearest **Germany**, from fear of immediate retaliation, wanted no part in discussions about checking aggression.<sup>87</sup> The public of course did not know of this exchange. On 22 March Savage declared that his government had been informed 'all along the line' of international movements; that local critics, 12 000 miles from events, could well trust people on the spot, and that 'when **Britain** is in trouble we are in trouble'. He also advocated that **Britain** should call a world conference to discuss economic problems leading to war.<sup>88</sup> The *Herald*, for once, found that the Prime Minister expressed 'the heart, mind and will of all in this country' while Adam Hamilton declared that in supporting **Britain** the government had the whole-hearted support of the National party. The attitudes of the coming September were rehearsed.

In the British guarantee of **Poland** there was at last the firmness, the open statement of policy, for which Labour had pleaded earlier. Yet to fight for **Poland**, on the far side of **Europe**, with its illiberal landlord rulers, its depressed minorities, its short-sighted foreign policy, was a curious cause. There had been no time for consultation—it was accepted without comment by the government which had just avowed its loyalty. A few newspapers<sup>89</sup> held that **Britain** should keep out of east **Europe** and unsuitable alliances with **Poland**, **Russia** or the **Balkans**, all disreputable



opportunistic dictatorships. But Chamberlain had stressed that the guarantee was to cover only an interim period, while **Britain** was negotiating with the Soviet Union and other states. There was no widespread realisation that the decisive step had been taken which in just five months would lead to war. Other apparent undertakings had dissolved in the hands of the diplomats, leaving plain men dismayed or puzzled or relieved. By now there was no sense that **Hitler** had some excuse, that he could hardly be blamed for retrieving his own—he had already amply redeemed **Germany's** losses at **Versailles**, and could make no racial claims to Bohemia and Moravia. It was plainly more than time to stop him and if **Poland** were to be his next grab, **Poland** was the place for a showdown. There was still feeling that a firm 'Thou shalt not' in advance would be sufficient without actual fighting—the **Christchurch Press** of 3 April found 'some reason to suppose that the announcement of the guarantee has relaxed rather than intensified the tension in **Europe.**'<sup>90</sup>

The intricacies of political pressures and of Chamberlain's own mind in making the decision were not clear in New Zealand, but Chamberlain was known as a man who clung to peace with more desperation than dignity, and if he now felt that firmness was necessary then anyone could be convinced. Further, it was a relief to see the British Prime Minister cast aside his placatory role and speak sharply.<sup>91</sup> In Britain the Labour party joined in the surge of applause and not since the war, wrote the *New Statesman and Nation* of 8 April, had a premier received such general support as that accorded to Chamberlain when he gave his unexpected pledge to **Poland**. This enthusiasm was echoed in New Zealand. In Britain and still less in New Zealand the difficulties of enlarging the Polish guarantee into a compelling 'Stop **Hitler**' bloc were not widely understood.

If the well informed in **Britain** still covertly hoped that the fight might be between **Germany** and **Russia**, it was a hope vaguely but warmly held by many a man in the street both in **Britain** and New Zealand—let the two bad boys have the fighting to themselves. Anglo-

Russian peace-bloc talks, begun in April, went on slowly for several months, while leftists fumed that Chamberlain was losing the last real chance of preventing war. But Chamberlain profoundly distrusted both **Russia's** honesty of purpose and its competence as a military ally;<sup>92</sup> **Poland**, Romania and the Baltic states were all wary of receiving Russian guarantees lest these either provoke immediate German attack or lead to Russian intrusion to forestall indirect aggression; **Russia**, dubious lest **Britain** and **France** might withdraw at the last leaving it to face **Hitler** alone, declared its unwillingness to pull other peoples' chestnuts out of the fire and balanced its halting movements towards a Western alliance with cautious steps towards **Germany**. On 12 May, the New Zealand government, acknowledging that the **United Kingdom** was much closer to the problem and its possible results, urged that it would be deplorable if Russian assistance in preventing aggression were not secured, and that no reasonable opportunity of gaining it should be lost.<sup>93</sup> The British government politely replied that these considerations were constantly in its mind.<sup>94</sup> This exchange did not of course reach the public amongst whom, leftists apart (in the pages of *Tomorrow* and to a much lesser degree in the *Standard*), there was little advocacy for alliance with **Russia** or impatience with the inconclusive moves. The public could not but perceive that peace-bloc manoeuvres were small and cautious, compared with the drive of German aggressiveness, but to balance and comfort there was a slight swelling on the theme that had been sounded for years by journalists and financial experts and refugee ministers—that Nazi Germany was war-weary already, its workers exhausted, its economic system strained, that it lacked adequate resources of raw materials, of oil and gold reserves, and could not fight a long war.

Meanwhile July saw the last act of appeasement, this time in the **Far East**: the Tokyo Agreement,<sup>95</sup> whereby **Britain**, recognising 'the actual situation' in **China**, advised British subjects there to keep clear of anything that might assist the Chinese and bring on themselves the justified wrath of **Japan**. New Zealand's government had been informed but not consulted. Several Labour back-benchers spoke out strongly

about this 'Eastern Munich' and Chamberlain's European policies, saying that he was dominated by international finance and war profiteers, while New Zealand dragged silently at his heels— probably the strongest criticism of British foreign policy made by Labour speakers while Labour was in office. <sup>96</sup> But this minor Eastern discord was lost among the quickening threats of **Germany**. By 1 June the *Standard* was remarking that people no longer asked if war were coming that year, but where it was likeliest to start, and on 6 July reported that the newsmen of **Washington** placed the betting 5 to 4 on the chance of war before 15 September. According to *Tomorrow* one of the most popular pastimes of August was guessing the answers to such questions as, 'Will there be war?' 'When will it start?' 'Will we be in it?'; and an opinion commonly expressed was, 'Oh, there won't be any war, this crisis will pass like the last.' <sup>97</sup>

But August's crisis did not pass, and when on the 22nd **Russia** and **Germany** announced their non-aggression pact there was no longer room for doubt or hope. The cable pages overflowed with inch-high black headlines; anger against **Hitler** was matched with shocked rage at **Russia** and statements that treachery might have been expected from that conscienceless nation. There was no feeling that anything could be done now to avert war, no doubt that New Zealand stood with **Britain**. Administratively the government was ready. The Organisation for National Security (ONS), modelled on the British Committee of Imperial Defence, having struggled through a starveling infancy, had come to modest growth since **Munich**, and now had its prescribed departmental procedures, its 'War Book' prepared. A state of emergency was proclaimed on Friday, 1 September, the necessary legal preliminary to bring into force the Public Safety Conservation Act of 1932, under which emergency regulations were issued as Orders-in-Council, dealing with mobilisation of the armed forces, stabilising prices and setting up censorship controls. With these weekend preparations tidily made, New Zealand waited for Sunday.

---

<sup>1</sup> *New Zealand Official Year-book* (hereinafter *Yearbook*) 1938,

<sup>2</sup> Sutch, W. B., *Poverty and Progress in New Zealand*, p. 134

<sup>3</sup> *Yearbook*1938, p. 58

<sup>4</sup> **Hitler, Adolf** (1889–1945): German Fascist dictator; Chancellor German Reich 1933; Head German State 1934–45

<sup>5</sup> **Mussolini, Benito** (1883–1945): Italian Fascist dictator from 1922

<sup>6</sup> **Laval, Pierre** (1883–1945): French PM 1931–2, 1934–6, 1942–4; executed 1945

<sup>7</sup> **Hoare, Rt Hon Samuel John Gurney, 1st Viscount Templewood of Chelsea, PC, GCSI** (1880–1959): Sec State Air 1922–4, **India** 1931–5, Foreign Aff 1935; 1st Lord Admlty 1936–7; Sec State Home Aff 1937–9, Air 1940; UK Ambassador Spain on special mission 1940–4

<sup>8</sup> Laval, Premier of **France**, and Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, secretly agreed that their governments would use their influence to induce **Abyssinia** and the League of Nations to accept that a large part of **Abyssinia** should be assigned to **Italy** for economic expansion and settlement. This was a sudden change from Hoare's speech in September in support of collective security against aggression. When the proposals became known in December 1935 they were rejected by both the Commons and the Chamber of Deputies, amid uproar which caused Hoare to resign.

<sup>9</sup> New Zealand did not officially recognise the conquest, and when in May 1941 Ethiopians, with the aid of British troops, drove the Italians from **Addis Ababa**, it had no diplomatic adjustments to make.

<sup>10</sup> Low, Sir David, Kt('62) (1891–1963): b **Dunedin**; cartoonist *Spectator* Chch 1902, *Buletin Sydney* 1911, *Star London* 1919, *Evenig Standard London* 1927, *Daily Mail London* 1950, *Manchester Guardian* from 1953

<sup>11</sup> Minhinnick, Sir Gordon, KBE('76) (1902–): b **UK**, to NZ 1921; cartoonist *NZ Free Lance* 1926, thence Chch *Sun*, *Auckland Sun* to *NZ Herald* 1930

<sup>12</sup> W. N. Pharazyn in *Tomorrow*, 18 Sep 35, p. 6; D. G. McMillan in *Otago Daily Times*, 20 Sep 35, p. 9

<sup>13</sup> Federated Seamans Union, *Dominion*, 5 Oct 35, p. 4; *Tomorrow*, 9 Oct 35, p. 10; Auckland Carpenters and Joiners, *Auckland Star*, 11 Oct 35, p. 8

<sup>14</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 31 Aug, 21 Sep 35, pp. 3, 1

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Sep, 12, 19 Oct 35, pp. 3, 1 & 2, 2

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, 26 Oct 35, pp. 1, 1; *Napier Daily Telegraph*, 1, 11 Oct 35, pp. 6, 4; *Press*, 30 Sep 35, p. 5

<sup>17</sup> Nash, Rt Hon Sir Walter, GCMG('65), CH('59), PC (1882–1968): b **UK**, to NZ 1909; MP (Lab) Hutt from 1929; Sec Lab party 1922–32; Min Finance 1935–49, Marketing 1936–41, Social Security 1938; Dep PM 1940–9; War Cab 1939–45; NZ Min USA & member Pac War Council 1942–4; PM, Min External Aff 1957–60; Leader Oppos 1950–7, 1960–3

<sup>18</sup> *NZ Worker*, 25 Sep 35, p. 1; see also *Standard*, 16 Oct 35, p. 8

<sup>19</sup> Forbes to Parr, 2 Sep 35, PM 260/4/2, pt 1, in War History Narrative, 'Pre-war Foreign Policy' (hereinafter WHN, 'Foreign Policy'), *Abyssinia*, p. 19

<sup>20</sup> *NZ Worker*, 8 May 35, p. 6; *Standard*, 13 Nov 35, p. 1

<sup>21</sup> *Dominion*, 29 Oct 35, p. 12

<sup>22</sup> GGNZ to SSSA, 13, 15 Dec 35, PM 260/4/2, pt 4, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', *Abyssinia*, p. 58

<sup>23</sup> *Press*, 20 Dec 35; *Evening Post*, 20 Dec 35; *NZ Herald*, 21 Dec 35

<sup>24</sup> *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates* (hereinafter *NZPD*), vol 245, pp. 149–84

<sup>25</sup> Holyoake, Rt Hon Sir Keith, GCMG('70), CH('63), PC (1904–): MP (Nat) Pahiatua from 1932; Dep Leader Oppos 1947; Dep PM & Min Agriculture, Marketing, Scientific Research 1949–57; Leader Oppos 1957–60; PM & Min Foreign Affairs 1960–72; Min State 1975–7; Gov Gen NZ 1977–80

<sup>26</sup> *NZPD*, vol 245, p. 164

<sup>27</sup> Forbes, Rt Hon George William (1869–1947): MP (Lib) Hurunui 1908–43; Min Lands, Agriculture, Deputy PM 1928–30; PM 1930–5, in Coalition govt 1931–5

<sup>28</sup> Savage, Rt Hon Michael Joseph (1872–1940): b Aust, to NZ 1907; MP (Lab) Auck West from 1919; Leader Labour party from 1933; PM from 1935

<sup>29</sup> Savage to Parr, 15 Jun 36, PM 260/4/2, pt 7, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', *Abyssinia*, p. 62; Parr, *Otago Daily Times*, 4 Jul 36, p. 13

<sup>30</sup> GGNZ to SSSA, 16 Mar 36, PM 6/7/3, pt 3, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', NZ– *Germany* to Oct 38, p. 17

<sup>31</sup> GGNZ to SSDA, 6 Apr 36, in *ibid.*, p. 19

<sup>32</sup> *Standard*, 11 Mar 36, p. 6

<sup>33</sup> **Franco Bahamonde**, Generalissimo Francisco (1892–1975): Generalissimo Spanish National Armies 1936–9; Head State from 1939

<sup>34</sup> Chamberlain, Rt Hon Arthur Neville, PC (1869–1940): MP from 1918; PMG 1923; Min Health 1923, 1924–9, 1931; Chancellor Exchequer 1923–4, 1931–7; PM & 1st Lord Treasury 1937–40

<sup>35</sup> Jordan, Rt Hon Sir William, PC, KCMG('52) (1879–1959): b **UK**, to NZ 1904; 1st Hon Sec NZ Lab party 1897; MP (Lab) Manukau 1923–35; NZHC **London** 1936–51; Pres Council LoN 1938; chmn Imp Economic Conference 1937–8

<sup>36</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 15 Aug 36, p. 2, 9 Apr 37, p. 2; *Standard*, 9 Apr 37, p. 7

<sup>37</sup> *Workers' Weekly* shows a total of £336 by 17 Dec 39

<sup>38</sup> Churchill, Rt Hon Sir Winston, KG('53), PC, OM, FRS (1874–1965): British Army 1895–1916, serving **India**, **Khartoum**, South Africa etc; war correspondent South Africa 1899–1900; MP (Cons, Lib) 1900–22, 1924–64, Sec State Colonies 1906–8, Home Sec 1910–11, 1st Lord Admlty 1911–15, 1939–40, Min Munitions 1917, Sec State War & Air 1919–21, etc; PM & 1st Lord Treasury, Min Defence 1940–45; Ldr Oppos 1945–51; PM & 1st Lord Treasury 1951–5, Min Defence 1951–2

<sup>39</sup> Mowat, C. L., *Britain Between the Wars*. pp. 577–8

<sup>40</sup> The Waterside Workers Federation gave £300. *Standard*, 23 Sep 36, p. 7



- <sup>41</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 9 Apr 37, p. 1
- <sup>42</sup> *Standard*, 21 Oct 36, p. 15
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Apr 38, p. 1; *NZPD*, vol 252, p. 584
- <sup>44</sup> *Standard*, 13 Jan 38, p. 7, 9 Feb 39, p. 2
- <sup>45</sup> **Chiang Kai-shek**, Generalissimo (1887–1975): Director Kuomintang Party, Republican **China** 1938; chmn Supreme National Defence Council 1939–47; Pres Republic China 1948–9, from 1950 (in Taiwan)
- <sup>46</sup> At Hororata, see *Press*, 9 Oct 37, quoted by *Tomorrow*, 13 Oct 37, vol III, p. 771
- <sup>47</sup> *Evening Post*, 1 Oct 37, p. 13
- <sup>48</sup> *Standard*, 4 Nov 37, p. 1. Export, without the consent of the Minister of Customs, of all cast scrap iron had been prohibited since 10 June 1937 by statutory regulation 183/1937. On 5 October another regulation (243/1937) extended this prohibition to all scrap metal.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Oct 37, p. 1, 3 Mar, 21 Apr 38, pp. 11, 5
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Oct 37, p. 1
- <sup>51</sup> *Tomorrow*, 30 Mar, 13 Apr 38, vol IV, pp. 351, 383
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, vol I, 19 Sep 34, pp. 4–5, by J. C. Beaglehole, referring to John Wheeler-Bennett's *Wreck of Reparations*. Again, in *Salient*, the student paper of **Victoria University College, Wellington**, an editorial on 8 January 1938 suggested that



though the democracies were 'aghast at **Germany's** so-called "grab", many Austrians might find it economically helpful.

<sup>53</sup> **Chautemps, Camille, GCVO (1885–1963): French politician; Min State 1936–7, 1939–40; PM 1937–8; in Daladier Cabinet 1938–9**

<sup>54</sup> **Blum, Leon (1872–1950): French politician; PM 1936–7, 1938; PM & Foreign Min Provisional Govt 1946–7; Pres Socialist party **France****

<sup>55</sup> ***Standard*, 17 Mar 38, p. 8**

<sup>56</sup> **Luckner, Count Felix von (1881–1966): good-will missioner and sailor, to **Australia** 1895–1900; German Imp Navy, in Battle of Jutland, then commander raider *Seeadler*, world tour in *Sea Devil* 1937ff; in **Germany**, not a Nazi, 1939–45; lecture tour to further understanding between people 1949–50**

<sup>57</sup> ***Dominion*, 20, 22 Apr 37, pp. 9, 12**

<sup>58</sup> ***Workers' Weekly*, 9 Jul, 30 Apr, 7 May 37, pp. 1, 2, 1**

<sup>59</sup> ***Ibid.*, 9 Jul 37, p. 3; *Tomorrow*, 21 Jul 37, vol III, p. 580**

<sup>60</sup> ***Dominion*, 22, 28 Apr, 1, 6, 7 May 37, all p. 13**

<sup>61</sup> **Fraser, Rt Hon Peter, PC, CH('45) (1884–1950): b **Scotland**, to NZ 1910; MP (Lab) Brooklyn 1918–50; Min Education, Health, Marine 1935–50; Acting PM, 1937–40; PM, Min External Affairs, Police 1940–9, Island Territories 1943–9, Maori Affairs 1946–9; Head War Cab & War Council; UN offices 1945–8**

<sup>62</sup> ***Dominion*, 28 Apr 37, p. 13**

<sup>63</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 6 Aug 37, p. 1

<sup>64</sup> *Standard*, 15 Jul 37, p. 9

<sup>65</sup> *Tomorrow*, 21 Jul 37, vol III, p. 580

<sup>66</sup> Lochore, Dr Reuel Anson (1903–): civil servant, diplomat; PM Dept, Dept Internal Affairs with several years post-WWH as Naturalisation Officer, Dept External Affairs 1957; NZ Min India 1962, Indonesia 1964, 1st NZ Ambassador West Germany 1966

<sup>67</sup> *Dominion*, 26 Apr, 4 May 37, pp. 3, 11

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Mar 38, p. 12

<sup>69</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Mar 38, p. 8; *Press*, 22, 23, 26 Mar 38, pp. 8, 8, 22

<sup>70</sup> *Dominion*, 25 Mar 38, p. 5

<sup>71</sup> Comptroller of Customs to Min Customs, 29 Aug 39, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', NZ- **Germany** to Oct 38, p. 11; *Evening Post*, 6 Oct 37, p. 6

<sup>72</sup> *NZPD*, vol 248, p. 628; whole debate pp. 594–639

<sup>73</sup> GGNZ to SSDA, 29 Sep 38, PM6/7/3, pt 4, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', NZ- **Germany** to Oct 38, p. 21

<sup>74</sup> *Round Table*, Oct 38, pp. 53–7; Wood, F. L. W., *New Zealand in Crisis, May 1938– August 1939*, pp. 1–9

<sup>75</sup> Armstrong, Richard (d 1959 *aet* 60): with RFC WWI, to NZ

**1922; exec member Labour Representation Cmte, Auck Trades Council; former City Councillor and past member Auck Transport, Drainage Boards**

**<sup>76</sup> de la Mare, Frederick Archibald (1877–1962): Hamilton High School Board Governors, 1st chmn CORSO cmte, borough councillor; NZU Senate 1919–47**

**<sup>77</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Oct 38, p. 10; *Workers' Weekly*, 7, 12 Oct 38, pp. 1, 2**

**<sup>78</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Oct 38, p. 10**

**<sup>79</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 23 Sep–7 Oct 38; *Evening Post*, 29 Sep 38, p. 10**

**<sup>80</sup> *Evening Post*, 30 Sep 38, p. 10**

**<sup>81</sup> Jordan to PM Dept, 3 Oct 38, PM 6/6/6, pt 1, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', NZ– **Germany** to Oct 38, p. 22**

**<sup>82</sup> Hamilton, Hon Adam (1880–1952): MP (Nat) Wallace 1919–22, 1925–46; Min Labour, PMG 1931–5; Leader Oppos 1935–40; War Cab 1940**

**<sup>83</sup> *Evening Post*, 1 Oct 38, p. 10**

**<sup>84</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10 Oct 38, p. 13**

**<sup>85</sup> *Standard*, 27 Oct 38, p. 17**

**<sup>86</sup> GGNZ to SSSA, 21 Mar 39, PM 6/6/3, pt 4, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', NZ– **UK** from **Munich** to war, pp. 3–4**

<sup>87</sup> SSSA to GGNZ, 31 Mar 39, PM 6/6/3, pt 16, in *ibid.*, p. 4

<sup>88</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 Mar 39, p. 12

<sup>89</sup> eg, *Press*, 22 Mar 39, *Auckland Star*, 21, 23 Mar 39

<sup>90</sup> Likewise *Auckland Star*, 1, 3 Apr 39, *Otago Daily Times*, 3 Apr 39

<sup>91</sup> *Evening Post*, 1 Apr 39

<sup>92</sup> Feling, K., *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, p. 403; McLeod, R., and D. Kelly (eds), *The Ironside Diaries*, p. 78

<sup>93</sup> GGNZ to SSSA, 12 May 1939, PM 201/4/2, pt 7, in WHN, 'Foreign Policy', NZ– UK from **Munich** to war, p. 11

<sup>94</sup> SSSA to GGNZ, 17 May 39, PM 6/6/3, pt 17, in *ibid.*, p. 12

<sup>95</sup> See Wood, F. L. W., *Political and External Affairs* (hereinafter Wood), p. 65

<sup>96</sup> *Standard*, 3 Aug 39, p. 10; *NZPD*, vol 254, p. 699 (R. McKeen), p. 738 (A. H. Nordmeyer), p. 787 (W. T. Anderton), vol 255, p. 13 (R. M. MacFarlane), pp. 108–9 (C. M. Williams)

<sup>97</sup> *Tomorrow*, 16, 30 Aug 39, vol V, pp. 649, 677

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 2 – IMPACT OF WAR

## CHAPTER 2

### *Impact of War*

**FACING** war, the Labour party was in a very difficult position. Traditionally, Labour was anti-conscription and anti-militarist, viewing war as part of the imperialist struggle for markets, a force that cut clean across its aim of improving workers' conditions and standards of living. Apart from the obvious suffering and sorrow, war meant loss of civil liberties and working harder for less, while destroying fellow-workers likewise driven to arms by the forces of capital. Labour leaders had been in prison for refusing to support the 1914–18 war. Only a few, however, were absolute pacifists— rather they had opposed that particular war and its abuses, such as conscription coupled with uncontrolled prices. During the 1920s Labour had opposed the League of Nations, viewing it as a victors' club and saying that the world needed instead a league of peoples. This attitude changed gradually as the League's useful technical work emerged, and when **Germany** joined in 1926 and **Russia** in 1934 it could no longer be considered a victors' club. New Zealand Labour followed the British movement in its hopes of world disarmament by agreement, and in 1930 it supported the Forbes government in suspending compulsory military training, a measure prompted both by economy and sentiment—the will to peace being strengthened by the obvious folly of spending money on armaments when the immediate enemies were unemployment and poverty. By 1931–2 New Zealand's armed forces were small indeed: there were only two cruisers and while **Britain** spent £1 8 s 5 d a head on land and air defence, and **Australia** 5 s 6 d, New Zealand spent only 2 s 10 d on all these services, its air force being almost non-existent. <sup>1</sup>

World public distaste for war preparations was at its height in 1933–4, but already British defence authorities, with eyes on **Germany** and **Japan**, were moving slowly into rearmament. Ripples of this reached New Zealand, and in 1934 the defence vote was almost furtively increased, Labour opposing it with the more urgent need to fight poverty. But Labour, growing towards the responsibilities of office,

increasingly stressed collective security as the effective means of defending democracy and peace—H. E. Holland <sup>2</sup> asked Forbes (who declined) to urge League action over **Manchuria** in 1931. <sup>3</sup> Labour in office strongly upheld sanctions against **Italy** and was critical of concessions to Spanish rebels. In 1936 it carried forward the programme of increasing armaments, and took to the League proposals that went far beyond British ideas for making enforcement of the Covenant automatic and powerful, while enlarging and deepening support by consulting the peoples of the world through plebiscites and broadcasts of League proceedings. It also proposed surveys of economic problems as a preliminary to rectifying international grievances. Against the charge of inconsistency in showing no will to abolish armed forces, Labour declared that it had never held that a nation should not be ready to defend itself, but that economic aggression was precedent to and the main cause of military aggression, and could be removed by economic adjustments. <sup>4</sup>

At the Commonwealth Conference in 1937 Savage spoke out his faith, saying that some grievous mistakes had been made, to which New Zealand had sometimes but not always consented, urging that peace could best be preserved not by secret diplomacy but by the Commonwealth laying down the lines that it would pursue in future; that as disputes between nations had always an economic basis, a concerted international effort was needed to remove these economic injustices, and that meanwhile the Covenant should be made real—there would be no final end to the miseries of war until those nations that loved peace made it abundantly clear that they were determined to maintain it, if necessary by force. <sup>5</sup>

The Labour party, then, even in such idealists as Savage and Jordan, had come increasingly to the idea of force as necessary to restrain evil. More robustly, **Peter Fraser** could say to the Labour Conference in 1937, 'If we truly desire to see Labour Democracy continue in our country we ought to be ready to defend it, even die for it. Do you think we would get any mercy from **Mussolini** or Hitler?' <sup>6</sup> In September 1937 the budget,



totalling nearly £34½ million, allowed £15,000 to the League, and £1,600,000 to defence <sup>7</sup>—an increase of £585,000 on the previous year. Nash remarked that these items were inextricably linked: effective application of the League's principles alone could bring permanent peace, but until then defence was necessary. The military and naval services were being modestly increased and re-organised and an air force begun, but with no idea of facing a major invasion. Commonwealth defence experts thought that the most likely attack would be from a raiding ship with aircraft and able to land about 200 men on a hit-and-run mission. Gradually emphasis was shifting from reliance on internationalism to territorial defence measures, though the economic foundations of peace and the value of education and propaganda were still pillars of Labour faith.

The *Standard*, during 1936–8, had many solid, hard-thinking editorials giving the background of treaties and national movements since 1919, stressing that armament makers thrive on fear; that economic grievances, the basic cause of war, could be worked out at a world economic conference; that the League should be made a reality with force behind it. It was not actually said that New Zealanders should be in this League force; it was always implicit that before fairness-plus-firmness even dictators would be reasonable.

In April 1937 trade unions and district Trades and Labour councils combined to form the Federation of Labour, replacing the Alliance of Labour. The industrial section of the Labour movement now had a more vigorous and coherent central organisation which in foreign affairs was more leftist than was the rest of the movement. At its first annual conference, in April 1938, the Federation passed this general resolution on foreign policy:

This Conference... directs the attention of the whole Labour Movement to the terrible threat to world peace by **Hitler**, Mussolini and Japanese Military-Fascism. The danger behoves the working-class to more firmly unite its ranks, strengthen its organizations, sharpen its vigilance and generate greater activity in the struggle against Fascism

**and war.**

**We consider that the policy of the Chamberlain Government in retreating before the Fascist black-mailers, instead of averting the drive to war, helps to promote aggression and is leading the British Empire into war.**

**The cause of world peace today depends upon the checking of Fascist aggression in Central Europe, **Spain** and **China**. Therefore we urge the Labour Government to insist that the British Empire will (a) support **France** and the Soviet Union in guaranteeing the independence and security of **Czechoslovakia**, (b) lift the embargo on arms to the Spanish Government and insist on the immediate withdrawal of the Fascist interventionists' forces in **Spain**, (c) organize collective action to bring to an end Japanese aggression in **China**.**

**Also we call on the trade union movement to improve in every way its support for the Spanish Government and to strengthen the boycott of Japanese goods.**

**Further, this conference denounces the suggestion in certain quarters for the reintroduction of compulsory military training, which is but the prelude to a demand for conscription for overseas services in the event of an imperialist war. Having in mind the experiences of the war of 1914–18, when the people of New Zealand were subjected to what was virtually a military dictatorship, we urge the Labour Government to take steps to repeal all legislation which provides for conscription for overseas service for imperialist purposes.**

**Finally, we direct the National Council of the Federation to give greater attention to the danger to world peace, to the issuance of propaganda against war and Fascism and the developing of opposition to war in the working class movement. <sup>8</sup>**

**It was a large, impossible order, a putting-together, without compromise, of irreconcilable policies—insistence that the growing danger to peace**

and the working class be curbed, without any modification of the traditional stand against conscription and 'imperialist' war. The government was to insist that aggression be checked, but not by New Zealand workers—for plainly at the time the number likely to volunteer would not have caused a dictator to bat an eyelid. It was an unhappy conflict, one which was shared by the Labour movement in **Britain**, and which was to remain with them well into the war. It is not insignificant that this resolution was moved by a Communist and published in full by the *Workers' Weekly* (22 April 1938) but not in the *Standard*. A *Standard* article, after remarking that in **Europe** the dictators were now more firmly in the saddle than ever and probably other countries besides **Austria** would soon be under Fascist domination, neatly turned the point homeward: 'It is not enough to talk of democracy or to be anxious of its fate in **Europe**, we must be careful to preserve Government by the people and for the people here in New Zealand.'<sup>9</sup> In Germany a strong working-class movement had been overcome by Fascism; New Zealand workers must take care Fascism did not gain ground here. The election was only seven months away.

The National party, with its sense of close adherence to **Britain**, had felt the impropriety of New Zealand's occasional divergences from **Britain** at the League of Nations. Its members, with more experience of office, were more accustomed to the idea of the inevitability of war and not at all committed to any theory of nonparticipation. Some were not afraid to say, even in 1936, that if New Zealand subscribed to collective security it should give support not only with words but with a complete expeditionary force.<sup>10</sup> They expected quite early that the League of Nations would fail and they wanted more defence. They were reluctant to see Labour spend on public works and social services money which could be used for that purpose.

The New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association was specially concerned with defence and felt that its members' knowledge of the last war, their sufferings and their dead companions entitled them to respectful hearing. Obviously they were not pacifists, and they could

reasonably ask other men to face what they had faced 25 years before. Though a non-political body, their views on defence coincided with those of the National party: they felt that New Zealand was not ready to do her fair share in Commonwealth defence, and that compulsory training in the Territorials was a first essential.

Late in 1936 the sense of inadequate defence led some people with strong RSA and Territorial interests or belonging to such organisations as the **Navy League** (all of whom the Labour party speedily identified with the Nationalists) to form the Defence League,<sup>11</sup> aiming to educate public opinion towards increased defence measures and to encourage young men into military, naval, and air force training. It also wanted the government to organise services, such as hospitals, transport and food supplies, to meet a possible national emergency. The League claimed that its intention was to assist not hinder the government, and that it was a non-party organisation, on a democratic and national basis. On 15 October 1936 a deputation visited the Defence Minister who politely welcomed its assurances of co-operation, reminded it that the government was responsible for defence and was working 'quietly but thoroughly', and did not think there was any need for scares.<sup>12</sup>

Labour rank and file was much more sensitive. 'More than ever eternal vigilance is the price of popular government and liberty', wrote a correspondent in the *Standard* of 9 September 1936, alarmed at the proposed formation by business and professional men of a military propagandist league; it would be nothing new for such a league to turn into a defence force, complete with shirts and salutes. The workers must scrutinise closely the aims, objects, personnel and sponsors of proposed leagues. 'Europe today proves that patriotism is the refuge for greater scoundrels and the cloak for more bestial brutality than ever before.'

Though the *Standard* continued its warning against the Defence League as the possible germ of a fascist force, the League was favoured by the press in general, which was consistently critical of the government and friendly to its opponents. Another sign of Labour distrust was a remit from the Easter conference of 1937 which, though

not naming the League, clearly referred to it: 'That the Government be urged to disband and prevent the formation of armed forces not directly under the control of the Government, to prevent the wearing of party uniforms, and to legislate to ensure that the manufacture of arms and munitions is under Government control.'<sup>13</sup> During 1938, with concern for defence becoming more general, the League's activity increased. At Wellington on 24 March a meeting of about 800 urged that besides increased Army strength all resources should be organised for defence. Suggested measures included a militia force of middle-aged citizens, organisations of civilians so that in a national crisis there would be as little confusion as possible, and instruction about gas decontamination and gas masks. The principal speaker, Hon W. Perry MLC,<sup>14</sup> spoke of current negotiations in **Britain** to relax conditions of labour so that more work could be put into armaments; it was no argument to lessen the Labour movement's distrust.<sup>15</sup>

Progress in New Zealand's rearmament was described by Jones,<sup>16</sup> the Defence Minister, on 18 May 1938 at **Dargaville** in a speech widely published in the press and as a pamphlet. He spoke of reorganising and increasing the naval division, creating an air force and making improvements in the Territorial forces which aimed to train leaders ready for a sudden expansion if needed. A peacetime strength of 9000 was thought sufficient, and Jones admitted that there were then but 7400, of whom only 41 per cent had attended camp that year. He appealed to fit, alert young men to sacrifice some of their leisure, and to employers to give leave for service. The Defence League approved; but the next day **Auckland** papers published a manifesto signed by four Territorial colonels who broke soldierly silence in a sharp criticism of the Territorial position, declaring the present numbers, organisation and training quite inadequate, due to lack of support from successive governments and from the public.

These statements brought defence into prominence for some weeks, and bodies such as a Farmers' Union Conference urged a more vigorous defence policy with universal military training.<sup>17</sup> The Defence League

offered to bring in the 1600 needed Territorials and proposed a citizens' militia of men over Territorial age. To all this the government replied that it was doing a great deal more than the Nationalists had done in the early 1930s, that its measures were adequate for any attacks anticipated by Imperial experts, that it was spending money and getting good value for it; that many of these criticisms were political, a stick with which to hammer the government. But on 2 June 1938 the Prime Minister, remarking that 'No one can say what is going to happen when the nation has its back to the wall, but, whatever is necessary, when it comes to compulsion, we will not begin with human flesh and blood', <sup>18</sup> obliquely made the first suggestion that a Labour government might find conscription necessary, a suggestion that he and others were to repeat with increasing significance. Delicately Savage began to accustom himself and his party to an inevitable change that went clean against Labour principles and tradition. Meanwhile, in July, as a practical encouragement to service, Territorial pay was raised by 3 s a day, plus camp allowances of 5 s a day—the first rise since 1911.

Early in its election campaign for November 1938, while still acknowledging the ideal of the League of Nations, the National party urged that a strongly defended British Empire was the greatest factor in world peace, that in foreign policy New Zealand must stand wholeheartedly with **Britain**—Jordan's assertions of difference were deplored <sup>19</sup>—while land, sea and air forces should be expanded rapidly to contribute fairly to Empire defence and world peace. The armed force would be voluntary, but in war the resources of the country, both men and women, would be mobilised; no one would be allowed to exploit his fellow citizens. <sup>20</sup>

Countering this, Labour's manifesto on 24 September had explained that it was increasing defence expenditure—£600,000 in 1932, £1 million in 1935, more than £3 million in 1938–9. <sup>21</sup> It was improving and co-ordinating the three Services. In foreign policy it claimed belief in collective security through the League, Commonwealth co-operation and more defence. Neither party wished to risk popularity by stressing



war and defence; it was politically wise to keep to familiar, blunted phrases.

During 1939 as threats multiplied, feeling again grew that not enough men were enlisting in the Territorials, especially the more mature who might supply leadership. The government uneasily juggled with its distaste for militarism, with defence needs, and with rebuttal of political opponents. The Defence League, since November 1938, had urged three months' compulsory military training for 18-year-olds, followed by four years in the Territorials. The Chamber of Commerce considered this view in May <sup>22</sup> and, together with manufacturers and employers, pressed it (plus universal emergency service) upon the government late in August. <sup>23</sup> Even a few Labour members with military backgrounds, notably J. A. Lee, <sup>24</sup> W. J. Lyon <sup>25</sup> and W. E. Barnard, <sup>26</sup> advocated increased recruiting. Labour's Easter Conference both re-affirmed its opposition to conscription and turned down a motion to suppress the Defence League—the Defence Minister saying that the League merely represented Labour's political opponents, defeated last year, and it was better to have them working openly than underground. Lee asked, 'Are we to say there is to be no free speech for these retired and liverish colonels who want to see everyone doing the goose-step when there is no war?' <sup>27</sup> The Prime Minister repeated that no one could tell what a nation would do when backed to the wall, but conscription would not begin with flesh and blood.

In the second half of April 1939 a Pacific Defence Conference was held in [Wellington](#). It had its origins in repeated requests by New Zealand for discussions between [Britain](#), [Australia](#) and New Zealand on the strategic importance of the [Pacific](#) should trouble there coincide with a European war. <sup>28</sup> It was made clear that help from overseas, even of equipment, could not be quickly obtained, and New Zealand's defences must be sharply increased. Savage was finally convinced that immediate strengthening of land forces was needed. This he proclaimed on 22 May, having in the preceding weeks fumbled reluctantly towards it. In April he still wanted an international conference, hated the idea of

conscription, and was sure that every man would be ready to serve in an emergency; <sup>29</sup> on 25 April he suddenly spoke of a home defence force of 50 000 men of up to 50 years old, independent of overseas sources for arms. This was closely involved with his belief in New Zealanders' eagerness to defend their Labour-governed country, but it gave rise to a report that the government was ordering 60 000 uniforms and should have done so earlier when it would have improved the wool sales. <sup>30</sup> This Savage called an attempt to discredit the government both with the wool growers and the anti-militarists; he was thinking of a citizen army in plain clothes, 'not goose-stepping... in uniform and spending hundreds of thousands a year.' <sup>31</sup> The goose-stepping reference offended the Territorials, reported the *Dominion* of 6 May; poor Savage complained that everything was being turned to party propaganda. <sup>32</sup> Political absurdities attended New Zealand's approach to war.

Besides the Defence League there were in May 1939 a few extra-governmental movements to augment the home forces. An RSA National Guard was proposed at *New Plymouth* <sup>33</sup> and a Veterans' Brigade at *Auckland*. <sup>34</sup> Some trade unionists made their own suggestions. The Easter Labour Party Conference had asked the government to co-operate 'with the Industrial Labour Movement in building up a Democratic Defence Force.' <sup>35</sup> The Auckland Trades Council in May proposed a company of 200 trade unionists officered by men with whom they normally worked, which would, said their adviser W. J. Lyon, assist co-ordination and *esprit de corps*. <sup>36</sup> The leftist Carpenters Union paper *The Borer* in May urged the recruiting of trade unionists prepared to defend both their country and their progressive institutions, to fight enemies at home and abroad.

The *Standard* of 11 May strongly deprecated attempts 'by a section of the Press and certain organisations to create a feeling of panic' about defence, and Savage declared that private armies were not wanted, that the bogey of invasion had been turned into a political weapon against the government. The Defence Minister politely vetoed all separate organisations, saying that their spirit was appreciated, but defence must



be under government control and those prepared to join such organisations would readily enlist in the Territorial forces. <sup>37</sup>

In May a recruiting drive began; on the 22nd Savage, in a special broadcast, said that while he did not believe general war to be inevitable and had no secret information of a crisis, the international situation was bad and all, however reluctantly, must face reality. Strength and vigilance were the conditions of survival. If war came to **Britain** it came to New Zealand. He asked for volunteers, first to the regular Army, then for 6000 more Territorials to make them up to 16 000; for 280 to the specially trained coast defences, and finally for all able-bodied men of 20–55 years to register in a National Military Reserve, from which 5000 experienced men would be selected as Territorial reserves. <sup>38</sup> To avoid confusion he asked the Defence League to withdraw its enrolment cards. He stressed that training was for home defence, defence of living standards and social security; explained how the **Air Force** in particular had improved in Labour's time, and still declared that international discussions would be of more use before a new war than after it. The Defence League welcomed the speech, and withdrew its cards. The Opposition expressed relief and qualified approval, still preferring universal training to volunteers. <sup>39</sup> So did the press in general. The *Dominion* on 27 May gave the views of 17 assorted people on the defence proposals, several suggesting that conscription would be necessary.

Territorial enlistment was brisk and the 16 000 were secured early in August, <sup>40</sup> but for the Military Reserve it went much more slowly. The anxieties of the Opposition and the RSA were renewed, the latter's annual conference in June urging 'compulsory universal national service'. <sup>41</sup> After Parliament opened in June the Opposition vigorously criticised defence inadequacy and wanted universal military training for home service, while some members introduced what was to be one of the repeated themes in the next few years: that money should be diverted from public works and social services to defence—national security before social security. <sup>42</sup> The Farmers' Union, a body usually closely associated with the National party, in July approved the government's

defence efforts, deprecated criticising it for inadequate preparations, saying that the people themselves were to blame, and strongly urged compulsory military training. <sup>43</sup> In its qualified approval, the Farmers' Union at this stage was close to the Defence League, acknowledging advances but demanding more.

The National party, then, in the three years before the war urged increased defence as a need transcending politics, but urged it in the terms of party warfare. The RSA and the Defence League, in advocating compulsory military training, stood with the National party. Labour was sensitive and resentful about these attacks, and suspicious of their motive. Party politics dogged and clogged every defence move.

Immediately war was declared towards midnight on Sunday 3 September 1939 <sup>44</sup> all major sections of the community voiced support of the government to help **Britain** and fight the Nazis. Many different streams of feeling and tradition could unite in this. For instance, a Labour party caucus replying to British Labour greetings predicted the inevitable 'triumph of justice, democracy and socialism'; <sup>45</sup> the National caucus resolved 'This is the hour to remember the slogan which fired the patriotism of the men and women of this country twenty-five years ago—"To the last man and the last shilling"; <sup>46</sup> Adam Hamilton declared 'Party politics must be laid aside so that our people may be united in their determination and effort to live up to the high traditions established in the past.' <sup>47</sup> The Federation of Labour promised to keep production as high as possible, stressed that Nazis were the enemies of trade unionism and of the best sections of the German people and called all workers, including those of **Germany**, to make common cause in the fight for human justice, liberty and international brotherhood. <sup>48</sup> The churches sonorously proclaimed loyalty to the Throne, co-operation with the State, and the brotherhood of man.

A great many local bodies, trade associations, sports and other groups passed resolutions and wrote to the government of their unswerving loyalty to the Crown, and keen desire to co-operate fully with the government in defence of the Commonwealth. Such

declarations came, for instance, from the NZRSA, <sup>49</sup> the Associated Chambers of Commerce, which most pressingly offered to assist in framing regulations affecting commerce and industry, <sup>50</sup> the Wellington branch of the National Council of Women, <sup>51</sup> the New Zealand Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs, <sup>52</sup> the New Zealand Motor Trade Federation, <sup>53</sup> the Wellington Manufacturers Association, <sup>54</sup> the Municipal Association of New Zealand, <sup>55</sup> the Canterbury Progress League, <sup>56</sup> the Christchurch City Council, <sup>57</sup> the New Zealand Bowling Association <sup>58</sup> and the New Zealand Amateur Swimming Association. <sup>59</sup> Fortunately for the government officers concerned, many local sports bodies did not express their loyalty individually but asked their New Zealand associations to frame suitable resolutions: thus the rugby players of Otago, hotly followed by those of Canterbury, on 4 September telegraphed to their New Zealand Union proposing a united resolution. <sup>60</sup> Some took the situation very seriously: the cricketers of **Wellington** and Otago delayed planning their season as their young men might be defending the country instead of playing cricket, <sup>61</sup> while the New Zealand Baseball Council declared that though competitions would be carried on where possible, players of military age should offer their services in this dark hour. <sup>62</sup>

In a few aspects, war actually began. Recruiting for the National Military Reserve, begun in May for service in New Zealand, increased rapidly, with nearly 7000 offering in the first four days, making a total of 25 444 by 6 September, some of whom were soon called for guarding vital points, coast-watching and fortress duty. <sup>63</sup> Enlistment for the overseas force opened on 12 September to an equally enthusiastic response. Public Works carpenters and private contractors swung into action, building camps at **Trentham**, **Burnham** and **Ngaruawahia**. Some eager people who, remembering 1914–18, at once began to raise patriotic funds, were checked and chilled by the government which promised instead a comprehensive organisation for money-gathering. Petrol was rationed for a few weeks; prices were frozen; day-to-day life changed not at all. For most people there was nothing immediate to do.

With some people, self interest balanced fervour and they began at once to hoard food. Anticipating shortages arising from import restrictions plus war conditions, they bought tea, sugar and flour in panic quantities. The grocers, unable by regulation to exceed their normal wholesale supplies, were obliged to ration their customers. Four pounds of sugar per person per time was fairly general and in **Wellington**, for instance, tea was limited to one pound and flour to seven pounds. <sup>64</sup> This embarrassed grocers, for obviously it was the more worthwhile customers who could afford such outlay, nor did it avoid multiple buying by the determined ones; country people, used to 56lb bags of sugar, were bewildered when offered 4lb a week. The flour rush lasted only a few days. The quantities of tea and sugar entering New Zealand were not diminished, rather increased, and by mid-November the panic had subsided. Tinned fruit and fish were also bought up by those who could afford them, while in drapers' shops the belief that reels of cotton would be scarce made the demand so strong that they were scarce indeed. <sup>65</sup> It was all small scale, but the private and petty greed contrasted with public professions of loyalty and co-operation.

After the first moments of acceptance when all parties stood bareheaded before the great issue, the war seemed far away and local differences re-assumed their sharp outlines. On 12–13 September the Emergency Regulations Bill which gave the government very wide powers to legislate by orders-in-council, was passed without opposition, J. G. Coates <sup>66</sup> saying 'All of us dread the idea of a Government taking omnibus powers to do exactly what it likes, but the people of this country must realise that their very existence may depend on the unification of effort.' <sup>67</sup> Fraser soon warned that the government would advance some finance measures on which he would not expect the Opposition to stifle its criticism: 'Nobody should be expected to sink his conscientious opinions even at a time like this.' <sup>68</sup> Hamilton, as he himself later explained, had privately besought Fraser to avoid contentious legislation; this he held would not seriously embarrass the government and would be a very real contribution towards public and sectional unity. <sup>69</sup>

Here it is necessary to remember the background. The National party was alarmed by what the government had already done and feared more for the future. Labour, coming to power in 1935 pledged to relieve unemployment, had done so largely by putting thousands of men on public works—hydro-electricity, irrigation, and, conspicuously, road-making. It was not pick-and-shovel relief but fully-paid work, often from large camps which included family housing, and using a great deal of heavy equipment imported directly by the government. This, plus increased imports resulting from increased spending power, bit so deeply into New Zealand's balance of trade funds in **London** that the government was obliged to restrict imports at the end of 1938. Nash went to England to renew accumulated loans totalling more than £17 million due for repayment in 1940. He found the financial authorities so hostile to his government's 'unsound' experimental policies that they at first refused to convert the loan (which would have bankrupted the New Zealand government), then consented to do so on very hard terms. In July 1939 the loan was raised: more than £1 million was to be repaid on 1 January 1940, and the remaining £16 million carried on at 3½ per cent, with £2 million to be repaid in 1940–1 and £3½ million in each of the four following years.<sup>70</sup> Restrictions checking the import of British goods were frowned on, and the New Zealand government should not promote industries in conflict with British interests.<sup>71</sup> Nash learned a lesson he never forgot: ever after he watched over New Zealand's sterling balance with a protective care which caused him to restrain early wartime impulses to give produce and money to **Britain**.

Meanwhile it was necessary to keep imports down, and as local industry could not rapidly be built up without importing equipment, shortages were inevitable. These were soon to be swallowed up in the larger shortages of the war, but during the first year the complaint was often made that, but for pre-war import restrictions imposed by a spendthrift government, various goods would still have been plentiful. While the restrictions favoured manufacturers, they curbed and threatened many importers and traders, and encroached on an area hitherto free from State intrusion; they were viewed with resentment

and alarm as a long step towards socialism. Such controls, administered by civil servants necessarily new to the business field, inevitably occasioned misunderstanding, rudeness, muddle and delay, which brought resentment against regimentation to a very high pitch well before war started. However, when war made controls inevitable not only were people pre-conditioned to accept them, but the organisation already existed and had got through some of its teething troubles.

War further sharpened the Nationalists' wish to have men of sound ideas and business ability at the helm. Many were convinced that the country would be ruined, its war effort enfeebled and democracy overthrown by experimenting socialists, and many saw totalitarianism looming at home: 'if democracy is worth fighting for abroad, it is worth defending politically in this country'.<sup>72</sup> Firmly exiled from office by the 1938 election, the National party hoped that the new need for unity would at least curb Labour's socialistic progress, and shrewd minds knew that wars often bring in coalition governments. As the *Standard* jeered on 12 October: 'they thought that the sweet fruits of office, even though they had to share them with the Labour party, were almost within their grasp.'

For the Labour party, avoidance of measures that would displease the Opposition was a very high price to pay for co-operation. What was the point of being the government if they were to govern according to the wishes of the Opposition? From top to bottom Labour was exasperated at being interrupted by war when it had lately achieved triumphant re-election and was ready to press on with social and financial reforms. To rein in, or to accept coalition, was to abandon the position for which it had battled so long, and workers could argue that abandonment would be giving in at home to the enemy they were fighting abroad.

The political truce was broken early in October over the Marketing Amendment Act, which enabled the government to buy and re-sell any produce at prices fixed by the State, and over the Reserve Bank Amendment Act which enlarged the Bank's powers and made final the



government's control of it. There was a storm of protest, directed particularly against Nash, in Parliament, in the press and at meetings of farmers and businessmen. The national emergency was being exploited to promote the factional end of complete socialisation. <sup>73</sup> Nash stated that the Bank bill was an ordinary measure which would probably have been introduced had there been no war, but war made it still more necessary that currency and credit should be controlled by the government. Hamilton replied that New Zealanders would never submit to autocratic dictatorship of the State, the very thing **Britain** was fighting; Sidney Holland <sup>74</sup> said New Zealand had thrown her financial captain overboard and faced a stormy voyage with a crew of political adventurers rocking the boat; Coates wanted to know the difference between National Socialism under **Hitler** and National Socialism under Nash. <sup>75</sup>

The session closed on 7 October 1939, with Fraser remarking that such heat was quite in order; the government did not expect sinking of principle or curtailment of expression of opinion. <sup>76</sup> *The Standard*, however, wrote about obstruction of war measures. <sup>77</sup> During the next two or three months widespread and widely reported meetings of farmers and businessmen complained of these new encroachments of socialisation, plus the longer-standing grievances of import restrictions and no increase in dairy prices for 1939–40. Such war regulations as price and transport control were seen as clumsy government intrusion into affairs run much better by private enterprise. A few extremists even advocated direct action such as closing all farms for a fortnight, or tipping milk down the drains. <sup>78</sup> A **Dunedin** newspaper correspondent wrote: 'We are at war and it is no disloyalty to organise and put into practice a general strike to make this country quietly more efficient, prosperous and free.' <sup>79</sup>

Such wrangling could perhaps be expected, paradoxical as it may now seem to have been. Troubled peace had been replaced by 'phoney war'. After all the forebodings, bombs were not raining on cities; almost stationary armies faced each other in fortifications. For New Zealand,

waiting went on. Normal living, it was felt, should be suspended, but there was nothing to replace it. Unable to get at the enemy without, National party people turned their frustration and adrenalin against the enemy at hand; Labour replied in kind, and each accused the other of using the war to grind political axes.

The need for increased production confirmed the position of farmers. Traditionally they were the backbone of the country, the vital basis of the New Zealand economy—in fact, were the economy—and they knew it. It was only sense, therefore, that their interests should rank first with any government, and especially in war time. They believed deeply that what was good for farmers must be good for New Zealand. They had little use for secondary industries, which the Labour government, hoping to lessen dependence on overseas prices for farm produce, was trying to foster behind tariffs and import controls. They had still less time for unproductive public works, some virtually relief projects, on which the government was spending freely and which, by offering better pay and conditions than farmers could afford, drew workers away from farms. Traditionally suspect were freezing workers and wharfies, always loafing behind their regulations and awards, always trying to clip a bit more than their labour's worth from the farmer's returns, and cossetted now by a Labour government. For two years or so before the war farmers had adjusted to rising costs by trimming expenses, especially of labour, cutting down dairy herds and increasing sheep numbers, thus maintaining net income even though production was lessened. <sup>80</sup>

Now farmers were asked to produce more, while army enlistments and a rise in public works pay made their labour shortage worse, and the government took no large steps to help them. Let the government close public works, they urged, then farmers would have an adequate supply of men to choose from, money would be saved for war expenses, and even the guaranteed prices might be improved enough to make increased effort worthwhile. They resented being asked to work harder for no more money while the rest of the community took the war easily.

In particular, farmers were disturbed because there was no time limit



to the commandeering of produce under the Marketing Amendment Act and, when questioned, Nash would say only that the matter would be brought before Parliament when the war ended.<sup>81</sup> It was strongly felt that the government intended to use the war as a stalking-horse to get control of the main economic structure, and this cut very deeply at farmers' independence: '... the farmer will not do what he is told according to the dictates of an employer. He is the master of his farm and its production depends on his ability and organisation. If he is given the correct incentive he will do his job but without it he won't. If they interfere with the individual enterprise of the farmer they can never replace it with any other organisation and get the same production',<sup>82</sup> wrote an indignant man from Hawke's Bay, and similar views were widely uttered.

Labour's guaranteed prices for dairy produce, starting in the 1936-7 season, had at first won farming approval. In that year a loss of £272,482 was borne by the government. The 1937-8 season saw a modest rise in prices paid to farmers and a £576,724 surplus in the dairy account; but in 1938-9, when prices again rose slightly, the deficit was £2,514,889.<sup>83</sup> An advisory committee recommended a further price rise for 1939-40 but Nash, questioning the basis of its calculations, decreed that there would be no increase,<sup>84</sup> and in fact butterfat prices were to continue unchanged from 1938-9 until 1 April 1943.<sup>85</sup> The halt in 1939-40 caused keen dissatisfaction: farmers were being asked to produce more with no compensation against rising costs: it followed that the prices were a bar to increased production, and loyalty to the Empire required their improvement.

An allied complaint was the shortage of experienced farm labour. This was not just a wartime problem; it had succeeded the Depression problem of not being able to pay even for an experienced man when he stood at the door asking for work. But it was accentuated by rural labour enlisting, and a further acute annoyance was the public works pay increase from 1 October of 5 s a week (plus an extra 5 s camp allowance for married men in single quarters), giving a minimum wage of £4 5 s a

40-hour week. This brought public works pay in line with that fixed for other industries by the Arbitration Court, but the award wage on a mixed farm was £2 5 s a week, plus board and lodging reckoned at £1 a week, and on a dairy farm £2 12 s 6 d, with no 40-hour limit.

Farm wages, except those for a few groups such as shearers and harvesters, had never been fixed by collective agreements or Arbitration Court awards. Farm workers were too scattered for organisation, farmers strongly disliked regimentation, board and lodging were normally part of the deal, hours and conditions varied, and pay likewise. However, following the guaranteed price scheme which was intended to assure the competent dairy farmer a decent standard of living, the Agricultural Workers Act 1936 passed on the benefit to his employees. It decreed a certain number of paid holidays and a scale of minimum wages ranging from 17 s 6 d a week for those of less than 17 years to £2 2 s 6 d for those of 21 or more, which rose by 1939 to range from £1 to £2 12 s 6 d.<sup>86</sup> Meanwhile, by various Orders-in-Council, the Act was extended to other farm workers, establishing holidays and rates of pay. From 1 May 1937, on farms producing wool, meat and grain, the rates ranged from 17 s 6 d to £2 2 s 6 d.<sup>87</sup> These rates rose with those for dairy farms, except that for men of 21 years and more pay should not exceed £2 5 s a week.<sup>88</sup> Farmers widely allowed that good men would be fools to stick to farms, and were certain that they could not compete with such pay; according to newspaper reports, very few spoke like the Waimate farmer who said that somehow farm wages must be raised: 'Do not think for a moment you are going to smash all other classes of the community down to the level of the teamster who gets £2.5.0 a week'.<sup>89</sup>

Few mentioned poor farm housing as a cause of the labour shortage. Basically, many farmers expected a supply of capable single men, content to live in more or less primitive bachelor conditions. They were sure that they could not afford family housing for employees, forgetting that the resultant absence of children from rural districts perpetuated the shortage and that it was the Public Works Department's provision of housing, as well as better pay, which enticed labour away from the land.

Of course some farmers provided good houses for married men, but often even large farms had only one or two small family houses apart from single quarters. Naturally farm housing had been at a standstill during the Depression, and during the few intervening years of comparative prosperity it seemed a less urgent need than the fencing, top-dressing and long-delayed repairs or improvements that soaked up the better prices. <sup>90</sup>

It was frequently urged that unproductive public works where men were 'unemployed in the sense that we understand the term' should cease, and it was even suggested that farmers should be able to claim particular men from public works—the obvious difficulties 'probably could be solved if the Government faced the position resolutely'. <sup>91</sup> Some thought that farm workers should not be accepted by the Army, others that it was useless to hold a man who wanted to enlist: 'he would only grumble on the job'. <sup>92</sup> Subsidised farm labour was proposed at a number of meetings—one at Lawrence, for instance, approved a detailed plan advanced by the president of the Otago Farmers' Union, transferring men from subsidised local body (Scheme 13) and public works to such jobs as scrub cutting, weed clearing, hedge cutting, ditching, draining and fencing, not more than £1 a week of wages coming from the farmer, the rest from government funds. Camps on wheels for easy moving could be established where required in country districts, and the men distributed to adjoining farms to work in gangs under efficient supervision. <sup>93</sup> A good many farmers would have endorsed the Canterbury Progress League's suggestions for suspension of the 40-hour week, registration of manpower, national service for both war and production and the transfer of men from public works back to farms. <sup>94</sup>

After a month's tour of the **North Island**, Hamilton's summing-up of the farmers' attitude modified somewhat the devoted support for **Britain** expressed earlier: support in the form of farm produce should fetch a decent price. He had found everywhere 'intense dissatisfaction of the militant type' arising from the inadequate price of butterfat, the permanence of the commandeer of produce, the shortage of suitable

**labour and the insufficient measures to check rising costs. Though farmers were willing to make sacrifices, he said, if they retained ownership of their produce and could sell it for sterling, ‘thus getting possession of British money’, they would get substantially more than at present, and ‘regain a large portion of that economic justice that is not only their right but also the country’s vital need’. <sup>95</sup>**

**An editorial in *Point Blank*, the Farmers’ Union paper, of 15 December gathered together the farmers’ grievances as many saw them:**

**While the farmer is asked to work fifty or sixty hours on seven days a week, in all weathers, and for an inadequate return, the produce from his farm is commandeered and controlled by well-paid officials who are given the benefit of the forty hour week. It is handled on the wharves and in the freezing works by spoon-fed trades unionists, many of whom are concerned with doing as little as possible for as much as possible.... The farmer is willing to do his duty, but he cannot do it unless he gets a good deal fairer treatment than he is getting now. In the first place, adequate labour must be provided.... There is plenty of labour available for Public Works, on which the wages have recently been increased .... Let Mr Webb <sup>96</sup> use his influence with Mr Nash to obtain prices, for their commandeered produce, that will enable them to pay farm workers a wage that will attract men from Public Works and also permit them to give their workers a forty hour week. Why should the farmer himself not have a forty hour week if it comes to the point, and be recompensed for the higher skill and ability he possesses. His returns to-day are less than those of a carpenter. When the Government is willing to look at matters squarely and put first things first, then, and then only will increased production be assured.**

**Another, more appealing, statement of attitude by the man on the land appeared in the advertising columns of several newspapers:**

**I, THE UNDERSIGNED, and all those associated with me, engaged in a 60- to 80-hour week producing Wool, Mutton and Lamb in order that New Zealand will keep its promise to the British Government as part of**

its war effort, and being quite content to set aside all pecuniary reward for the duration, give notice that on conclusion of peace, WE WILL ASSUME COMPLETE CONTROL OF THE SALE AND DISPOSAL OF OUR WOOL, MUTTON AND LAMB, and will use every Constitutional and Legal measure TO PREVENT THE NATIONALISATION AND SOCIALISATION OF OUR PROPERTIES. T. D. Burnett, <sup>97</sup> Mount Cook Station, South Canterbury November 11, 1939.

This was reprinted in the *New Zealand Transport Worker*, the watersiders' paper, of 15 December with the comment: '[if this gentleman] had to sell his wool in the market this year without nationalisation, as he calls it, how would he get on? And who the devil wants his Mount Cook station anyhow?' The same paper, remarking on talk of a farmers' revolt, wrote that under a Nationalist government a Labourite who talked sedition during a major war would be summarily dealt with, and perhaps even a Labour government could be too tolerant with agitators. 'The sooner these people are made to realise that *they* are now the "agitators" and the "spreaders of strife", and that the Labour government is the rightful and constitutional guardian of this country, the better.' It remembered the baton-carrying farmers who helped to break the 1913 strike. <sup>98</sup>

A few letters appeared in newspapers saying that the Farmers' Union did not speak for all farmers, and that its president and Hamilton should urge increased production instead of 'continually grouching and attacking the Government'. <sup>99</sup> A resolute note of self-help sounded from some districts where, though young men were scarce and wives were helping with milking, farmers claimed they would get over this difficulty just as they had in the past; <sup>100</sup> some local committees proposed to advise and assist on properties owned or affected by those enlisting. <sup>101</sup>

Government spokesmen tried to placate. They saw the difficulties—including that of getting experienced labour under 21 years of age. They explained that farm workers were on public works only if no farm work were available (which did not, of course, account for men who deliberately got themselves sacked from farms); <sup>102</sup> that public works

men could readily have leave for seasonal farm work; that more than 3500 men were already transferred from Scheme 13 and public works to farm work, breaking in new land or reclaiming farms that had gone back, with the government paying 75 per cent, and it was hoped to transfer thousands more to such work. <sup>103</sup> Farmers were offered a subsidy of £1 a week for six months to take on an inexperienced man, <sup>104</sup> and were assured that arrangements were being made to check on enlistments, men in occupations classified as essential being refused; of those already enlisted several hundred would be returned to their normal jobs. <sup>105</sup>

In the community of trade, background discontent against Labour's regimentation of business, in wages, hours, working conditions and import restrictions, was increased again by price stabilisation. <sup>106</sup> An early request by **Auckland's** Chamber of Commerce to start selling at replacement costs was refused. <sup>107</sup> Prices could be raised after 1 September 1939 only by the actual increase of costs, applied for and approved in each case by the **Price Tribunal**. Increases such as extra imported costs of goods, freight, insurance, interest on extra capital needed to meet increased import prices, all set forth on special application forms, could be passed on, but traders feared that there would be rising costs everywhere—such as for stationery—with which the forms would not cope. They did not seek extra profits, they claimed, only the right to pass costs on, making a reasonable margin of profit; they added that they would not get what they did not fight for. <sup>108</sup> The Christchurch Chamber of Commerce and the Canterbury University College Economics Department, in two bulletins published in November, protested that to submit a claim for every price increase would be intolerably cumbersome and slow in the quick moving world of business. There were as yet very few shortages and adjustment of supply and demand would be better achieved if prices were allowed to run free. <sup>109</sup>

In the first months of the war import restrictions remained the chief complaint of the business world. This was linked to war purposes by the idea that to pay as you go required business as usual; hence the



government should strongly assist farmers to increase production and sterling funds and allow traders to secure stocks, in order to supply revenue and maintain employment. Also, a few shop assistants' unions feared that business retrenchment would lead to unemployment 'after Christmas'. <sup>110</sup> A large meeting at **Hamilton** on 4 December, combining the usually conflicting voices of farmers, the businessmen and shop assistants ('an unholy alliance', said Savage), <sup>111</sup> pressed for the relaxing of import restrictions, and reducing farm costs and labour problems. <sup>112</sup>

Some sections of the trading interest, however, had no sympathy with the Farmers' Union claim that unless their conditions were improved primary production could not be increased. This production determined how much imports might buy, and a trade journal harangued farmers in terms reminiscent of the extreme Left:

There can be no more haggling now over prices, and anyone (no matter what his standing) who attempts to put any brake on production for either personal gain or political motives deserves nothing short of a prompt trial and speedy punishment on conviction. The rest of the Empire is rallying to the tocsin and every New Zealander worth his salt will pull his full weight, without stopping to argue what it is worth to him. <sup>113</sup>

From the Associated Chambers of Commerce, a body traditionally critical of government interference in business and trade, came a remarkably fair, non-sectional statement by the retiring president, M. S. Myers, who said that had there been no war he would have protested about regulations intruding on trade. But war inevitably meant assumption by the State of functions neither necessary nor desirable in peace. The government had to govern, to decide what the country would do in all the war's aspects. Fighting men were only a part of defence; food-growing, factories, and financial sacrifice were also important factors. More co-operation was needed between all sections. Discussion and constructive criticism should not be stifled—'it is only mean, contemptible, negative or destructive criticism that is to be condemned'. As the State's intervention might be more easily borne but for lack of

**business knowledge in its officers, the remedy surely was close consultation between the public authorities and trained private interests. On the 'sound business' handling of shortages he remarked that sharply rising prices simply meant that the poor paid by going short or doing without, while the rich paid in money. He did not believe that special profits out of war conditions were necessary for the maximum output of New Zealanders: rather that large returns easily made, in business or in wages, induced slackening of effort. <sup>114</sup>**

**Such far sight was exceptional. For the most part public utterances in these first few months showed no foreboding of how long or deep the war might be. The war was as yet only an argument to be used by various sections of the community in support of attitudes already held: the traders were still chafing against import restrictions, the farmers' complaints were really another phase of the conflict between town and country, a conflict very strongly rooted in New Zealand. The government felt it neither necessary nor wise to stifle—or even to censor out of the newspapers—sectional hostility and criticisms of itself that only a few months later would seem dangerously subversive.**

**War sharpened the government's inner trouble, the threat of schism which could have made necessary either coalition or else an election charged with war hysteria. It grew from the past. The distress of the Depression had swept Labour into power after 20 years of striving growth, in which members' differences mattered less than their effectiveness. They were men of high purpose, fervent to bring economic justice and prosperity to the people of New Zealand, and at first they were so busy relieving the Depression that they scarcely noticed a latent division in their ranks. The majority was headed by Savage, who inspired a quite extraordinary faith and following in the electorate, if to a lesser degree among his colleagues; under him a shrewd, competent, hard-working pair, Fraser and Nash, gradually came to dominance. This majority aimed to direct the economy through existing channels, while others wanted government to take control of it more boldly.**



The cracks were held together by the pressure of the 1938 election, but afterwards there emerged a group of left-wingers. In this group were Lee, McMillan, <sup>115</sup> Nordmeyer, <sup>116</sup> Clyde Carr, <sup>117</sup> Lyon, Richards, <sup>118</sup> Barnard and Langstone, <sup>119</sup> with some other waverers on the edge. They felt that Labour's government was making no advance towards socialism, which they regarded as its original and proper goal. Instead, the relief measures and the 40-hour week giving employment and overtime pay, by increasing spending power had promoted inflation and the crisis of 1938, which had compelled import restrictions and a British loan on hard terms. Hardening of Labour's hierarchy discipline made these back-benchers powerless; they felt that democracy was dying in the Labour party, with leaders becoming less brotherly as years in office multiplied, and many voters shared their disillusion. At Labour grass-roots in the branches there was a broad swell of discontent, growing from lack of socialism and from awareness that the comradely atmosphere of the branches, in which Labour had largely grown to strength, was becoming unimportant beside the growing influence of trade union leaders, powermen elevated by compulsory but inert unionism. That mounting Nationalist pressure for conscription of men was not being confronted by vigorous measures to conscript money augmented the sense of Labour's betrayal.

In this dissatisfaction John A. Lee had a forward part, advancing a financial policy much akin to the Douglas Credit-type ideas prominent in the mid-Thirties: that the State, instead of borrowing for development, should create a socialist bank and issue credit based on capacity to produce, with more stress on secondary industries than on the roads and hydro-electric schemes of Labour's public works, thereby checking the inflation caused by spending power not balanced by production of consumer goods.

After the 1938 election, wherein Lee's *Socialism in New Zealand* was much pointed to, and Nationalists hinted alarmingly that he was likely to succeed the milder Savage, Lee pressed for the appointment of Cabinet by caucus. This had been Labour's original intention, but in the

enthusiasm of 1935 Savage had been given a free hand. He expected it again in 1938, and after initial defeat by caucus he got his way as a personal matter. Lee, able, forceful, and his party's most skilful propagandist, expected Cabinet rank, and many expected it for him, but after four years he had no portfolio, no real power, though he was active on the Defence Council. In defence Lee diverged from New Zealand's traditional policy of sending expeditionary forces to seek the foe overseas. He believed in isolation and in New Zealand being defended by air and by a small but efficient military force. His defence thinking was not adopted but the **Air Force** was substantially increased between 1937 and 1939. <sup>120</sup>

In mid-1936 Lee became Director of Housing with wide powers and cheap finance and with Nash, his Minister, pre-occupied with other matters. It was estimated that New Zealand needed 20 000 new houses, while 27 000 should be demolished and 55 000 repaired. Lee organised with energy and skill, making good use of such resources as his shrewd and able permanent Under-Secretary, Arthur Tyndall, <sup>121</sup> and the facilities of the powerful Fletcher Construction Company, which included joinery factories. <sup>122</sup> Building trade unions, which sought to establish socialistic principles and worker control in State house construction, were advised by Lee to form cooperative companies and to compete with tenders. Companies were formed in **Wellington**, **Hamilton** and **Dunedin**, but proved successful only in **Dunedin**. <sup>123</sup> Land was purchased and prepared in many towns, architects devised standardised but not uniform houses, and, despite rising costs and shortages of both workmen and materials, contractors put up houses at an increasing pace. By July 1938 it became clear that the Housing Department had outrun the capacity of the building industry, <sup>124</sup> but by March 1939 some 3445 houses had been completed. <sup>125</sup> After the 1938 election, Armstrong <sup>126</sup> became Minister of Housing and Lee's responsibility lessened.

Lee, restive, criticised Nash's policies—'shilly-shallying and drift', attempting 'a Labour spending policy with a capitalist financial

machine’—in a letter which leaked out early in 1939 and was widely circulated. <sup>127</sup> Labour’s Easter Conference of 1939 very heartily voted confidence in Nash, and more narrowly (285 votes to 207) censured Lee’s disloyalty and indiscipline. With the war Lee’s impatience grew. Five Cabinet ministers, including Fraser, had been gaoled in the 1914–18 war, while Lee, with all the appeal of a demagogue heightened by a DCM and an empty sleeve, was seemingly qualified for wartime leadership. This did not endear him to the Fraser–Nash group, and his financial proposals increased their irritation. He declared that orthodox financing of the war would ruin New Zealand, he spoke of debt repudiation, he renewed pressure against bankers, recalling that bankers had subsidised **Hitler**; these ideas were attractive to many who had felt the weight of ‘the Bank’ in the bad years. He was ready to press on towards socialism, despite the war and the risk of financial panic. Against the charge of disloyalty, Lee and his friends claimed that they were holding to Labour’s pristine policy, which others were forsaking. He stood for democracy in caucus, and he was critical of New Zealand being hitched to Chamberlain’s chariot without visible safeguards.

Savage, the beloved figurehead, was ill with cancer, though this was carefully concealed to avoid unrest. <sup>128</sup> Lee, knowing that he was sick but not how near he was to death, wrote ‘Psychopathology in Politics’ <sup>129</sup> explaining that a leader physically and mentally sick was fatal to his party. It was poor taste and poor timing, and Lee was at once relieved of his post as parliamentary under-secretary to Nash. On 11 January 1940 at **Auckland**’s Labour Representation Committee a motion of severest censure against him was defeated 109:85 and replaced by one expressing confidence in both Lee and Savage. But before Labour’s National Executive two days later almost the same censure motion was carried 15:3. <sup>130</sup>

On 25 March at the Easter Conference Lee was expelled from the Labour party. With Savage dying, it was vital to the central group underwriting the smooth succession of Fraser that Lee be got rid of quickly. The expulsion was well organised. ‘Big Jim’ Roberts, <sup>131</sup> king of

the waterfront unions and president of the Labour party, made little pretence of impartiality. Savage's death was expected hourly and it was claimed that Lee's attacks had killed him. Branches unaware of the issue beforehand had not instructed their delegates, and power was concentrated in a few hands by a voting system established that very day whereby union delegates exercised votes in proportion to the size of the unions, now swollen with compulsory but often passive members. The expulsion vote however, 546:344, showed that Lee's challenge was far from slight, while the election of D. G. McMillan, also prominent in the left wing, as vice-president of the party showed that this group was not rejected.

There is little doubt that the offending article was the pretext, not the cause, of Lee's expulsion, little doubt that he was condemned in an hysterical atmosphere to which Fraser contributed.<sup>132</sup> But political comradeship of 20 years mattered nothing beside the welfare of Labour, which Fraser firmly identified with his own comprehensive leadership. Lee's expulsion was more than the removal of an unruly member, it was a formative piece of discipline. He was exiled to the political wilderness, a salutary example, and with him went W. E. Barnard, the Speaker, who resigned from Labour in principled protest. The sacrifice of Barnard's promising career (he had been in Parliament 12 years and was widely respected) marked as with a gravestone the point where the rest of the leftists headed back into the main stream. It was the task of McMillan, runner-up to Fraser in caucus voting for Prime Minister,<sup>133</sup> to close the rift. He firmly expressed loyalty and received Cabinet rank but resigned at the end of the year for health reasons. Langstone, already in Cabinet, supported Lee silently and later retired to a diplomatic post. Lyon went into the Army and was killed.

Lee set up his Democratic Labour party, with branches all over the country, but there was no large breakaway. The election due in 1941 was postponed for two years because of the war. In the 1943 election almost all of Lee's 51 candidates lost their deposits, though they polled four per cent of the total votes; Labour, though losing five seats, still had a

comfortable majority. <sup>134</sup> Many of Lee's followers would not split Labour; all their political experience held them from this, especially with the Nationalists pressing for wartime coalition. However much Lee had contributed to his own downfall, something died in the heart of Labour when he was cast out. Authoritarianism was strengthened; criticism of the leaders would not do. This change, this narrowing, would probably have occurred without the war, but at all levels the war was an extra reason for suppressing strife within the government's party.

Lee's head on a spike was both a warning against divergence within Labour and a show of force to those outside. It revealed, said the *New Zealand Herald* of 27 March, a system as totalitarian as Fascism, Nazism or Communism, which should be noted by people fighting for freedom. A writer to another Nationalist paper wondered how opponents of the government could hope for tolerant consideration when men who had served Labour faithfully for years were discarded for divergence on the means to achieve Labour's ends. <sup>135</sup> But most conservatives were thankful that Labour had shed its dangerous member. 'The "Thunder on the Left" seems destined to pass away harmlessly for lack of a storm centre', predicted the *New Zealand Herald* on 27 March.

It was often remarked after the first few weeks that it was a funny war. **Poland** was knocked out with numbing swiftness in three weeks, but thereafter the expected war did not happen. The cable war news, despite bigger headlines, seemed in its day-to-day effect much the same as people had been reading for years. In Britain air-raid precautions were switched on, children were evacuated from cities, and everyone waited with their gasmasks, but the bombers did not come. British ships blockaded, while British aircraft attacked a few naval bases and dropped propaganda leaflets over **Germany** explaining to Germans that the Nazis were their real foes. The French advanced a few miles into the Saar, stopping short of the Siegfried Line; by mid-October they were joined by some 160 000 of the British Expeditionary Force, and the western front settled down quietly for the winter, while German propagandists assured French troops that Britain would fight to the last Frenchman.

During those first months, but for Russia New Zealand's newspapers would have been hard up for excitement and for wrath. **Russia** was rated the direct and immediate cause of the outbreak of war, for without the treacherous Russo-German pact would **Hitler** have attacked **Poland**? This fury of words and feeling could not, of course, reach **Russia**, but part of it could be turned against New Zealand's own Communist party, a small, highly derivative group, zealous in trade union activity and fringed with intellectuals, <sup>136</sup> which stuck faithfully to its duty of supporting **Russia**'s foreign policy through all its changes.

After 1928 it had been the declared policy of the Comintern, to which the New Zealand party was then affiliated, to ward off attacks on the **USSR** and promote world revolution. The local party gathered strength during the Depression, when authorities viewed it as a sinister influence among the workless, and its leaders were repeatedly arrested on charges of fomenting unrest and strikes, and of distributing seditious literature. A closely allied body, professedly nonpolitical and cultural, the New Zealand branch of Friends of the Soviet Union, was formed in 1932 and had 1000 members by the following year, <sup>137</sup> its aims being closer political, economic and cultural relations between the workers of the **USSR** and other countries, defence of the former against imperialist intervention and making known the truth about **Russia**'s development. <sup>138</sup> In 1935, following the rise of **Hitler**, declared foe of Bolshevism, world revolution receded in the Comintern's policy, while support of **Russia** became paramount. Reformist governments which, by offering the workers a slice of bread and inducing them not to seize the loaf, were no longer the enemy. Communist parties the world over were urged to unite with socialist and labour forces in the struggle against war and Fascism, and to defend the **USSR**. In New Zealand this directed Communists toward anti-war efforts, such as 'hands off **Abyssinia**' processions, but local leadership continued opposition to Labour till after the 1935 election, when it was decided to give the new government unconditional support against the forces of reaction. The offer was not welcomed. Pointing to the communist role as disrupters of working class solidarity in **Germany, Spain, France** and **Australia**, unions and the



Labour party firmly rejected united front proposals.<sup>139</sup> The Communists continued to seek affiliation regularly, undaunted by vigorous rejection—as in 1937 when the Labour Conference declared against admitting Communists or Friends of the Soviet Union to membership of the Labour party.<sup>140</sup> Communists were active in trade unions, where they rallied all those anxious for rapid internal social progress and for opposition to war and Fascism abroad. They denounced appeasement very strongly throughout the Spanish war and the Czech crises, and urged the formation of a peace-bloc, including the **USSR**. The Polish guarantee they greeted with scepticism, unable to credit Chamberlain with a genuine change of policy. In the chequered Anglo–Russian talks they saw, rightly, evidence of Chamberlain’s inability to stomach an alliance with **Russia**; they took no notice of rumoured German–Russian negotiations except to deny them.<sup>141</sup>

On 25 August, in a widely distributed Manifesto, the National Executive declared staunchly: the Soviet Union is right. The Pact signed on 23 August was in the interests of socialism and the world Labour movement. The USSR had double-crossed no one, remaining faithful to its policy of having peaceful and friendly relations with all countries willing to do the same. **Hitler**, realising that the Soviet Union, with its people morally and politically united under socialism, was too powerful to attack, had double-crossed his backers, the financial gangsters in **London**, the real criminals, who had hoped to direct him against the Soviet Union. By signing the Pact, the Soviet Union had disrupted imperialism’s cynical plans to involve it in a war which, whatever its initial stages, would develop into a united front of the **Munich** powers against the land of socialism; it had safeguarded the citadel of socialism, and it had driven a wedge between **Germany** and **Japan**, thereby greatly assisting the Chinese people. If war came, it would be the responsibility of the pro-Fascist leaders of **Britain** and **France**, the top-hatted gangsters who had helped Fascism to unleash the war.

But, continued the statement, while the Pact was necessary in the interests of socialism, **Hitler**’s Fascism remained the deadly enemy of

the working classes. Fascism could not be defeated by **Britain** under its present leadership but only if this were replaced by a real people's government and a democratic defence force. In New Zealand **Peter Fraser** was fraternising with Adam Hamilton, preparing to abandon the positions of the working class for those of the reactionary imperialists who intended, under cover of the war crisis, to attack democratic rights and living standards. If Fascism were to be defeated, democracy must be extended and living standards maintained, for only a free people with something to defend could defeat Fascism. An emergency conference of the Labour party, the Federation of Labour and the Communist party must meet at once, the government must state its support of the Soviet Union and oppose the reactionary British imperialists. All trade union standards, all social services and all democratic rights must be maintained, defence measures must be on a democratic basis and conscription of wealth must begin.

This may be taken as a sample of current communist thinking, pruned of much rhetoric. It was printed in the *People's Voice* of 1 September 1939 and, as a leaflet, 40 000 copies were thrust under doors, into letter boxes and cream cans, into factories and workshops. It was infuriating to many citizens in that September, when the mood of loyalty was high. Sections of the community with little in common could at least join in berating the Communists, as could those frustrated by having no direct means of getting on with the war. In Parliament, protests came from both sides: Doidge <sup>142</sup> and Polson <sup>143</sup> on 12 and 13 September thought that Communist subversive activities should be suppressed in war time, while Labour's Schramm <sup>144</sup> wanted the country to be protected from 'unfair, subversive, untrue, malicious and disloyal Communist propaganda'. Fraser soothed, explaining the folly of giving nation-wide publicity to statements beneath contempt. The government, he said, would take action if necessary <sup>145</sup> and this remained the administration's policy until January 1940.

Most newspapers warned against communist subversion but the *Standard*, headlining 'Nonsense from the Mental Slaves of **Moscow**' on 7



September, launched a campaign that surpassed anything from the conservative press:

The New Zealand dupes of Comrade Stalin <sup>146</sup> are now bellowing out that a war between democratic **Britain** and Fascist **Germany** is an imperialist war.... The Communist decoy ducks now say that Stalin has betrayed the European Socialists so that he may preserve intact the so-called Socialism operating in **Russia**. Exactly the same argument is used by a scab in an industrial fight... so that his wages will keep his home comforts intact.

Stalin's course was in harmony with the treachery of local Communists everywhere who deliberately weakened Labour movements with internal strife, and whenever this happened Fascism triumphed. 'Only a person with the logic of a lunatic and the mentality of an industrial and political traitor would try to explain the relations of **Germany** and **Russia** away as the Communists... are attempting.' While democracy was making a life and death bid for law in world affairs, the Communists were making a typically twisting attempt to cloud the issue by criticism of the Chamberlain government.

The Labour hierarchy, zealous to extinguish in its rank-and-file the deep-seated though not uncritical regard many had for **Russia** as the exponent of Socialism, attacked this lingering loyalty in other major *Standard* articles. On 21 September one, 'The **Hitler**-Stalin Axis; brief history and explanation of communist policy', told how Russian Communism had departed from its beginnings, and how local Communist parties, under Kremlin direction, shattered Labour movements, while in **Russia** itself Stalin's purges made **Hitler's** insignificant, and the last ten years showed that Hitlerism and Stalinism were not opposites but twins. All Communists were now revealed as Nazis in disguise and all the 'confusionism' of the New Zealand Communist party could not hide their openly established front with Stalin and **Hitler**. 'Some are fanatical hopeless worshippers of Stalin, as doped as are the **Hitler** youth of today. Some are merely mistaken. It is to be hoped that the latter will now open their eyes and admit the existence of

facts no longer disputable'. <sup>147</sup> A fortnight later another long article explained, allegedly from American sources, that Russian shipments daily left **Leningrad** without which **Germany** would be starved into revolt within a year; also, that on 9 April 1935 **Germany** and **Russia** signed a pact for a 200 million Reichmarks credit during the next five years, which had enabled **Hitler** to absorb **Austria**, smash the Spanish Republic, and seize **Czechoslovakia**; the August 1939 pact enabled him to invade **Poland** and defy the democracies. <sup>148</sup>

A long editorial on Stalin's iniquity and the disruptive folly of local Communists concluded: 'By the time this appears in print, it seems almost certain that **Russia** will be in full military alliance with **Germany** and at war with **Britain**. Should Russian submarines appear off our coast and sink our ships will the *People's Voice* justify that as being in the cause of peace and democracy?' <sup>149</sup>

Some Labour people found these attacks excessive. <sup>150</sup> Early in November, J. A. Collins, a trade union secretary, wrote that the reported drop in the *Standard's* circulation was mainly due to political and trade union leaders in **Wellington** who had forced the *Standard* into foolish diatribes against **Russia**, ill-founded and insulting to the intelligence of the average New Zealander. <sup>151</sup> He added that certain trade union secretaries with a pathological hatred of Communism kept their power by gangster methods, packing unions and meetings with supporters, or organising rival candidates against those who opposed their policies.

The national executive of the Labour party followed up the *Standard's* pressure with the so-called 'black circular', an authoritarian instruction which narrowed channels for criticism within the party, forbade the publication of any resolution or information contrary to government policy, and also forbade Labour party members to give any support or information to the Communist party. <sup>152</sup> Some trade unions passed resolutions on the *Standard's* lines, for example that of the Federated Seamen at a **Wellington** meeting chaired by F. P. Walsh <sup>153</sup> which said, 'To us the crimes of Stalin's dictatorship are even more

repugnant than those of his comrade and fellow-worker— **Hitler....**' <sup>154</sup> Several Ministers lent their weight: Semple <sup>155</sup> 'belted the ears off' communist supporters, <sup>156</sup> Webb said that there was no room in this country for a party which hailed Stalin or Lenin; <sup>157</sup> on 18 January 1940, under *Standard* headlines, 'Moscow Minikins March to Order Goose-stepping with **Hitler**', Fraser himself described, with long quotations, how British Communists had 'turned' on orders from the Kremlin. At the outset of the war British Communists had behaved 'like ordinary, normal decent citizens anywhere'. Their manifesto in the *Daily Worker* of 2 September supported the war, believing it to be just: the present rulers of **Britain** and **France** could never do anything except for their own imperialist interests, but whatever their motives, the action now taken by them, under pressure from their own people, 'is actually for the first time challenging the Nazi aggressor', and should be supported by the whole working class. Ten days later, continued Fraser, the emissary from **Moscow**, Georgi Dimitroff, <sup>158</sup> secretary to the Communist International, came to **Britain**, threatening H. Pollitt, <sup>159</sup> Secretary of the British Communist party, and J. R. Campbell <sup>160</sup> of the *Daily Worker* with political liquidation, and himself gave orders to oppose and hinder the war. 'In the whole history of politics there has never been such a shameful abdication of principle, such a complete "sellout", as that of the British Communist Party, indeed of the Communists everywhere including New Zealand', who, openly and blatantly, were now supporting ruthless aggression. <sup>161</sup> Again, in a Trades Hall argument, Fraser vigorously declared that there was no place for Communists in the Labour movement; such 'unity' was spurious. <sup>162</sup>

Labour's rejection of Communism was not new, but it was sharply insistent now, for two main reasons, apart from genuine disgust. Compulsory unionism had made communist zeal unnecessary, indeed antipathetic, to many union leaders, while to the government, mustering support as widely as possible and making use of side issues to absorb the antagonism of powerful opponents, the Communist party was thoroughly expendable. Nationalist interests, shocked at the socialisation of such measures as the Marketing Act amendment were

mollified by Labour's enmity towards Communism. Thus the editor of *Point Blank* on 16 October, after stating that though New Zealand was not yet at war with **Russia**, **Russia** was as great a menace as **Germany**, with emissaries all over the world who in New Zealand were making violent attacks on both Chamberlain and the New Zealand government and demanding to be included in a Labour conference, went on:

The Acting Prime Minister Hon. P. Fraser, who, since the outbreak of war, has displayed qualities of real statesmanship is not likely to pay the slightest attention to their "demands". Further than that Mr Fraser is the type of gentleman who will deal very firmly with them if they become a nuisance, and probably the only reason why they are permitted to issue their printed rubbish is because at a time of Empire crisis there are very few people likely to take much notice of them. They would have been more dangerous had not **Russia** come out in her true colours. Nevertheless, subversive elements should be carefully watched... and the safest place for many of them would be under lock and key.

A month later the editor remarked that although *Point Blank* did not often agree with the *Standard*, he was pleased to commend the latter's utter condemnation of Communism. <sup>163</sup>

**Russia's** actions continued to disgust New Zealand critics, while demanding much agility from the Communist party. Secret clauses in the Russo-German pact <sup>164</sup> had allotted eastern **Poland**, Bessarabia and the Baltic states as Russian spheres of influence; so on 17 September 1939 as **Poland** crumpled, **Russia**, declaring that the Polish state no longer existed, reclaimed on ethnic grounds the **Ukraine** and White Russian territory acquired by **Poland** after the First World War. Two days earlier the *People's Voice* had rebutted speculation about Russian troop concentrations: 'the daily press, true to its desire to organise a campaign of hate against the land of Socialism, spread all kinds of fairy tales about a secret deal between **Germany** and the Soviet Union for the partition of **Poland**—in spite of the well known declaration of Stalin that the Soviet Union did not covet a foot of anybody else's territory.' <sup>165</sup> A week later the *People's Voice* explained that the Red Army was an army

of liberation, rescuing their blood brothers both from Polish oppression and the brutal German threat. <sup>166</sup>

On 28 September, after signing their Boundary and Friendship Treaty which openly partitioned **Poland**, the German and **USSR** governments declared that they had thereby created a sure foundation for lasting peace in east **Europe**; that it would be in the true interests of all peoples to end the war; that if it continued **Britain** and **France** would be responsible; that **Germany** and **USSR** would consult on necessary measures. At the same time **Russia** hastened to improve her Baltic frontiers: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, by 'pacts of mutual assistance' (28 September to 10 October), ceded naval bases and airports to **Russia**.

Newspapers presented **Russia's** entry into **Poland** as a cynical violation of treaty obligations. Some, such as the *Press* (19 and 22 September 1939) saw evidence of detailed agreement there, but wondered if this would persist. Others, such as the *New Zealand Herald*, guardedly welcomed it as a check to **Hitler**, with hints that German and Russian interests were too divergent for their alliance to last. <sup>167</sup> Thus a Minhinnick cartoon, 'Snatching the Swag', showed a sly-grinning Stalin shaking hands with a doubtful **Hitler**, while his left hand holds a bundle labelled ' **Ukraine**'. <sup>168</sup> Another bore the words 'Adolf met a bear—the bear was bulgy—the bulge was Adolf'. <sup>169</sup> The *Standard* had it both ways: its foreign affairs column referred to the Kremlin's diplomatic victory over **Hitler**, while elsewhere it said that without the August pact **Germany** would not have attacked **Poland**, and that without Russian help there 'Germany would be desperate and the war much nearer its end'. <sup>170</sup>

Russian attempts to control the Gulf of **Finland** and to adjust the frontier of **Finland** where it approached **Leningrad** were resisted, and war broke out at the end of November. World indignation against **Russia** was greatly quickened by this new instance of a smaller nation fighting against great odds. In Britain there was public readiness and official planning to send military aid to **Finland**, and this came not only from

**the Right: the British Labour movement declared profound horror and indignation against Soviet imperialism and its Nazi methods and called for all practicable aid to the Finnish nation. In New Zealand newspapers were eloquent. Thus spoke the *Herald*:**

**Decent-minded people everywhere are revolted at the grim Baltic spectacle of bear stalking beaver.... Previously it was chauvinist Czechs and pugnacious Poles that oppressed the innocent Nazis. Now the fiery Finns have turned on the benign **Bolsheviks** .... The technique is terribly familiar and affronts commonsense. <sup>171</sup>**

**Russia's brutal onslaught on **Finland** has profoundly shocked world opinion.... The Nazi offence against **Poland** was rank, smelling to heaven, but what shall be said of this even more cowardly aggression? <sup>172</sup>**

**The *Dominion* saw 'in both Nazi and Soviet methods an identical attitude.... These dictatorships are engaged upon crusades for the furtherance of their own political ideologies throughout the world'. <sup>173</sup> **Russia's act, said the *Press*, was an appalling declaration of her aims and her rejection of any restraint in pursuing them. <sup>174</sup> The *Otago Daily Times* on 2 December spoke of Stalin using the tactics of the gangster to impose his will on a small country, and on 30 December considered him a more ruthless and cynical menace than **Hitler**. The latter's 'errant genius' had driven him to maniacal excesses but, in Stalin, dictatorship without charity or principle played the diplomatic game with laborious concentration on self-interest alone. 'Where Hitlerism has persecuted and degraded thousands, Stalinism has "purged" and starved hundreds of thousands into submissiveness or death'.****

**On 14 December 1939 the League of Nations expelled **Russia** as an aggressor, New Zealand voting for expulsion, <sup>175</sup> and asked member states to help **Finland**. The New Zealand government considered this for a month, then, having consulted the British government, <sup>176</sup> gave £5,000 to the Finnish Red Cross. <sup>177</sup>**



At first **Russia** used comparatively small forces and the Finns proved unexpectedly tough. Reports of Finnish heroism, of skilful ski-troops and success, and of Russian brutality and ineptitude filled papers starved for excitement on the western front. It was almost a surprise in March 1940 to realise that brave little **Finland** had surrendered to Russian armies which had lost so much prestige. 'All the honours of the campaign go to the Finns', said the *New Zealand Herald* on 14 March. 'They have exposed the clumsiness of the Russian military machine and banished the bogey of the Red Army.' The *Press* on the same day deplored 'the fiasco of the Allied scheme to aid **Finland**', and the *Evening Post* on 1 April held that the 'Soviet Government in its onslaught upon the heroic Finns has exposed to the whole world the ravages which Communism makes upon the fibre of any nation which falls a victim to that deadly mental and moral disease. The exposure of the Russian army and the Russian air force has astonished the world.'

Against all this the *People's Voice* published Russian accounts of border incidents, 'the brazen provocations of the Finnish militarists' in their 'senseless adventure', <sup>178</sup> denied civilian bombings <sup>179</sup> and, more reasonably, said that **Russia** wanted to safeguard its frontiers, especially near **Leningrad**; in 1918 the Finnish ruling class and 'Butcher' Mannerheim <sup>180</sup> had called in German troops to suppress a workers' rebellion, killing thousands, and since then **Finland** had 'been the happy hunting ground of every anti-Soviet adventure'. <sup>181</sup> The Red Army had checkmated Helsinki plans for 'incidents' to win **United States** assistance, <sup>182</sup> and Bernard Shaw <sup>183</sup> and Stafford Cripps <sup>184</sup> were quoted as saying that without Western backing Finland would not have refused **Russia's** proposals. <sup>185</sup> These arguments were put together in a pamphlet, *Finland, the Truth*, by N. Gould, which, according to the *People's Voice*, sold nearly 15 000 copies. <sup>186</sup> Finally, in March, that paper claimed: 'Right from the start, the *Voice*, alone in New Zealand, has pointed out that the REAL issue was the desire of the imperialist states to make **Finland** a war base against the Soviet Union'. <sup>187</sup> Actually this view had been advanced by the other leftist journal, *Tomorrow*, <sup>188</sup> which also, remarking that official enthusiasm to aid

**Finland** was simply another very significant step in the lining-up of world capitalism against the one socialist power, urged that the Labour movement should make sure that New Zealand boys were not used to overthrow Socialism on the plains of the **Ukraine** or elsewhere. <sup>189</sup>

During September New Zealand's Communist party supported the war on two fronts—defeat **Hitler** and eject Chamberlain—and the need to defeat **Hitler** was stressed in the *People's Voice* of 16 and 22 September. The 'two fronts' line was also taken by the British Communist party on the outbreak of war, as the *People's Voice* of 6 October pointed out, quoting a statement from the *Daily Worker* of 2 September, presumably to show that it had erred in company. On the other hand, the American Communist spokesman, Earl Browder, <sup>190</sup> had said on 2 September that **America** must not become involved in the war but must seek an opportunity to intervene decisively for peace. This too was reprinted in the *People's Voice* on 6 October. Russian leaders, a week earlier, had said that the war was unnecessary and should end. The *Voice's* editor, Gordon Watson, wrote: 'the clear firm voice of the land of Socialism... is appealing for peace'. Faced by the might of Socialism, **Hitler** had surrendered more in a fortnight than the appeasers gave him in six years. **Russia** had snatched the Polish Ukraine and White Russia from **Hitler** and their landlord oppressors, saved the Baltic states from the Nazi nightmare, and was forming a peace bloc in the **Balkans**. Peace now would enable the peoples of the belligerent countries to get rid of those responsible for the war. New Zealand should press **Britain**, with the Soviet Union and the **United States**, to call a peace conference. <sup>191</sup>

On this same day the British Communist party was likewise changing step. The *Daily Worker* of 6 October said, 'This is not a war for democracy and against Fascism. This is not a war in defence of peace against aggression. The British and French ruling class are seeking to use the anti-Fascist sentiments of the people for imperialist aims.... The war is a fight of Imperialist Powers over profits, colonies and world domination. It will bring only suffering and misery to millions of working class homes.'



**Russia's** new friendship with **Germany** was signalled by several statements that drove its overseas supporters further towards an anti-war position. Thus on 10 October, *Izvestia* denounced the British and French idea of war against **Hitler's** ideology: 'destruction of people because somebody does not like certain views and world outlook is senseless and insane brutality'. <sup>192</sup> On 2 November a speech by Molotov <sup>193</sup> carried the readjustment a step further: **Britain** and **France**, who lately declaimed against aggression, were now the aggressors, while **Germany** was striving for an early peace. Ideological war was dismissed, bracketed with the religious wars of old; fear of German claims for colonies was at the bottom of this imperialist war; German relations with **Russia** had radically improved. <sup>194</sup> On the anniversary of the Russian revolution the Communist Internationale issued a statement lauding Russian achievement and calling, in well worn slogans, for struggle against the imperialist war. <sup>195</sup>

The New Zealand party hastily accepted this doctrine and, after a national committee meeting at the beginning of December, explained that clearly this was, on both sides, an imperialist war which must be opposed by the working classes. 'The Party should have said this decisively from the beginning. Weaknesses and mistakes in the Party's work and slogans were due to the fact that it had not grasped quickly enough the decisive changes in the world situation, brought about by British imperialism's rejection of the Peace Front with the Soviet Union, and the consequent extension of the imperialist war to involve **Britain, France** and **Germany**.' New Zealand had come in as a satellite of **Britain**, her Labour leaders proclaiming the policy of collective security, which they had helped to destroy at **Munich**. These leaders had finally deserted the working class for the imperialist war-mongers. The Communist party could no longer seek affiliation with Labour, and called on the New Zealand working class, along with those of other fighting countries, to oppose the war. <sup>196</sup>

This opposition continued until June 1941, when **Russia** was invaded. There was at least some communist thinking in the trade union

resolutions that opposed the war and conscription in the early months, and Communists were prominent in putting anti-war amendments, which were heavily defeated, before the Easter conferences of the Federation of Labour in 1940 and in 1941. <sup>197</sup> Opposition was also expressed through the *People's Voice*, leaflets, and public meetings, in stereotyped and raucous phrases attacking Britain's aims and conduct of the war, the Labour government and the Army in New Zealand, the folly and dishonesty of recruiting and of conscription. Some local bodies speedily forbade their open-air meetings, and there were very few halls available to Communists. The *People's Voice*, which claimed circulation of 7500 on 22 September 1939 and 10 000 on 16 February 1940, was the main channel until it was suppressed three months later; but thereafter the Communists, with furtive zeal, continued their attacks in cyclostyled pamphlets, variously titled. <sup>198</sup>

This was in the future. During the early months of the war, the Communist party was not stifled and its activities were limited only by its available energy. Looking back, its persistence in seeing righteousness rather than expediency in every Russian move may combine comedy with pathos. At the time, for many people such disloyalty was outrageous, though its very blatancy lessened its appeal and its danger.

During the mid-1930s the reformed churches in New Zealand, as in [Britain](#), voiced in varying degrees the current distaste for war and war preparations. Many felt that if the churches could speak on this with a unified voice the government would listen more attentively, but church union was a large, difficult and distant matter wherein New Zealand was unlikely to step ahead of [Britain](#); nor were there any attempts at a direct Christian crusade against war preparations. As events moved towards war the churches, with minor reservations and some small differences in alacrity, accepted it, and at the outbreak urged the members to respond helpfully to State demands. But in each church, again in varying degrees, a rift developed between a minority who believed that even in war time Christians should bear witness to the wrongness of war, and

the majority who felt that it was too late for protest, that human nature cannot be changed, and that this particular war justified, even demanded, participation in it.

The Methodist Church went further than the others in its rejection, following its counterpart in England which had declared against war in 1933. Pacifist feeling was liveliest among young people, but it was by no means limited to them, nor to any protesting fringe; it was espoused by active, ardent men in the heart of the Church, men such as Percy Paris,<sup>199</sup> president of the New Zealand Conference, its governing body, in 1938. In March 1935 the Conference declared war to be contrary to Christ's purpose and a crime against humanity. It must be repudiated utterly and the Church would support every means towards peaceful settlements, reduction of armaments and removal of economic inequalities. Recognising that if war came some would refuse to bear arms while others would fight for national and international commitments, the Conference upheld individual liberty of conscience in all directions. In schools citizenship training should replace military cadet courses, but Methodist chaplains would not be withdrawn from the armed forces.<sup>200</sup>

By 1937 the Conference, while still declaring war to be abhorrent, upheld the use of force to preserve law and order under the League of Nations, and called for a world conference on economic grievances and for repeal of the compulsory clauses of the Defence Act (which had not been enforced since 1930).<sup>201</sup> Early in 1939 it reaffirmed these resolutions. After 3 September some official Methodist voices, while repeating that war was contrary to Christ, praised the labours of British leaders for peace and reminded that the Church taught the duty of Christians to serve their country, and give obedient, loyal support to constitutional authority. Inner conviction, which drove some to arms, some to refuse arms, should be honoured and for the latter the State was asked to provide alternative service compatible with conscience.<sup>202</sup> Other speakers urged the need to respect conscience, to secure the Church against schism and its pulpits against being used for either

recruiting or pacifist propaganda. <sup>203</sup>

At New Year the Methodist Young Men's Bible Class passed a startling resolution: war was contrary to Christ and they should unswervingly follow the Cross, refusing all war service; they urged the government to stand firm against conscription. <sup>204</sup> It was rapidly established that this was not the general or official Methodist position. <sup>205</sup> The Conference, meeting in February 1940 amid recruiting and pacifist activity, did not wish to be identified with its pacifist element, notably with the Rev O. E. Burton, <sup>206</sup> already in prison. It no longer repudiated war, declared loyalty to the Throne and held that New Zealand was at war because there was no honourable alternative. Conscientious objections should be respected but all objectors should render alternative service. It accepted the State's ban on subversive utterances and opposed recruiting or pacifism from pulpits. <sup>207</sup> The *Methodist Times* of 10 February firmly rebuked the Church's active pacifists. <sup>208</sup> The official church, while steadfastly claiming freedom for the individual conscience, accepted the war and turned to the ensuing moral problems of wet canteens and raffles for patriotic purposes.

The Church of England's Lambeth Conference of 1930 had declared that war where one's own country did not attempt arbitration should be rejected. The concept of collective security under the League of Nations was accepted in the mid-1930s by both English and New Zealand leaders, and in 1936 the Archbishop of Canterbury <sup>209</sup> declared that it was not un-Christian to fight in just wars. <sup>210</sup> In succeeding years Averill, <sup>211</sup> Archbishop of New Zealand, and other prominent churchmen, while condemning war and criticising the settlement of 1919, saw lessening hope in the League of Nations and, though reluctantly, more need of British rearmament. They urged strengthening the Church through increased spirituality and claimed for all who came to conscientious and not merely convenient decisions on military service the respect of fellow Christians. <sup>212</sup> The General Synod of February 1940 held that the war was the lesser of two evils, it was to save civilisation, prevent self-intoxicated men from forcing inhuman ideals on the world. <sup>213</sup>

Meanwhile it was the duty of the Church to strengthen its hold with normal ministration, to sow and work for the future. <sup>214</sup> Though the word 'crusade' was skirted warily, the Allies were fighting for the freedom to be Christians. <sup>215</sup> From this position it was not difficult, on formal occasions and with leaders of other churches, to step on to the recruiting platform. <sup>216</sup>

In the Presbyterian Church of the mid-1930s official policy was to support the League of Nations. <sup>217</sup> Each Christian must determine whether or not to refuse war service and the Church would minister all members wherever inner conviction led them. <sup>218</sup> More than other church papers, the official Presbyterian *Outlook* in 1938–9 had articles on world affairs, on religious persecution in **Germany** and the threat of war, generally concluding that the key to peace was in Christianity. <sup>219</sup> After 3 September the *Outlook* held that **Britain** had made every effort for peace; it was a just and necessary war. <sup>220</sup> A pronouncement prepared by a central committee on international relations spoke of a just cause and urged civic responsibility in service required by the authorities, restraint in judging the foe, and pressing on with the usual work. It was passed by the Dunedin Presbytery, with a plea for kindness to refugees, by **Auckland** and Christchurch. <sup>221</sup> **Wellington's** Presbytery made a separate statement, ashamed that Christian witness had not prevented war but recognising that New Zealand could only range itself with **Britain**. Members should give national service as conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, would commend; some would bear arms, some refuse, either course could express true loyalty to the will of God. <sup>222</sup> In November the General Assembly, endorsing the pronouncement, advocated service with due regard for the rights of conscience. <sup>223</sup>

On 27 September in the *Outlook* a correspondent (Alun Richards <sup>224</sup>) asked about the Church's attitude to censorship: would the editors censor their paper to hold it in line with government censorship regulations or maintain freedom to prophesy? An editorial answered crisply that 'we shall, of course, submit to the law of the land'; there was no reason to expect that the government would interfere with any

fundamental doctrines and certain restrictions had to be accepted. <sup>225</sup> However, by June 1940 Presbyterian zeal for taking thought, for not yielding up judgment, reasserted itself in an editorial claiming that freedom to criticise should be prized and protected, that to ban it as subversive would be great error; wise leaders could learn from informed criticism while bearing the ill-informed with equanimity. <sup>226</sup>

The Roman Catholic Church, with no school of absolute pacifism, opposed armament-making, supported the League and hoped that education would improve economic understanding and lessen nationalism. Traditionally it held that a state attacked might rightly engage in war when it was the only means left to repel violation of territory, integrity or just treaties, or to resist the fomenting of revolution. <sup>227</sup> Mussolini's attack on Abyssinia by these definitions was unjust and the Church in New Zealand, through its periodicals, stoutly condemned him, while criticising other nations, notably Britain, which had earlier acquired empires by war and would not share them. <sup>228</sup> There was special difficulty as the Pope, encircled by Fascism, had spoken, albeit vaguely, of the war as justified by the defensive and material needs of Italy. <sup>229</sup> New Zealand apologists, seeing Mussolini as the arbiter of power in Europe, who could be driven by opposition into the arms of Germany, stressed the need for revision of colonial mandates. <sup>230</sup> Fortunately the Abyssinian affair ended quickly and about Spain there was no doubt. Franco's nationalists were fighting for religion and order against red revolution and anti-Christ, as the *Tablet* and *Zealandia* proclaimed almost weekly; they also mentioned that Spain proved war to be sometimes just and necessary. <sup>231</sup>

Many New Zealand Catholics came from Ireland, did not trust British politicians and disapproved of the Treaty of Versailles. But Catholics were persecuted in Germany, Poland was a Catholic country, and the German pact with atheist Communist Russia threatened the reign of anti-Christ. 'This is why we fight not a war but a crusade.' <sup>232</sup> A *Zealandia* article remarked on the general decline of pacifism as an unconscious tribute to the traditional Catholic attitude: 'as long as man

is man... human beings will believe certain things to be so evil that they will feel obliged to stick at nothing, short of greater evil, in order to prevent or even to protest against them'. <sup>233</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Round Table*, vol 25, p. 214

<sup>2</sup> Holland, Henry Edmund (1868–1933): b [Australia](#), to NZ 1912; MP (Lab) Grey 1918–33; Leader Labour party from 1919

<sup>3</sup> *NZPD*, vol 235, p. 770

<sup>4</sup> *Standard*, 11 Nov 37, p. 6

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Aug 37, p. 2; Wood, p. 49

<sup>6</sup> *Standard*, 8 Apr 37, p. 2

<sup>7</sup> *NZPD*, vol 248, pp. 432–3

<sup>8</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 22 Apr 38, p. 1

<sup>9</sup> *Standard*, 21 Apr 38, p. 2

<sup>10</sup> *NZPD*, vol 246, pp. 311–12

<sup>11</sup> *Evening Post*, 15 Oct 36, p. 10, 25 Mar 38, p. 7

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Oct 36, p. 11

<sup>13</sup> Cyclostyled paper, ' [New Zealand Labour Party](#), 1937 Annual Conference. Recommendations to the Government', p. 1



**14 Perry, Hon Sir William, Kt('46) (1885–1968); barrister and solicitor Wgtn; 1NZEf; Dom Pres RSA 1935–43; MLC 1934–50; member War Cab 1943–5, Min Armed Forces and War Co-ordination**

**15 *Dominion*, 25 Mar 38, p. 12**

**16 Jones, Hon Frederick (1885–1966): MP (Lab) Dun Sth 1931–46, St Kilda 1949–51; Min Defence, PMG 1935–40, Min Defence 1940–9; NZHC Aust 1958–61**

**17 *Evening Post*, 25 May 38, p. 12**

**18 *Dominion*, 3 Jun 38, p. 12**

**19 '[Mr Chamberlain's] policy is to avert war, and we should assist him by every means in our power, instead of making his job more difficult.' Adam Hamilton, *Dominion*, 7 Jun 38, p. 8; *NZPD*, vol 251, p. 129, vol 252, pp. 442–5**

**20 *Evening Post*, 20 Sep 38, p. 6**

**21 These figures differ from those printed in the budgets which give £1,014,370 actually expended during 1935–6, in a total of £25,890,567; £2,099,289 for 1938–9, out of £35,772,678.**

**22 *Commerce Journal* ( **Auckland**), 25 May 39, pp. 1, 15**

**23 *Evening Post*, 21 Jun, 29, 31 Aug 39, pp. 12, 17, 10**

**24 Lee, John Alexander, DCM (1891–1982): MP (Lab) Auck East 1922–8, Grey Lynn 1931–43; Parly Under-Sec Min Finance 1936–9; 1st Controller State Housing Dept; expelled Lab Party 1940**



**<sup>25</sup> Lyon, William John (1897–1941): MP (Lab) Waitemata from 1935**

**<sup>26</sup> Barnard, Hon William Edward (1886–1958): MP (Lab) Napier 1928–43, Speaker HoR 1936–43; resigned Labour party 1940**

**<sup>27</sup> *Standard*, 20 Apr 39, p. 2**

**<sup>28</sup> Wood, pp. 72–82; McGibbon, I. C., *Blue-Water Rationale*, pp. 257, 316ff**

**<sup>29</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Apr 39, p. 12**

**<sup>30</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 4 May 39, p. 12**

**<sup>31</sup> *Dominion*, 4 May 39, p. 10**

**<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 6, 8 May 39, pp. 10, 10**

**<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 May 39**

**<sup>34</sup> *Truth*, 10 May 39, p. 8**

**<sup>35</sup> Minutes of Labour Party Easter Conference, 1939, p. 23**

**<sup>36</sup> *Workers' Weekly*, 5 May 39; *Standard*, 4 May 39, p. 10**

**<sup>37</sup> *Standard*, 1 Jun 39, p. 9**

**<sup>38</sup> *Evening Post*, 23 May 39, p. 16**

**<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 May 39, p. 12**

- 40** *Ibid.*, 8 Aug 39, p. 10
- 41** *Ibid.*, 23 Jun 39, p. 10
- 42** *NZPD*, vol 255, pp. 504–5
- 43** *Evening Post*, 12 Jul 39, p. 7
- 44** See Wood, pp. 7–10
- 45** *Standard*, 14 Sep 39, p. 5
- 46** *Dominion*, 7 Sep 39, p. 11
- 47** *Evening Post*, 4 Sep 39, p. 8
- 48** *Press*, 8 Sep 39, p. 10
- 49** *Evening Post*, 5 Sep 39, p. 5
- 50** *Ibid.*, 7 Sep 39, p. 13
- 51** *Ibid.*, p. 16
- 52** *Ibid.*, 8 Sep 39, p. 13
- 53** *Ibid.*, 9 Sep 39, p. 6
- 54** *Ibid.*, 4 Sep 39, p. 11
- 55** *Ibid.*, 12 Sep 39, p. 8

**<sup>56</sup> *Press*, 7 Sep 39, p. 10**

**<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Sep 39, p. 10**

**<sup>58</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Sep 39, p. 4**

**<sup>59</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 4 Oct 39, p. 6**

**<sup>60</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 Sep 39, p. 5; *Press*, 6 Sep 39, p. 16**

**<sup>61</sup> *Evening Post*, 5, 7 Sep 39, pp. 5, 7**

**<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Sep 39, p. 7**

**<sup>63</sup> *Press*, 7 Sep 39, p. 14; *Evening Post*, 1 Dec 39, p. 6**

**<sup>64</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Sep 39, p. 14**

**<sup>65</sup> *Dominion*, 15 Jun 40, p. 9**

**<sup>66</sup> Coates, Rt Hon Joseph Gordon, PC, MC & Bar (1878–1943): MP (Nat) Kaipara 1911–43; Min Public Works 1920–6, Justice 1919–20, PM 1925–8; Min Railways 1923–8, Native Affairs 1921–8, Public Works, Transport, Unemployment 1931–3, Finance, Customs, Transport 1933–5; Member War Cab 1940–3**

**<sup>67</sup> *Standard*, 21 Sep 39, p. 8**

**<sup>68</sup> *NZPD*, vol 256, p. 46; *Evening Post*, 13 Sep 39, p. 5**

**<sup>69</sup> *Evening Post*, 23 Nov 39, p. 10**

<sup>70</sup> *NZ Herald*, 8 Jul 40, p. 6

<sup>71</sup> Information from Dr W. B. Sutch, Jan 66; cf. Olssen, Erik, *John A. Lee*, p. 142

<sup>72</sup> Adam Hamilton, *Evening Post*, 1 Nov 39, p. 12

<sup>73</sup> On 5 October the Speaker ruled out as tedious repetition argument about Socialism and the Marketing Amendment Act. *NZPD*, vol 256, p. 713

<sup>74</sup> **Holland**, Rt Hon Sir Sidney, PC, GCB('57), CH('51) (1893–1961): MP (Nat) Chch Nth, Fendalton 1940–57; Leader Nat party 1940–9; member War Admin 1942; PM 1949–57; Min Finance 1949–54

<sup>75</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 7 Oct 39, p. 9; actually **Holland** spoke about a 'reckless crew of political "experimenters"', with 'a militant section of that crew' rocking the boat. *NZPD*, vol 256, p. 772

<sup>76</sup> *NZPD*, vol 256, p. 840

<sup>77</sup> *Standard*, 12 Oct 39, p. 1

<sup>78</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 27 Oct 39, p. 8, reporting a **Rotorua** meeting; *Standard*, 11 Jan 40, pp. 8, 11, reporting a meeting at Coroglen 'a month ago'.

<sup>79</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Oct 39, p. 3

<sup>80</sup> Dairy cows in milk—1937: 1 805 405; 1938: 1 763 775; 1939: 1 744 478; 1940: 1 739 874; 1941: 1 779 603. *Yearbook* 1942, p. 346. Total butterfat production fell from 442.4 million pounds weight in 1936–7 to 419.9 in 1937–8 and 376.7 in 1938–9;

despite the grumbles about incentive it rose again to 415 million pounds in 1939–40 and 448.8 million pounds in 1940–1. *Ibid.*, p. 355

<sup>81</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Nov 39, p. 15

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47

<sup>83</sup> *Yearbook*1941, p. 357

<sup>84</sup> *Evening Post*, 1 Dec 39, p. 4

<sup>85</sup> *Yearbook*1940, pp. 414–15, 1947–49, pp. 880, 890

<sup>86</sup> Riches, E. J., 'Agricultural planning and farm wages in New Zealand', *International Labour Review*, vol 35, no 3, Mar 37, pp. 5, 8, 21–3; *Yearbook* 1940, p. 832

<sup>87</sup> Regulation 154/1937; *Standard*, 6 May 37, p. 7

<sup>88</sup> *Yearbook*1939, p. 723, 1940, p. 815

<sup>89</sup> *Press*, 6 Nov 39, p. 10

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Nov 39, p. 4

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 6 Nov 39, p. 4

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Nov 39, p. 5; *Point Blank*, 15 Dec 39, p. 13

<sup>94</sup> *Press*, 16 Nov 39, p. 8

<sup>95</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 8 Nov 39, p. 6

<sup>96</sup> Webb, Hon Patrick Charles (1884–1950): b Aust, to NZ 1906; 1st Pres NZ FoL; MP (Lab) Grey 1913–14, Buller from 1933; Min Mines, Labour, Immigration, PMG 1935–46

<sup>97</sup> *Press*, 14 Nov 39, p. 1; *Dominion*, 15 Nov 39, p. 3. Burnett, Thomas David (1877–1941): MP (Nat) *Temuka* from 1919

<sup>98</sup> *NZ Transport Worker*, 15 Dec 39, p. 26

<sup>99</sup> *Press*, 24, 25 Nov 39, pp. 13, 15; *NZ Herald*, 9 Jan 40, p. 10

<sup>100</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 19 Oct 39, p. 8, report from Taranaki

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Oct 39, p. 10, report from Feilding

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Oct 39, p. 4

<sup>103</sup> *Evening Post*, 20 Oct, 3 Nov 39, pp. 9, 9; *Press*, 23, 27 Nov 39, pp. 10, 12

<sup>104</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Nov 39, p. 6

<sup>105</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Nov 39, p. 6

<sup>106</sup> See Baker, J. V. T., *War Economy* (hereinafter *Baker*), chaps 11–12

<sup>107</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 27 Oct 39, p. 6

<sup>108</sup> *Evening Post*, 17, 18 Oct 39, pp. 10, 15

<sup>109</sup> *Press*, 27 Nov 39, p. 9

<sup>110</sup> NZ Importers Federation, in *Evening Post*, 22 Nov 39, p. 10; *Press*, 21, 22 Nov 39, pp. 10, 8, reporting meetings at **Hamilton** and **Invercargill**; a report in *ibid.*, 30 Nov 39, p. 5, suggested that these were the only such meetings so far

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Dec 39, p. 6

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Dec 39, p. 8

<sup>113</sup> *NZ National Review* (incorporating *NZ Manufacturer*), Nov 39, quoted in *Press*, 28 Nov 39, p. 10

<sup>114</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 16 Nov 39, p. 5

<sup>115</sup> McMillan, Hon Dr David Gervan (1904–51): MP (Lab) Dun West 1935–43; Vice-Pres Labour party; Min Marine, Prisons, **DSIR** 1940–1

<sup>116</sup> Nordmeyer, Hon Sir Arnold Henry, KCMG('75) (1901–): Presby minister 1925–35; MP (Lab) **Oamaru** 1935–49, 1951–69; Vice-Pres Labour party 1940–50, Pres 1950–5; Leader Labour party (Parly) 1963–5; Min Health 1941–7, Industries & Commerce 1947–9, Finance 1957–60

<sup>117</sup> Carr, Rev Clyde Leonard (d 1962 *aet* 76): MP (Lab) **Timaru** 1928–62; Deputy Speaker HoR 1946–50, education cmtes 1929–30, 1935–49

<sup>118</sup> Richards, Arthur Shapton (1877–1947): b **UK**, to NZ 1894; MP (Lab) Roskill/Mt Albert from 1931

<sup>119</sup> Langstone, Hon Frank (d 1969 *aet* 88): MP (Lab) Waimarino 1922–5, Roskill 1928–49; Min Lands, State Forests 1935–40,

**120 Olssen, pp. 88–9**

**121 Tyndall, Sir Arthur, Kt('55), CMG('39), MICE, FNZIE (1891–1979): Under-Sec Mines 1934, Dir Housing Construction 1936; Judge, Arbitration Court 1940–65; ILO commissions 1950, 1952–3, 1957, 1964–5**

**122 Olssen, pp. 93–4, 96, 104**

**123 *Ibid.*, pp. 103–5**

**124 *Ibid.*, p. 107**

**125 *Ibid.*, pp. 92–108; cf. p. 797ff**

**126 Armstrong, Hon Hubert Thomas (1875–1942) MP (Lab) Chch East from 1922; Min Labour, Immigration 1935–8, Health, Housing from 1938**

**127 Olssen, pp. 135–7**

**128 As late as 7 Mar 40 the *Standard* laughed at rumours of the Prime Minister being seriously ill, and mentioned a chill; he was looking very fit and was in daily consultation with his ministers. He died on 27 March.**

**129 *Tomorrow*, 6 Dec 39, pp. 75–7**

**130 Brown, Bruce, *The Rise of New Zealand Labour*, pp. 205–6**

**131 Roberts, Hon James (1881–1967): b **Ireland**, to NZ 1901; Sec**



**Waterside Workers Fed (later Union) 1915–41, NZ Alliance Lab 1920–36; rep NZ ILO Conf 1930, dep member Governing Body 1930–8; Pres NZ Lab party 1937–50; Waterfront Control Cmsnr 1940–6; MLC 1947–50**

**132 Lee also contributed. His final appeal was maladroit as he himself seemed to recognise 23 years later in his *Simple on a Soap-box*, p. 194. His wife came to stand beside him as he spoke from the floor, and he embraced and kissed her, with words that had far more emotion than relevance. The Labour Conference in 1940 was not susceptible to *matinée finales* that might have been successful in an American campaign of recent decades. It seemed contrived, a ‘jack-up’, and cost Lee votes.**

**133 The voting was published: Fraser 33, McMillan 12, Clyde Carr 3, which leaves four votes unaccounted for. Brown, p. 209, has remarked that it could have been no comfort to Fraser that his succession was opposed by nearly a third of those voting. McMillan was reported in the *Auckland Star*, 8 Apr 40, p. 9, as saying that the voting figures published were not correct.**

**134 Louise Overacker, ‘The New Zealand Labour Party’, *The American Political Science Review*, vol XLIX, no 3, Sep 55, p. 722**

**135 *Point Blank*, 13 May 40, p. 41**

**136 Scott, S. W., *Rebel in a Wrong Cause*, p. 88**

**137 *Soviet News*, Jun 33**

**138 *Ibid.*, 1 Aug 32**

**139 *Standard*, 19 Feb, 8 Jul, 4, 26 Nov 36, pp. 1, 7, 3, 6**

**140 *Ibid.*, 8 Apr 37, p. 7, 20 Apr 39, p. 10**

**141** *Workers' Weekly*, 16 Jun 39, p. 2

**142** Doidge, Hon Sir Frederick, KCMG('53) (1884–1954): b Aust, to NZ 1935; 1st Pres NZ Journalists Association; MP (Nat) **Tauranga** 1938–51; NZHC **London** 1951–4

**143** Polson, Hon Sir William, KCMG('51) (1875–1960): MP (Indep Nat) Stratford 1928–46; War Admin 1942; Leader Legislative Council 1950

**144** Schramm, Hon Frederick William (1886–1962): MP (Lab) Auck East 1931–46; Speaker HoR 1944–6

**145** *NZPD*, vol 256, pp. 47, 87, 96

**146** Stalin, Generalissimo Joseph Vissarionovic (1879–1953): Gen Sec Central Cmte of Communist party from 1922, effective ruler of **USSR** from 1924; Commissar for Defence of the **USSR** 1941–6; Pres Council Mins from 1946

**147** *Standard*, 21 Sep 39, p. 11

**148** *Ibid.*, 5 Oct 39, p. 1

**149** *Ibid.*, p. 3

**150** *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7, 12 Oct 39, p. 13

**151** *Ibid.*, 8 Nov 39, p. 14

**152** *Press*, 20 Oct 39, p. 8

**153** Walsh, Fintan Patrick (1896–1963): Pres Seamens Union from

1927, Wgtn Trades Council from 1937; Vice-Pres FOL from 1948; member **Industrial Emergency Council** during WWII, **Economic Stabilisation Commission** throughout its existence

<sup>154</sup> *Auckland Star*, 9 Dec 39, p. 17

<sup>155</sup> Semple, Hon Robert (1873–1955): b Aust, to NZ 1903; formed 1st Miners Union Runanga, helped form 1st Miners Federation 1908 to become Federation of Labour 1909; MP (Lab) Wgtn East 1918–19, 1928–54; Min Public Works, Transport, Marine, National Service, Railways 1935–49, War Admin 1942

<sup>156</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Nov 39, p. 9

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Dec 39, p. 8

<sup>158</sup> Dimitroff, Georgi Mihailov (1882–1949): Bulgarian politician; became Russian citizen 1933; Executive Sec Comintern 1934–43; Premier Bulgaria 1946

<sup>159</sup> Pollitt, Harry (1890–1960): Chmn UK Communist party from 1956; Sec ‘Hands off **Russia**’ Movement 1919, National Minority Movement 1924–9, Communist party 1929–56

<sup>160</sup> Campbell, John Ross, MM (1894–1969): member Executive Cmte Communist party 1923–64, of executive cmte Communist International 1925–35; Editor *Daily Worker* 1949–59

<sup>161</sup> *Standard*, 18 Jan 40, p. 4

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Jan 40, p. 7

<sup>163</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Nov 39, p. 10

<sup>164</sup> Sontag, R. J. (ed), *Nazi–Soviet Relations, 1939–41*, p. 78

**165** *People's Voice*, 15 Sep 39

**166** *Ibid.*, 22 Sep 39

**167** *NZ Herald*, 20 Sep 39

**168** *Ibid.*

**169** *Ibid.*, 3 Oct 39

**170** *Standard*, 19 Oct, 2, 9 Nov 39, pp. 4, 4, 6

**171** *NZ Herald*, 1 Dec 39

**172** *Ibid.*, 4 Dec 39

**173** *Dominion*, 2 Dec 39

**174** *Press*, 2 Dec 39

**175** PM to Jordan, 11 Dec 39, PM 344/2/1, pt 1, in War History Narrative, 'New Zealand and the War in **Europe**' (hereinafter WHN, 'NZ and **Europe**'), p. 5

**176** GGNZ to SSDA, 16 Jan 40, in *ibid.*, p. 6

**177** *Evening Post*, 17 Feb 40, p. 5

**178** *People's Voice*, 15 Dec 39, p. 5

**179** *Ibid.*, 22 Dec 39, p. 1

**180 Mannerheim, Baron Carl Gustaf Emil (1867–1951): Finnish soldier & statesman; Regent **Finland** 1918; planned & built Mannerheim Line against **Russia** & commanded army against **Russia** in 1939–40, 1941–4 wars**

**181 *People's Voice*, 8, 22 Dec 39, pp. 1, 2**

**182 *Ibid.*, 19 Jan 40, p. 1**

**183 Shaw, George Bernard (1856–1950): Brit socialist, dramatist, novelist, critic**

**184 Cripps, Rt Hon Sir Stafford, PC, CH, Kt, FRS, QC, JP (1889–1952): **UK** politician; MP (Lab) 1931–50; Solicitor-Gen 1930–1; Ambassador Russia 1940–2; Lord Privy Seal & Leader HoC 1942; Min Aircraft Production 1947, Chancellor Exchequer 1947–50**

**185 *People's Voice*, 12 Jan 40, p. 3**

**186 *Ibid.*, 9 Feb 40, p. 5**

**187 *Ibid.*, 21 Mar 40, p. 1**

**188 *Tomorrow*, 6, 20 Dec 39, pp. 73, 105, 24 Jan 40, p. 191**

**189 *Ibid.*, 21 Feb 40, pp. 230–1**

**190 Browder, Earl Russel (1891–1973): US politician; member Central Communist party US from 1921, Gen Sec 1930–44; 1st Pres Communist Political Assn 1944–5; member exec cmte Comintern 1935–44**

**191 *People's Voice*, 6 Oct 39, p. 1**

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Oct 39, p. 1

<sup>193</sup> Molotov, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich (1890–): Russian politician; dep chmn Council Mins **USSR** 1941–57; Commissar, Min Foreign Aff 1939–49; Ambassador Mongolian Rep 1957–60; Permanent Rep Internat Atomic Energy Agency 1960–1

<sup>194</sup> *People's Voice*, 10 Nov 39, p. 1

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Nov 39, p. 2

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Dec 39, p. 4

<sup>197</sup> Defeated 224:26 in 1940, and 229:27 in 1941. *Standard*, 28 Mar 40, p. 14, 17 Apr 41, p. 3

<sup>198</sup> See chap 19, 'Censorship'

<sup>199</sup> **Paris**, Rev Percy Reginald (1883–1942): Methodist minister from 1906; Superint Wgtn central circuit 1935, Pres 1938; Ed *Methodist Times* 1924–34; founder League of Young **Methodists** 1920

<sup>200</sup> *NZ Methodist Times*, 30 Mar 35, pp. 7, 11, 13

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Mar 37, p. 374; *Evening Post*, 25 Feb 37, p. 14; *Yearbook* 1938, p. 208

<sup>202</sup> *NZ Methodist Times*, 7 Oct 39, p. 185; *Otago Daily Times*, 3 Oct 39, p. 3

<sup>203</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Nov 39, p. 11; *Press*, 16 Nov 39, p. 2; *Evening Post*, 22 Nov 39, p. 17

**204** *Evening Post*, 4 Jan 40, p. 8

**205** *Ibid.*

**206** Burton, Rev Ormond Edward, MM, Medaille d'Honneur (1893–1974): served 1NZE; Methodist minister 1935–42, 1955–; chmn NZCPS 1937–45

**207** *Otago Daily Times*, 28 Feb 40, p. 4

**208** Reprinted in *Auckland Star*, 12 Feb 40, p. 9

**209** Lang, Most Rev & Rt Hon Cosmo Gordon, 1st Baron Lambeth ('42), PC, GCVO (1864–1945): Archbishop Canterbury 1928–42

**210** *Evening Post*, 14 Oct 36, p. 11; *Year Book of the Diocese of Auckland...* 1935, p. 21

**211** Averill, Most Rev Alfred Walter (1865–1951): b UK, to NZ 1894; Bishop Waiapu 1910–13, Auck 1913–40; Primate NZ 1925–40

**212** *Year Book of the Diocese of Auckland...* 1936, p. 27; *Church News* (Christchurch), Sep, Nov 37, pp. 21, 10; *Dominion*, 16 Apr 37, p. 12

**213** *Press*, 17 Feb 40, p. 9

**214** *Church Chronicle*, 1 Feb, 1 Apr 40, pp. 3, 35

**215** *Press*, 23 Apr, 15 Oct 40, pp. 3, 4; *NZ Herald*, 21 Aug 40, p. 6

**216** *Press*, 5 Jun 40, p. 8

- 217** *Evening Post*, 14 Nov 35, p. 11
- 218** *Outlook*, 11 Nov 35, p. 22
- 219** *Ibid.*, 2 Mar, 1 Jun, 7 Sep 38, pp. 21, 2, 3, 22 Mar, 10 May, 28 Jun, 30 Aug, 6 Sep 39, all p. 3
- 220** *Ibid.*, 13 Sep, 4 Oct 39, pp. 3, 3
- 221** *Otago Daily Times*, 6 Sep 39, p. 5; *NZ Herald*, 13 Sep 39, p. 13; *Press*, 14 Sep 39, p. 4
- 222** *Evening Post*, 16 Oct 39, p. 5
- 223** *Press*, 16, 21 Nov 39, pp. 2, 10; *Outlook*, 20 Sep 39, p. 11
- 224** Richards, Rev Alun Morgan: b Wales 1907, educ NZ; freelance journalist *Europe*, Far East; Presby minister; WEA tutor-organiser Wgtn 1939–41; with Govt Publicity (Economic Information Service), NZ organiser CORSO 1947; Ed *Outlook* 1948–56; Min Wgtn 1957–65; Ed *NZ Methodist* 1966–8
- 225** *Outlook*, 4 Oct 39, p. 3; *Star-Sun*, 4 Oct 39, p. 6
- 226** *Outlook*, 5 Jun 40, p. 4; *Press*, 6 Jun 40, p. 6
- 227** *NZ Tablet*, 27 Mar, 5 Jun, 18 Sep 35, pp. 3, 33, 1–2, 29 Apr, 6 May 36, pp. 21, 7, 22 Sep 37, p. 26, 2 Feb 38, p. 27
- 228** *Ibid.*, 28 Aug. 4, 11 Sep, 13 Nov 35, pp. 3, 20–1, 6, 9 & 29, 26 Feb, 4 Mar 36, pp. 23, 4
- 229** *Ibid.*, 30 Oct 35, p. 1



**230 *Ibid.***

**231 *Ibid.*, 22 Sep 37, p. 26, 2 Feb 38, p. 27**

**232 *Ibid.*, 27 Sep 39, p. 7**

**233 *Zealandia*, 7 Sep 39, p. 10**

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 3 – THE FIRST MOVES

## CHAPTER 3

### *The First Moves*

ON 8 September 1939 it was announced that there would be a special force of volunteers to serve in and beyond New Zealand, the immediate target being 6600 men aged 21–35 years for the **First Echelon** (about one-third of the proposed expeditionary force). The three long-established military districts, northern, central and southern, subdivided into sixteen areas, were each to supply according to its population a certain number of volunteers. Enlistments began on 12 September: by 9 pm that night they totalled 6655 <sup>1</sup> and within a week reached almost 12 000. <sup>2</sup> Thereafter as the first mood of acceptance and excitement waned, recruiting became slower and slower, and by December it plainly needed gingering up to complete the **Second Echelon**. For instance the Otago area yielded 567 volunteers in the week ending 16 September, but only 7 in the week ending 11 November, while in the **Canterbury** area the scores were respectively 1130 and 21. <sup>3</sup>

For this sudden surge and the sharp decline there were many reasons, some practical, some emotional. A large number of men were ready to enlist at the first call, their motives various and often mixed. Some were moved by plain old-fashioned patriotism, or were adventurous, restless, bored; some wanted to see the world or get away from jobs or families that depressed them. Some, though hating war, felt soberly that Nazism was so bad, so contrary to their own values, that it outweighed other evils and only fighting could stop it. They themselves could not remain out of the fight. Some, sure that they would have to go sooner or later, preferred not to wait or to be pushed. Some saw that, for the first wave, the chances of interesting jobs matched those of dying a little sooner. These, and no doubt hundreds of individual reasons, lay behind those first 12 000 enlistments.

Having passed the medical examination (where a good many were halted for teeth, which at this stage had to be repaired at their own expense), they could not go straight into khaki—carpenters and other

tradesmen were busy extending camps at **Ngaruawahia**, **Trentham** and **Burnham**, clothing and equipment had to be assembled, officers and NCOs sorted out. Men were warned not to throw up their jobs until actually called. Officers and NCOs were summoned in the last days of September, and most of the rank and file of the **First Echelon** during the first week of October. Volunteers for the Second and Third echelons were still sought (by 2 October enlistments totalled 14 742 <sup>4</sup>) but they would not be called up for two or three months. These necessary delays tended to check the enlistment snowball right at the start. There was time for a wait-and-see mood to grow.

Speechmakers and newspaper editors in the next few months commented often that there was not the wave of feeling, not the flocking to the colours, not the open-handed giving of money, not the serious war-mindedness of 1914; they usually concluded that the country needed a lead. But was this inertia surprising? The war was remote, confused, and not dramatic; life was unchanged and there was no smouldering backlog of military temper ready to flame up if skilfully stoked or poked. Rather there was a deep reluctance, especially amongst men of fighting age and their families, to go through the desolate business again. Behind this feeling lay the wounds of 1914–18, when about 100 500 New Zealanders (including 550 nurses) had gone overseas. Some 58 000 casualties had included nearly 17 000 deaths, from a population little in excess of 1 100 000. <sup>5</sup> These wounds had been deepened by awareness that anxiety, poverty and failure had beset thousands of returned men, inadequately compensated for suffering and loss of opportunity, in a world that seemed no better for their sacrifice. Also, for three years before 1914 military training had been compulsory, producing a large body of young men already half-way into the Army, prepared to do what was expected of them and carrying others along with them; while very few guessed at the long grim stretch and the savage dirty fighting that lay ahead. In the years before 1939, by contrast, Territorial training was voluntary and not popular, nor was there complete acceptance of the soldier as a worthy figure—if many esteemed him, to others his uniform was an unwelcome symbol. The war

itself was accepted without protest. Almost everyone declared loyalty but dull resentment was widespread, expressing itself almost unconsciously in forgetting the war as much as possible and, for many, in feeling that it was primarily the concern of a vague 'they', presumably the government; if 'they' wanted an army, let them conscript it, not expect a man to volunteer.

This absence of enthusiasm, mixed with foreboding and remembered pain, showed at the railway station farewells to the First Echelon contingents both when entering camp early in October and when returning from final leave just before New Year. Bands did their best, there was the usual banter, the soldiers themselves were cheery if set-faced ('the real feelings of the Troops were for the moment hidden under a mask of cheerful indifference' <sup>6</sup>) but there were few cheers, some crowds were notably silent and women wept. At Napier and Hastings, for instance, it was the opinion of several old soldiers that the attitude of the people towards the war was reflected in the atmosphere of restraint: 'There was no gloom, but the wild and hysterical enthusiasm witnessed during the Great War was absent.' It seemed that no one present welcomed the war but that all were determined to see it through now that it had started. <sup>7</sup>

Further, the slowness of the war in the west gave time for second thoughts. It is now known that the German command thought and hoped at first that **Britain** and **France** did not really mean to fight, that their war would be a fire of straw and a peace could be patched up for a year or two more. This was not known to the Allies, but it was clear that the peace so far from peaceful had been followed by war much less warlike than expected. The careful imprecision of the British government's stated war aims contributed to the sense of uncertainty. During November the Opposition wanted sharper definition of war aims than defence of freedom and democracy, and to some there seemed still a chance of avoiding a big fight; Fraser in **London** pressed on both these points. <sup>8</sup> In New Zealand it is hard to guess how many, and with what urgency, asked 'What are we fighting for?' Apart from pacifists and

Communists, there were a good many Labour supporters who had been very uneasy about Chamberlain's pre-1939 course and who were troubled now that New Zealand's government had identified itself completely with the British government's purposes.<sup>9</sup> Could the men in **Britain** and **France** whose judgments had been so wrong be trusted now for wisdom and integrity? Such people felt that the war was slipping into a likeness of the imperialism of 1914–18, that it might crumble into an ill-advised Chamberlain peace or somehow, especially after **Russia** attacked **Finland**, be switched against **Russia**. All the years of secret diplomacy and *faits accomplis* favoured these doubts. Some West Coast trade unions in December passed critical resolutions about this imperialist war; writers in *Tomorrow*, including a few members of Parliament,<sup>10</sup> were worried about war aims, convinced that others less articulate were also worrying, and some urged that the first duties of politically conscious New Zealanders were to protect civil liberties and guard against the excesses of war-mindedness and against Fascism at home: the non-political could defeat it abroad. *Tomorrow* spoke for only a very thin slice of New Zealand, but such people were not alone in feeling a lack of purpose and direction—for instance Rodney Coates, farmer of Otamatea and no leftist, declared, 'There is a spirit abroad that is anti-British. People are so ignorant of the position they are asking, "What are we fighting for?" All are asking for a lead.'<sup>11</sup> He laid this bewilderment at the door of the government, but a larger despair was expressed by a writer to the *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail* who on 8 April wrote that lately a returned soldier had asked why, after he had gone through hell for years, his sons were required to go through it all again. The peoples of the Empire, the letter continued, were for the most part going into the war in a spirit of dazed fatalism. 'Having no real understanding of the propaganda game, they are just marching out once more, thinking that since we're "in it" there is no way out but to stumble and blunder further in.'

On the other hand, in the *Transport Worker*, which generally backed the government and held that the prime and proper concerns of trade unions were the wages and working conditions of their members, a

writer asked what would happen if **Germany** won. Would New Zealand be taken over? Would his own life, liberty and standard of living be preserved? He did not want to know what Chamberlain said to **Hitler**, or what the British did in the Boer War 40 years ago. 'Whether the Treaty of **Versailles** was wrong or not is not as important to me as what occurs to my carcass just now, and the necessity of a commonsense decision of supporting the New Zealand Government in its war effort.' <sup>12</sup>

These are sample views, individual perceptions of war aims or lack of them, each, it may be presumed, held by a number of people; doubtless there were many others. Of those above, the clearest reason given for fighting the war was to prevent **Germany** from winning. Withal, the feeling that plain men did not know the real purposes and manoeuvres of governments behind their fronts of words induced caution. For instance, the *Southland Times* on 6 October remarked that **First Echelon** men were merely going into camp for three months, after which they would receive orders to hold themselves in readiness while back in civilian work, or to remain on military duty here, or to go overseas. In the camps, gossip ran that troops would not be going overseas, they would have three months' training and return to their jobs. Such talk could well deflect men from enlisting when a break in employment could check promotion or even lose a job, let alone the three months' drop in pay.

Newspapers yield a few letters from young men saying why they did not volunteer. They were bitter that war had arrived for them, who had had no part in making it. Without enthusiasm, they accepted that it was necessary to fight the Nazis. They felt that conscription would come sooner or later and they might as well wait for it. With the bleak days of the Depression only a little behind, men who had known relief camps and pannikin bosses had no zest for more mud or for Army sergeants; men who had secured good positions at £5 or £6 a week had no mind to give them up for 7s a day any sooner than they must; men still on relief had little urge to fight for the country that had given them so little. Unemployment was waning, but jobs were still eagerly sought—thus at



**Christchurch and Dunedin** where papers at first published the names and addresses of volunteers, employers were embarrassed by applications for jobs before their present holders were even medically examined.

In one newspaper, for instance, a questioning young man wrote that a travelling companion on a train had asked him what young men today thought about the war. 'Some, of course, don't think about it at all, but the ones who do, I am convinced, think it is a scandalous thing.' They did not, he went on, disagree with **Britain's** policy, but war was so different from the ideals they had been brought up with.

Unlike Germany, the war psychosis is not an integral part of the young New Zealander's make-up.... Every year when at school, and perhaps after that, we marched with the returned soldiers to the **Cenotaph** to commemorate those who had laid down their lives for democracy—the war to end wars; and today with this second Great War upon us, looking back it seems all so farcical.... Despite these thoughts, since September war has been our policy, to give freedom to the oppressed people of the world, and if war it must be then every young man in this country is prepared to do his part. Most of us are marking time and waiting, waiting silently, for the time to come when we will be conscripted, and I think that that time should be now. We have known for years the way the wind was blowing in **Europe**, and I think that conscription or compulsory military training should have been brought in... two years ago. It is the only fair way and... the general physique would have been at a higher standard. There is no doubt that **Hitler** is a madman, and if we are to meet force with force every man should be asked to do his duty and should be prepared for it.

When this war starts in earnest thousands can be expected to suffer. But for what? Will the world be a better place when it is all over? We hope so and will give our lives in that cause, yet still the doubt remains.

13

A 23-year old, well read in the last war, said that he was holding back not from cowardice or pacifism, but because he could not see why he

should be mutilated or blinded while others of his age waited for conscription; instead of leaving the decision to the individual, let the government's register and ballot decide whether one should be called up in two days or two years. <sup>14</sup>

Another thought that thousands would be willing to serve under conscription, without the moral responsibility of volunteering to kill; wanting both British victory and a clear conscience, he would destroy his fellow men if directly chosen to do so by lawful authority, with the rightness or wrongness of it resting upon the government, not on himself. <sup>15</sup>

A 33-year-old man wrote to the *Press* on 10 October: One realises what one is sacrificing in giving up a hard-earned situation to enlist—for what? Some of us don't forget that a few of the best years of our lives were spent in camps at 10s a week. Some of us have seen pictures of acres of white crosses in **France**, and in the ears of some of us still ring the echoes of the tragedies of last war. Sacrifice and die for one's country! Yes and again yes; but let it be done in a fair way, and what more fair way could there be than conscription.... I am quite content to hold my job until John Bull whistles me up through the conscription list. Then I shall fall in and march into the fog of duty... my step will be no less brisk because my life is conscript to my God and my country's need.

Another reported that when he discussed service with married men they said, 'It's not my job, I've a wife and kids', while single men said, 'If they want me they can come and get me', or 'I've a job worth six quid a week, I would be a mug'. <sup>16</sup> Yet another wrote that he was quite willing to go under conscription but not willing to give up his job to 'some scrounger who won't volunteer', and that he knew plenty of others who were waiting for 'a written invitation from Mr Savage'. <sup>17</sup> A fencer was quite willing to fight for the country but was not giving up a good job at £1 a day while 'Jack So-and-So remains in the bank and John Someone-Else in the county office'. <sup>18</sup>

Certainly a large part of the young men's reluctance to immolate themselves ahead of others was fear that being away at the war would cripple them economically for the rest of their lives. The recruiting air was full of promises, but they knew how promises can become vague and shrunken. Savage on 7 January pledged that they would not return to 'an unseemly struggle for the right to live'. Again on 3 March, in his last broadcast speech, he said that this time New Zealand could and must do more than before; to reabsorb thousands back into civilian work would be a full-sized job for the government and the community; the government was taking steps and would welcome suggestions.

No government getting a war under way could reasonably be expected to have its rehabilitation cut and dried, but people, equally reasonably, were dubious of promises not backed by statutes. A first step was made on 14 October with a regulation obliging employers to reinstate employees at the end of their military service, but this was not strongly publicised till later. Many officials less responsible than Savage promised quite as much as he did on behalf of the government—for instance, the deputy-mayor of **Wellington** declared that returned men or the dependents of the dead would 'have no call to make on the Government that will not be fully met', they would lose nothing, apart from the accidents of war; he himself would undertake as far as was in his power that **Wellington** would do its share to make the pledge good.<sup>19</sup> Fine words uttered freely and vaguely on all sides begot more doubt than confidence. At **Auckland** the RSA, sharply aware of last time's meagreness, said that the government must remove some pension anomalies before it would urge young men to enlist.<sup>20</sup> Newspapers carried a trickle of letters contrasting the soldiers' 7s a day plus danger and discomfort with the 'carry on as we are' attitude of the rest of the community. One said:

It is rather amusing to witness the attempts being made to entice men to enlist. Wash it all out and get down to facts. Let the various bodies who are doing the most shouting come out in the open and declare themselves ready to protect the vital interests of the men.... All the

mortgages, monetary interests, big businesses, shares, insurances etc., won't be worth the paper they are written on if the tide goes the other way and we are beaten.... Start a crusade for the protection of the men who protect wealth and I'm sure conscription will never come. <sup>21</sup>

An example of the situation was provided at Stratford where the Mayor and the RSA called a meeting to encourage recruiting. Most of the young men were at a swimming carnival but 74 other persons, while supporting a motion for conscription, firmly defeated a proposal to first levy one per cent on all capital over £500 for a fund to rehabilitate men after the war. <sup>22</sup> Again, at **Palmerston North**, when the Junior Chamber of Commerce recommended conscription of both men and wealth, the senior Chamber urged conscription of manpower as in 1917, but opposed subsidising soldiers' pay out of taxpayers' money, suggesting instead that the government should, if necessary, increase the allowance for wives and children. <sup>23</sup> Some local bodies considered subsidising their employees' Service pay to civilian level but decided it was not practicable.

Another factor checking enlistment was uncertainty about 'reserved occupations'. Farmers were assured that their highest duty was to work their land—'Farm or fight' was a slogan—but did this hold for their skilled labourers? Some farmers believed that they had no right to intrude on the decisions of their men; others pressed their claims on the **Labour Department** and Army authorities, to the chagrin of enlisting musterers or shepherds, who might be passed fit then told to go back to their jobs. Skilled technicians, too, were held at the employers' requests, for the government had no wish to disrupt industry. There were protests against the hidden contrivings of some employers and demands that reserved occupations should be publicly listed; the government, feeling its way through new problems, was anxious not to commit itself. Enough uncertainty existed for some waverers to claim that they were not allowed to enlist, and for others to distrust this claim.

Right from the beginning there were demands for a national register and for conscription. Wars are usually fought within the framework of

the previous war, and in 1916 conscription had been brought in, though volunteering continued along with it till the end, resulting in nearly 92 000 volunteers and 32 000 conscripts and some feeling between the two. In the reasons now advanced, fairness stood first: why should the burden and risk be borne by the willing, while the slack and selfish stayed in safety and took the jobs? Efficiency demanded that men keenly needed for food production or for essential industry should not disrupt these things by disappearing into the Army. Conscription also saved the personal ordeal of deciding between the claims of country, family and business obligations. Many of these demands came from National party circles, from farmers' organisations, Chambers of Commerce, the newspapers and the RSA, some closely and calmly reasoned, some smacking more of political attack on the government. A steady trickle of newspaper letters spoke of fairness and efficiency, some were of the direct 'I have two sons in the Army. Why doesn't the Government bring in conscription' type, others more complex, discussing for instance the relationship of the State, the individual, and the good of the nation.

The government was highly sensitive on this point. Labour had decried the 1914–18 war as an imperialist struggle wherein workers were duped and exploited for privilege and money power, and five Cabinet ministers had been gaoled for opposing conscription or the war itself. This war, for the protection of workers and democracy everywhere, was, they explained, quite different, but it was no light matter to make an about-turn on conscription, and they hoped to avoid it. Surely, with their own Labour government and a high standard of living to defend, which would certainly be lost if **Britain** were defeated,<sup>24</sup> workers would volunteer in such generous numbers that conscription would not be needed. For the first three months there was no real recruiting campaign: military plans were uncertain, and it was a task for which most Labour members felt a natural reluctance. Those in the House most for it were Nationalists, and the left-wingers Lee and Barnard for whom the government did not desire prominence. Moreover, many people thought that massed infantry had given way to aerial combat and it followed that expeditionary forces were unnecessary.

The statement by Savage in June 1938 that if conscription came it would begin not with men but with money was now established Labour doctrine, placating traditional feeling within the party and fending off conservative pressures.<sup>25</sup> Conservatives however were apt to retort that as recent legislation had already conscripted wealth, manpower should follow. For instance a letter in the *Press* of 21 November 1939 said that there was a catch-phrase often heard, 'If wealth is to be conscripted, men should be conscripted as well,' adding that only an ignorant savage or a cold and finished scoundrel could weigh a man's life against a bag of money. Another writher, not a lone voice, expressed a less emotional view: 'It may be assumed that the majority of those called up for service would return from the war uninjured. They would merely sell their services to the State for a short period. Wealth conscripted would be seized without payment and would never be returned'; one class would not only give its men but be robbed of its property also.<sup>26</sup> The impracticability of conscripting wealth was repeatedly explained.<sup>27</sup>

The first rush of volunteers was reassuring, and until arrangements about the use of New Zealand troops were made with **Britain** during Fraser's November–December visit, urgency was lacking. But with **Freyberg**<sup>28</sup> appointed as General Officer Commanding and the **First Echelon** due to sail early in January, while not nearly enough men were available for the **Second**, a national recruiting campaign was launched just before Christmas 1939 for 10 000 volunteers by 12 January, for the **Second Echelon** and the nucleus of the **Third**. Higher overseas pay rates were announced, colonels rising by 17s 6d a day to 42 s 6d and privates by 6d to 7s 6d; while teeth would be repaired by the Army. There were large newspaper advertisements and posters: 'Your pal is in the **First Echelon**. Enlist today', 'The Spirit of Anzac calls you. You will be proud to be among the first Ten Thousand'. Recruiting officers were to visit remote pockets of manpower such as public works camps, sawmills and mines, with attendant doctors to give medical examinations on the spot. Local bodies, the RSA, Territorial Associations, patriotic councils, **Red Cross** societies and the like were asked to help.



Many of these people and groups believed in conscription, and with divided minds they pumped out their speeches. As the *Press* put it: 'They co-operate; but they do not agree.'<sup>29</sup> Probably those near the apex of affairs accepted more readily than those less elevated the need to subdue their own convictions, support government policy and work up volunteers. Thus Colonel P. H. Bell,<sup>30</sup> commanding the Southern Military District, told the RSA that despite all private opinions the idea of conscription must be abandoned and the appeal for volunteers supported;<sup>31</sup> Adam Hamilton declared 'The duty of the National Party is to assist the Government to the fullest extent in making the voluntary system effective. If conscription is unduly stressed it will undermine the Government's efforts and no member of the National Party wants that.'<sup>32</sup> Many local leaders however were less willing to stifle their feelings. The Mayor of **Ashburton**, for instance, when only 100 people came to farewell the district's 34 soldiers, said that he had been asked to appeal for recruits but would prefer a 'spot of conscription'.<sup>33</sup> The Otago Farmers' Union, though it would 'willingly co-operate' in this drive for the Second and Third echelons, declared that universal military service was the only fair and democratic basis for an overseas force.<sup>34</sup> The Waipa County Council thought likewise, but while government policy was for volunteers it would give what support it could; one councillor asked how they could back what they knew to be wrong: 'The Government's attitude is absurd and they are asking us to stump the country.'<sup>35</sup> At Te Aroha a patriotic spokesman held that voluntary enlistment had failed if civilians were expected to go round telling young men they should go to war and he thought the young men wanted conscription.<sup>36</sup> Some local bodies declared themselves in favour of conscription, but on 26 January Fraser said that Cabinet was taking no notice of such resolutions.

It is probable, however, that others took notice. In Dunedin, where from October to March enlisting was slow, the Mayor, entraining recruits for the **First Echelon** on 6 October, had hoped there would soon be conscription, while the local RSA spoke firmly for it and not until pressed by headquarters did the president appear on recruiting platforms.

<sup>37</sup> At Christchurch, where enlistment also dragged at first, the recruiting committee was very active but at least one member, Sidney Holland, made it clear that he was doing his duty against his better judgment. <sup>38</sup>

The Prime Minister broadcast, appealing to sense and sensibility; the generals and mayors made speeches; the final parades of the First Echelon at **Auckland**, **Wellington** and **Christchurch** were vigorous rallies. The *Observer* of 10 January said briefly what other papers were saying at more length: it deplored the volunteer system but congratulated the government on greater energy—‘At last some attempt is being made to kindle patriotic fervour. Last week’s parades were memorable events. Those long columns of eager young soldiers provided a splendid inspiration.’

The First Echelon marches were undoubtedly moving. At Auckland on 4 January the *Herald* reported a steady stream of volunteers at the Drill Hall, some obviously straight from jobs, in aprons, minus coat or wash; and on the 10th the steady stream yielded 97 men. At Wellington the total for 5 January was 105, and 114 on the 8th—a record. The *Evening Post*, interviewing recruits on 4 January, wrote that the ‘call of adventure and the roving spirit’ seemed the main motives—though men do not necessarily speak their hearts to reporters. Said one: ‘When I saw three of my pals in the march yesterday I realised for the first time that they are really in for a trip round the world and I wanted to be in the swim too.’ A good job and obligations had kept a 36-year old from joining sooner but when he saw the troops in the city he simply had to go. Another said, ‘It’s well worth the risk to be in the swim with the other boys’, and the next that soon a man would have to be in uniform to get a girl.

The enlistment rate quickened sharply. On 30 December volunteers numbered 18 858, but by 6 January there were 20 541, <sup>39</sup> and by 27 January there were 25 140 <sup>40</sup>—some 6000 in four weeks. Various devices were used: vans with loud speakers toured **Auckland** streets, and outside recruiting booths brightly dressed girls on lorries did tap and Highland



dances. In Auckland, **Dunedin**, **Christchurch** and **Hamilton** low-flying aircraft rained paper 'bomphlets' ('If this were a bomb, where would you be? Enlist today') on Friday night shoppers. **Wellington** and **Auckland** tried to sing men into the Army with community sings plus recruiting speeches. At Westport it was proposed that prominent citizens should make speeches at picture theatres, and the clergy of the Buller district were asked to mention volunteering in their sermons. <sup>41</sup> At Christchurch during a football match troops marched round the grounds with gaps in their ranks and 22 joined in ten minutes. <sup>42</sup> There were parades of weapons, of bands, Territorials and returned men; there were speeches and more speeches. Still there was talk of conscription, rumours that it would be introduced soon, rumours which, it was feared, would shrivel the drive to enlist. For instance a major, recruiting at **Wellington**, said that he had been given fifteen different dates for its introduction, <sup>43</sup> and **Dunedin** people in February heard that conscription cards were being printed and would be issued in March. <sup>44</sup>

While recruiting activity grew, those who enlisted and their families began to feel hostility to the others who inevitably appeared as selfish job-holders. Families in which several sons had enlisted looked askance at those which had yielded none. The first call was for single men, but some men with sizeable families enlisted, and if their wives consented they were accepted, <sup>45</sup> though some citizens regarded this as economic folly or even criminal evasion of responsibility. <sup>46</sup> Under recruiting pressure some men doubted if a wife and one or two children justified remaining. 'I am beginning to feel that perhaps I am shirking,' wrote one. 'If conscription was introduced I would have no difficulty—I would know that my time would come eventually.' <sup>47</sup> Another newspaper column held this heart-cry:

Today my husband enlisted. We are very proud of him and at the same time very sad. I have a small son four years old.... My friends say my husband is foolish and ask why he did not wait for conscription. Why give up a position with £6. 10s. per week for a soldier's pay. Yes, Sir, this is what the people are thinking. Why doesn't the Government wake up.

**Conscript the men; also conscript the money. Give everyone soldiers pay; then men will enlist. Why should my boy be separated from his daddy when there are single men left behind.... My husband is only 29, his best years are ahead of him. We were married in 1934, had two years on relief, and now when his country called he has answered, but there are too many men who don't mind how loud or long the country's bugle calls..., <sup>48</sup>**

**White feathers appeared, but not widely; the National Council of Women disapproved, quoting the Queen who hoped there would be none. <sup>49</sup> In the House, Sidney Holland, whose military service in 1914–18 was beyond question, exhibited a feather he had received, declared that they were being sent to other returned soldiers, and hoped that it would be made a heavily punishable offence. <sup>50</sup> Another feather was sent to the redoubtable 'Starkie', hero of Robin Hyde's *Passport to Hell*. <sup>51</sup> A few newspaper letters and articles <sup>52</sup> condemned the senders as impertinent and presumptuous. A colonel who said that conscription would not be needed if decent women refused to dance or play tennis with non-volunteers was firmly rebuked by an editorial and letters in the **Christchurch Press**. <sup>53</sup> *Truth* also reproved. <sup>54</sup> In Taranaki a man who received white feathers went into the Army, leaving his mother, sick father and two young brothers on a 200-acre farm. The 11-year-old boy drove the lorry to the factory, as his mother could not drive and she 'was told all would be OK'. However, she was taken to court and fined for aiding and abetting her son to drive while he was under-age to hold a licence. This led to the elder son's release from camp. <sup>55</sup>**

**The claim, strongly advanced by the RSA, that rejected or waiting volunteers should be distinguished by a badge was recognised by Cabinet in February, <sup>56</sup> though it was not until mid-June that these badges were issued. Many ex-soldiers joined or rejoined the RSA, some not having been members for 15–20 years. This increase, begun before August 1939 and intensified with the war, was more than 7500 in the first year, giving a total membership of 30 496 by September 1940. <sup>57</sup> They joined partly from general interest and to identify themselves with a body**

knowledgeable and important at the time; partly to avoid, by use of the Association's badge, misunderstandings and the attentions of the distributors of white feathers. <sup>58</sup>

While leaders of the community busily worked for volunteers, conscription and anti-conscription movements were developing. The RSA and Chambers of Commerce had advocated compulsory national service since 1939, farmers considered it necessary if production were to be increased and the Defence League, very quiet since the beginning of the war, at the end of January 1940 wrote to 317 local bodies urging compulsory national service, with all citizens allotted suitable tasks. Of 224 replies, 89 declined giving an opinion, 30 thought it the government's business, 2 opposed the idea, and 103 favoured it— 63 of these speaking for bodies and 40 as individual councillors; <sup>59</sup> a few councillors were sharply critical of the League and its purposes. <sup>60</sup> The League's proposal was echoed by at least one private person who called himself 'a democrat, an anti militarist, an ex-serviceman and a socialist', who scorned as hypocritical and inconsistent the many supporters of the volunteer system who cheered the volunteers, saw the glorious side of war, believed it to be unavoidable, never missed a parade, and 'let George do it'; surely to allot tasks to every serviceable person would be more efficient, democratic and wholesome than the 'obnoxious campaigning of the recruiters whose stereotyped jingo phrases and methods are sickeningly reminiscent of the last war to end war'. <sup>61</sup>

Newspapers, in editorials, news reports and correspondence columns, lost no opportunity of assuring the public that the public considered the voluntary system neither efficient nor fair. How far newspapers suppressed or diminished the views of those opposed either to the war itself or to conscription in particular can only be guessed—and perhaps only by those who have tried to express other opinions opposed by those newspapers <sup>62</sup> —but a few appeared. Some <sup>63</sup> said that men who followed their consciences in refusing to fight needed as much courage as soldiers and should be respected. Others held that those who would not have to go were the most avid for conscription, and hoped that in a

referendum only those of military age or their parents could vote; <sup>64</sup> some pointed out that conscription propaganda was inimical to volunteering. <sup>65</sup> A few suggested that older men should enlist or be conscripted, urging the value of maturity and previous training, or that young men, who had no responsibility for the war, should not be the first to go—‘the economy of drafting off the broken-mouths and retaining the two-tooths is obvious. As a fighting force a body of matured men will, under modern conditions, be superior to one composed of youths in every respect except perhaps mobility.’ <sup>66</sup>

Some thought that the government should know the real need, and that there were enough volunteers. An Otago man complained of the slogan ‘equality of sacrifice’:

Believe me, there is no equality of sacrifice under conscription or any other form of recruitment.... If two men are fit for war service of whom one is engaged in an essential industry and the other goes to fight, where in the name of common sense is the equality of sacrifice. Hoping to see in the future more appeals to the intelligence of the people than to their stupidity.... <sup>67</sup>

Leftists held that all men would be needed here if New Zealand were invaded and that self defence was the first duty. **Britain** was involved in **Europe**, all kinds of surprises were possible, conscription would not be needed to get New Zealanders to defend their own country, but the government should make sure that they had the necessary weapons. This view was shared by the Roman Catholic Church, with the *New Zealand Tablet* of 25 October declaring that there were several ways in which New Zealand could pull its weight, but wholesale conscription would not be a reasonable service to the Empire, ‘and it would be a traitorous disservice to our own country’. Communists, of course, who opposed the whole war at this stage, opposed conscription vigorously, in the *People’s Voice*, in leaflets, and in any unions where they had influence.

Some Labour bodies passed resolutions urging the government to

stand firm against pressure for conscription, pressure from Labour's political enemies. Thus a deputation from the Labourers' Federation went to the Minister of Defence on 14 November 1940, and on 7 February a stop-work meeting of 1000 **Wellington** watersiders by a large majority opposed conscription; as did the Rotorua Labour Representation Committee. <sup>68</sup> The *Union Record* (of the Carpenters and Joiners Union) <sup>69</sup> in communist-tinged phrases demanded 'stern unbending refusal', and held that conscription would be unnecessary if New Zealanders were positive that the troops would be used only against the Nazis and not for policing **India** or for any other imperialist activity. <sup>70</sup> The *New Zealand Railway Review* (of the New Zealand Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants) warned against the constant talk of conscription—'It is just the old idea that if you say a thing often enough and convincingly enough you will change the opinion of the next person'; New Zealand had a big enough job feeding **Britain** without worrying about conscription. <sup>71</sup>

The *People's Voice*, which would surely have reported all the anti-conscription motions it heard of, recorded only a handful: the Auckland Carpenters and Ruawai Left Book Club (issue of 19 January); Dunedin Furniture and Related Trades (16 February); New Plymouth Watersiders (8 March); Otago Labourers (28 March); Ngauranga Freezing Workers (12 April).

Labour authorities, while holding firmly to the voluntary system, were cautious. On 19 December Langstone, when asked directly if there would be a referendum before conscription were introduced, replied, 'We have been elected. A referendum was taken at the last election.' <sup>72</sup> The *Standard* repeatedly reproved debate about conscription: 'If the issue ever arises it will be time enough to start agitating for a referendum.' The government opposed conscription and 'it is a certainty that conscription will not be introduced here except in an extreme emergency.' Meanwhile the best way to counter propaganda for conscription was to give full support to the voluntary system. <sup>73</sup>

Labour's rank and file was, of course, in difficulties: conscription

was right against the traditional grain, but to agitate against it betokened lack of confidence in their leaders. The outspoken *Union Record* voiced the suspicions of the section of the movement not silenced by the fear of embarrassing its own government.<sup>74</sup> Meanwhile, in mid-January, pacifists and a wide range of leftists at Wellington started the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council,<sup>75</sup> urging New Zealand to withdraw from the war, oppose all conscription and protect civil liberties. Branches appeared in **Christchurch**, Auckland, **Palmerston North** and **Nelson**.<sup>76</sup> At least some of its meetings were well attended—about 1000 crowded the Wellington Trades Hall on 18 January<sup>77</sup> after the Mayor had cancelled its Town Hall booking;<sup>78</sup> and the *Evening Post* reported more than 800 at a Miramar meeting on 4 February.

In December the West Coast Trades Council had condemned the war as imperialist,<sup>79</sup> with consequent furore among its affiliates.<sup>80</sup> Although it was rescinded on 10 February,<sup>81</sup> this anti-war expression, plus other anti-conscription activities, led to a joint conference of the executives of the Labour party and the Federation of Labour, which on 21 February made a statement on war policy. It was an interesting statement, floodlighting Labour's image of itself. In well-rounded party-rallying phrases, it condemned Nazi aggression, and stressed that New Zealand's high standard of living, won by democracy and trade unionism within the British Commonwealth, depended on that Commonwealth. The British government was at last standing for collective security, as New Zealand had repeatedly advised; it would now be 'politically irresponsible or worse' if New Zealand Labour did not give **Britain** fullest support. The six peace aims of British Labour were endorsed: no revengeful peace, but restitution to victims; right of all nations to self determination; the outlawing of war; rights of minorities; an effective international authority; an end to colonial exploitation and trade monopoly. Recalling that the labour movement had stated its opposition to conscription on 13 July 1939, sure that there was no need for it, that young men would rally willingly to the defence of freedom, the statement continued



**We now unconditionally reaffirm that statement.... in our opinion there is no good reason for either conscription or anti-conscription movements in New Zealand. There is no conscription in New Zealand, and there will be no conscription whilst Labour is in power. The best possible guarantee against conscription therefore is to participate in the work of the Labour and Trade Union Movements, to help to keep Labour in power, and to support the Government's voluntary recruiting campaign.**

**Social Security registration forms were now being used for a national register (this had been announced on 13 February), but it was for organising economic and industrial life, not for conscription. Freedom of speech was upheld, with some rather vague qualifications.**

**It is hard to think that the men who compiled this statement <sup>82</sup> did not realise that conscription would come sooner or later, but they were running politics. Savage, whose personal hold was very strong, was dying (though this was firmly denied till early March); there was the dissident pull of the left wing and they were concerned to hold the party steady. (For instance, a series of mass demonstrations of Labour solidarity and confidence in the Prime Minister and the government had been planned in December and January, the first to take place at **Auckland** on 10 March, <sup>83</sup> but Savage's sinking health made them obviously unsuitable.) It was not a time for unwelcome changes. 'No conscription' was so deeply graven on many stalwart Labour hearts that to depart from it during this mild and muddled phase of the war might well have shaken faith in the leaders. Moreover, if the rumours of impending conscription were scotched, enlistment would quicken.**

**The declaration so assuaged the Canterbury Peace and Anti-Conscription Council, which had been very active issuing pamphlets and canvassing houses, that it decided to suspend all anti-conscription efforts. <sup>84</sup> The Wellington body continued its preparations for a general conference at Easter and the Labour party executive instructed that no Labour member might attend that conference. <sup>85</sup> About 100 delegates**

and observers attended, however, from trade unions, pacifist organisations, youth groups and women's movements. They held that the government should initiate a peace conference of workers as well as governments of all nations or, failing that, withdraw New Zealand from the war; they condemned the Emergency Regulations and the restrictions of civil liberties, denounced the compilation of the national register and called on the government to declare unconditionally against conscription. <sup>86</sup>

At the same time the annual conference of the Federation of Labour heartily adopted the February Statement of War Policy, with only 28 (against 223) voting for a leftist amendment calling for immediate peace, disarmament, socialism, and national independence for **Czechoslovakia, India, Ireland and Poland.** <sup>87</sup>

The concurrent Labour party conference severely condemned the Wellington Peace and Anti-Conscription Council as a political anti-Labour organisation, contrived by Communists, to whom all opposition to the war was widely attributed. Fraser recalled that when war was declared there was no opposition from anyone in the country, except the pacifist Ormond Burton, until **Moscow** gave orders. The conference adopted the war policy statement by 821 votes to 104. One speaker remembered that in 1935 <sup>88</sup> Fraser had told conference that its decisions were only recommendations, not binding on the government. In fact, Fraser's 1937 statement was very close to what actually happened in 1940. He had said that motions of conference were expressions of opinion, not necessarily binding on the government, which would interpret them in the light of existing circumstances; the final word lay with Cabinet, after consulting caucus and the national executive. 'The Labour Party, as the Government, was now responsible for the welfare of the whole community not merely of its own supporters.' <sup>89</sup>

But in March 1940 it was necessary to reassure conference of its own power. Fraser denied having said that conference decisions were not binding, only that the government could not accept decisions contrary



to its election pledges; in such a case it would be necessary to call a special conference. <sup>90</sup> Here Fraser forecast, as he was later to claim, the special meeting that was called on 2 June, called to endorse, not to discuss, the change in government policy on conscription. Meanwhile several newspapers <sup>91</sup> assured their readers that if conscription seemed necessary to fill the drafts, the question would first be considered by a Dominion-wide Labour conference.

Subsequently, several Labour branches expelled members who belonged to the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council. <sup>92</sup> Only a few were involved, but this action was significant as part of the change taking place in the party. By identifying these people with the discredited Communists, Labour's executive gave warning to other die-hard anti-militarists in its rank and file that Labour demanded full loyalty to its present self and was prepared to discard people and principles that clashed with its new task, the task of keeping Labour in power while running the war. It could be said that Labour adjusted itself to war, or that the need to fight the war changed Labour. This was already being shown by the Lee affair at this same Easter conference, <sup>93</sup> and by the silencing of pacifists; in due course conscientious objectors were to meet firm discouragement where, remembering an earlier Labour party, they might well have expected more tolerance.

Meanwhile the Auckland Carpenters Union <sup>94</sup> and the **Auckland Builders and General Labourers Union** in April decided to affiliate with the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council, <sup>95</sup> 'pursuing the traditional policy of the Labour movement' and recalling that in 1916 **Peter Fraser** had been national secretary of a body of that name. <sup>96</sup> The 1940 Peace and Anti-Conscription Council was soon effectively suppressed. Two prominent Australian members, K. Bronson and N. Counihan, were quietly deported, <sup>97</sup> halls for meetings were not available or were cancelled at the last minute, <sup>98</sup> and on 30 June even the Trades Hall was permanently denied it by the police. <sup>99</sup>

Labour's repeated reaffirmation that there would be no conscription

did not put heart into enlistments. From 1–27 January, 6282 men enlisted, bringing the total to 25 140, and in each of the next three weeks about 1000 enlisted. But only 730 signed on in the week ending 24 February, and for the next three weeks, till mid-March, the weekly average was 571, with a low tide of 534 in the week ending 9 March. Some areas were brimming their quotas, notably Wairarapa–Hawke’s Bay– **Gisborne** and **Auckland**,<sup>100</sup> but in several **South Island** districts quota figures loomed heavily above enlistments.<sup>101</sup> The Minister of Defence on 14 March maintained that recruiting was quite satisfactory, but on the same day at Christchurch Sidney Holland had declared: ‘We are at our wits’ end. We have had meeting after meeting. We have made speeches until we are sick of speaking. We have had demonstrations without end, and we still need 615 men.’ On 22 April **Christchurch** business and sporting men proffered such suggestions as: employers should let fit men without genuine reasons for holding back know that they would lose their jobs if they did not enlist; they should also let the men know that they themselves were sincere in their assurances that there would be places for them when they came back; appeal should be made to intellect as well as emotions; marching feet were the best recruiting sergeants in the world; school children should go home and ask their brothers why they had not joined up.<sup>102</sup> One or two *Press* letters criticised recruiting methods. One, on 19 April, hoped that future efforts would avoid a ‘mixture of martial music and platitudes ... an insult to our intelligence’; another thought that the recruiting committee, like a keen young salesman, had been ‘overselling’; if it were to cease activities for a few weeks the news from **Europe** would fill **Canterbury**’s quota.<sup>103</sup> These instances may be taken as illustrative of not only **Canterbury**’s difficulties, but probably those of many other districts where newspapers were less candid. Complaints of public apathy by perplexed mayors and other recruiting citizens were widespread; if there were real fighting going on, there would be real recruiting. ‘The thing to kick them along would be to learn that the New Zealanders are in action. They would move quickly enough then,’ said an Otago footballer.<sup>104</sup>

In the first fortnight of March Fraser, still Deputy Prime Minister, toured both Islands giving, as the *Standard* put it, an inspiring lead by frankly explaining the vital issues from platforms holding representatives of both political parties. Adam Hamilton assisted, appearing mainly at different towns, though **Invercargill** and **Wanganui** had the privilege of hearing the leaders of both government and Opposition give the same message from the same platform; Hamilton's photograph appeared in large advertisements— 'Now is the time for service.... We have a high and sacred cause.... Young men ... I appeal to you, you with the blood and traditions of your fathers, to spring to the side of your mates in the struggle today....' <sup>105</sup> Parades of troops and returned men garnished these political gatherings, which some Nationalists viewed hopefully as a sign of approaching coalition. <sup>106</sup> The victorious HMS **Achilles**, having shared in destroying the pocket battleship *Admiral Graf Spee* at the **River Plate** in mid-December, returned late in February; her men were feted in their home towns and welcomed in the main cities with more parades and speeches. In the last half of March the **Second Echelon** went on special leave, carrying their khaki message even to remote places, and returned to give mass parades in provincial centres during April.

The impact of one such public appearance, the departure after final leave at **Dunedin**, with a band, returned soldiers' speeches, and hundreds of friends, was described by the *Otago Daily Times* with unwonted feeling:

Without ostentation or display, hundreds of farewells were spoken. Quietly, almost abstractedly, in the manner of those who say one thing while they are thinking of something else, the men filled the last moments before the troop train steamed away.... one realised how the sword draws its power from within itself, although in peace time it lies idly in the scabbard with hardly a soul to do it reverence. The scene was profoundly impressive....

In heavy type, the article made its conclusion: Surely more than

anything else, such unrehearsed incidents in the progress of the war will awaken a higher realisation of the national peril and a higher resolve to see things through. <sup>107</sup>

In the last week of March the weekly enlistment rate climbed to 726, at which figure it remained steady all through April. April passed quietly, though on the 10th newspapers had inch-high headings, ‘**Norway** and **Denmark** Invaded’. Under the well-prepared lightning stroke, **Denmark** crumpled in a day. In **Norway**, although **Britain** had mined part of the coast two days earlier, the assault from **Oslo** to **Narvik** was so swift that it eluded the British fleet and secured crucial airfields. On 14 April British forces landed at several points but finding that they could not make headway quietly withdrew, except at **Narvik** where they continued fighting throughout May. They actually captured the town on 28 May but then, not being able to make anything of this gain, withdrew on 10 June.

New Zealand papers treated all this quite calmly. **Denmark** with her small army and undefended frontiers was an undersized easy victim—though her butter and cheese and bacon would be missed by **Britain**. **Norway**, relying on her neutrality, was also an easy kill, while the British withdrawals seemed inconspicuous but almost successful. To New Zealanders the fall of **Norway** and **Denmark** proved again that the Nazis were aggressive villains and that the ‘Fifth Column’ was a special danger; it did not follow that Nazi villainy could really threaten man-sized powers like **Britain** or **France**. A *Press* correspondent on 19 April wrote that the British propaganda machine made the Norwegian campaign ‘look like a fight between Joe Louis and one of the Dionne quins. One almost feels sorry for **Germany**.’ There was only a modest increase in recruiting though the age limit was raised from 35 to 40 years. <sup>108</sup> April yielded 2717 volunteers for the army, March had given 2462, and February 3779. By 27 April volunteers totalled 34 900; of these 15 636 had gone to camp (and overseas), and 6720 were available for posting; 1860 were in reserved occupations. <sup>109</sup>

For Services other than the Expeditionary Force, enlisting was much

keener. In February a special railway unit required 370 men and 1142 volunteered, while 600 offered for a forestry unit wanting 160. <sup>110</sup> Early in October, when ordinary enlistments were slackening, 900 ground positions advertised in the **RNZAF** had drawn more than 2000 applications in five days. <sup>111</sup> Those volunteering as pilots, air gunners and observers greatly outpaced the selection committees. By mid-February 4300 had applied and 2000 had been interviewed; <sup>112</sup> by mid-April the **Air Force** numbered 387 officers and 3064 airmen, including educational and civilian staff, with 2096 awaiting selection interviews. <sup>113</sup> Meanwhile, as the rate of intake was limited, many of those waiting to be called took preliminary mathematics courses—and sought volunteer badges to show their purpose. When the **Navy** in February asked for technicians and tradesmen, many hundreds applied, quenching the demand in a few days while more than 500 yachtsmen volunteered for the ten positions offered to them. <sup>114</sup>

During these first eight months, in fact and in feeling, New Zealand was getting used to its war. Khaki was making its impact. Relatives and friends of volunteers felt that they were in the war; those who gave to patriotic appeals, or entertained soldiers, or packed parcels, or made hussifs <sup>115</sup> for the troops, felt they were doing their bit, though a bit that changed their lives very little. As yet no New Zealand soldiers had met the enemy, though there was, of course, the *Achilles*, and the **RAF** included some 400 New Zealanders who had joined before the war; from time to time their photographs appeared in New Zealand papers—decorated, missing, wounded, dead. The newspapers after mid-February also showed pictures of the Kiwis in Egypt. The Second Echelon was getting ready to go overseas. To the small towns soldiers came back on leave, the aura of here-today-and-gone-tomorrow about them, a hint of force and danger. In the cities near camps—**Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch**—hundreds appeared every weekend, some to be the private lions of their families or friends, a few to accept the hospitality of strangers or near-strangers, others to rove the streets and the places of entertainment, slowly augmented by Welcome Clubs, teas and socials and dances run by the churches, the **YMCA**, the **YWCA** and various

clubs. They hoped for beer and girls and a bit of fun; often they found only boredom and beer of which they could not afford much. In the streets the sound of heavy black boots, moving in rapid groups, made heads turn with a tinge of awe, a self-conscious awareness of their protectors—or with disapproval if those protectors showed signs of drink. The soldiers swaggered a little; they were New Zealanders bound for overseas and they felt they were the All Blacks; they sang the old songs, they sang ‘Roll out the barrel’ and ‘We’ll hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line’. The war was still far away, and there seemed to be no hurry about it.

New Zealand knew little of the storm that hustled the Chamberlain government from office as the sluggish war ended in the first days of May 1940, with the Allied retreat from southern **Norway** after a three weeks’ campaign, reports of which had been pedestrian but optimistic. True, the dailies of 6 May briefly quoted the *Manchester Guardian* on shallow ministerial optimism and the Prime Minister’s dangerous capacity for self-delusion, the *Daily Mail*’s view that British leaders had been fooling themselves and the public, and the South African papers which charged the Ministry of Information with deceiving press and public. But that same day the *Evening Post*’s war news column held that the set-back in **Norway**, apart from its implied reflection on the British government’s conduct of the war, was not of vital consequence in the long distance strategy of the war.

Editorials in the *New Zealand Herald* (7 May) and the *Press* (9 May) complained about official secretiveness and evasion, of treating British people as if they had no reserves of moral courage, but the *Evening Post* (8 May) held that ministerial frankness should be qualified by strategic necessity. The *Auckland Star* on 6 May, however, said that through muddle and dissension in **London** many Anzacs at **Gallipoli** had died needlessly and in vain; some apparent errors in **Norway** were unpleasantly reminiscent of **Gallipoli** and it must ‘be made clear to the British Government that the Dominions would not permit their troops to be sent and sacrificed in any ill-conceived or badly organised adventure.’



Reports of the debate on **Norway** and the conduct of the war in the House of Commons on 7 and 8 May gave much space to the explanations of Chamberlain and Churchill, the former claiming that all was not yet lost in **Norway** and that the Germans had paid heavily for their gains. It was also clear that there was vigorous criticism of the government, both in the press and in the House. While some New Zealand papers printed more of these criticisms than others, there was general mention of attacks by two Conservative members, Admiral Sir Roger Keyes <sup>116</sup> and Leo Amery. <sup>117</sup> The Admiral declared that the **Norway** campaign was a shocking story of ineptitude, repeating the **Gallipoli** tragedy, and he expressed the frustration of the fighting **Navy**. There were restrained reports of Amery's censuring the lack of decisive consistent action and demanding a reformed government with fighting spirit in which the Opposition took a share of responsibility, but there was no stress on the final Cromwellian thrust that helped to sharpen the mood of the House. <sup>118</sup>

The complaints of Attlee, <sup>119</sup> Sir Archibald Sinclair <sup>120</sup> and others on muddling mismanagement were briefly noted. **Lloyd George's** <sup>121</sup> call to Chamberlain to set an example of sacrifice by giving up the seals of his office was widely reported, as were the cries of 'Resign, resign' that greeted the vote in which the government's majority fell from about 240 to 81. <sup>122</sup> But the second day's reports gave much space to Churchill's explanations, and the *New Zealand Herald* (10 May) declared, 'Highest honours in a searching debate go to Mr Churchill.' Many of the rebel Conservatives who insisted on coalition were named, and it was 'understood' that Labour leaders had told Chamberlain that they would not serve under him. Nevertheless the inevitability of Chamberlain's resignation was not sharply apparent. *The Evening Post* (9 May) saw the vote as the government's survival and a united shoulder to the wheel; the *New Zealand Herald* and the *Dominion* on 13 May saw Chamberlain's May 10 (British time) resignation, with a comfortable loyal majority, as unnecessary, but in the highest traditions of British statesmanship.

Churchill was warmly welcomed, the bulldog fit to meet the bull-like rush of the new war. On the day he took office as Prime Minister, 10 May, **Germany** launched its great attack in the west, first invading **Belgium, Holland** and Luxembourg. By 18 May startled New Zealanders were reading that the Germans had overrun **Holland** and were thrusting into **France**. In that week, along with details of Churchill's all-party cabinet, they also read Labour statements that there was no earthly reason for coalition in New Zealand: **Britain** was due for an election in 1940, but in New Zealand the government had a large majority, neither party wanted coalition, and lack of it was not impeding the war effort. <sup>123</sup> They also read resolutions from chambers of commerce and farmers' unions, renewing their demands for conscription and an end to the 40-hour week, and many editorials on lack of leadership and inadequate war effort. Suddenly the remote, unreal war was high and threatening; dismayed New Zealanders felt that they must do something, and old discontents boiled up with new fervour. Some farmers' suggestions were far-reaching: thus in Hawke's Bay they wanted coalition including outsiders of ability, conscription of all wealth and manpower, a moratorium on debts, interest and rents, all males on Army pay, graded from private to colonel according to ability in farming and industry, and vigorous production of armaments. <sup>124</sup> At Gore they proposed a 'fight or work' policy, with a national register to maintain both the overseas forces and essential industry, and a British-style cabinet which would also include the presidents of the Farmers' Union and the RSA. <sup>125</sup>

On 13 May Adam Hamilton urged that Parliament should be called immediately, but Fraser adhered to the date already set, 13 June. On 19 May Hamilton, finding that the National party, despite its restraint and co-operation in the past months and despite the British example, was not being invited to join a coalition, made a forthright attack on the government for this, for its 'shilly-shallying' war effort and the long silence of Parliament in its seven-month recession. <sup>126</sup>

The same night, a Sunday, Fraser met the rising challenge with a singularly inept broadcast, quite out of touch with the urgency felt by



many as they turned to their radios. The Prime Minister commended **Britain's** change of leadership, but found endorsement for his own government in Labour's victory at the by-election for Savage's old seat. He spoke of the German crimes against the Netherlands, of the pressing dangers to **Britain** and **France**. New Zealand was sustaining its part and the government was prepared for a long war. He announced a new plan for increasing home defence forces but otherwise presaged no major change. He told how the government was helping to replace enlisted farm workers by subsidies on housing and inexperienced labour and by a personal approach to men on public works. Men capable of bearing arms either at home or abroad should come forward now. The rest of the country could serve best by going about their daily tasks and working with a will. He commended the efforts of women and, with a final unlucky touch, of watersiders who had loaded ships at the weekend, at overtime rates. <sup>127</sup>

Hard upon this pedestrian statement came Churchill's sonorous promise to demand, in the coming battle, the utmost effort from all. 'Interests of property and hours of labour are nothing compared to the struggle for life and honour, for right and freedom, to which we have vowed ourselves'. In its context, the contrast was disturbing, and during the next few days helped bring the general unease and restlessness to a quite remarkable pitch, not lessened on 23 May by news of the British Emergency Powers Defence Act, putting all manpower and property at the service of the government. Rarely except at the height of elections had so many people gone to so many meetings. It seems worthwhile to examine the several streams that together made a flood.

There was anti-alien <sup>128</sup> excitement. The Nazi 'Fifth Column' was prominent in **Norway** and the Low Countries; in **Britain** there were warnings about parachute landings and temporary wholesale internment of aliens. New Zealand could hardly expect paratroopers, but fear of a 'Fifth Column' sprang up overnight. On 15 May Wellington city councillors considered the possibility of enemy spies acting as saboteurs, and reviewed precautions about fires and water and electricity supplies.

<sup>129</sup> The same day A. J. Moody, <sup>130</sup> a lawyer and chairman of the Auckland Hospital Board, declared that ‘every German national should be interned at once. The Government should know that the responsible section of the community is greatly concerned about the large numbers of Germans who are at present free.’ He would employ no German doctors at **Auckland** hospital; it was ‘monstrously unfair’ that they should practise in New Zealand while New Zealanders were fighting to make refugees safer in future, and enlisted doctors would return to find their work taken over. These views, he said, were being freely expressed in **Auckland**, and he uttered them not to criticise government officials, but to strengthen their hands. <sup>131</sup> The *Herald* reported that there were 290 Germans in **Auckland**, only 11 of them interned. Fraser rapidly replied that the government had full information and was watching all aliens, that public vigilance was commendable but the circulation of alarms without foundation would be harmful and unhealthy. <sup>132</sup> Moody’s lead proved popular, touching off newspaper editorials and a rain of letters on the theme ‘play safe and intern the lot’; a week later he spoke of receiving letters and telegrams of approval from all over New Zealand and saw public demand for stringent measures. <sup>133</sup> He was backed by Sir Carrick Robertson, <sup>134</sup> president of the **Auckland** BMA, who said, ‘We do not suggest that all or any of these aliens are spies, but what we do know is that their roots for generations have been nurtured on German soil, and it is difficult to believe that just because of their mass expulsion during a political upheaval they are not at the bottom of their hearts loyal to **Germany**.’ <sup>135</sup>

Of course less inflamed views were also expressed. Some Auckland university professors led in asking for discrimination among aliens, and warned that working up crowd hysteria damaged the war effort by diverting emotion and energy from constructive action, <sup>136</sup> while several people in various places wrote in strains similar to A. R. D. Fairburn: <sup>137</sup> ‘I find it difficult to imagine that any person past adolescence and not subject to chronic hysteria would regard the presence among us of a handful of Germans (most of them victims of the enemy we are fighting) as a potential menace to this small and remote Dominion. On the other

hand, a good deal of undeserved suffering will be caused if the public sets about boycotting and persecuting German refugees. Trying as the times are, let us do our best to avoid stupidity and inhumanity.’<sup>138</sup> In Wellington, A. Eaton Hurley<sup>139</sup> and Edward Dowsett wrote that in **Britain** recent steps against certain categories of refugees were precautions against parachute or other invasion, but it could hardly be thought that New Zealand was in the same degree of danger. All refugees had been closely scrutinised by the authorities before coming here, many had suffered in German concentration camps such as Dachau or Buchenwald and, if they filled the positions of men in the forces, regulations made their tenure temporary. Any Fifth Column activities would be settled by competent investigation, not by wholesale accusations, and the writers believed that most refugees would welcome tribunals, as in England, to investigate their credentials. War against Nazi tyranny would be won by the morale of the Allies as much as by military prowess, and the morale of people depended on the justice of their cause, not on the bitterness of their emotions.<sup>140</sup>

It was, however, the views of Moody’s ‘responsible section’ that had nation-wide repetition and that were endorsed by Adam Hamilton, who declared his intention of seeking a full return of aliens who had arrived during the last few years. ‘The Government has utterly failed to deal with subversive elements in our midst.... Traitors, whether individuals, small groups, or members of some “fifth column” must be given no opportunity and shown no quarter.’<sup>141</sup> These views were not new: for instance some **Dunedin** RSA men in October had suggested that all enemy aliens should be behind bars,<sup>142</sup> there had been occasional grumbles that a German could earn £1 a day while a soldier got 7s, and *Truth* on 17 January had anticipated Moody’s opinions about Jewish and New Zealand doctors. A week later, however, *Truth* published a statement by the Refugees Emergency Committee that the number of refugee doctors was small.<sup>143</sup>

The RSA entered swiftly. Its anti-alien attitude was well established, but it now concentrated on ‘compulsory universal national service’. The

RSA held, and it was widely agreed, that it had earned a leading voice in defence matters, with which it linked concern about the enemy at home, disloyalty and aliens. It strongly claimed to be a non-political body, but basically it felt that only those who had served or been willing to serve before were fit to lead the country now, to ask young men to enlist and to expect willing sacrifice from all. The Labour government, of which several had been 'conchies' in 1914–18, did not qualify. However it was also a soldierly duty to support elected leaders, and this the RSA did scrupulously. Though it had long wanted a national register and universal national service, it had campaigned actively for volunteers, and it heartily accepted Fraser as Prime Minister. <sup>144</sup> On 22 May the central executive urged the government to meet the crisis with a national register and universal national service, and telegraphed its 90 branches to demand these things during the coming week, especially on 30 May. 'The New Zealand Returned Services Association calls upon the people of New Zealand to stand to.' <sup>145</sup> District bodies stood to with a will. In many places they called or took a leading part in meetings well before that date.

In Auckland a new body, the **National Service Movement**, sprang up. On 20 May its first public meeting, convened by B. H. Kingston, was attended by 300 people including returned soldiers, farmers, city businessmen and other representative citizens. Besides endorsing the RSA demands, it called for internment of all aliens and a war council under a 'strong and driving personality'. It also set up a committee of 50 with power to co-opt. <sup>146</sup> A further meeting, strongly advertised, <sup>147</sup> drew about 2000 on the morning of 23 May. The RSA had announced its active support of the Movement, which would endorse its own campaign for adequate pensions and rehabilitation of soldiers. <sup>148</sup> This meeting, widely reported and unusually excited, declared its non-party basis and approved the recent home defence measures, but attacked the government for not leading the country into sacrifice and effort. The chairman, Moody, called for a national register, compulsory universal service, a national government, and a war council of the best brains, co-opted if need be. The Rev P. Gladstone Hughes, <sup>149</sup> a prominent

Presbyterian, said that Fraser's speech had 'left us cold and angry', that Parliament should meet immediately, that sectional interests were behind the government's go-slow war effort. He was wildly applauded. Labour member F. W. Schramm, attacking Hitler, Communists and all lazy workers, promised to tell the Prime Minister all about the meeting, and Coates was suggested as Minister of Defence. Copies of the Movement's constitution and aims, given as the immediate summoning of Parliament, a British-type cabinet, a war council of the best brains, and compulsory national service, plus support of the RSA's efforts to improve pensions, were to be circulated throughout the country, 'many districts' having expressed a desire to form similar organisations. <sup>150</sup>

At Hamilton on 24 May a hurriedly convened meeting of 600– 1000 reiterated the demands of the National Service Movement and also wanted the internment of all enemy aliens, the protection of key positions and the suppression of all subversive propaganda. A returned soldier who interjected when the government was attacked, was ejected amid cries of 'Communist' and 'Concentration camps'. <sup>151</sup>

Meanwhile a remarkable surge of excitement was spreading through Taranaki and beyond. It was triggered off by the Hawera Rotary Club, disturbed by pamphlets urging that Britain should make peace. <sup>152</sup> On 21 May more than 50 Hawera citizens, representing trading, farming and professional interests, resolved that Parliament should be summoned immediately and a non-party government formed to intensify New Zealand's war effort. 'There is no reason,' said one speaker, 'why a match struck in Hawera should not spread a flame throughout the whole of New Zealand.' <sup>153</sup> They forthwith sent envoys—'flying squads', the *Taranaki Herald* of 23 May called them—to all the towns between New Plymouth and Palmerston North urging them to hold public meetings in support of these resolutions, and to join in a mass deputation to the Prime Minister—by special train if possible—stressing that the will to serve and sacrifice was widespread but leadership was lacking. A telephone committee prepared mayors and a few citizens for the envoys, who in each town met the RSA and the business men to arrange public

meetings a day or so later. <sup>154</sup> By 23 May the *Taranaki Daily News* reported rapid progress: public meetings had been arranged throughout Taranaki, at **Hamilton** and **Wanganui**; an 'organisation' was established at **Palmerston North** and from there the movement had radiated to **Dannevirke**, **Hastings**, **Napier**, **Levin** and the Manawatu. It was stated that 500 members of the Defence League at **Wellington** would march to Parliament with the Taranaki visitors.

A coal shortage precluded the special train and on Friday 24 May the Prime Minister announced that Parliament would meet the following week to legislate on the lines of the Emergency Powers Defence Act just passed in **Britain**. <sup>155</sup> Most of the Taranaki meetings were held on that same day—at Waverley, Patea, Manaia, Opunake, **Kaponga**, **Eltham**, **Stratford**, **Inglewood**, **Waitara**, **New Plymouth**, **Hawera**—and where shops were closed they were impressively large. It was repeated that the movement did not attack the government but wished to inspire it to still further efforts. All meetings were prominently supported by the local RSA and almost all, besides calling for an immediate Parliament and an all-party **War Cabinet**, endorsed the RSA demand for compulsory universal national service. Many speakers urged that labour hours be extended and some were anxious about aliens and subversion, but these were not included in the motions. Though Nash had just broadcast that New Zealand had done everything **Britain** had asked, that more food was in store than there were ships to carry it and more volunteers in hand than could be trained, there was at these meetings strong feeling that more must be done. There was talk of being conquered—New Zealand would be a German colony, New Zealanders would not be allowed to walk on the footpath and would be known not by their names but by numbers. As **Kaponga** speakers put it, a feeling of shame was sweeping the country, easy times and good living must go, it was time to get down in the scrum and push. <sup>156</sup> **Hawera**'s own meeting numbered 1000 people, but critical comment came in a letter from one of them. 'The people who sponsored the meeting meant well, but there was an atmosphere of aimless panic about it all; the type of situation that often confronts a cattle drover when his charges get scary and commence what is known



in cattle men's parlance as "ringing". <sup>157</sup>

At Palmerston North, the Taranaki envoys found a very vigorous branch of the Defence League which on the 20th had expressed disappointment in the war effort, demanding a national government representing all sections, universal national service, and that all economic and other resources should be organised towards maximum war effort, controlled by a war cabinet of four. On the 23rd, a 'vast audience reminiscent of election times' repeated these demands, adding that the government should immediately deal with aliens and any disloyal elements. The tone was belligerent; speakers condemned the government as 'wrapped in grave clothes' and 'colossally self-complacent' about its inadequate war effort. Fraser's suggestion that the widespread call for a national government was being worked up for political ends was, declared the Mayor, insulting: the patriotism of the people transcended such petty things. <sup>158</sup> Nor did Fraser's proposal, on 26 May, <sup>159</sup> for an advisory representative war council and conscription of manpower and other resources 'as required' give satisfaction; further demands were telegraphed from Palmerston North—for total conscription and a war cabinet of unrestricted power, composed of Nash, Semple, Coates and **Holland**, with Fraser as chairman. <sup>160</sup>

A meeting arranged by the RSA at Feilding on the 25th called for conscription of manpower and material and a war cabinet of those most competent, whether inside the government or not, and representing all sections. <sup>161</sup> Woodville's meeting, which gave the RSA and Defence League as its begetters and the sounding of public opinion as its task, moved for compulsory national service and said that the government was not doing its job about increasing production and working hours, or about aliens. <sup>162</sup> At Hastings 'extensive ground work ... by influential committees' prepared for a mass meeting on the 27th, but it was cancelled after Fraser's weekend announcements. <sup>163</sup> **Napier** had no meeting though its paper gave accounts of those elsewhere.

At Wanganui, the Taranaki bearers of the fiery cross met both a

strong RSA and the Dominion Farmers' Union conference, and together they raised a bonfire. The farmers on 23 May scrapped most of the agenda and instead demanded immediate conscription of all manpower and wealth ('better to come out of this with only our shirts so long as we are still under the Union Jack'), internment of all enemy aliens and disloyal elements, a war cabinet representative of all sections, and abolition of the 40-hour week for the duration. Next morning many shops closed for an hour, the pipe band played, 200 returned men marched to the Opera House, followed by 100 Farmers' Union delegates, and 3000 people heard speeches stressing the national emergency and the need for unity. It was urged that the present war effort was a miserable failure and that if the government could not do better it should let someone else have a go. Attempted amendments by two Labour men were drowned by waves of cheering, booing and counting out, in which the *Dominion's* report on 25 May saw 'remarkable evidence of the refusal by an overwhelming majority of New Zealanders to tolerate any discordant note in the demand for vigorous leadership and action in the present crisis'. <sup>164</sup>

Similar unanimity and enthusiasm occurred at a very vigorous RSA-sponsored meeting in **Dunedin** on Friday evening, 24 May, where 5000 attended, <sup>165</sup> and at **Christchurch** where 400 met in the afternoon. Both these meetings pressed for total service and a non-party government; at the latter, which was convened by 'citizens who have been prominent in the war effort ... in response to a request from the **North Island**' and which spoke of sending delegates to join the proposed **North Island** deputation to the Prime Minister, W. Machin, <sup>166</sup> president of the Employers' Federation, made a very forthright attack on Nash. <sup>167</sup> These seem to have been the main **South Island** meetings of the week, though many bodies meeting for normal purposes passed resolutions urging a national government, conscription, etc. On the 22nd at **Blenheim** 100 women, meeting for patriotic work, urged national service for both men and women as part of the home defence plan, with women filling the positions of Territorials at training. <sup>168</sup> At Oamaru on the 24th about 100 citizens anxious to speed up the war effort persuaded the Mayor to



call a public meeting on the 29th that would be 'constructive and helpful'; <sup>169</sup> by that date the Prime Minister's announcements had silenced the most urgent complaints, and the meeting was a rally calling for 100 per cent war effort—with conscription of manpower and of national resources, under national government. <sup>170</sup>

At Wellington, criticism of the war effort came mostly from the right-wing People's Movement, founded at the end of November 1939. Adam Hamilton had remarked that its ideas were indistinguishable from those of the National party, except that it did not seem to know there was a war on, <sup>171</sup> while its leader, E. Toop, <sup>172</sup> charged the National party with being inarticulate. <sup>173</sup> On 11 and 16 May, the *Evening Post* printed Toop's demands for immediate Parliament, compulsory military training and service for production, and a non-party war council of the best brains in the country. On 22 May Toop further suggested that the government's persistent inactivity was due to promises concerning conscription and other matters given to trade union leaders <sup>174</sup>—an idea commonplace in National party circles. Wellington's Mayor on 25 May announced a public meeting about the war effort, universal service and a national war cabinet for the 28th, but later cancelled it.

This survey of the week's meetings, while not complete, may show the truth of the Opposition's claim that they were spontaneous expressions of public opinion; indeed they were not arranged by the National party as such, nor addressed by Nationalist members— save at **Tauranga** where F. W. Doidge told 1000 people, who demanded conscription and a national government, that the Prime Minister could best serve the State by giving up his office. <sup>175</sup> But there were also grounds for Labour's view that these meetings were organised by anti-Labour persons, and the RSA was clearly involved in most of them.

In response some Labour bodies <sup>176</sup> published motions of confidence in the government's war effort, and deplored scaremongering and attempts by the 'exploiting sections' to use the war to obtain conscription and coalition, to press against the 40-hour week and working conditions. Inevitably these appeared both frail and stubborn

among the reportings of dissatisfaction. Some defence came from the Chamber of Commerce. Several branches had been prompt in demanding abolition of the 40-hour week, a national government and immediate calling of Parliament. <sup>177</sup> But on 23 May W. S. MacGibbon, <sup>178</sup> president of the Associated Chambers, when about to lead a deputation to the Prime Minister, made a very moderate statement pressing for a war cabinet or national government, for conscription and universal service. He complained that the country did not know what was being done and, while allowing that those in charge were sincere, doubted if ministers in charge of departments could give the undivided attention needed by the war effort; he added that the country was fortunate in having a Prime Minister who gave co-operation and help and was receptive to what was said to him—a note very different from the widespread scolding that Fraser received that week. He concluded: ‘Do not allow in the Dominion anything of panic. There has been a suggestion in some centres that there should be a march on Parliament House perhaps to force the Government to do something. I say we are a democracy and must not have anything out of sympathy with democracy. We must have law and order and not get panicky. It is not British to do so.’ <sup>179</sup>

Newspapers in the main solidly advocated coalition, conscription, universal service and a vastly more vigorous war effort, but a few minor editorial voices advised more precision and less noise. Thus the *Dannevirke Evening News* on 23 May remarked that neither farmers nor workers had shared in arranging *Dannevirke*’s public meeting, but only business men, executives and the RSA. Further, did people realise that they would have to surrender a lot if the government acted on their requests for compulsory national service and organisation of the country’s economic resources? The *Wanganui Herald* on 24 May, after commenting that such widespread public outcry had not been heard since the bad Depression days of the Coalition government, pointed out that rousing sentiment had replaced reasoned statement and that farmers’ unions, chambers of commerce and the RSAs had been advocating conscription without being clear whether it was for overseas service or for home defence. Meanwhile trade unions were busy talking

of no conscription of manpower without conscription of wealth, and again no one had defined what this meant.

On Sunday 26 May the Prime Minister broadcast plans for civil, military and financial national service 'as required'. Each step, as needed, would be taken by Order-in-Council with proper consideration and organisation; the government realised the need for mighty effort. He also proposed a representative war council, of the six cabinet ministers most concerned with war, three members of the Opposition, and representatives of industrialists, employers, trade unions and farmers. It would have powers necessary to keep the war effort at its maximum, and joint sessions of cabinet and war council would be held when needed.

The government had out-manoeuvred its critics. The RSA declared its support, though the **Dunedin** branch, always dour, demurred.<sup>180</sup> The Taranaki surge was spent. The government's political opponents found that their reproaches, their cries of emergency, had prodded the government into taking increased powers, in which they themselves would have only a limited share. Labour traditionalists were placated: they could believe that conscription of manpower and of wealth were bracketed, while the anathema coalition was not conceded.

The Emergency Regulations Amendment Act, authorising regulations that would place persons and property in the hands of the State, passed without division on Friday 31 May, while the BEF was fighting back to **Dunkirk**. On 3 June, while the **Navy** and the little ships were taking off thousands of empty-handed Allied troops,<sup>181</sup> emergency Labour conferences met in **Wellington**, called to ratify, not to debate, major changes in government policy. In crisis-laden tones, Fraser stressed the dreadful and sudden changes that were going on, changes that had sent some people into a panic, fanned by Labour's political opponents; he said that the government could cope with the war only if given a completely free hand (including the question of forming a national government);<sup>182</sup> its supporters must sacrifice some of their hard-won privileges. It was now as wrong to boggle about holidays or

overtime as to haggle over profits. Since wealth as well as manpower was being conscripted, there was no break with traditional policy. There had been no time to call conferences before taking action, it was a question not of days but of hours—‘Our duty was clear. We either had to lead the people in the hour of crisis or give place to others.’ James Roberts, president of the Labour party, repeated the message: unless the delegates gave their own government the mandate it asked for, another government would take its place and such powers would be forced upon them. These warnings and the logic of events carried the conferences. With the condition that none should profit unfairly from the sacrifices of the workers which would be for the wartime only, they promised full support for conscription ‘as required’ of wealth and manpower. The Federation of Labour’s voting was 275:50, the Labour party’s 903:100.

183

Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Opposition had rejected the proposed war council as no real coalition, a sop, an attempt to acquire their support without giving them enough power to represent those behind them effectively. As the *Greymouth Evening Star* of 28 May put it, ‘The suspicion is general that pressure may be brought to bear on the Labour Government, by prominent supporters, to adopt a policy calling for conscription of wealth more than for conscription of men.’ The press in general—with the powerful exceptions of *Truth* on 29 May and the *New Zealand Tablet* on 5 June—declared that the coalition offered was quite inadequate: measures so far-reaching demanded the wholehearted response of the entire community, and could not be carried by a party representing about 55 per cent of the electorate and tied to pledges made in peace time. All pointed to the British example, not yet a month old, declaring that the all-party Cabinet there had instantly created unity from top to toe. A cartoon in the *Auckland Star* of 28 May showed a small war council trailer behind a cabinet limousine, with Fraser, wrench in hand, worrying over the tow rope, while Voice of the People thundered, ‘Stop monkeying about, Peter—you must all ride together.’ Minhinnick’s Fraser, his back turned to symbols of British national government, gazed into his Labour looking-glass saying, ‘Magnificent! I

salute it! But it's not politics'. <sup>184</sup>

The *New Zealand Herald*, on 28, 29 and 31 May, collected and summarised resolutions from sundry bodies throughout the country, such as the Rotorua Chamber of Commerce, the New Zealand Manufacturers' Federation, the South Island Dairy Association and several local farmers' unions. These maintained, with varying intensity, that both the situation itself and the far-reaching emergency regulations required full coalition. <sup>185</sup> The Dominion president of the Farmers' Union, W. W. Mulholland, <sup>186</sup> said that if Fraser did not now lead the country into real unity, he would face the same position as had Chamberlain in Britain. <sup>187</sup> At a special East Coast meeting, one speaker said, 'I do not say that a Coalition Government will be better than the Government of the present time, but it will inspire confidence.' <sup>188</sup>

The Wairoa Harbour Board also demanded, lengthily, a government holding the confidence of all electors. <sup>189</sup> A newspaper correspondent, H. Kitson, <sup>190</sup> who had chaired the public meeting at Christchurch, wrote that if there were to be only a 'nebulous War Cabinet' the Opposition should walk out and find more useful occupation. <sup>191</sup> Palmerston North's special committee, headed by the Mayor, thought the new proposals insufficient. <sup>192</sup> In Invercargill, 145 business firms petitioned Fraser for coalition: while endorsing his proposals for action, they wanted 'an heroic Prime Minister and Government that will devote itself to the formation of a national Government which will truly represent each and every class in the Dominion and devote itself to victory.' <sup>193</sup>

The most strident demands came from the new-born National Service Movement. On 27 and 28 May full-page advertisements in the Auckland papers declared that three objects of the Movement, rejected by the government seven days earlier, were now promised— immediate calling of Parliament, national service, and a non-party war council. Three demands remained: non-party coalition government, internment of aliens, and removal of anomalies in the pensions of present soldiers. The meetings set for 28 May were postponed at Auckland and at country

centres, but further announcements would follow. A women's branch was enthusiastically formed on 27 May, mainly to support the coalition drive, but it also advocated internment of aliens and discussed taking on men's jobs. <sup>194</sup>

On 4 June a meeting of 3000 in the Auckland Town Hall responded to the question, 'Do you want a lead and a leader?' with cries of 'Gordon Coates'. Speakers demanded a coalition thinking of victory not votes; a non-party war cabinet with full powers; compulsory national service and equality of sacrifice, speedy suppression of all subversion, 'Communist, Nazi, Pacifist or just plain disloyalty'; justice and proper protection for the men, women and children of New Zealand who would fight or suffer in the war. <sup>195</sup> These demands were also printed in widely distributed leaflets, which gave the Movement's purpose as: 'one people, one aim, one voice, united action on the part of a loyal and determined people bent on giving all and doing all to win the war'. <sup>196</sup>

At Pukekohe on 10 June, the Rev Gladstone Hughes and another National Service speaker from **Auckland** spoke to about 500 people, who passed the usual motions for coalition, conscription and internment. <sup>197</sup> The Morrinsville branch on 11 June held a public meeting, with shops closed for it, chaired by the Mayor and forebodingly addressed by Hughes. <sup>198</sup> Two days later at **Rotorua** an enthusiastic meeting of nearly 200 called by the local Chamber of Commerce, with two speakers from **Auckland**, formed a branch of the Movement. <sup>199</sup>

On 13 June the **Auckland** chairman, B. H. Kingston, declared the Movement's growing impatience for unified control of the war effort, but on the 15th the Attorney-General, H. G. R. Mason, <sup>200</sup> said that the Movement must dissolve. Its intentions might be very good, but it was starting up the path which **Hitler's** organisation had taken. Its propaganda, with an 'indefinable expanding range of aims', showed it likely to become a body rivalling constitutional authority, with an irresponsible committee deriving power from mob violence. <sup>201</sup> Later in Parliament Mason reviewed leaflets giving these aims and giving also the impression that the Movement was getting and would get things done.



Further, a circular asking for 'say, £ donation and £ 1 per week' at the discretion of the donor suggested permanence, and another envisaged a very large organisation: should an emergency arise calling for any form of activity within minutes of a telephone call or telegram from the centre 'the whole of New Zealand would be placed in motion, you in your area playing your part with the rest of the nation'. Mason said that the Movement's publicity man was just putting too much energy and combativeness into his job, but large advertisements could in excited times quickly work up troublesome emotion. <sup>202</sup> There were some protests from Adam Hamilton and from some newspapers, <sup>203</sup> saying that the government's judgment in this matter had astounded and distressed many worthy people and that it would be better employed chasing the Fifth Column. The Movement advertised a meeting of badge-wearing supporters on 17 June to discuss the government's action, but cancelled it after telephone talks with the Prime Minister that warned of police action. <sup>204</sup> Expressing dismay at such misunderstanding, it rapidly amended its aims to general zest for the war effort and the establishment by constitutional means of a united representative government. <sup>205</sup> By 19 June the *Observer* could write: 'the Government's little brush with the **National Service Movement** seems to have been just a piece of harmless shadow sparring with a happy ending for everyone, except perhaps for those who would have tried to use the Movement as a screen for political attack on the Government.' The *Evening Post* on 15 June explained that in **Australia** a somewhat similar unofficial movement, 'a sixth column' encroaching on the duties of police and defence authorities, had 'raced like a bush fire' to an alleged membership of 30 000 and mass meetings before being frowned upon by the Federal Prime Minister. <sup>206</sup>

The Movement withered quickly. Its offer in early July to load a ship that watersiders were reported unwilling to work after midnight proved unnecessary. <sup>207</sup> In mid-July newspaper correspondence showed that when the **War Cabinet** was formed, some Movement members, including **Kingston**, the **Auckland** chairman, were satisfied, <sup>208</sup> while others, including Gladstone Hughes, wanted a 'new movement to convert the

parody of national unity expressed by the **War Cabinet** into a real unity.’<sup>209</sup> In August the Movement turned its attention to physical culture classes to improve the fitness of civilians,<sup>210</sup> while the women’s section arranged itself in groups concerned with clerical training, knitting and sewing for patriotic purposes, soldiers’ wives, journalism, anti-waste, and canteen work; also a spinning circle to revive interest in an ancient craft and to ease the knitting wool shortage.<sup>211</sup>

With the principle of conscription conceded, and even a narrow place offered to the talents of business and property, the edge was taken off the National party argument and now the urgency of the moment swung behind the government’s proposals; to stand out for larger powers looked like party politics at the war’s expense. The manoeuvrings about the War Council and the **War Cabinet** are told elsewhere.<sup>212</sup> Here it can be noted that a War Council concerned with production for war, war finance and emergency regulations, was announced on 18 June: six cabinet ministers, one representative of the farmers, one of employers, two trade union men, four returned soldiers (one a Maori) and an independent member of Parliament— National party members had refused places.<sup>213</sup> This became merely an advisory body when further negotiations led in mid-July to a **War Cabinet** of Fraser, Nash, Jones, Hamilton and Coates to handle war matters, while Labour’s Cabinet retained control of the rest of the country’s affairs. Nationalist interests, having exerted as much pressure as they reasonably could, accepted both the emergency and its compromise, while hoping for more in the future—the Chamber of Commerce, for instance, while welcoming the **War Cabinet**, hoped that it would be the forerunner of a national government.<sup>214</sup>

Meanwhile, during all this expression and creation of public opinion, the enlistment figures more quietly reflected the views of the men actually involved. During April and the **Norway** campaign 726 men enlisted weekly. This rate was falling slightly by the end of the month: 1232 in the fortnight ending on 11 May. With the attack on the western front it quickened; 928 joined up in that week and 1339 in the week



ending 25 May, when the agitation for conscription and coalition reached its peak, making a total of 38 399 enlistments before conscription was promised. Thereafter, with the French news growing worse, between two and three thousand volunteered weekly, the highest number, 3480, being for the week ending 29 June, when **France** had capitulated and it had been announced that volunteering would end on 22 July. In the last week, 3087 anticipated conscription by signing up, with 1947 more on the final day, Monday 22nd. At that date volunteers for 2NZEF, including the **Maori Battalion's** 4103, numbered 63 740. <sup>215</sup> Many who volunteered for the **Air Force** but failed to meet its exacting physical requirements, enlisted in the Army, and the Prime Minister on 19 September 1940 gave the total registered for voluntary service with the NZEF as 65 063. By then more than 16 000 had volunteered for the **Air Force**, and nearly 3000 were already serving in the **Navy**. <sup>216</sup>

For the mercy of **Dunkirk** and other evacuations, whence between 20 May and 26 June 1940 a total of 558 032 troops were ferried across the Channel, <sup>217</sup> there was deep thankfulness. It was something to set against the shattering realisation, in the days that followed, that the French, who last time had slogged out four stubborn years, were now crumpling in less than six weeks. Newspapers were restrained: the headlines were big and bad, the reports of attack and defeat were confused and confounding, but hopeful notes were sounded where possible; the German radio paid tribute to the fighting quality of the British; the morale and courage of the French forces were high and they had withdrawn without being encircled. It was stressed that the Allies were fighting back steadily against tremendous odds, against millions of men and thousands of tanks, thrown in reckless of loss, that German gains were made at enormous cost, that the enemy would soon exhaust his effort and find his lines of communication too long; that staying power would count. On 13 June the headlines declared that **Paris** would never submit; two days later **Paris**, an open city, received the invaders, her leaders seeing no worthwhile reason for risking her destruction; Reynaud, <sup>218</sup> the premier who talked of last ditch fighting from North Africa, was replaced by Marshal Pétain, <sup>219</sup> the 84-year-old veteran of

Verdun, who on 18 June sought an armistice.

Now, more even than in the first days of the war, 'the news' dominated conversation, people waited at their doors for the paper, hung about the radio—a **Waikato** man complained to his Primary Producer Council that the frequent **BBC** broadcasts from Daventry were affecting production, as farmers instead of working remained at home, hoping that something fresh would be announced. <sup>220</sup> There was awe, dismay, apprehension, but no widespread sense that **France's** fall was any more than the fall of **France**. Nor was there any immediate railing against **France** in the daily papers or radio—sorrow not anger was the note. At first editors, as in the crises of September '38 and March '39, shook their heads but passed no judgment; it was too large a matter, too much was obviously not known. Leading articles merely warned that it all showed how close the war was, how necessary that all energy should be directed towards it. Churchill's effort to rally French resistance by a solemn act of union between the two countries, which failed almost before it was heard of, did not sink deeply into New Zealand consciousness. Papers gave prominence to the messages of the King (5 June), of Fraser (14 June), of the British Government (15 June), and of Churchill (18 June), all speaking of French heroism, fortitude and devotion, which had been praised by many lesser witnesses at **Dunkirk** and after. A terrible misfortune had fallen on a valiant people and the size of the disaster measured the might of the enemy. Press and radio gave forth and echoed the words of Churchill, powerful, restrained oratory that contained the emotions of the moment.

The news from **France** is very bad. I grieve for the gallant French people who have fallen into this terrible misfortune. Nothing will alter our feeling towards them or our faith that the genius of the French will rise again.

What has happened in **France** makes no difference to the British faith and purpose. We have become the sole champions now in arms to defend the world cause. We shall do our best to be worthy of that high honour. We shall defend our island....

But sympathy was soon overrun by anger. On 19 June the *New Zealand Herald* and other papers quoted a BEF correspondent who wrote that a huge confederacy of spies and Fifth Column agents had beaten **France**, and that the nation was as rotten as an old tree inside; such reports continued, and the resurgence of Laval was viewed with misgiving. On the morning of 24 June, with the armistice terms not fully known, the *Christchurch Press*, more restrained than many papers, said 'It is a betrayal, but more pitiful than infamous.' Later that day, when the terms were declared, all remaining sorrow turned to anger, and editors thundered all over the country. The *Press* (25 June) declared that Pétain's government must be charged not merely with deserting an ally but with becoming an accomplice of the enemy. **France**, conceding every conceivable point, had openly and shamelessly betrayed her British ally, said the *New Zealand Herald*. The *Evening Post* (24 June) held that the Pétain government's contract with **Hitler** 'is a breach of faith that admits of no denial and of no extenuation. Within the bounds of common morality that Government is left without a feather to fly with ...', while the *Otago Daily Times* (25 June) stated that **France**, without suffering a final defeat on the field, possessing a great empire and a powerful ally, had, through the panic precipitancy of the government, been forced into an undertaking which spelled degradation and servitude for a whole proud people, and had become 'an unprotesting agent' against Britain. Everywhere it was seen that **France** had made itself a springboard for the attack on **Britain** with no attempt at the scorched earth policy by which the Russians in 1812 and the Chinese at present fighting **Japan** snatched the fruits of victory from the invader. The French fleet was supposed to be demobilised and interned, but **Germany** and **Italy** would use it, as they saw fit, to defend the coast of **France**; the thin pretence that French ships would not act on German orders comforted no one.

There was no recognition that **France** with her armies in full retreat and her population confused and helpless had only her fleet to bargain with, and that only by compromising was she able to obtain any

independence. Editors concluded that, by agreeing virtually to collaborate against **Britain**, **France** had won dubious secret promises of better terms following German victory.

Several papers at the same time published the Daventry report of the Dunedin Rhodes Scholar, journalist Geoffrey Cox,<sup>221</sup> telling how the ministers, then at Bordeaux (but soon to move to Vichy, which gave its name to the French collaborationist government), outvoted premier Reynaud, the fierce little fighter, and installed Pétain, the ancient hero of Verdun, to sue for peace. Everywhere, he said, was the spirit of defeat; **France** was weary from the last war and the years since of struggle between Left and Right. The tired-eyed, drooping Pétain epitomised this weariness and the reluctance to face again the slaughter of Verdun. A cartoon by Minhinnick, 'The Hollow Tree', appeared in several papers, showing a great fallen tree cracked through at its base, hollow and black within. Waving his small 'Blitzkrieg' axe and shouting 'I did it with my little hatchet', **Hitler** stands over a shallow cut in the trunk, with monkey- **Mussolini** peering from behind.<sup>222</sup>

Articles and reports from various overseas papers were published, so that while all agreed on treachery and betrayal from within, accounts of the forces and interests behind these evils differed widely. Thus about 26 June it was copiously reported from the *Chicago Daily News* that breakdown was due to the Belgian collapse, plus treachery, inefficiency and graft in **France**. Early in July *The Times* supplied the view that lack of foresight, fear of responsibility, divided counsels, outmoded military thinking, and inability to understand Nazi intentions had brought **France** to her knees. Hindsight makes it clear that from this time 'Maginot-thinking' became anathema; never again would a people deceive itself that a fixed, defensive wall could protect a nation.

The 'slothful orgies'<sup>223</sup> of Blum's Popular Front regime of 1936–8 were widely named as the basic evil. Both the *New Zealand Tablet* of 26 June and the *Otago Daily Times* of 3 July repeated a *Sydney Bulletin* article which laid the blame on Communists and the Popular Front's 40-hour week, with its diminished production of armaments, especially

aircraft, and the squandering of French weapons in the Spanish war which had aligned **Italy** with the enemy. This view was repeated by the *Tablet* on 10 July. It was independently set forth, minus the Spanish details, on 15 August by the *Southland Times*, which concluded that following the labour troubles of 1938 'the French nation was like a building riddled with borer. The ultimate collapse was by no means surprising. Communism is hand in glove with the Nazis'. *Zealandia*, on 11 July, repeated the cry 'Le communisme, voila l'ennemi!' and warned against **Moscow**-drugged minds which attributed the collapse to pro-Fascist politicians. In the House on 12 July F. W. Doidge claimed that **France** had been reduced to helplessness because Blum, like the Labour government in New Zealand, repeatedly made concessions to militant unions. Fraser replied that this was 'sheer tripe' and 'misrepresentation of one of the finest men **France** has ever had and one who is suffering today.'<sup>224</sup> Readers of *Truth*<sup>225</sup> were told that the betrayal was planned long before the war by Bonnet,<sup>226</sup> Flandin<sup>227</sup> and Laval, who disliked the Left more than they disliked **Hitler**, and that high officers contributed to domination by philo-Germans. This view was also put forward by the *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*:<sup>228</sup> factors contributing to **France's** fall were 'the purblind interests of big money and a pathological fear in certain high places of impending social upheaval.'

Censorship was also given as a cause. **France**, blinkered by official secrecy and press censorship, had stumbled to inevitable disaster, said the *Otago Daily Times*,<sup>229</sup> adding the *Manchester Guardian's* warning that if the British press became merely the mouthpiece of official news and opinion it would begin treading a path that notably contributed to the ruin of **France**. The menace of the ' **Maginot** mind' was discussed, linked with the false calm induced by censorship which hid disaster till the last moment.<sup>230</sup> The *Auckland Star*<sup>231</sup> explained that **France** had suppressed unpleasant truths and encouraged pleasant falsehood; the *New Zealand Financial Times*<sup>232</sup> said: 'rumour breeds best in a vacuum; and to take the tragic lesson of **France** again, our nearest Allies fell to pieces largely because they were not told what was happening.'

These scattered, desultory opinions, however, occupied little space. Having poured forth its wrath in one burst, the press in the main dropped **France** very quickly. It was clearly no use to cry over spilt milk, clearly impolitic to dwell on military and moral disaster. By 28 June 1940 Japanese foreign policy and New Zealand's budget had driven **France** from the centre pages. It returned for a few days early in July when **Britain** as a last resort took action against part of the French fleet at **Oran**, action which, although some ships escaped to **Toulon**, could be rated as a much-needed victory, removing the threat of a German-controlled French fleet in the **Mediterranean**. It was even suggested that **Britain** was better off without **France**. For instance: 'Our task becomes clearer,' said *Truth*. 'At last we fight our own war, hopefully blotting out **Essen, Hamburg, Kiel, Boulogne, Havre, Brest** or any other German strongholds.' <sup>233</sup> Churchill's words were echoed: **Britain** had left the slough at the bottom of the hill, and was toiling slowly upwards morally and physically far better equipped, despite the loss of allies, to meet the Nazi menace than it had been a year before. <sup>234</sup> In a few months cables and articles began to appear explaining that the French people, distinct from their government at Vichy, desired British victory, accepted the leadership of de Gaulle, <sup>235</sup> and were assisting with sabotage and slow production while suffering shortages of food and fuel. <sup>236</sup>

If the fall of **France** evoked bitter surprise mingled with dismay, the entry of **Italy** probably aroused a simple sense of outrage. Few in New Zealand had ever shared Chamberlain's evaluation of **Italy's** military and naval strength, and most regarded it as a lightweight enemy. Expectation of this entry had been growing as the German attack developed. The *Press* of 7 June 1940 reviewed the news and the speculation of recent weeks. There had been successive predictions that **Italy** would declare war within a few days. **Mussolini** would prefer to keep **Europe** on tenterhooks indefinitely but he was becoming the victim of his own devices:

every time he arranges popular demonstrations against the Allies and engages ostentatiously in further troop mobilisations he makes it more



difficult to postpone the day of action without damaging his own prestige and that of his regime. It is for this reason that in the **United States** and in Great Britain and **France** hope of keeping **Italy** out of the war has virtually been abandoned. Signor **Mussolini**, it is agreed, has travelled so far along the road to war that he cannot draw back. The only questions are when he will strike and where he will strike.

Short of supplies and easily blockaded, **Italy**, reflected the *Press*, would attack only when **France** was near collapse; its own interests lay eastward in **Greece** and **Yugoslavia**, where intrusion would bring the disapproval of **Russia**, **Germany's** other ally, while attack on **France** would set two great Catholic countries against each other.

**Mussolini** had not intended to enter the war until the spring of 1941 but now, expecting a rapid finish, he pressed forward in order to claim spoils, though in fact **France** fell before any real fighting could occur.<sup>237</sup> News that **Italy**, denouncing the long denial of its territorial dues by **Britain** and **France**, had struck at the Riviera reached New Zealand at 6 am on 11 June 1940, and New Zealand's own declaration of war was issued by 10.30 am. **Italy's** 'cynical and cold-blooded attack', said the Prime Minister, would call forth in New Zealand as elsewhere the strongest feelings of indignation. Newspapers repeated that **Italy's** action was expected and their contempt varied only in choice of metaphor. 'The entry of **Italy** ... has neither surprised nor dismayed the Allies', stated the *Press*; its Fascist leaders had chosen war with dishonour because regimes born in violence have not the moral strength to live otherwise than by violence. Nor was the *Evening Post* surprised by 'the thunder which has just issued from the famous balcony of the Palazzo Venetia', and spoke of the hyena borrowing the lion's skin. '**Italy's** entry comes as no surprise,' wrote the *New Zealand Herald*, and compared **Mussolini's** attack on **France** with Stalin's on **Poland**; he had 'humiliated **Italy** in the sight of all men by exhibiting her as the black-shirted carrion-crow, hungrily aiding and abetting the screaming Nazi eagle'; Minhinnick's cartoon, 'Enter the Vulture', showed a scrawny-necked bird hovering over an explosion. 'There can be no surprise, but merely

disgusted acceptance ... of the vulturine nature of the Italian dictator,' said the *Otago Daily Times*. At Palmerston North, the *Times* held that **Mussolini**, not the Italian people, had stabbed **France** in the back, hoping for loot and believing **Hitler** victorious; 'the jackal follows the tiger'.

The rout at Caporetto <sup>238</sup> in 1917 was recalled by several papers, and a soldierly 'old resident', reported on 12 June by both the *Otago Daily News* and the *Southland Times*, said that it was characteristic of Italians to join an attack just when victory seemed assured; except for their excellent Alpini troops, they were the worst soldiers he had ever seen or heard of, but very good at running away. A general comment was: 'Fair enough, *we* had to carry them last time, now it's their turn.'

Some more realistic opinions were voiced. The *Listener*, repeating the vulture theme, said that **Italy** had no friend on earth: 'to call **Germany** her friend is to insult even Ribbentrop. <sup>239</sup> **Germany** despises and uses her; openly threatens and unblushingly bribes her; and when she has ceased to be useful will show her as much respect as a thug shows to the harlot who has shared his bed and his board.' It must not be forgotten that this loathsome enemy had men, guns and ships, and to expect its armies to collapse at first impact with the Allies would be an ignorant and dangerous fallacy. <sup>240</sup>

The *Auckland Star* on 11 June said that both cupidity and fear had moved **Mussolini** to take his peaceful people into war. It was doubly certain that the war would be long and desperately hard, but the heavy odds could be countered by Empire-wide efforts of the kind that the British people, 'led at last by a Government worthy of them', were making. Also the threat of Nazi victory would bring new friends; already **President Roosevelt** <sup>241</sup> had bluntly likened Mussolini's action to stabbing a neighbour in the back, and had declared **America's** intention of giving all possible material aid to the Allies.

Despite all the disapproval, there were no demonstrations against the Italian consul at **Wellington** before his departure. On 11 June,



outside the drawn blinds of his office in Aitken Street, knots of a dozen or so gathered from time to time. Some youths had passing designs on the Italian arms displayed at the entrance, others took desultory interest in the evident burning of papers in an outhouse, but the single constable posted at the door had a quiet day. <sup>242</sup>

Birthplace statistics in the 1886 census had shown that 483 persons born in **Italy** were scattered through New Zealand. Thereafter a trickle had come by immigration chains, with friends and relations following one another from certain areas in **Italy** to certain areas in New Zealand. About half had come from fishing villages in Stromboli, the Bay of **Naples** and the far south, to be fishermen mainly at Island Bay and Rona Bay at **Wellington**, but with some at Dunedin, Hawke's Bay, **Auckland** and **Nelson**. At Nelson there were also some market gardeners from the inland southern area of Polenza. From scattered villages in northern Venezia a number had come to the coalmines of the **West Coast** and to the market gardens of the Hutt, where a few were Fascists; a handful from near the Swiss frontier lived in Taranaki as dairy farmers. Among recent arrivals were a few businessmen, well educated and pro-Fascist. Generally, northern Italians were better educated and more politically minded than those from the poorer south, who when without leaders were politically inert. <sup>243</sup> In August 1940 some 800 Italians were classified as enemy aliens, <sup>244</sup> while many others, born in New Zealand of Italian parents, were classed as New Zealanders, liable in due course for military service.

Most of these groups had Italian clubs, which were simply social bodies and which were closed in January 1941 mainly out of regard for undue public apprehension. The largest, the Garibaldi Club at **Wellington**, had contributed during **Italy's** neutrality to the Red Cross and to interest-free war loans, thereby probably reflecting the feelings of the majority, and it resisted an attempt by the Fascist Club to use its premises. The Fascist Club, set up in 1927, never had more than 100 members, and about 75 in mid-1940, of whom about 50 lived in **Wellington**. <sup>245</sup> It was, wrote Dr Lochore, then senior translator in the

**Censorship Department, a moribund affair that looked important on paper but would have succumbed in a week but for the zeal of the Italian consul. Its executive members were peasants flattered into office by that great gentleman, but even those who had come to New Zealand from dislike of Mussolini's regime found it wise to maintain correct relations with the Fascists here lest their relatives in Italy should be troubled. <sup>246</sup> Many Italians, while settled to make their lives in this country, were strongly attached to their relatives at home, and for these the war was a tragic conflict.**

**Italian immigration had accelerated only mildly before the war. Between January 1933 and March 1938, the yearly average of Italian arrivals intending to settle permanently was 16; in the next year 29 came, and 16 in 1939–40. During 1939, 26 Italian males were naturalised, and 4 during 1940. <sup>247</sup> By an amendment on 22 November 1939, persons naturalised before August 1914, and their children, were generally exempt from alien regulations and did not have to register. <sup>248</sup>**

**Anxiety about aliens and the 'Fifth Column' was running high by 11 June 1940, and the Prime Minister immediately announced the internment of a 'considerable number' of Italians known to have Fascist sympathies. This knowledge was derived from police investigation of aliens begun in mid-1938 and from the wartime censorship of all overseas correspondence and all internal correspondence addressed to aliens. <sup>249</sup>**

**In May 1940 the British government had advised that Italian consuls in British territories had instructed their people to commit sabotage if Italy entered the war, and that in some places there were explosives on hand. <sup>250</sup> Obviously in New Zealand miners would have more scope for sabotage than gardeners or shopkeepers or fishermen. About 50 Italians worked in the State coal mines on the West Coast, 19 on the coal face. Many were naturalised and some were married to New Zealand women, but 'prompt steps were taken to place in other employment those who were not interned'. <sup>251</sup> These steps were not directly initiated by government authority; special meetings of miners decided almost**

unanimously that in the interests of general safety Italians should be suspended from all work in the mines. <sup>252</sup> A proposal to put them on public works <sup>253</sup> produced some indignant letters, calling for their internment and opposing high wages to enemies. <sup>254</sup> In mid-September it was announced that these miners were being set to clear blocks of Crown land on the West Coast; the majority had been on social security for some months. <sup>255</sup>

The regulations, following precedents of the last war, already provided that no one who was British by naturalisation only could work on a wharf or a ship except by special licence. There were not many Italian-born watersiders, and their retirement from this area drew little notice, except that at **Port Chalmers** watersiders refused to work with men of Italian extraction who apparently were not excluded by the regulations. <sup>256</sup> British warnings against possible sabotage by Italians presumably stimulated the passing on 11 June of shipping safety regulations by which police control of wharves and ships was stiffened: wharves were barred to the public, and no person was to be allowed on board a ship without a permit, while customs officers were given more power to search cargoes. <sup>257</sup>

Most of **Wellington's** 381 Italians, except for some market gardeners at Taita, lived at Island Bay with off-shoot groups at Makara and Rona Bay. They owned and ran many of the local fishing boats and a sprinkling of suburban shops. Immediately after the declaration of war, police went to Island Bay to question men thought to be anti-British, while a launch called in the boats already out at the fishing grounds. Even such a mild and minor group of enemy aliens was exciting on the New Zealand scale. Several newspapers reported the Island Bay round-up with some zest, and the *Otago Daily Times'* special correspondent made the most of it.

The scene was a notable one, though there was no sort of hostile demonstration. Indeed, many Italians have come to regard New Zealand as their home and express abhorrence of the **Mussolini** regime as

**opposed to the interests of both the Italian monarchy and the Church.**

**There was keen excitement in the little fishing suburb of Wellington. Emotion ran high as friends and shipmates were hauled away for internment for the duration of the war. Picturesque groups of fishermen, some in sea-boots and jerseys and others in shore clothes, stood gesticulating and chattering volubly along the foreshore. Their dark, excited faces and abrupt gestures were in strong contrast with the calm, bulky figures of the police going about their duties. Some of the internees waved and called "Arevederci" ... as though they were setting off on a pleasant holiday.... It is understood that among those interned were some who were naturalised New Zealanders and even of New Zealand birth.**

**Wellington's fish supply, however, was not expected to be affected seriously; the boats would find crews and continue to work. <sup>258</sup>**

**Newspapers did not publish the number interned, though the *Evening Post* of 12 June was told that four men did not return to their homes that night. Police sources state that 30 Italians were taken to **Somes Island** in June. <sup>259</sup>**

**Away from mines and ships and wharves there was no general intention to deprive Italians of work or business. The Mayor of **Wellington** explained on 12 June that a number of men with Italian names were employed by the Council, some in responsible positions; the police had been told about them but there would be no hasty dismissals. Some had worked for years for the Council, some had been born in New Zealand, and of course there would be no action against them, though there would be action against employees of any nationality who took a disloyal attitude. Again, when an angry 'Returned Digger' in the columns of the *Press* asked the Minister of Works why he had an Italian as foreman on the mid-Canterbury irrigation scheme, Semple replied with his usual firmness and more than usual dignity that the Italian was a decent, capable, highly skilled man who had been 15 years with the Department and showed no disloyalty. 'The Government is not waging a campaign against aliens, and proposes to interfere with them only if**

they are thought to be engaged in subversive activities'. <sup>260</sup> 'Returned Digger' agreed that the foreman 'may be as good as anyone else and a good worker; but the principle is this: my sons have to leave New Zealand for 7s a day as wages, while aliens sheltered here can draw three times as much.' <sup>261</sup>

With a few safeguards imposed, Italian fishermen continued to fish. On 11 June representatives of the Services and the Industries and Commerce, Police and Marine departments discussed with the Secretary of the Organisation for National Security whether the Italians should be withdrawn from that industry and replaced by British nationals. It was decided that the fish supply should be maintained, and that all possible Italians should be kept working rather than have them interned and a charge on the community. It would be most undesirable to take them out of their boats, leaving them ashore to become disgruntled saboteurs. A proposal to insert, say, two British subjects in each boat crew of five was dismissed as likely to cause friction and poor fishing. <sup>262</sup> Detailed arrangements were proposed and with slight additions were approved by the Prime Minister. All boats in the **Wellington** area were to be concentrated at Island Bay <sup>263</sup> where they would, before sailing, regularly be inspected for explosives, and for signalling gear or charts not usual for fishermen. Registration numbers a foot high would be painted on the boats, which would avoid the harbour entrance, and from time to time there would be aerial reconnaissance over the fishing grounds. At Port Chalmers, **Napier** and **Auckland** there were similar arrangements for inspecting boats operated by Italians. At Nelson and **Gisborne**, where Italians did not own the boats and were already working with local crew-members, inspections were less frequent. <sup>264</sup>

Italian fishermen could fish under the inspection and protection of the police, but those in business were more subject to the pressure of public feeling, expressed either by avoiding their shops or by open hostility. The *Evening Post* of 12 June thought it unfortunate that public disgust should extend to Italians who had no sympathy with **Mussolini**. Although Italian shopkeepers had had a thin time that day,

there had been no senseless demonstrations or window-breaking, nor were any likely. The Greek consul-general, T. E. Y. Seddon,<sup>265</sup> reported that Greeks were suffering from the anti-Italian feeling in **Wellington**; one fish shop owner was asked three times by hesitating customers if his shop were Italian.<sup>266</sup>

There are only occasional references to the little shops that closed or were sold: as, for instance, that of young Vicenzo Basile who started hairdressing in **Eastbourne, Wellington**, a few months before June 1940, but had to give it up and do labouring work because of public feeling.<sup>267</sup> An instance of overt hostility was the case of Joseph Lino, who had come to New Zealand in 1913, was naturalised and married to a New Zealander, and had for 10 years kept a popular restaurant in **Dannevirke**. Early in July 1940 he left the town after sudden local unfriendliness culminated in the restaurant being twice damaged by a man who claimed in court that his motive was loyalty, he did not like to see Italians in business; he was fined £5 15 s. *Truth*, while regretting 'Joe's' misfortune, held that there was commonsense in the view that all aliens, naturalised or not, should be interned: pro-British ones would be protected from violence and therefore happier, and the others could do no harm.<sup>268</sup>

Catholics, about 13 per cent of the population,<sup>269</sup> faced some inner conflict. Rome was the capital of **Italy**, and it was also the centre of their faith. A lead to opinion was given by the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hinsley:<sup>270</sup> both Pius XI and Pius XII,<sup>271</sup> the previous and current popes, had denounced Fascist paganism, and now the Fascist leaders had dropped their disguise of temporising with religion. They had broken with Christian civilisation, and there was no longer any possibility of a *modus vivendi* with the open enemy of the faith of most Italian people. Fascism had become radical Nazism, committed to pillage, to dominate and enslave.<sup>272</sup> Liston,<sup>273</sup> Bishop of **Auckland**, regretfully expressed the same view, that Fascist leaders had made Catholic Italy an enemy.<sup>274</sup> The *Tablet* repeated the message: the incredible had happened and the leader of the people overwhelmingly



Catholic had thrown in his lot with an avowed enemy of Christianity. **Mussolini's** dream of a new Roman empire and his distrust of **Britain** and **France** were stronger than the popular dislike of Nazism, stronger than the reluctance of a Catholic people to ally themselves with an open enemy of their faith. Fascism must not be identified either with the Italian people, on whom it was imposed from above, or with the Church, with which it existed in 'uneasy neighbourliness'. The Italian people and still less the Church and the Pope could not be held responsible for **Mussolini's** decision. <sup>275</sup> War with **Italy** was accepted by Catholics without protest though with reluctance. The only appeals against military service on the grounds of not wanting to fight Italians were made by young men from Italian families. The fight against **Italy** did not seem the real fight, and possibly this eased Catholic bitterness.

New Zealand's trade with **Italy** was both minor and one-sided, its cutting-off a concern to housewives rather than ministers of supply or finance. In 1938 New Zealand exported £6,578 worth of goods (mainly wool) to **Italy**, and £1,565 worth in 1939, importing from **Italy** as the country of origin £163,745 worth in 1938 and £137,835 worth in 1939. <sup>276</sup> In the latter year, prominent items were gloves (£12,328), millinery (£16,381), silk, art silk and other piece-goods (£33,435), buttons (£3,061), wine (£2,725), olive oil (£4,313), almonds (£21,414), cream of tartar (£4,920), motor-cars (£7,798) and musical instruments (£2,017); others were essential oils, acids, miscellaneous drapery, marble, and cherries in brine. <sup>277</sup>

Along with concern to guard young minds from communist and subversive influences, there were movements to promote positive feelings of Britishness and loyalty. As the Germans pounded west some New Zealanders, shaken into self-doubt, felt that this success might be due in part to the Nazis' will-to-win, their fervent patriotism, their propaganda in schools; it might be well to learn from them, to thicken up patriotism. There were a few suggestions <sup>278</sup> that business houses, schools, public buildings, and even cars should meet these days of stress with flags flying, the sign of the unconquered citadel, to stiffen



resolution and defeat pessimism. This was going further than many wanted, but something was needed to arouse enthusiasm and the schools seemed the right place to start. The rising generation must know that the Union Jack was more than coloured bunting, realise the glory of their British heritage, the need to defend it and the alternative disaster.

In primary schools, the patriotic temper varied with headmasters and other teachers. The new Director of Education, Dr C. E. Beeby,<sup>279</sup> and the Minister, H. G. R. Mason, both rejected Nazi propaganda methods but held that schools should teach faith in the values underlying democracy: love of freedom, of reasonableness, and justice and tolerance of opposition.<sup>280</sup> The Director, when asked on 6 June for a rule on flag saluting, quoted the syllabus, suggesting that it gave ample opportunity for inculcating patriotic ideals.<sup>281</sup> The syllabus instructed that head teachers should attend to the development of a good tone, a corporate life and the patriotic sentiment; the narrow nationalistic interpretation of history should be avoided and there should be sedulously cultivated a strong faith in a more peaceful, harmonious and prosperous world; annual commemorations should be used to inculcate in the young love for their country and desire to promote peace among nations; national anthems and songs of all nations could always be used.

Most education boards had by-laws requiring teachers to assemble pupils to salute the flag, with appropriate explanations, on anniversaries such as Waitangi Day, Anzac Day, the King's Birthday, Empire Day, and Armistice Day and a 1921 Order-in-Council called for saluting the Union Jack and singing the national anthem at the beginning and end of each school week.<sup>282</sup> In general flag ceremonies had declined: the Hawke's Bay Education Board in June 1940 found that 115 of its schools had serviceable flags, 28 had unserviceable ones, and 34 had none at all.<sup>283</sup> The Federated School Committees conference just after the outbreak of war had recommended that flag-honouring should be revived.<sup>284</sup>

Now as **France** fell, there was feeling among education boards, school committees, teachers and others that patriotism should be writ

large and youthful loyalty increased by saluting and singing. For instance, the Taradale RSA urged that children and teachers should assemble daily to salute the flag and sing the national and New Zealand anthems, to inculcate loyalty and to check subversive teaching; any teacher not complying should be dismissed.<sup>285</sup> Several education boards issued instructions that saluting should be done once a week;<sup>286</sup> the Auckland Board remembered the 1921 Order-in-Council, the Nelson Board recommended that a flag should fly at every school in New Zealand throughout the war, while the Wanganui Board would leave the matter to the discretion of headmasters.<sup>287</sup> A Masterton school stated that for more than seven years it had had a Monday morning ceremony at which both anthems were sung, separate classes recited verses of Kipling's 'Children's Song', with the whole school singing the last verse. The flag was saluted while the headmaster recited 'Flag of the Empire, thou shalt be/The noblest flag that ever waved/O'er river, mountain, land or sea'. The Wellington Board thought that this should be more or less standard practice<sup>288</sup> and the *Dominion* called it a 'very fine little ceremony'.<sup>289</sup> The Minister suggested that saluting the flag over-often might make it a mere drill without feeling.<sup>290</sup> This drew reproof from a non-educational public figure, Mulholland, the president of the Farmer's Union: so-called intellectuals who loudly proclaimed loyalty to the people of the world and denied or were lukewarm to their own country were traitors. 'Why are our leaders both in Church and State frequently so lukewarm in their patriotic expressions? Is it that they doubt the righteousness of our fight, or is it that they are ashamed to challenge this false sentiment to which perhaps they had given some heed in the past.... In these days we need robust patriotism, not the anaemic patriotism of the Minister of Education who feared to allow the school children to salute the British flag too often'.<sup>291</sup> The Professor of Education at Victoria University College, W. H. Gould,<sup>292</sup> thought this 'splenetic outburst' was itself perilously close to subversion, and the Prime Minister said hastily that Mulholland's remarks, though not subversive, were not helpful, but he was doing very good work and his words were possibly over-emphasised by the press.<sup>293</sup> Mulholland did not

mind the attention given to his statement, for 'in these times of stress it is essential for public men to hearten the people by giving expression to their patriotic sentiments in a forthright downright manner free from hesitancy.'<sup>294</sup>

The state of mind behind the flags was set forth in a memorandum from the Canterbury Education Board to its schools:

During the war, the effects of which are bound to be somewhat depressing, it is desired to sustain in the children an abundant source of loyalty and vitality. To date, conditions have caused throughout the community a spirit of unrest and nervous tension, and this is likely to react in the general atmosphere in the home and in the school. To offset this, and to keep prominently before the children what **Britain** and Britons stand for throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, the Board has decided ... that every school day should begin with the song 'There'll always be an England'.

The school committee's incidental funds should pay for the music, and station 3YA would broadcast the song twice weekly at 9 am.<sup>295</sup> A correspondent doubted if 'this attractive song' would wear well, and suggested instead Parry's setting of Blake's '**Jerusalem**', or better still a weekly menu including 'God Defend New Zealand', Kipling's 'God of our Fathers' or 'Land of our Birth', finishing up with 'These Things Shall Be on Fridays.'<sup>296</sup>

Flag saluting faded from the news, presumably because it was generally accepted. In June 1941 the Teachers' Court of Appeal held that a by-law requiring teachers to salute the flag was *ultra vires* and reinstated a teacher, a Jehovah's Witness, who had been dismissed under it.<sup>297</sup> Walter J. Broadfoot MP<sup>298</sup> suggested that there should be legislation validating the by-law.<sup>299</sup> However, a regulation gazetted on 13 November 1941 decreed that the flag should be honoured in all public schools on seven anniversaries,<sup>300</sup> the Minister explaining that the purpose of the ceremony was to awaken the spirit of patriotism in the children, and the purpose of the regulation was to supercede the *ultra*

*vires* by-laws of some boards and put the matter beyond dispute.

Another minor instance of increased pressure for patriotism in schools was the **Navy League's** brush with the Wellington Education Board. The League had long canvassed for members in schools: subscription was one shilling and when all the children in a school of less than 100 pupils joined, or at least 100 in a bigger one, the League presented a flag, which was used in the flag saluting ceremonies.<sup>301</sup> In May 1940 the Wellington Board maintained its 10-year-old refusal to allow League speakers during school hours, saying that teachers could teach about the **Navy** and schools should not become agents of propaganda, good or bad,<sup>302</sup> and held to this against renewed pressure in August, claiming that if the League were admitted other organisations could expect admission. This the *Evening Post* condemned as 'weak and misguided consistency'.<sup>303</sup> The RSA backed the League, saying that children should be navy-minded and that **Wellington's** was the only Board in the country which refused permission. The Board, trimming to the wind of opinion, proposed that the League's subscription gathering be dropped and that a naval officer should address one big gathering of schools. Local headmasters, through their Association, claimed deep interest in the **Navy**, and ability to impart it.<sup>304</sup> Finally, on 16 October 1940 the Board granted the League's representatives an annual half-hour in its schools, on condition that they did not canvass for members, saying that its principal objection was to the invidious difference of one child being able to pay while another could not. It also urged the Department to broadcast to schools talks by experts on current events and the various defence forces.<sup>305</sup>

Opposition to the League came not only from the **Wellington** Education Board, but from headmasters, wary of schools becoming propaganda centres, and private schools were among those that declined visits. The League, considering it futile to address schools unless allowed to form branches, visited no Wellington State school during 1941, but resolved in 1942 to seek out any schools where headmasters would welcome speakers, noting that some Wairarapa schools, regardless of the

Board, had formed branches. <sup>306</sup> Two Board members, Colonel T. W. McDonald <sup>307</sup> and T. K. Moody, who strongly believed that if the League's demand for a strong Navy had prevailed the present parlous position would have been different, independently circularised school committees, asking for an hour's access a year instead of half an hour, and for the right to form branches. <sup>308</sup> Despite support from Wellington school committees for these proposals, the Board in April 1942 again refused to enlarge the League's operations, <sup>309</sup> and as Colonel McDonald lost his seat on the Board in July, the League lost a champion within that forum.

Other channels, however, remained. On 21 July 1942 a Navy League flag, signifying 100 members, was presented to St Mark's School <sup>310</sup> by the Governor-General, Sir Cyril Newall, <sup>311</sup> with the Minister of Defence and Mrs Peter Fraser among the visitors. <sup>312</sup> Under such distinguished patronage the League could quietly continue this branch of its work. At the end of 1943 two more Wellington schools, Newtown and Khandallah, received Navy League flags, again presented by the Governor-General, while the League's Wellington secretary reported that in 1943 school enrolments exceeded 4000, the highest number in the last 21 years. <sup>313</sup>

In schools, as elsewhere, robust loyalty linked itself with religion. There was feeling that now was a time for soundness, for setting one's own house in order, mixed with a strong, vague wish to count God among one's allies, to get on side with God. What better peace-offering than the prayers of children? This was not a new desire, but it gained strength and acceptance from the times. With his customary vigour F. W. Doidge MP said that if the war was teaching people anything, it was teaching them to come back to God; he wondered if the education vote should be spent without teaching children to fear God and honour the King. <sup>314</sup> There had long been regret in church areas that State education was, by statute, secular and there had been persistent efforts to change this. Since schools taught for more than the four hours daily required by law, it had become usual, and was legal under the system started in Nelson, for ministers of religion with the approval of

headmasters and school committees to take classes for half-an-hour weekly, though the children did not have to attend. Also during the 1930s the Bible in Schools League had induced most boards to favour, again with the consent of school committees and headmasters, the daily repetition of religious exercises, usually the Lord's Prayer, taken by teachers. <sup>315</sup> This was of doubtful legality, and in 1938 Fraser as Minister of Education had said that he would move against it. <sup>316</sup> The feeling, which gained strength and acceptance from the war, that religion should have more place was expressed by a writer to the *Press*:

At a time when the Government is endeavouring to deal with the spread of pernicious and subversive propaganda ... it may not be out of place to inquire whether this is a sufficient or adequate means of ensuring a broad and sane outlook on our national life and its duties, ideals and responsibilities.... Merely secular education will only produce a democracy without life, without ideals and without inspiration. It is high time we in New Zealand abandoned our silly and irrational prejudices against the Bible in schools. <sup>317</sup>

On 21 August the Wellington Board accepted Colonel McDonald's proposal that, as the Empire was out to defend Christianity, and the King had called for prayers for victory, the Board should begin its meetings with prayer. <sup>318</sup> Another member, C. H. W. Nicholls, suggested as a further step that the Board should ask its schools to do likewise, once a week. 'We have reached a stage in the history of the British Empire when we must come down to earth', he said. 'I have always opposed religious instruction in schools, but I think this is a time when prayers should be said in schools'. <sup>319</sup> Here, simply, was the reaction of one sincere minor public man to the blows falling on **Britain**.

Next month the Board, by 11 votes to 3, decided that subject to the approval of headmasters and committees its schools should open each day with the Lord's Prayer; Colonel McDonald in an impassioned speech asked how, if God could not be mentioned in schools, people could expect the help of Christ in the present struggle, adding that all should show the suffering British people that New Zealand was not going 'to



blot the religious escutcheon.’<sup>320</sup> In October the Wellington Board, claiming that it was a matter for itself and school committees, rejected the advice of the Director that this decision was contrary to law.<sup>321</sup> The Otago Board recommended any of its headmasters who were not already doing so to open with the Lord’s Prayer, and defied the Director. Should committees continue to legalise the matter, questioned the Otago Board, or has the time arrived for us to turn a blind eye on the Education Act which in this respect is hopelessly behind public opinion. There is no doubt that the desire for religious instruction in our schools has been increasing—particularly so in the matter of opening with religious exercises. This desire has been intensified since the outbreak of the war and the realisation of the need for Divine help.... It would be a fine thing at the present time if every school in New Zealand were to open not only with the Lord’s Prayer but also a suitable prayer of intercession on behalf of our fighting forces and the men, women and children of the Homeland.... Education Boards and school committees are in much closer touch with public opinion in this matter than the Education Department and the Government.

The Otago Board hoped that all its schools would adopt its recommendation—not an instruction—to begin with the Lord’s Prayer.

<sup>322</sup> At the same time the Auckland Board reported that it had not officially considered the issue, and very few if any of its schools opened with prayer, but school committees could hold referendums among parents.<sup>323</sup>

Professor Gould complained of an administrative body, elected on a narrow franchise, presuming to interpret public opinion and override the law.<sup>324</sup> The Educational Institute explained on 26 October that pressure against secular State education was longstanding, but now the advocates of religion were making use of the crisis. ‘The Institute sides with those distinguished Christian leaders who have objected in the strongest terms to the use of religious observances as a kind of social tonic in times of national crisis’.<sup>325</sup> To clear up public misunderstanding the Director of Education, Dr Beeby, on 1 November



stated that the Department and education boards existed to administer free, secular and compulsory education, with no power to give directions on religious instruction or observances. Under section 49 (7) of the Act, school committees could grant use of school buildings for religious instruction out of school hours, but they could not order that the school should open with prayers, which no child could be compelled to attend and a teacher taking part would do so as a citizen, not a teacher; the curriculum belonged to the Department alone. An education board, like any group of citizens, could express an opinion that certain religious observances would be desirable, but such opinion could not be regarded as legal instruction. <sup>326</sup>

Legal niceties did not perplex those who felt that the [Wellington Board](#) had taken the right course. The Presbyterian *Outlook* held that by acquiescence in earlier decisions by boards the Department had waived its right to interfere. <sup>327</sup> Colonel McDonald was undismayed, <sup>328</sup> and he was not alone; at the end of November the Wanganui Board asked its schools to open with the Lord's Prayer. <sup>329</sup> The Wellington Board on 20 November reported protests from only one school committee, support from religious and social organisations and its own intention to allow the daily prayer, subject to the approval of headmasters and school committees. <sup>330</sup>

For some, the 9 o'clock recital of the Lord's Prayer by thousands of children was the whole issue; it might do some good and surely it would do no harm. For others, it was the thin end of the wedge, as the Bishop of [Wellington](#) made clear:

What really is at stake ... is the future of Christianity as our national religion.... What we of the Church are asking for is not just the right of entry to the schools, but an adjustment of the educational system which will give free course to the Christian Gospel. To my mind, there is no sense in pretending that we are fighting for great spiritual issues while we make no effort to adjust the law of the land to the clamant and urgent need of the building up of a generation which will have some knowledge of the principles upon which alone a world of freedom and

justice and peace can be established. <sup>331</sup>

There was no further confrontation. With unity the country's avowed watchword, it was impolitic for the Department to do more than wait for religious fervour to flow and ebb. <sup>332</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Sep 39

<sup>2</sup> Wood, p. 98

<sup>3</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 16 Nov 39, p. 10

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Oct 39, p. 3

<sup>5</sup> *Press*, 8 Mar 40, p. 8; *Yearbook*1940, p. 230

<sup>6</sup> *Southland Times*, 29 Dec 39, p. 6

<sup>7</sup> *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 29 Dec 39

<sup>8</sup> Wood, pp. 106–9

<sup>9</sup> Discussed in *ibid.*, pp. 111–12

<sup>10</sup> F. L. Frost, J. O'Brien, W. E. Barnard

<sup>11</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 Jan 40, p. 9

<sup>12</sup> *NZ Transport Worker*, 1 Mar 40, p. 9

<sup>13</sup> *Evening Post*, 9 Dec 39, p. 12

<sup>14</sup> *Press*, 27 Dec 39, p. 7

<sup>15</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Mar 40, p. 15

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 Mar 40, p. 10

<sup>17</sup> *Press*, 23, 30 Jan 40, pp. 6, 12

<sup>18</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 May 40, p. 11

<sup>19</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Mar 40, p. 12

<sup>20</sup> *NZ Herald*, 2 Feb 40, p. 8; *Truth*, 14 Feb 40, p. 14

<sup>21</sup> *Press*, 16 Jan 40, p. 5

<sup>22</sup> *Truth*, 17 Jan 40, p. 9

<sup>23</sup> *Southland Times*, 4 Oct 39, p. 6; *Palmerston North Times*, 4 Oct 39, p. 8

<sup>24</sup> Savage's 'If Britain loses, all is lost' became a slogan.

<sup>25</sup> See p. 28. Langstone on 20 December 1939 said that if there were not enough volunteers and strong measures had to be taken, they would be 100 per cent, with everyone on soldier's rations and pay; it would be a great step towards collective socialism, and those most opposed to it would be capitalists and Communists. *Evening Post*. 20 Dec 39, p. 12

<sup>26</sup> *NZ Herald*, 31 Jan 40, p. 12

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 8, 9, 13 Mar, 28 May 40, pp. 10, 10, 14, 15, 13;  
*Auckland Star*, 28 May 40, p. 6

<sup>28</sup> **Freyberg, Lieutenant-General Rt Hon Sir Bernard, Baron Freyberg of Wellington and Munstead, Surrey ('51), VC, GCMG('46), KCB('42), KBE, DSO (1889–1963): b UK, to NZ 1891; GOC NZ Forces 1939–45; C-in-C Allied Forces Crete 1941; Gov Gen NZ 1946–52**

<sup>29</sup> *Press*, 10 Feb 40, p. 13

<sup>30</sup> **Bell, Brigadier Peter Harvey, CB('44), DSO (1886–1963): QMG & 3rd Military Memb NZ Army Board 1940; OC Northern Military District 1941**

<sup>31</sup> *Press*, 22 Dec 39, p. 8

<sup>32</sup> *Evening Post*, 29 Feb 40, p 10

<sup>33</sup> *Press*, 22 Dec 39, p. 3

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

<sup>35</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 Jan 40, p. 12

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Feb 40, p. 9

<sup>37</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 15, 28, 29 Feb, 6 Mar 40, pp. 8, 10. 8, 8

<sup>38</sup> 'Some people would like to see conscription. I believe it would meet with the approval of the majority ... but the Government, in its wisdom, had decided on a voluntary system. The decision rests with the Government and ours is the job to translate it into action.' *Press*, 22 Dec 39, p. 8

- 39** *Otago Daily Times*, 15 Jan 40, p. 6
- 40** *NZ Herald*, 6 Feb 40, p. 9
- 41** *Press*, 8 Jan 40, p. 6
- 42** *NZ Herald*, 29 Apr 40, p. 9
- 43** *Evening Post*, 12 Jan 40, p. 9
- 44** *Otago Daily Times*, 19 Feb 40, p. 6
- 45** F. Jones in *Evening Post*, 12 Apr 40, p. 6
- 46** *Press*, 2 Dec 39, p. 9; *Otago Daily Times*, 6, 20 Oct 39, pp. 6, 8
- 47** *NZ Herald*, 18, 20 Jan 40, pp. 12, 14
- 48** *Evening Post*, 22 Jan 40, p. 6
- 49** *Ibid.*, 6 Oct 39, p. 11
- 50** *Otago Daily Times*, 28 Sep 39, p. 10
- 51** *Wanganui Herald*, 9 Jan 40, p. 9
- 52** *Taranaki Daily News*, 8 Jan 40, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 9; *Press* 16 Jan 40, p. 5; *Otago Daily Times*, 18 Mar 40, p. 10; *Southland Times*, 8 Jun 40, p. 15
- 53** *Press*, 22, 23, 26, 28 Dec 40, pp. 8, 10, 4, 5

<sup>54</sup> *Truth*, 24, Apr, 17 Jul 40, pp. 9, 14

<sup>55</sup> Information from Mrs P. Duckett, Waitara, Sep 69

<sup>56</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 Feb 40, p. 10

<sup>57</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Nov 40, p. 5

<sup>58</sup> *Press*, 2 May 40, p. 8

<sup>59</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10 Apr 40, p. 11

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Feb 40, p. 12 (Mt Albert); *Press*, 9 Feb 40, p. 10 (Westport), 1 Mar 40, p. 14 (Paparua); *Evening Post*, 13 Feb 40, p. 4 (Lower Hutt), 9 Feb 40, p. 8 (Makara), 15 Feb 40, p. 10 (Wellington)

<sup>61</sup> *Evening Post*, 24 Jan 40, p. 4

<sup>62</sup> In this survey, newspaper letters are given a place as expressing, in the phrases of the moment, views by random people. That few letters appeared opposing conscription cannot be taken to mean that opposition was not felt or expressed, only that it was not published.

<sup>63</sup> *Press*, 26, 28 Dec 39, pp. 5, 3; *Southland Times*, 23 Feb 40, p. 9

<sup>64</sup> *Press*, 9 Oct, 29 Dec 39, pp. 5, 3; *Southland Times*, 8 May 40, p. 4; *NZ Observer*, 1 Nov 39, p. 8

<sup>65</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Feb 40, p. 12

- <sup>66</sup> *Press*, 12 Sep 39, p. 5; also *Dominion*, 19 Sep 39, p. 9; *Press*, 9 Oct 39, p. 5; *Evening Post*, 10 Feb 40, p. 10, *NZ Herald*, 2 Mar 40, p. 13 (Bishop Cherrington)
- <sup>67</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 12 Oct 39, p. 11
- <sup>68</sup> *People's Voice*, 16 Feb 40, p. 1
- <sup>69</sup> The *Record* supplanted the *Borer* as the voice of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners in 1940. Like its predecessor it was prepared and published in the **Auckland** area, but was made available to Union members throughout the country. In July 1951 appeared the first issue of a national journal, the *New Zealand Building Worker*.
- <sup>70</sup> *Union Record*, 15 Jan 40, p. 2
- <sup>71</sup> *NZ Railway Review*, 5 Jan 40, p. 3
- <sup>72</sup> *Evening Post*, 20 Dec 39, p. 12
- <sup>73</sup> *Standard*, 28 Dec 39, p. 6. 1 Feb 40, p. 4
- <sup>74</sup> *Union Record*, 15 Mar 40, p. 7
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Feb 40, p. 6
- <sup>76</sup> *People's Voice*, 19, 26 Jan, 16 Feb, 15, 29 Mar 40, pp. 5, 1, 5, 1, 2; *Union Record*, 15 Jan 40, p. 8
- <sup>77</sup> *Tomorrow*, 24 Jan 40, p. 188
- <sup>78</sup> *Evening Post*, 15 Feb 40, p. 10



<sup>79</sup> *Press*, 6 Dec 39, p. 8

<sup>80</sup> *Dominion*, 8 Dec 39, p. 10; *Grey River Argus*, 9 Dec 39; *Press*, 12, 13 Dec, pp. 8, 14; *People's Voice*, 22 Dec 39, p. 1

<sup>81</sup> *Press*, 12 Feb 40. p. 8

<sup>82</sup> Several Cabinet ministers were present. *Evening Post*, 21 Feb 40, p. 11

<sup>83</sup> *Press*, 23 Jan 40, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 31 Jan 40, p. 11

<sup>84</sup> *Press*, 12 Apr 40, p. 10

<sup>85</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Mar 40, p. 10

<sup>86</sup> *Auckland Star*, 26 Mar 40, p. 9

<sup>87</sup> *Standard*, 28 Mar 40, pp. 7, 14

<sup>88</sup> Actually 1937; see *Standard*, 8 Apr 37, p. 1

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Apr 40, p. 14

<sup>91</sup> *NZ Herald*, 27 Mar 40, p. 11; *Otaga Daily Times*, 27 Mar 40, p. 8

<sup>92</sup> *Standard*, 11 Apr 40, p. 1; *Press*, 13 Apr 40, p. 12

<sup>93</sup> See p. 48

<sup>94</sup> *Union Record*, 10 May 40, p. 6

<sup>95</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 May 40, p. 13

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 May 40, p. 10

<sup>97</sup> *People's Voice*, 26 Jun 40, p. 2; *Evening Post*, 12, 16 Sep 40, pp. 13, 9

<sup>98</sup> *People's Voice*, 5 Mar 40, p. 5; *NZ Methodist Times*, 24 Feb 40, p. 347

<sup>99</sup> *People's Voice*, 9 Jul 40, no pagination

<sup>100</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 May 40, p. 14; *NZ Herald*, 16 Apr 40, p. 9

<sup>101</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 5 Feb, 10 Apr 40, pp. 8, 8; *Press*, 17 Apr 40, p. 10

<sup>102</sup> *Evening Post*, 23 Apr 40, p. 11

<sup>103</sup> *Press*, 16 May 40, p. 3

<sup>104</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 21 May 40, p. 6

<sup>105</sup> eg, *Press*, 20 Mar 40, p. 14

<sup>106</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Mar 40, p. 17

<sup>107</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 28 Mar 40, p. 5

<sup>108</sup> *Evening Post*, 12 Apr 40, p. 6

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 May 40, p. 11

<sup>110</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 29 Feb 40, p. 8

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Oct 39, p. 12

<sup>112</sup> *NZ Herald*, 14 Feb 40, p. 10

<sup>113</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 19 Apr 40, p. 8

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Feb 40, p. 12

<sup>115</sup> A tape-tied cloth folder containing needles, thread, buttons, scissors, etc. *Evening Post*, 23 May 40, p. 12

<sup>116</sup> Keyes, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger, 1st Baron of Zeebrugge and of **Dover** ('43) (1872–1945): MP 1934–43; Dir Combined Ops 1940–1

<sup>117</sup> Amery, Rt Hon Leopold Stennett, PC, CH (1873–1955): Sec State Cols 1924–9, Dom Aff 1925–9, **India** and **Burma** 1940–5

<sup>118</sup> Harold Nicholson, one of the Conservatives who turned against Chamberlain, wrote of Keyes's 'absolutely devastating attack' on naval bungling, and Amery's 'further terrific attack'. The latter switched attention from **Norway** to the whole conduct of the war, concluding with Cromwell's dismissal of the Long Parliament: 'You have sat here too long for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go.' Nicholson, Harold, *Diaries and Letters 1939–1945*, p. 73; also Dalton, Hugh, *The Fateful Years: Memoirs 1939–1945*, pp. 304–11; Calder, Angus, *The People's War: Britain 1939–45*, pp. 81–2

<sup>119</sup> Attlee, Rt Hon Clement Richard, 1st Earl Attlee ('55),

**Viscount Prestwood ('55), KG, PC, OM, CH, FRS (1883–1967): MP (Lab) 1922–55; Leader Oppos 1935–40, 1951–5; Deputy PM 1942–4, Sec State Dom Aff 1942–3; PM 1945–51; Min Defence 1945–6**

**<sup>120</sup> Sinclair, Rt Hon Sir Archibald, 1st Viscount Thurso of Ulbster ('52), KT('41), PC, CMG (1890–1970): MP (Lib) 1922–45; Sec State Air 1940–5; Leader Parl Liberal party 1935–45**

**<sup>121</sup> Lloyd George, Rt Hon David, 1st Earl of Dwyfor ('45), PC, OM (1863–1945): MP (Lib) 1890–1931, (Indep Lib) 1931–44; PM 1916–22**

**<sup>122</sup> The vote was 281:200, showing many Conservative absences apart from those who marched into the Opposition Lobby.**

**<sup>123</sup> *Evening Post*, 14 May 40, p. 6; *Standard*, 16 May 40, p. 1**

**<sup>124</sup> *Napier Daily Telegraph*, 17 May 40, p. 4**

**<sup>125</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 18 May 40, p. 10**

**<sup>126</sup> *Evening Post*, 20 May 40, p. 8**

**<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.***

**<sup>128</sup> See p. 859ff**

**<sup>129</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 May 40, p. 10**

**<sup>130</sup> Moody, Allan John (d 1973 *aet* 85): barrister & solicitor; chmn Auck Hospital Bd 1938–47**

**<sup>131</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 May 40, p. 8**

<sup>132</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 May 40, p. 13

<sup>133</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 May 40, p. 8

<sup>134</sup> Robertson, Sir Carrick, Kt('29), FRCS (1879–1963): b Scotland, to NZ 1905, 1NZE 1915–16: Pres Auck and NZ branches BMA

<sup>135</sup> *NZ Herald*, 28 May 40, p. 6

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, 25 May 40, pp. 11, 14

<sup>137</sup> Fairburn, Arthur Rex Duggard (1904–57): lecturer Elam School Fine Arts; freelance journalist & script writer; 3 years with Broadcasting Service; poet and savant

<sup>138</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 May 40, p. 6 (slightly abridged); *NZ Observer*, 5 Jun 40, p. 2

<sup>139</sup> Hurley, Albert Eaton: b 1904; barrister & solicitor Wgtn 1929–76; Sec Municipal Assn NZ 1936–52, legal adviser 1949–76; Ombudsman Auck 1976–80

<sup>140</sup> *Evening Post*, 1 Jun 40, p. 7

<sup>141</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 23 May 40, p. 4

<sup>142</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Oct 39, p. 10

<sup>143</sup> With about 1400 doctors on the Medical Register, there were only 11 Jewish doctors in practice, and fewer than 20 training in Dunedin. *Truth*, 24 Jan 40, p. 7

<sup>144</sup> For instance, on 8 April the **Christchurch** executive declared

that Fraser had already shown his courage and capacity, his appreciation of the needs of the country at war, and that he would not allow subversive elements to go unchecked. 'Mr Fraser is our leader in this time of crisis. We stand or fall by him'.  
*Press*, 9 Apr 40, p. 6

<sup>145</sup> eg, *Southland Times*, 23 May 40, p. 6

<sup>146</sup> *NZ Herald*, 21 May 40, p. 9

<sup>147</sup> Such phrases as 'This crisis demands your presence', 'Better to sweat ourselves *now* than be sweated by the Nazis *for ever*', 'A call for ACTION', plus large photographs of Churchill with slogans from his speeches, struck a note of urgency and authority.

<sup>148</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 May 40, p. 13

<sup>149</sup> Hughes, Rev Percy Gladstone (d 1949): b Wales; Presbyterian minister; Dom Pres LoN Union

<sup>150</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 May 40, p. 9; *Auckland Star*, 23 May 40, p. 8

<sup>151</sup> *Waikato Times*, 24, '25 May 40; *NZ Herald*, 25 May 40, p. 13

<sup>152</sup> *Patea and Waverley Press*, 24 May 40

<sup>153</sup> *Hawera Star*, 22 May 40

<sup>154</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 May 40, p. 15; *Taranaki Daily News*, 22 May 40, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 24 May 40, p. 9; *Patea and Waverley Press*, 24 May 40

<sup>155</sup> See p. 95

**156** *Taranaki Daily News*, 25 May 40, p. 9; *Patea and Waverley Press*, 24 May 40

**157** *Taranaki Daily News*, 28 May 40, p. 8

**158** *Palmerston North Times*, 24 May 40, p. 7

**159** See p. 104

**160** *Evening Post*, 27 May 40, p. 11; see pp. 106–7

**161** *Palmerston North Times*, 27 May 40, p. 3

**162** *Ibid.*, 25 May 40, p. 4

**163** *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 24, 27 May 40, pp. 8, 7

**164** *Dominion*, 25 May 40, p. 16

**165** *Otago Daily Times*, 25 May 40, p. 12

**166** Machin, William (1879–1958): b UK, to NZ 1919; Gen Mngr NZ Farmers' Co-op Assn 1926–39; **Home Guard** QM 1938–41; 1st chmn EPS Chch 1941–4

**167** *Press*, 25 May 40, p. 10

**168** *Nelson Evening Mail*, 23 May 40, p. 3

**169** *Auckland Star*, 25 May 40, p. 17

**170** *Oamaru Mail*, 30 May 40



<sup>171</sup> *Evening Post*, 2 May 40, p. 13

<sup>172</sup> Toop, Ernest Richard, CBE('65) (1895–1976): Wgtn City Council 13 years, Dep Mayor 3 years; Wgtn Harbour Bd 13 years, chmn 5 years

<sup>173</sup> *Evening Post*, 4 May 40, p. 7

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 May 40, p. 11

<sup>175</sup> *Dominion*, 27 May 40, p. 11

<sup>176</sup> Exec Council ASRS, *Evening Post*, 23 May 40, p. 13; Wanganui Rlwy Workshops, *Wanganui Herald*, 23 May 40, p. 8; Otahuhu and Hillside ASRS, exec P & T Employees' Assn, *NZ Herald*, 25 May 40, p. 13; Addington Rlwy Workshops, *Press*, 30 May, p. 8; Hutt Rlwy Workshops, *Evening Post*, 31 May 40, p. 8; Taranaki Trades Council, *Taranaki Daily News*, 24 May 40, p. 8; **New Plymouth** LRC and **Wellington** district sections of NZ Workers Union, *Evening Post*, 27 May 40, p. 11; exec Westland branch of NZ Timber Workers Union, Chch Sth and Shirley branches of Lab Party, *Press*, 28 May 40, p. 8; Waitara Freezing Workers, *Taranaki Daily News*, 31 May 40, p. 8; Blenheim Engineering and Allied Trades, *Marlborough Express*, 8 Jun 40; Canty Freezing Works and Related Trades, *Press*, 11 Jun 40, p. 12; Wairarapa Trades Council, *Wairarapa Times–Age*, 28 May 40

<sup>177</sup> eg, *NZ Herald*, 21 May 40, p. 11; *Gisborne Herald*, 22 May 40, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 22 May 40, p. 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 22 May 40, p. 6

<sup>178</sup> MacGibbon, William Smith, OBE('52) (1890–1962): b **Scotland**, educ NZ; Pres Assoc Chambers of Commerce 1940

<sup>179</sup> *Press*, 23 May 40, p. 8

<sup>180</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 29 May 40, p. 6

<sup>181</sup> In the main exodus from **Dunkirk**, 26 May–4 June, 338 226 men were taken to England; 27 936 had already gone. Roskill, S. W., *The War at Sea 1939–1945*, vol I, pp. 216, 227, 239, 603

<sup>182</sup> *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 40, p. 9

<sup>183</sup> *Standard*, 6 Jun 40, pp. 1, 2; Minutes of Emergency Conference, **NZ Labour Party**, 3 Jun 40

<sup>184</sup> *NZ Herald*, 21 May 40, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 23 May 40, p. 13; *Southland Times*, 25 May 40, p. 6

<sup>185</sup> *NZ Herald*, 28, 29, 31 May 40, pp. 9, 11, 10

<sup>186</sup> Mulholland, Sir William, Kt('56), OBE('46) (1887–1971): Dom Pres Farmers' Union 1936–44, Pres Fed Farmers 1945–6; fdtm member NZ Royal Agricultural Soc

<sup>187</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 29 May 40, p. 6

<sup>188</sup> *Gisborne Herald*, 30 May 40, p. 6

<sup>189</sup> *Wairoa Star*, 5 Jun 40

<sup>190</sup> Kitson, Henry (1882–1959): chmn Employers Fed 1940; local govt and bds member; HQ Southern Military District 1942–5

<sup>191</sup> *Press*, 28 May 40, p. 14

<sup>192</sup> See p. 100

**193** *Southland Times*, 31 May 40, p. 4

**194** *Auckland Star*, 28 May 40, p. 11

**195** *NZ Herald*, 5 Jun 40, p. 12

**196** *Auckland Star*, 15 Jun 40, p. 12

**197** *NZ Herald*, 11 Jun 40, p. 9

**198** *Morrinsville Star*, 7, 11 Jun 40

**199** *NZ Herald*, 14 Jun 40, p. 9

**200** Mason, Hon Henry Greathead Rex, CMG('67), QC (1885–1975): MP (Lab) Eden, Auck Suburbs, Waitakere 1926–66; Attorney-General, Min Justice 1935–49, 1957–60, Min Education 1940–7, Native Affairs 1943–6, Health 1957–60

**201** *Auckland Star*, 15 Jun 40, p. 10

**202** *NZPD*, vol 257, pp. 235–6

**203** *Auckland Star*, 15, 17 Jun 40, pp. 8, 6; *Evening Post*, 17, 20 Jun 40, pp. 6, 5; *NZ Herald*, 17 Jun 40, p. 6

**204** At Te Awamutu, a meeting to express dissatisfaction, set for 17 June, whose promoters claimed to have no association with any organisation, was postponed indefinitely in view of the government banning 'a similar meeting which was to have been held in **Auckland** today.' *Te Awamutu Courier*, 17 Jun 40

**205** *NZ Herald*, 17, 27 Jun 40, pp. 6, 11

- <sup>206</sup> *Evening Post*, 15 Jun 40, p. 13
- <sup>207</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Jul 40, p. 13
- <sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 23, 30 Jul 40
- <sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, 20, 22, 24, 27 Jul 40
- <sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 9 Aug 40, pp. 11, 8
- <sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jul, 10, 29 Aug, 24 Sep, 5 Oct 40, pp. 11, 17, 4, 11, 16
- <sup>212</sup> Wood, pp. 139–42
- <sup>213</sup> Ministers on the War Council were P. Fraser (Prime Minister), W. Nash (Finance), F. Jones (Defence), D. G. Sullivan (Supply) and R. Semple (National Service), with P. C. Webb (Labour) and W. L. Martin (Agriculture) alternating at meetings according to their topics. Other members were W. W. Mulholland, president of the Farmers' Union; C. C. Davis, of the Employers Federation; R. Eddy, president of the NZ Workers Union; A. McLagan, president of the Federation of Labour; W. Perry, president of NZRSA; E. T. Tirikatene MP, returned soldiers, representing the Maori people; Sir Andrew Russell and L. G. Lowry MP, returned soldiers, appointed by the government; H. Atmore, Independent member for Nelson. *Evening Post*, 18 June 40, p. 8
- <sup>214</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Jul 40, p. 8
- <sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, 29 Jul 40, pp. 8, 6
- <sup>216</sup> *Auckland Star*, 19 Sep 40, p. 15; other figures in this paragraph are from weekly totals published in most newspapers

**217 Roskill, vol I, p. 239. Of these, 189 541 were Allied troops, the rest British**

**218 Reynaud, Paul, GCVO(Hon) (1878–1966): French statesman; PM 1940, 1946–8**

**219 Pétain, Marshal Philippe (1856–1951): French soldier/statesman; Gen-in-Chief 1917; Sec War 1934; Chief French State 1940–44**

**220 *Evening Post*, 26 Jun 40, p. 6**

**221 Cox, Sir Geoffrey, Kt('66), CBE('59) (1910–): Rhodes Scholar 1932; foreign & war correspondent 1936–40; 1st Sec & Charge d’Affaires, NZ Legation Washington 1942–3; dep chmn [Yorkshire TV UK](#); Dir Tyne–Tees and Trident TVs UK**

**222 *NZ Herald*, 27 Jun 40, *Southland Times*, 2 Jul 40**

**223 *NZ Herald*, 18 Jun 40, p. 6**

**224 *NZPD*, vol 257, p. 489**

**225 *Truth*, 10 Jul, 7 Aug 40, both p. 14**

**226 Bonnet, George Étienne (1889–1973): French politician; Min Finance 1933–4, 1937–8; Ambassador USA 1937; Min State 1938, Foreign Aff 1938–40; member Nat Council 1941**

**227 Flandin, Pierre Étienne (1889–1958): French politician; Min Finance 1931–2, 1932, Public Works 1934, Foreign Aff 1940–1; PM 1934–5; 5-year sentence for collaboration 1946; Leader Left Republican Party pre-war**

<sup>228</sup> *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 9, 11 Jul 40, both p. 7, quoting the British magazine *Cavalcade*

<sup>229</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 11 Jul 40, p. 12, quoting the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* of 3 Jul 40

<sup>230</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Jul 40, p. 17

<sup>231</sup> *Auckland Star*, 15 Aug 40, p. 14

<sup>232</sup> *NZ Financial Times*, Sep 40, p. 388, quoting the *Economist*

<sup>233</sup> *Truth*, 10 Jul 40, p. 14

<sup>234</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 3 Sep 40, p. 6

<sup>235</sup> de Gaulle, General Charles André Joseph Marie (1890–1970): French politician, soldier; Chief Free French, then Pres National Committee 1940–2; Pres Committee National Liberation Algiers 1943, Provisional Government French Republic & Head Chief of Armies 1944–6; Pres French Govt 1958–9, Republic 1959–69

<sup>236</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Nov, 3, 4, 7 Dec 40, pp. 7, 7, 8, 12–13, 21 Jan 41, p. 7; *Auckland Star*, 27 Aug 42, p. 10; *Dominion*, 19 Apr 41, p. 9; *Press*, 15 Sep 41, p. 5; *NZ Herald*, 13 Feb 41, p. 10

<sup>237</sup> Deakin, F. W., *The Brutal Friendship*, pp. 9–10

<sup>238</sup> A surprise attack in November 1917 by the freshly formed German–Austrian 14th Army on the Italian lines stretching into **Yugoslavia**, after a stalemate of two-and-a-half years, which drove the Italians back, in a near-rout, to the Piave River, where they held the offensive. This attack threatened to engulf the whole of north-east **Italy**, and more than 600 000 Italians surrendered or deserted in the retreat. British and French guns

and infantry were deployed to the area and a Supreme Command established to counter the débâcle.

<sup>239</sup> Ribbentrop, Joachim von (1893–1946): Nazi Min Foreign Aff 1938–45; executed as war criminal

<sup>240</sup> *NZ Listener*, 18 Jun 40, p. 12

<sup>241</sup> Roosevelt, Franklin Delano (1882–1945): 31st Pres USA 1933–45

<sup>242</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 Jun 40, p. 8

<sup>243</sup> War History Narrative, ‘Police Department’, pp. 56–7; Lochore, R. A., *From Europe to New Zealand*, pp. 22–30

<sup>244</sup> See p. 119, fn 248

<sup>245</sup> WHN, ‘Police Department’, pp. 57–9

<sup>246</sup> Lochore, p. 30

<sup>247</sup> *Yearbook*1941, p. 45, 1942, p. 42

<sup>248</sup> WHN, ‘Police Department’, p. 75. In all, 817 Italians were registered as enemy aliens in August 1940. Whangarei had 2, Auckland 67, Hamilton 27, Gisborne 27, Napier 42, New Plymouth 10, Wanganui 6, Palmerston North 13, Wellington 381, Nelson 81, Greymouth 94, Christchurch 27, Timaru 7, Dunedin 30, Invercargill 3; *ibid.*, p. 82 and Schedule following p. 124

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40, 77; see also chaps 19, 18



**250 WHN, 'Police Department', p. 59**

**251 *Ibid.*, p. 60**

**252 *Press*, 12, 13, 17 Jun 40, pp. 12, 8, 8; *Auckland Star*, 17 Jun 40, p. 3**

**253 *Press*, 2 Jul 40, p. 6**

**254 *Ibid.*, 3, 4, 5 Jul 40, pp. 12, 10, 13; *Dominion*, 4 Jul 40, p. 11**

**255 *NZ Herald*, 17 Sep 40, p. 6**

**256 *Evening Post*, 14 Jun 40, p. 5**

**257 *Ibid.*, 14, 19 Jun 40, pp. 8, 7**

**258 *Otago Daily Times*, 12 Jun 40, p. 6**

**259 'Aliens Administration', a war history narrative prepared by the Police Department (hereinafter WHN, 'Aliens'), p. 9**

**260 *Press*, 1 Aug 40, p. 10**

**261 *Ibid.*, 12 Aug 40, p. 10**

**262 Report of Secretary ONS to PM, 11 Jun 40 in WHN, 'Police Department', pp. 91-3**

**263 This involved the removal of four boats from Rona Bay, three from Makara, one from Paremata and one from Picton.**

**264 WHN, 'Police Department', pp. 93–6**

**265 Seddon, Thomas Edward Youd (1884–1972): son of Rt Hon R. J. Seddon; MP (Lib) Westland 1906–22, 1925–8; Hon Consul Greece 1938–60; chmn War Pensions Bd 1930–63**

**266 *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Jun 40, p. 6. Perhaps to counter such hostility, Greek nationals, who numbered 600, decided to give one day's takings from business, or one day's wages, to patriotic funds. The day selected was 28 June 1940, and it yielded £1,639. *Press*, 16 Jul 40, p. 6**

**267 *Evening Post*, 6 Nov 41, p. 10**

**268 *Truth*, 10, 17 Jul 40, pp. 8, 9**

**269 *Yearbook*, 1947–49, pp. 954–5. In the 1936 census, excluding Maoris, 195 261 or 13.09 per cent out of 1 491 484; Maoris, 11 326 or 13.76 per cent of 82 326.**

**270 Hinsley, His Eminence Cardinal Arthur (1865–1943): Roman Catholic Archbishop Westminster from 1935**

**271 Pius XI (Achille Ambrogio Damiano Ratti) 1857–1939: Pope from 1922; Pius XII (Eugene Pacelli) 1876–1958: Pope from 1939**

**272 *NZ Herald*, 12 Jun 40, p. 11**

**273 Liston, Most Rev James Michael, CMG('68) (1881–1976): Roman Catholic Bishop Auck 1920–70; Archbishop 1954**

**274 *Zealandia*, 20 Jun 40, p. 4**

**275 *NZ Tablet*, 19 Jun 40, p. 5**

**276** *Yearbook* 1941, p. 195, 1942, p. 223, which latter revises the import figures for 1939; *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Jun 40, p. 6

**277** NZ Dept Statistics, Annual Statistical Reports, 1939, *Annual Statistical Report on Trade and Shipping*, Pt II, p. 58

**278** Auckland, *NZ Herald*, 5 Jun 40, p. 10; Invercargill and Christchurch, *Press*, 19, 21, 25 Jun 40, pp. 8, 14, 14

**279** Beeby, Dr Clarence Edward, CMG('56): b UK 1902, educ NZ; lect. Philosophy, Education CUC 1923–34; Dir NZ Council Educational Research 1934–38, associated WEA, adult educ 1928–38; Asst Dir Educ 1938, Dir 1940–60; UNESCO conference posts from 1946, chmn Exec Bd 1963; NZ Ambassador France 1960–3

**280** *Evening Post*, 7 May 40, p. 9 (Beeby); 9 Jul 40, p. 10 (Mason)

**281** *Auckland Star*, 19 Jun 40, p. 6

**282** *NZ Herald*, 21 Jun 40, p. 4

**283** *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 24 Jun 40, p. 6

**284** *NZ Herald*, 20 Jun 40, p. 10

**285** *Dominion*, 4 Jul 40, p. 5

**286** Wellington, *Evening Post*, 20 Jun 40, p. 10; Christchurch, *Press*, 13 Jul 40, p. 10; Hawke's Bay, *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 24 Jun 40, p. 6

**287** *Wanganui Herald*, 19 Jul 40, p. 6

**288** *Dominion*, 18 Jul 40, p. 8

**289** *Ibid.*, 19 Jul 40

**290** *Evening Post*, 9 Jul 40, p. 8

**291** *Ibid.*, 16 Jul 40, p. 8

**292** Gould, Professor William Horace (1877–1946): b **UK**; Dir Educ Tonga 1913–14; Prof Educ VUC from 1927

**293** *Evening Post*, 19 Jul 40, p. 6

**294** *NZ Herald*, 20 Jul 40, p. 12

**295** *Press*, 13 Jul 40, p. 10

**296** *Ibid.*, 18 Jul 40, p. 10

**297** *Evening Post*, 11 Jun, 14 Jul 41, pp. 8, 10

**298** Broadfoot, Hon Walter James, KBE('55) (1881–1965): MP (Nat) Waitomo 1928– 54; Mayor Te Kuiti 1927–35; Junior Whip 1936–41, Senior Whip 1941–9; PMG 1949–54; Min Nat Service, War Cab

**299** *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 687, 690

**300** These were: Waitangi Day, 6 February; Anzac Day, 25 April; Empire Day, 24 May; King's Birthday, 1st Monday in June; Dominion Day, 4th Monday in September; Trafalgar Day, 21 October; Armistice Day, 11 November. See also p. 1138

**301** *Evening Post*, 7 August 40, p. 7

**302** *Ibid.*, 22 May 40, p. 10

**303** *Ibid.*, 22 Aug 40

**304** *Ibid.*, 3, 18 Sep 40, pp. 6, 11

**305** *Ibid.*, 16 Oct 40, p. 10

**306** *Evening Post*, 4 Feb 42, p. 4

**307** McDonald, Colonel Thomas William (1869–1968): b Aust; Mayor Lower Hutt 1905–7: MP (United) Wairarapa 1928–31; member RSA, Wgtn Educ Bd, Wgtn, Petone Technical College Bds; organiser & CO public school cadets Wgtn district

**308** *Ibid.*, 10 Feb, 17 Apr 42, pp. 5, 6

**309** *Ibid.*, 23 Apr 42, p. 9

**310** A private school not far from the Governor-General's residence.

**311** Newall, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Cyril, GCB, OM, GCMG, CBE, KStJ, 1st Baron of Clifton-on-Dunsmoor ('46) (1886–1963): Indian Army 1909, RFC 1914, **RAF** 1919; Chief Air Staff, **UK**, 1937–40; Gov Gen NZ 1941–6

**312** *Evening Post*, 22 Jul 42, p. 4

**313** *Ibid.*, 8 Dec 43, p. 6

**314** *Dominion*, 25 Jul 40, p. 11; *NZPD*, vol 257, p. 721

**315** Otago and **Canterbury** had begun this in 1930, **Wanganui** in 1933, **Wellington**, Taranaki and Hawke's Bay in 1937. Breward, Ian, *Godless Schools*, p. 97

**316** Campbell, A. E., *Educating New Zealand*, p. 52

**317** *Press*, 6 Aug 40, p. 12

**318** A few days earlier the Riccarton Borough Council had accepted the proposal of its Mayor, H. S. S. Kyle MP, to invoke Divine blessing on its proceedings as in Parliament. *Otago Daily Times*, 15 Aug 40, p. 6

**319** *Evening Post*, 21 Aug 40, p. 11

**320** *Ibid.*, 18 Sep 40, p. 11

**321** *Ibid.*, 16 Oct 40, p. 11

**322** *Otago Daily Times*, 18 Oct 40, p. 9

**323** *NZ Herald*, 18 Oct 40, p. 8

**324** *Evening Post*, 19 Oct 40, p. 10

**325** *Ibid.*, 26 Oct 40, p. 11

**326** *Ibid.*, 1 Nov 40, p. 8

**327** *Outlook*, 23 Oct, 25 Sep 40, pp. 3, 3

**328** *Evening Post*, 6 Nov 40, p. 11; also 8, 19, 24 Oct, 13 Nov 40, pp. 6, 10, 10, 13 for supporting letters

**329** *Ibid.*, 26 Nov 40, p. 9

**330** *Ibid.*, 21 Nov 40, p. 12

**331** *Ibid.*, 2 Dec 40, p. 11, quoting *Church Chronicle*, Dec 40, p. 167

**332** See pp. 1134–5

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I



## CHAPTER 4 – RESPONSE FROM THE HOME FRONT

## CHAPTER 4

### *Response from the Home Front*

AS the 'phoney war' in **Europe** was swept away by the blitzkrieg, and the Battle of **Britain** followed, there was in New Zealand an upsurge of wanting to contribute to the struggle, to pull one's weight, and again frustration because there was so little to do. But it did not wholly subside in grumbles about lack of leadership. It produced a rising tide of enlistment, a violent spurt of giving to patriotic funds, of loans and gifts of money to the government for general war purposes, and renewed uneasiness about the 40-hour week. Farm production was increased and changed to answer new British needs; some industries, such as woollen mills, clothing and bootmaking swelled at once; some engineering firms began making munitions. The Home Guard was formed, Emergency Precaution schemes took place, the chambers of commerce organised waste metal collections. There were rapid and widespread efforts to help **Britain** directly, with money for aeroplanes; typists, housewives and schoolgirls sewed and knitted for the victims of bombing. There were proposals to ration bacon and cheese, to send gift shipments of food; there were arrangements to billet British children.

The impulse to do something was patchy and did not overwhelm long-standing interests. An example of its quality was provided by the King's Birthday holiday of Monday, 3 June 1940. As early as 8 May *Truth* had suggested that all proceeds from the many sports events should go to patriotic funds. By an Order-in-Council on 30 May the holiday was indefinitely postponed, the Minister of Labour announcing that every shop, office and factory would be working on Monday; workers all over the country had expressed eagerness to do so and to give the day's earnings to patriotic funds. How spontaneous this eagerness was may be doubted. Certainly the Waitara and Longburn freezing workers made such an offer, which led the organisers of the current Sick and Wounded Fund to launch a national appeal for similar donations.<sup>1</sup> But the unions at New **Plymouth**, for example, some of which had already decided to make weekly contributions to patriotic funds, were surprised

by the announcement, though prepared to follow larger unions.<sup>2</sup> Some other unions, while not opposed to such collections, objected to members being compelled or stampeded into giving money they might not be able to afford.<sup>3</sup> Generally the holiday was forgone and many of its sports fixtures cancelled, but four large race-meetings were held, though attendances were diminished. Attention was focused on this by the slaughtermen of Westfield who, on hearing at 10 am that the Ellerslie meeting had not been cancelled as they had been led to expect, downed knives and went off.<sup>4</sup>

The urge to do something faded for many people because there was no extra or different task at hand. Speeches and posters urged them to back up the Fighting Forces, Work for Victory, Work for your Lives—‘in the factory no less than in the field, will victory be won’—but many workers in ordinary jobs could not see that extra effort would in any way help **Britain** or win the war, though it would obviously benefit their immediate employers.

A few owners offered to do war-work at non-profit rates. **Sidney Holland**, hoping that other firms would do likewise, offered his Family’s engineering factory and garage for war work without profit, including the staff who were willing to do overtime without pay.<sup>5</sup> There was no rush of emulation, but one **Invercargill** motor engineering firm, H. E. Melhop, made a similar offer<sup>6</sup>—admittedly the motor industry, under petrol restrictions, was slack—while a Port Chalmers ship-repairing firm, Stevenson and Cook Engineering Company, first placed its plant and staff at government disposal, then offered a unit of 50 trained men for such work anywhere in the world.<sup>7</sup> The staff and executives of two trading firms, A. S. Paterson and Williams and Kettle, offered to work for any government purpose in their spare time<sup>8</sup> while 200 members of the Auckland State Advances Corporation offered an extra hour a day without overtime.<sup>9</sup> Such offers were politely received and publicised for their splendid patriotic spirit, but there was no immediate use for them, and they did not multiply.

In a few cases workers offered or agreed to work longer hours, giving their overtime pay to patriotic funds. For instance, those employed by a group of **Christchurch** leather manufacturers agreed to four extra hours weekly at double pay given to patriotic causes, by which, commented the *Southland Times* of 7 June, they greatly increased production and contributed £200 a week to the war drive without reducing their pay-packets. The men of timber mills near **Rotorua** and in the King Country offered an extra half day a month, at ordinary rates, their pay plus a donation from the employers going to patriotic funds.<sup>10</sup> On the casting vote of the president, the **Temuka** branch of the New Zealand Workers' Union offered to perform overtime at ordinary rates and, if the Minister of Labour thought it necessary, to work a 44-hour or 49-hour week immediately.<sup>11</sup>

But these offers touched the thorny problem of the 40-hour week. Traditionally, Labour did not object to extra hours, within reason, but demanded higher pay rates for them. Even sporadic setting aside of this principle, though genuinely voluntary and patriotic, could undermine trade unionism's achievements as thoroughly as any scabbing, nor was it unthinkable that wily employers might contrive such offers. The workers at Booth Macdonald, a **Penrose** foundry partly engaged on munitions, offered to further the war effort by working on Saturday mornings at ordinary rates of pay. The Minister of Labour, backed by the **Industrial Emergency Council**, refused the offer, saying that the evidence submitted did not justify extended hours.<sup>12</sup> A similar appeal made in grand style by some farm implement workers in the **Waikato** was less summarily but as effectively squashed. On 16 July they resolved:

In view of Mr Churchill's broadcast this morning and the Prime Minister's appeal for greater output and harder work, the factory staff of A. M. Bisley ... in work essential to primary production, are prepared and willing and respectfully urge the Prime Minister that they be permitted to follow the example set by the workmen in **Britain** and work such hours at standard rates of pay as are considered essential. In the

interests of freedom and our Empire we urge the Government to bring in regulations permitting this to be done for the duration of the war. <sup>13</sup>

The Prime Minister acknowledged their patriotic spirit and referred the resolution to the Minister of Labour. The staff of 24 worked 45 hours a week till checked by shortage of steel. In September, with more steel on hand, the firm proposed to resume its 45-hour week, but was told by the union that the men could work the extra hours only at overtime rates. <sup>14</sup> The firm was ready to face prosecution, <sup>15</sup> considering the question one of national importance, and opposition leaders complained in the House of 'mass-unionism and bossocracy' which thus prevented workers from expressing their patriotism in the one way they best could. <sup>16</sup>

A writer to the *Evening Post* on 23 July voiced exasperation with the slogans that could not be followed.

"Produce for Victory" ... "Work for your life" ... Rich man, poor man, we have spare hours we are anxiously waiting to give. All men, women, and youths have spent eleven months waiting for a lead telling them where they shall seek that extra work they are ready and willing to perform for Victory. How can the non-productive produce, except by preventing waste.... How can the 40-hour a week union worker seek extra hours of work in a trade to the union of which he does not belong? How can an executive outside the unions work with pick and shovel inside the union as he would be glad to do....

Nor were trade unions the only barrier to extra work. A **Christchurch** man, rejected for the Services, but desperate to help, offered his labour free on any Sunday to enable some farmer to do more important work, hoping that this would start a **Canterbury** weekend service unit among the many like himself who would be ashamed to take a penny. The chairman of the North Canterbury Farmers' Union thanked him, saying that this was a very fine gesture, but such a thing was not needed yet. 'After all, when he's working all the week, the farmer really must have some leisure on Sundays, and if an offer like this was accepted he would have to supervise what was being done.' With the petrol shortage, the

would-be helper could not get very far from the city. <sup>17</sup>

The 40-hour week, of course, came under heavy frontal attack during the agitations at the end of May, <sup>18</sup> and continued to do so. Farmers and businessmen held that only by producing more without increasing labour costs could the spiral of scarce goods and rising prices be checked. Some militant unions, however, saw the crisis being used against them and to increase profits, while there were still workers unemployed. For at this stage there were still thousands without regular work. In early July 1940 it was estimated that 1200 men in **Christchurch** were out of work because of the closing of seasonal jobs like the freezing works. <sup>19</sup> Official quarters in Wellington explained that before relief measures came in an estimated 10 000 men managed to make a bare living by working when and where it suited them, and were satisfied to do so. These men had remained a permanent section of the community, and so long as they did not exceed 10 000 the position was normal. There were plenty of jobs on farms for experienced men and even for inexperienced men if single and fit; elsewhere openings were not so easy. <sup>20</sup> Unionists could therefore claim that proper utilisation of manpower, drafting it to the industries most in need, was all that the war effort required as yet; 'if and when there is any real need for an extension of the working week ... the workers will be the first to realise and give effect to it'. <sup>21</sup> Meanwhile they did not 'wish to sacrifice the 40-hour week on the altar of hysteria', and knew that any unjustified extension of hours might well become a heritage of labour. <sup>22</sup>

The argument about working hours had been going on since the beginning of the war, and was to recur again and again. Under the shock of **Dunkirk**, a slightly placatory note sounded from some of the advocates of longer hours: for unity they would make some compromise. The Wellington Chamber of Commerce suggested friendly, round-table discussions with its critics from the railway workshops. <sup>23</sup> The Dominion president, W. S. MacGibbon, told Canterbury farmers that people should not say without thinking that the 40-hour week should be thrown overboard; in some industries this might be an advantage, in others it

might only increase costs. At the same meeting, a farmer opposing a motion for its abolition said that a request of that sort would only irritate government and workers, and drive a wedge between them and the farmers. Voting however was for abolition, 'at least for the duration'.

24

The government declared that its position was clear and consistent: the 40-hour week was not sacred, it would go if and where it was clearly hindering the war effort, but many industries were short of raw materials and longer hours would only increase unemployment. Any company or industry requiring extended hours for work connected with the war, and not able to afford full overtime rates, could apply to the **Industrial Emergency Council**, which heard evidence from all parties concerned, and the adjustments which it deemed necessary would be made effective by orders-in-council.

Even in 1939 men of many trades engaged on defence and emergency works, such as military camps and roads and aerodromes, had worked two or three shifts if necessary with only two or three shillings extra per shift, although opposition to shift-work was part of the unionists' creed and firmly built into awards. In June 1940 new Labour Legislation Emergency Regulations (1940/123) gave the Minister of Labour, advised by the **Industrial Emergency Council**, power to alter conditions in any industry or firm in any way connected with the war, and many changes in labour conditions were made, especially in the next few months. <sup>25</sup> Within a year there were changes, sometimes successive changes, in the established conditions of about a dozen industries: ammunition making, woollen milling, clothing trades, slipper making, cement and asbestos manufacture, brushware, timber-milling, tinsmithing for the dairy industry, tanning, shearing and cheese-making. <sup>26</sup> By these orders shifts were allowed, hours at ordinary rates extended, overtime lessened, and apprentice conditions waived. The effect in general was that longer hours were worked for less pay than the peacetime awards prescribed. Newspapers, however, did not stress that these workers were without protest forgoing peacetime wages, though



there was quite frequent mention of the large sums that other workers gained through overtime.

Here it may be noted that in mid-1940 the coal miners, normally not over-willing, made a voluntary, if temporary, increase in their hours at ordinary rates. Several factors, including floods and lessened Australian supplies, caused a coal shortage. The miners, at the request of their Minister and the owners, agreed to 11 days a fortnight instead of 10, working four hours on each of five alternate Saturdays; this, as Minister P. C. Webb put it, 'got us out of a crisis'.<sup>27</sup>

Farmers who since the start of the war had been urged to produce more, without any particular demand or organisation, were in mid-May warned by Nash that their market was becoming more restricted. There were in New Zealand 85 000 tons of meat and 18 000 tons of butter more than **Britain** wanted, and the competition of margarine had strengthened, its quality being improved, while the price of butter had risen by 5 *d* a pound since the war's start. Many British people claimed that it was not worth risking the life of a single sailor to import butter while margarine at 5 *d* to 9 *d* per lb had an obvious advantage over New Zealand butter at 1 s 7 *d*,<sup>28</sup> especially when heavy war taxation compelled household economy. Relief, therefore, mingled with the sympathy felt by farmers when dairy supplies from the Low Countries and **France** were cut off. Now **Britain** asked for 15 000 tons more cheese and 10 000 tons more pigmeat. New Zealand farmers could see that protein was more necessary than butter in the British diet, and the difficulty of selling butter against margarine further commended cheese production. Some 6000 farmers more or less voluntarily set about sending milk instead of cream to their factories, without waiting to be pressed by the emergency powers.<sup>29</sup> However, it was necessary also to maintain supplies of butter, lest its English price, rising through scarcity, should drive it off the market, causing Britons to lose their taste for it permanently. Earlier in the year **Britain** had so accepted the improved, unrationed and much cheaper margarine that there was an actual surplus of butter with the ration at 8 oz. When in June the butter



ration was dropped to 4 oz people preferred unrationed margarine. In July, when the total fat ration became 6 oz of butter and margarine in any proportion, increasing butter sales made a limit of 4 oz necessary from the end of August.<sup>30</sup> Farmers were anxious to keep costs (ie, wages, etc) down, lest the price they must charge should press unkindly on war-drained **Britain** and, further, lest it put butter in the position of caviar, with margarine capturing the market. This aspect, remarked the *Point Blank* editorial of 15 June, was 'perhaps even more important than the patriotic one.'

Perhaps this aspect was a reason for the prominence of butter in several proposals to give—not sell—food to **Britain**. Thus in Southland, Adam Hamilton's brother proposed giving a million pounds of butter, which 'would promote lasting good-will ... a more opportune time to make such a gift might not arise', and he himself would contribute the cost of 1000lb.<sup>31</sup> At Gisborne the Kia Ora Co-operative Dairy Company gave £1,000 to provide a gift of butter as a win-the-war donation to **Britain**.<sup>32</sup> At Whakatane it was thought that boxes of butter and carcasses of meat would be more appreciated by distressed Britons than gifts of money, and in addition the goodwill engendered would do much to assist the marketing of New Zealand produce after the war.<sup>33</sup> A similar proposal came from Banks Peninsula.<sup>34</sup> At Palmerston North the Chamber of Commerce suggested that a million carcasses of lamb should be given;<sup>35</sup> the Red Cross at **Auckland** proposed 45 000 boxes of butter.<sup>36</sup> The Auckland Chamber of Commerce spoke of giving £ million sterling or some free cargoes, while admitting that the Farmers' Union was not enthusiastic about the latter.<sup>37</sup> A sprinkling of letters in papers hoped for schemes whereby modest people could contribute towards gift shipments of food. These thought mainly of butter: the British ration of four ounces a week stuck in their minds, and they often suggested rationing themselves to make more available.<sup>38</sup> Presumably gifts of butter would have been welcome in England, though the organisation needed in New Zealand would have been disproportionate. But less sentimental counsel prevailed. On 28 May Fraser pointed out that **Britain** had agreed to take only 115 000 tons of butter though New

Zealand could make 125 000 tons available. He later reminded the chambers of commerce that there was considerable incongruity in offering free produce to **Britain** while borrowing millions of British pounds for war purposes. <sup>39</sup> The Farmers' Union warned the chambers of commerce that gift shipments might interfere with government commitments, <sup>40</sup> and it is probable that Nash, as Minister of Marketing, signed other letters <sup>41</sup> like that sent to the **Waiuku** Women's Institute which had asked about giving butter: all refrigerated cargo space was being used for purchased produce, an equivalent amount of which would be delayed by gift shipments and, apart from distribution difficulties, such a transaction would affect the position between New Zealand and the **United Kingdom** in regard to sterling and war funds. <sup>42</sup>

A few direct food gifts were made. For instance, in October 20 000 eggs were sent, chiefly from Hawke's Bay, through the Women's Division of the Farmers' Union, for free distribution to hospitals and the **Red Cross**, but no more shipping was available for eggs that season. <sup>43</sup> Southland schools arranged a pig-feeding scheme that promised 155 baconers, which by courtesy of the shipowners and with the blessing of the Minister of Agriculture, would be sent free to the British government. <sup>44</sup> Free transport was also contrived by J. J. Maher, <sup>45</sup> an Upper Hutt farmer, who sent off 25 pigs in October, with a letter naming all who took part in the enterprise. <sup>46</sup>

Fairly widespread, particularly among farmers, were proposals that cheese and bacon should be rationed in New Zealand or commandeered for export, thus increasing immediately the amount going to **Britain**. <sup>47</sup> One report of such a suggestion, from the Canterbury District Pig Council, indicated that the farmers' keenness to succour **Britain** with bacon was heightened by suspicion that the government would first nourish its own supporters in the towns: 'the government would see that New Zealand did not want, but would disregard the needs of the Mother country. It was on this consideration that the motion was carried unanimously'. New Zealanders could always eat more mutton instead. <sup>48</sup> In August a State Advances official, after a tour of the **North Island**, told

the Manawatu Council of Primary Production that there was a 'tremendous body of opinion' in favour of rationing bacon and cheese; the Council, however, considered that rationing was not needed to produce the 10 000 extra tons of bacon requested by **Britain**.<sup>49</sup>

Earlier, farmers had declared that to produce more they must have adequate labour and profit margins. Now they were at least partially shocked into forgoing these conditions. 'Even production at a loss will be better than falling under **Hitler**'s iron heel,' warned Mulholland in April.<sup>50</sup> A Farmers' Union secretary found his May tour of **Canterbury** and Otago 'wonderful and inspiring'. Nowhere was there any desire to make money out of the war. 'The temper of the farmers is that if the rest of the community is willing to ... do a harder day's work for a smaller net income they are quite willing to do the same'.<sup>51</sup> A *Point Blank* correspondent wrote that in recent years government sins had produced an 'obstinacy policy' in many farmers, who were cutting costs by reducing production without reducing their net incomes, but now, with fertiliser and transport subsidies, he saw 'certain alibis' for not increasing production removed, and the stage set for a change of attitude in many farmers.<sup>52</sup> In July Mulholland advised that they must expect declining quality if not quantity in farm labour, also that they must accept married men and build houses for them, using the rural housing subsidy.<sup>53</sup> A Tamaki farmer, hearing complaints about wharf labourers, said, 'Never mind if other sections are not pulling their weight; let us as farmers go to the job and forget about overtime and increasing costs.'<sup>54</sup>

The 1940-1 production targets announced on 17 June 1940 called for 10 000 more tons of bacon than in the previous year, and 15 000 tons more cheese; beef and wool should be increased, while butter, mutton and lamb should be maintained at last season's levels. Pasture and food crops seeds should be increased.<sup>55</sup> It was announced on 12 June that **Britain** wanted 8000 tons of linen flax fibre and that **South Island** farmers should have 15 000 acres ready for sowing in September. Linen fibre, used in aircraft fabrics, parachute harness, fire hose, canvas

and other articles, was a vital war material. The crop had not been grown commercially before, though during the past four years there had been some research and experiment in its production, and machinery for one fibre treatment unit had been imported. <sup>56</sup> Farmers in 1940–1 under government contracts tackled a new crop and factories to extract the fibre were established, efforts described elsewhere. <sup>57</sup>

Primary Production Councils had been established already, but now they went to work with new energy, setting up small district committees to see how each farm could grow more: those with tractors and other equipment would co-operate with neighbours, some would grow more winter feed and stock crops or seed, some keep a few more cows and pigs. <sup>58</sup> District Pig Councils, with their target one pig per cow, advised and cajoled. For example, the **Wellington** Council, explaining that every two bushels <sup>59</sup> of barley grown would bring another store pig to bacon weight, issued a moving account of **Britain**'s efforts in pig-rearing, about Wimbledon's velvet turf being used for grazing pigs and its groundsmen who would never smile again. 'Think of Wimbledon! Think of that turf pugged by the cutting feet of pigs! Think of **Britain** facing the stark horror of total war in the cold grey months that lie ahead. Think of our own security, and then cast your eyes about your farm to decide just where barley shall be grown this year'. <sup>60</sup>

In Hawke's Bay the **Primary Production Council** exhorted: 'you may think yourself a sheep farmer, but fundamentally you may be a potential producer of pigs. So search your conscience, dig out that curry comb or oil up the tractor that has not yet earned its keep, and plough as you never did before. Plough your own land, plough your neighbour's land, plough for victory, plough for **Britain**'s 45,000,000 mouths, plough for your kinsmen in the battle line....' <sup>61</sup> Response to the barley appeals was modest and, as it later turned out, reasonable: more than 20 000 acres of barley were proposed for the southern half of the **North Island**, but by September 1940 it was reported that less than 5000 acres would be grown. <sup>62</sup>

There was readiness, to improvise, to find a way round shortages. For

instance, changing to cheese meant more milk cans, so there was much routing out and re-conditioning of old ones. <sup>63</sup> More pigs meant more fencing and roofing, and production councils advised farmers to hunt up old wire from hedges and plantations and roofing iron from old buildings in town. <sup>64</sup> A zealous family at **Hawera**, aiming at 600 baconers by April, built portable pig houses of *pinus radiata* on macrocarpa runners, all creosoted, covered with iron from bitumen drums. <sup>65</sup> Some towns, notably **Christchurch**, set up municipal piggeries, run by men on Scheme 13, or collected food scraps from houses for farmers. <sup>66</sup> Even conferences were forgone: one which would have taken hundreds of dairy farmers to **Auckland** in June was cancelled, <sup>67</sup> and some districts considered cancelling annual Agricultural and Pastoral shows.

However, while the Farmers' Union urged more and better production, it also called for proper direction of manpower and government economy on non-war objects, opposed wage increases and wanted longer hours without overtime. <sup>68</sup> To sum up: the farming community, in the winter of 1940, did not throw out all thoughts of profit and loss, distrust of a non-farming government, its ancient enmity with the towns or resistance to the demands of labour; yet concern with these things diminished while farmers soberly but urgently turned to the tasks now clearly before them.

Farmers might well feel that they had their orders; women were welcomed back to the clothing factories and woollen mills that they had left on marriage; in many trades, workers and management might see that only by using existing plant, both to make more and to improvise for other products, could they fill the gaps in such everyday requirements as nails, roofing materials, electric light bulbs or gloves, caused by the failure of overseas supply. But there were still a great many women and older people who felt excluded from the excitement and sacrifice. Get on with the job was dull advice when so many jobs had not the slightest visible bearing on war or victory. There were, reproved *Truth* on 10 July 1940, too many

running round moaning and scare-mongering instead of getting on with their jobs. They wish this, that and the other—would like to take on some real war-work, toil seven days a week, they can't get interested in anything, and so forth.... This is not England, no matter how anxious we all are to help. The time may come (perhaps sooner than we expect) when we can all do something worthwhile.... In the meantime, we are not helping the nation by moping round the wireless, cackling about the war at work, or helping to spread the latest rumour.... each can do his part by getting on with his own job. It all helps.... We all can't immediately rush into khaki or war work without causing hopeless disorganisation and confusion. So in the meantime, let us 'carry on'.

For weekends *Truth* advised fresh air instead of brooding over the radio, possibly listening to German propoganda; one should go to football, play golf, or walk, to help keep fit and in better spirit. <sup>69</sup>

'Carrying on' was all that so many could do. Offers from women and older persons to work on farms, as tram conductors, or in any way at all were received politely but there was no immediate need or niche. People wanted to do what was being done in England. Newspapers were full of pictures of land army girls tending animals and making hay; girls as skilled munition makers, girls clipping bus tickets; older men growing vegetables on allotments. In New Zealand, would-be land girls were told there was no need for them on farms though they could do domestic work in farm houses, thus freeing wives to help their husbands. <sup>70</sup> They were not wanted as tram conductors for there was no shortage of male tramway workers. <sup>71</sup> Town dwellers wanting allotment gardens <sup>72</sup> were told that there was no shortage of vegetables, no need to cultivate parks and reserves. <sup>73</sup>

One war effort, however, was open to all: everyone could give money to various patriotic purposes, and in that first surprised uneasy winter, a great many did. Business firms, public bodies, banks and the well-to-do contributed in loans and donations the main part of the government's War Purposes Fund, many lending thousands of pounds interest-free,



some for one year, more for the duration of the war and longer. For example: Milne & Choyce lent £5,000 for a year; Parisian Neckwear, **Auckland**, and the Devonport Steam Ferry both lent £1,000 for the duration of the war and six months, the Permanent Building Society, **Nelson**, £2,000 for the same term. <sup>74</sup> Old Digger, Kelso, lent £200 for the duration and twelve months, Newmarket Butchery, **Christchurch**, £100 for the duration, the North Rakaia River Board, £1,000 for the duration and six months and Woodville's Legion of Frontiersmen, £15 likewise. <sup>75</sup> The Ngati Tuwharetoa Tribal Trust gave £150 and lent £500 for the duration and six months; <sup>76</sup> the Aupouri tribe of Parengarenga in the far north gave £100 and lent £1,000 on like terms, from 'cash reserves earned within the native settlement within the past few years'. <sup>77</sup> The New Zealand Rugby Union gave £1,000. <sup>78</sup> The Auckland Racing Club lent £20,000 for the duration and six months, <sup>79</sup> the **Ashburton** County Racing Club, £200, <sup>80</sup> the Temuka Borough Council £1,280, and the Canterbury Law Society £1,000 on like terms. <sup>81</sup> Trade unions lent their funds: the Dunedin Operative Bootmakers lent £500; <sup>82</sup> the Amalgamated Carpenters and Joiners of **Christchurch**, £1,000; <sup>83</sup> the New Zealand Workers Union on 27 June lent £5,000 for the duration and six months and, later, members donated sums totalling £2,088. <sup>84</sup>

This War Purposes Fund stood at £1,357,297 on 21 March 1940, at £1,692,140 on 27 April and £1,949,438 on 4 June. <sup>85</sup> In the next fortnight it rose by £142,002 to £2,091,440, <sup>86</sup> reached £2,197,921 by 24 June and £2,279,669 by 3 July, <sup>87</sup> Thereafter it rose more slowly, being £2,457,562 by 3 August and £2,631,168 on 22 November. <sup>88</sup>

Donations also came freely to the established local patriotic boards, which in April had launched a national appeal for present comforts and later rehabilitation of servicemen. These donations were large and small, given by individuals, clubs and unions and by firms, both workers and employers contributing. Some were continuing gifts: several racing clubs decided to give their net profits for the duration to assorted patriotic purposes; <sup>89</sup> regular contributions were made by some workers, such as those of the Post and Telegraph Department, who in June 1940 made

their second donation of £400; <sup>90</sup> in **Wellington** the Karori Horticultural Society in June gave £10 and decided that all wartime profits would be devoted to patriotic purposes instead of prizes. <sup>91</sup> The freezing workers of Waitara decided on 1 June to give 6 *d* in each pound of their wages for the duration. <sup>92</sup> A few firms and at least one farmer offered their whole profits for the duration. <sup>93</sup>

Giving to patriotic funds had not been very enthusiastic during the first seven months of the war. It had rather resembled the recruiting campaign during the 'phoney war', with organisers working valiantly for only moderate response 'until the surge of the May-June crisis, which coincided with the launching of the Sick, Wounded and Distress Fund under the banners of the **Red Cross** and the Order of St John, reached purses and cheque books.' <sup>94</sup> The big firms gave freely, but there were also hosts of small givers. Workers' unions and regular staff contributions were prominent, the latter often subsidised by their firms; small groups like the Taita Women's Institute and Hutt Central School pupils gathered their shillings and pounds. <sup>95</sup> The First XV of Rongotai College, **Wellington**, even offered to forgo their football caps, giving instead £5 to the fund, but the Wellington College Board of Governors considered this too great a sacrifice for their school's team to make. <sup>96</sup> There were stalls and dances and concerts and card parties and collections by children, there were raffles, copper trails and queen carnivals, radio appeals and auctions and flag days, and stock sales where a heifer might be sold thirteen times. Suburbs and local patriotic committees vied with each other. The war was urgent and close in people's minds and giving to this appeal was a way of taking part in it—though as yet there were virtually no wounded New Zealanders. The giving was at times almost exuberant. The skills of commercial travellers in particular gained astonishing results. A *Press* report of 30 May thought that all records were probably broken when an Auckland on a decorated float at the end of a drive auctioned two lettuce leaves for 18 *s* 6 *d* and 22 *s* 3 *d* respectively. <sup>97</sup> Such things were highlights; generally much solid effort lay behind the fairs and stalls and entertainments.



Also people paid for the war, willy nilly, through taxation. On 28 June 1940, under tall headlines, papers explained that the war required £37,500,000 for the current year. Of this £20 million, earmarked for use overseas, would be lent by **Britain**, the rest would be raised in New Zealand. Already all persons over 16 years were paying one shilling in every pound of wages, salary and other income as social security tax; now they would pay a further shilling on every such pound as national security tax. <sup>98</sup> Income tax, on all income over £200, had been increased by 15 per cent for war purposes in 1939. This increment remained, and in addition the basic rate was now 2 s 6 d in the pound instead of 2 s, rising to 12 s for individuals and 8 s 9 d for companies. Sales tax doubled from five to ten per cent. <sup>99</sup>

Government policy was to pay for the war substantially out of taxation and internal borrowing, methods which checked inflation—despite full employment, overtime and more women being at work—by reducing consumption of goods and services and lessening private investment. Taxation over a wide field increased progressively, but borrowing produced even more: special war taxation yielded £225 million up to March 1946, while £27 million of general taxation was transferred to war purposes from the consolidated fund, but borrowing in New Zealand provided £242 million. A further £53 million borrowed in the **United Kingdom** was progressively repaid, with the final payment being made early in 1946. <sup>100</sup>

After 1939, a substantial internal loan was raised in each war year, with two in 1942. Appeals were pushed with all the persuasions of speeches, radio talks, advertisements, posters, parades and canvassing through trade unions, shops, factories and all places of work. Progress reports on each loan were published in newspapers, with some subscribers mentioned, both large and small; targets were often surpassed. In 1940, some £10 million was raised by a compulsory loan. The idea was to make all who had means do what some were doing voluntarily in the interest-free loan. The minimum subscription was to be the equivalent of income tax for the year ended 31 March 1939,

decreased by £50 for individuals and £70 for companies. As security, stock was issued to mature in 1953 and not to bear interest till October 1943. Only this loan was compulsory; <sup>101</sup> patriotism and pressure sufficed for the rest.

To cater for small contributors, the National Savings Act in 1940 provided for the issue of 3-year and 5-year saving bonds of £1, £10 or £100 at three per cent interest, and for special savings accounts with the post office and trustee savings banks, on two and three year terms, also at three per cent. The scheme was launched, with strong publicity, on 10 October 1940. In the early stages district targets were announced, appealing to local loyalty and competition. Post offices which attained their weekly quotas flew special flags, and newspapers announced their success. Later, pressure was largely sustained through canvassing at the sources, through places of work, persuading people to arrange for regular deductions from pay packets. By March 1946, National Savings investment had contributed £40 million. <sup>102</sup>

To sum up: 'out of a total of £628 million, the people and institutions of New Zealand had by 31 March 1946 made available, by lending or in taxes paid, £494 million, or close to 80 per cent. The balance was met by reciprocal aid arrangements and, to a minor extent, by other receipts. There was no outstanding overseas debt as a result of World War II.' <sup>103</sup>

The first efforts to raise patriotic funds on a national scale were similar to the fund-raising activities of the First World War, but the Minister of Internal Affairs had requested delay: the government would produce a scheme for national organisation, to avoid overlapping, <sup>104</sup> waste and abuse. This scheme appeared early in October 1939. It was topped by the Minister himself, assisted by an advisory council. A **National Patriotic Fund Board** would administer expenditure appropriate to a national body, notably all money spent on troops overseas.

Funds would come partly from direct contributions, partly from provincial councils. Eleven such councils were placed in general charge

of collection and of local expenditure. Their areas were those already established for the national centennial celebrations long planned for 1940 and, to start with, the centennial committees were given the new task of organising for patriotic funds, with authority to call on other interested bodies or persons and to delegate collecting powers. These extensions were obviously necessary, for as the *Press* of 9 October remarked, 'Members admirably qualified for one service may not be equally well qualified, or qualified at all, for the other.'

Army camps supplied only the necessities for living and training. Recreation huts, libraries, sports equipment, band instruments and all extra comforts in camps, forts, guarded points and on ships were provided by patriotic funds, with bodies such as the **YMCA**, the churches and **Red Cross** doing on-the-spot organisation. The bare, rapidly growing camps were obvious and immediate targets for patriotic bounty.

In November, in conference, the **National Patriotic Fund Board** and the provincial councils worked out their respective responsibilities. The National Board would provide comforts for troops overseas, on ships and for prisoners-of-war. Also, in the home camps it would erect, furnish and maintain recreation rooms run mainly by the **YMCA** and **Salvation Army**. The provincial councils would set up and maintain canteens and social rooms, such as the various Welcome Clubs, in towns near camps. They would provide sports equipment, band instruments, fruit for servicemen, and wool to be knitted into socks, scarves and balaclavas. They would also make small grants to bridge some needy gaps before a serviceman and his dependents began receiving service pay, or before a discharged man could obtain work or relief. It was established that the National Board would provide for the sick and wounded, while the provincial councils would build up reserves for the care of soldiers on their return: <sup>105</sup> in rehabilitation no one as yet was clear how much would be done by central government, how much locally.

At first money was slowly given. There were many backward glances to the stirring activity and generous giving of 1914, when women went into action with fairs, Paddys' markets, sales of work, flag days, and

concerts; when churches raised large sums, when flags and livestock were auctioned, when hotels had collection boxes, and district vied with district. Government regulations now restrained would-be fund-raisers. All money collected had to go to the provincial authorities, which seemed very remote to small towns. For instance patriotic committees at Otahuhu and **Te Aroha** explained that their communities wanted their contributions to be handled by a local authority, so that they could know how they were spent. <sup>106</sup> Some centennial committees moved rather stiffly in their new tasks, ready money was not plentiful, and there was room for feeling that patriotic giving was merely paying another tax, as one newspaper correspondent put it. <sup>107</sup>

It was easy to point to public works or to the new £80,000 2ZB radio station at **Auckland** and say that the government should spend such money on its soldiers. Opposition to the 'socialistic' commandeering of goods for marketing overseas and to the check on price rises by the price fixing tribunal was running high, and despite repeated statements that the government itself would not handle patriotic funds, the regulations seemed another State intrusion into a field properly the concern of individuals.

Such opposition was fanned, or at least strongly voiced, by some newspapers, probably as part of their general criticism of the government. Thus the *New Zealand Herald* on 3 January 1940 declared that patriotic funds were disgracefully inadequate. <sup>108</sup> In 1914, at a comparable stage, **Auckland** province alone had raised more than £50,000 for patriotic purposes, and £20,000 for Belgian relief. The present organisation, designed to prevent small abuses, waste and duplication, was blameless but barren. 'Any faults in 1914, on the other hand, were washed away in bountiful showers of cash.' Organisation from **Wellington** and nominated local committees had taken the heart out of a very human business, substituting a cold slab of officialdom. Response would not fail if it were all put back into the hands of the people. Let the districts go to work in their own way, electing their own committees, devising ways and means subject to popular will. Let there

be recognition of district patriotism and desire to have a voice in spending local money. <sup>109</sup>

A *Press* report on 13 January <sup>110</sup> similarly contrasted **Canterbury's** lavish giving in 1914 with current meagreness. Its editorial on 17 January said that the public missed the variety and energy of the 1914–18 collecting devices; appeals should have clear aims and the prestige of established bodies like the **Red Cross** should draw money to appropriate specific causes rather than to a general pool.

The Patriotic Fund scheme, however, had some early and reputable champions. The Associated Chambers of Commerce on 16 November suggested that the regulations had been misunderstood, and urged warm support. The Governor-General, Lord **Galway**, <sup>111</sup> president of the National Board, in his New Year speech answered objections. He stressed that the money contributed would not be handled by the government, as many seemed to believe, but by men of known integrity on the National Board and provincial councils, who were generously giving their services. The scheme was designed to avoid overlapping and waste, ensuring that each shilling would reach those for whom it was intended; anyone could earmark his contribution for a particular purpose, such as the **Red Cross**, or the **YMCA**. <sup>112</sup>

Already, for both national and local funds collectors were busy with street collections and the like. For instance the **Wellington** Provincial Council's 'very successful' flag day on 8 December 1939 raised £1,235. <sup>113</sup> In mid-December the first national appeal, to provide comforts for the troops soon starting overseas, was launched. Its organisers hoped for £20,000 in the first fortnight <sup>114</sup> but it began slowly, totalling £6,696 at New Year. <sup>115</sup> It was to become known as the Governor-General's appeal, from his advocacy, and drew some large contributions. Notably, T. H. Lowry <sup>116</sup> of Hawke's Bay repeated a family effort in the last war by giving £10,000 for a recreation hut in the main base camp overseas. <sup>117</sup> This appeal eventually reached about £55,000. <sup>118</sup>

Meanwhile in mid-February 1940 another national appeal, known as

the Fighting Services Welfare Fund or the 'Army Huts appeal', had begun, with the **YMCA** and the **Salvation Army** as collecting agents, aiming at £100,000. In the first month it collected £32,000; <sup>119</sup> by May, with active collecting over, it had almost £90,000 with some returns to come; <sup>120</sup> eventually it reached £104,000. <sup>121</sup> In Nelson, Otago, **Invercargill**, Westland, **Motueka** and **Whakatane** there were no special campaigns for the appeal, contributions being made instead from provincial patriotic funds, <sup>122</sup> thus presaging the methods of the future.

Statements on the purpose and methods of the patriotic scheme, its working with existing nation-wide social welfare organisations both as collecting and expending agencies, appeared in newspapers. <sup>123</sup> A letter by the Governor-General, widely published in mid-March, asked the Prime Minister to remove from people's minds apparent doubts that money would be sent overseas. <sup>124</sup> Response however was still grudging in some places. In March collectors for the **YMCA- Salvation Army** appeal were getting 'a rough spin', some city business men refusing to see them, others putting them off with 'a miserable five shillings'. <sup>125</sup>

Not surprisingly, there was rivalry between local and national collectors. Local workers, anxious to concentrate on the needs of the men in nearby camps and to build up resources for rehabilitating them afterwards, resented centralised appeals skimming off the cream of ready money in their districts. In April the Otago Council, for instance, complained about national encroachments. The **YMCA** and **Salvation Army** had had their appeal, the **Red Cross** and the Order of St John were about to have another, there were appeals for the Poles, for the Finns, for the Anglican Church; Otago might do well to follow other councils in forbidding collections by outside organisations. <sup>126</sup> In May, a conference decided that there would be no more national appeals after the one just about to start; instead national fund purposes would be supported by contributions from the provincial councils. <sup>127</sup>

The Sick, Wounded and Distress Fund, run by the **Red Cross** and the Order of St John, was launched on 12 May, at about the same time as the blitzkrieg against the Low Countries and **France**. New Zealand,



shaken into a new mood, gave with a will. The target of £250,000, larger than any so far, was passed in about five weeks; the final figure was £746,451. <sup>128</sup> At the same time there was brisk giving for Spitfires, and for the relief of **London**, themes treated in later paragraphs.

In September 1940, a fresh start was made. Teething troubles had been worked out in the reluctant 'phoney war' period, and although the shock of the new war was subsiding, New Zealanders were geared to give steadily. National purposes were to be supplied by quotas, determined by population, from the provincial councils: these, and agents appointed by them, became the sole collectors. A new All-Purpose appeal for £1 million was launched, to provide a year's comforts for the fighting forces, rehabilitation for servicemen and their dependents, and to relieve distress in **Britain** and other affected places. The 11 provincial councils each had to raise a given proportion of the £1 million: **Auckland's** share was £250,000, Southland's £25,000, **Wellington's** £200,000, with about half to come from the metropolitan areas. <sup>129</sup> Provincial councils in turn set targets for centres within their districts. There was much publicity, with statements of aims and channels, area quotas, progress reports and exhortation to 'give till it hurts—it is the least you can do'. <sup>130</sup> All the usual fund raising devices were used, from massive queen carnivals to children's concerts. Effort focused on various aspects and sub-branches of the appeal at different times, to increase interest. Some districts far exceeded their quotas: **Wanganui**, for instance, doubled its, with £30,838. <sup>131</sup> By August the target was exceeded by £150,000. <sup>132</sup>

It was not easy for patriotic campaigners to raise money. There was competition from the successive government loans raised to finance the war, which drew off patriotic fervour and paid modest interest. Some feeling persisted that the government should provide the jam on the bread of service life instead of leaving it to the public. For instance, some workers' organisations in **Dunedin** explained that they opposed all appeals on principle; they had no quarrel with Patriotic Council members but they were 'mutts' to do the work of collecting; if they refused, the government would have to conscript the wealth of those

who had it. <sup>133</sup> In particular, it was felt that collection for rehabilitation was out of place, but to this the secretary-general answered that these reserves were intended not for general rehabilitation but for helping cases which no legislation could cover; even 25 years after the previous war men were being helped by funds raised in 1914–18. <sup>134</sup>

Expenditure objectives changed with the war. In the first year or so recreation huts were a large item; later prisoners-of-war became a major concern. By 1942 more than 6000 prisoners each needed a weekly parcel costing £1. Clothing, books and an inquiry bureau demanded further expenses. In that year **Wellington's** quota of the nation-wide £1 million appeal was £106,000, of which 40.5 per cent was destined for the sick and wounded and prisoners-of-war; 21 per cent for relief of distress in **Britain** and elsewhere; 20 per cent for service comforts in New Zealand and overseas; 14.25 per cent for spiritual needs; 4.25 per cent for mobile canteens, administration expenses and contingencies. <sup>135</sup>

The collection targets set for 1942 proved to be too high for many areas, <sup>136</sup> though others met and passed them. **Dunedin**, which in June decided that direct giving had failed and resorted to a queen carnival, run by Labour organisations, had by 22 August passed its quota of £73,500 by £1,500, being the first of the main centres to reach its goal. <sup>137</sup> **Te Aroha**, by direct giving, over-subscribed its quota of £8,600; Opotoki, with a population largely Maori, exceeded its quota of £5,769 by £317. <sup>138</sup> A conference in November, 1942 asked the government to pay for POW food parcels and **War Cabinet** agreed to do so, granting £340,000 for 1943. <sup>139</sup> This was a considerable relief for the fund-raisers; prisoners-of-war were to exceed 8000.

As an example of allocation, in 1943 for the **Wellington** provincial area the target was £205,410, to be collected from 10 zones ranging from the **Wellington** metropolitan area, £100,651 (49 per cent), through to the Wairarapa, £26,703 (13 per cent) and Wanganui and Feilding £18,487 (9 per cent) each to **Taihape** and Marton £4,108 (2 per cent) each. <sup>140</sup> This provincial total was allocated thus: <sup>141</sup>



<b>National Patriotic Fund Board for overseas and work of national character</b>	<b>£173,580</b>
<b>Provincial Patriotic Council's normal requirements, including £22,000 for parcels, £9,000 for wool and money for entertainment, sports gear, service clubs, etc.</b>	<b>£42,000</b>
<b>Welfare Fund</b>	<b>£12,000</b>
<b>Contingencies</b>	<b>£6,000</b>
<b>Outstanding accounts</b>	<b>£15,942</b>
	<hr/>
	<b>£249,522</b>
<b>less cash in hand at 30 Sep 1942</b>	<b>44,112</b>
	<hr/>
	<b>£205,410</b>

At the same time the Otago Provincial Council was bent on raising £70,000 for its **National Patriotic Fund Board** levy, being 8.7 per cent of the national requirement, and £45,000 for its soldiers' parcels, wool and welfare. <sup>142</sup>

Money came in from direct donations by persons, firms, trade unions, employers' associations, from collections and street appeals. It came from patriotic shops and stalls and from special sales of goods ranging from silver thimbles and old jewellery to paintings and books more or less rare. <sup>143</sup> Many activities and entertainments, ranging from chamber music concerts to university revues, race meetings and public sports gave their profits, and school children raised money for soldiers' parcels. Profits from some art unions were handed over. <sup>144</sup> Considerable sums came from the salvage of scrap. The National Council for the Reclamation of Waste Materials, set up in June 1940, organised 110 volunteer committees which over the war years collected 27 250 tons of paper, 6014 tons of rubber, including 600 000 used tyres, 2170 tons of metal, mainly non-ferrous (such as toothpaste tubes) but including some cast iron, five million glass containers for re-use and 331 5001b of cleaning rags for the forces. In all, these collections brought £51,485 to the provincial patriotic councils. <sup>145</sup>

One way and another the organisers and collectors toiled on towards

their recurring targets and the public gave, some regularly, some rarely. Annual gross expenditure of the central National Patriotic Fund Board, exclusive of the provincial councils, marked the rise in patriotic business: 1939–40, £233,737; 1940–1, £547,644; 1941–2, £1,097,944; 1942–3, £1,601,725; 1942–4, £1,857,281; 1944–5, £1,868,962; 1945–6, £995,684. <sup>146</sup>

The wish to help **Britain** directly was evidenced by the warmth of several mid-1940 drives: money for aeroplanes, for relief for London, clothing for refugees, homes for British children. Perhaps the most clear-cut was the campaign for fighting aircraft.

The idea, propagated by **Lord Beaverbrook**, <sup>147</sup> British Minister for Aircraft Production, was that £5,000 <sup>148</sup> would ‘pay for’ a fighter and £20,000 for a bomber, and those who raised the money could name the aircraft. It caught the public imagination. Captains of industry and maharajahs gave very large sums, enough for several Spitfires; some bereaved devoted parents gave enough for one; city after city, town after town, colony after colony, started Spitfire Funds, and so did all manner of institutions and organisations—newspapers, factories, breweries, trades, sports and hobby clubs; there was even a fund from women called **Dorothy**. <sup>149</sup>

Of course all this was not realised by New Zealanders, particularly at the start, although the papers in June and July had several reports of substantial Empire gifts. The idea of a money gift was first put forward at the end of May 1940 when C. G. White, <sup>150</sup> a director of the Union Steam Ship Company, recalling **Sir Joseph Ward’s** <sup>151</sup> offer in 1909 of the battlecruiser *HMS New Zealand*, proposed some large gesture of loyalty, say £1 million in cash or kind. He was backed by Sir Charles Norwood, <sup>152</sup> motor magnate and civic figure of **Wellington**, who said that such a sacrifice from New Zealand in her present financial state would carry weight; <sup>153</sup> an old Scot wrote that thousands of exiles would gladly give a day’s pay to help the Motherland now and enclosed his £1, hoping that the *New Zealand Herald* would put forward his appeal and that it would rise, like Baden Powell’s <sup>154</sup> scouts, to millions. <sup>155</sup>

This theme of a plain cash present was not taken up, at any level, but a week later the papers reported that the **Nizam** of Hyderabad had given a further £50,000 to maintain the **RAF** squadron bearing his name, for which he had paid £100,000 the previous October, and that the *Straits Times* at **Singapore** had opened a fund to raise £250,000 for a squadron of bombers. <sup>156</sup> Some *Evening Post* correspondents, while doubting that New Zealand could equal the **Nizam** or the *Straits Times*, suggested a fund here through which New Zealanders could help to provide a squadron, one offering £10 in appreciation of the **RAF** heroes and of 'Cobber' Kain, <sup>157</sup> a New Zealand **RAF** ace who had lately been killed in a crash. <sup>158</sup> The *Post* stated that others had strongly advocated such a fund but that it was necessary first to obtain the sanction of the National Patriotic Fund Board. It is clear that the government was not at first wholly enthusiastic for a scheme that would bite into sterling funds, though it later accepted public opinion. Nothing grew visibly from these early **Wellington** suggestions. Fraser later said that the first proposal to launch an appeal for a fighter aircraft came to him in June, by telephone, from the Mayor of Taumarunui, who had deferred to Fraser's view that it all required more careful consideration. <sup>159</sup>

However, the idea struck sturdy roots in Southland, where on 18 June the *Southland Times* printed a letter from a woman suggesting that patriotic funds, lately become substantial, should buy aircraft and tanks from the **United States** for **Britain**; such funds would soon be replaced and multiplied by New Zealanders just now awakening to their danger. A few days later another Southlander, G. A. Hamilton, <sup>160</sup> wrote that winning the war was more urgent than rehabilitating soldiers or sending them socks. The war seemed likely to be mainly at sea and in the air, therefore let some of the patriotic funds buy aircraft and let New Zealanders fly them. 'If our province could purchase even one, and call it Southland, no doubt one of our Southland pilots would take great pride in it and his achievements would become memories for us all'; other provinces might follow, and 'should final victory be assisted by the gift of 1000 planes from New Zealand the cost would be cheap indeed.' He

would contribute £100 for a start; <sup>161</sup> he made it £500 a few days later. A flood of supporting letters appeared, meetings were held, and a special committee, aiming at £25,000 to buy two Spitfires, sought government permission. <sup>162</sup> This was granted by 12 July, the Prime Minister praising the splendid patriotic spirit while denying that such subscriptions would actually increase **Britain's** air strength, as all Empire factories were already working at full capacity. He declared the aircraft fund a proper patriotic purpose under the Regulations, and to avoid conflicting appeals advised the provincial patriotic councils to take up the various proposals being made, co-opting those taking the initiative in the affair. <sup>163</sup>

The urge to help an immediate fighting purpose, the magnificent **RAF** men in their Spitfires, was breaking out all over the country. On 3 July the Kauri district of **Whangarei**, rivalling Southland's lead and possibly ignorant of it, raised £161 in a stock drive, making £250 to date, the nucleus of a fund for a bomber to be flown by a Kauri airman. <sup>164</sup> The Auckland Chamber of Commerce on 4 July proposed £1 million from sterling funds, or alternatively two or three free cargoes, to be used for buying aeroplanes. <sup>165</sup> The Christchurch RSA suggested that the NZRSA should present a fighter named after Cobber Kain. <sup>166</sup> During August Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, **Auckland**, **Hamilton**, **Wellington** and many other centres started funds. At a smoke concert of the New Zealand Dairy Co-operative, **Hamilton**, the proposal to buy an aircraft produced £500 in five minutes, and more than £6,000 in the following fortnight. <sup>167</sup> On 29 August the Meat Producers Board decided to give £30,000 of its accumulated £65,000 in appreciation of the **RAF**, and by 3 September the British government's thanks for this gift were published. <sup>168</sup> The Women's Division of the Farmers' Union announced their plans to buy a £20,000 bomber. <sup>169</sup>

There were critics. The newspaper *Truth* on 7 August noted with misgiving **Invercargill's** hopes that the scheme would spread and produce £1 million for **Britain's** aircraft. New Zealand's **London** funds had been increased with difficulty in the last two years, the war had added problems, and Southland's £20,000 could not seriously affect the funds.

If the appeal were to sweep the country it might, said *Truth*, create troubles and its supporters might regret the money lost to New Zealand's own soldiers abroad. A forthright expression of hostility came from the Wellington Provincial Patriotic Council, which said that the appeal was exploiting the patriotic feelings of New Zealanders and depleting sterling funds to no good purpose while local appeals were being neglected. <sup>170</sup> An NZRSA spokesman thought it useless and a drain on general funds. <sup>171</sup> The president of the New Zealand Workers Union at Waitara was not enthusiastic about Spitfires, thinking that free meat and cheese would be better for **Britain**, while New Zealand, being in greater danger than ever before, needed to concentrate on home defence. <sup>172</sup>

The Minister of Finance checked any wildness by announcing on 17 August that only £100,000 would be remitted to the British government. Echoing Fraser, he warned that this sum would not, despite the splendid spirit behind it, provide any additional aeroplanes, while using money otherwise available for war expenditure overseas. The appeal would close on 30 September and any surplus would go towards New Zealand's share in the Empire Air Training Scheme. <sup>173</sup>

This curb caused some protest: for instance the Mayor of Palmerston North telegraphed asking Nash to review his decision and devote the whole amount to the purpose for which it was given. <sup>174</sup> A few published letters asked, should we not help to win the war now rather than accumulate funds to be used when the war was won for us by others, for what would it profit to have sterling in **London** if we lost **London**? <sup>175</sup> A few editorials defended the idea of sharing in the cost of the air war, of taking part of the financial burden from British shoulders. <sup>176</sup>

Support for the Spitfire fund was lively and widespread. Newspapers collected, publishing subscriptions: some were large—the *Evening Post* had an anonymous gift of £5,000—but many were small amounts, like 'Hostel girls, £2; Kelburn Croquet Club, £16.5s; Mum, **Petone**, £1.' <sup>177</sup> Mayors, Rotary clubs and local patriotic committees used all the numerous devices of the New Zealand community bent on raising money: 16 farmers on Waiheke Island sold 32 cattle raising £160; <sup>178</sup>

sports clubs donated, there were raffles, entertainments, sales. *New Zealand Herald* readers gave more than £33,000 between 17 August and 12 September. The appeal, except in Otago, closed on 30 September. Otago, preoccupied until November with a long-planned Queen Carnival for other patriotic funds, then began its Spitfire Fund, which closed on the following 1 February with £10,587.

Meanwhile on 5 December it was announced that the aircraft fund from the provinces (excluding Otago) then totalled £102,940, and some special sums—£7,500 from the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company, £5,000 from the Women's Division of the Farmer's Union, £30,000 from the Meat Producers' Board and £158 from Niue Island—gave in all £145,600. Further, the government had decided to give the whole amount to the purchase of 23 fighter aircraft, attributed and named thus: **North Auckland**, 1; **Auckland**, 5; **Waikato**, 1; Taranaki, 1; Hawke's Bay, 2; **Wellington**, 3; Marlborough–Westland–**Nelson**, 1; **Canterbury**, 2; Southland, 3; New Zealand, 3; Country Women of New Zealand, 1. <sup>179</sup> It was not explained why £45,000 more than the limit fixed by Nash in August was being handed over. Possibly complaints about the government not allowing money subscribed for special purposes to leave the country may have been influential. For instance, the Hawke's Bay Patriotic Council wanted assurance that surpluses from appeals would not go into the Consolidated Fund or be used for government purposes; one mayor stated that he had not opened a fighter aircraft appeal because he believed that the money was going into the Consolidated Fund, not into Spitfires. <sup>180</sup> The *Observer* on 2 October said 'the surplus is being brazenly collared by the government to help with its own defence organisation'.

**Lord Beaverbrook** responded gratifyingly, speaking for the whole British nation, and for freedom-lovers every land: 'Our hearts are uplifted, our spirits fortified, by this magnificent gesture of support. You enable us to strike even harder blows at the evil forces of Nazi and Fascist aggression, bringing nearer the day when the hosts of **Hitler** and his Italian jackal will forever bite the dust. ...' <sup>181</sup>



Early in March the last instalment of £11,160, largely from Otago, was sent to **Britain**, making a total of £156,776 in New Zealand currency. <sup>182</sup> This was applauded in the **BBC** series 'London Calling', which said that the money would buy a squadron of 25 Spitfires, New Zealand's own, flown and serviced by New Zealanders and bearing the names listed earlier, plus two called 'Otago'. <sup>183</sup> In fact, 485 (New Zealand) Squadron RAF had been established in March and equipped with Spitfires: at the start of May were published the names of 20 pilots picked to fly these aircraft, <sup>184</sup> and a month later came news of the squadron's first kill, by its leader, M. W. B. Knight, <sup>185</sup> of **Dannevirke**. <sup>186</sup> It was not until the Squadron was re-equipped in 1942 with an improved type of Spitfire that the fighters could be regarded as being provided by New Zealand. <sup>187</sup>

The Spitfire Fund was not the only exotic appeal to flourish in the dark days of 1940. The Lord Mayor of **London**'s appeal for help, answered by the British public and by Commonwealth countries, drew both clothes and cash from New Zealand. The Red Cross Society had earlier made known the plight of refugees in **Poland, Finland, Norway**, and in the first nine months of the war had sent off more than 300 cases of clothing, mainly for women and children. <sup>188</sup> In June, when thousands of refugees were pouring into Britain, Lady Galway launched her Guild to collect, repair and pack clothes for them, and soon in every town mayoresses headed branches of the Guild. <sup>189</sup> As the Battle of **Britain** developed in August, to the refugees from **Europe** were added thousands of bombed-out British people, homeless, bereft of possessions. The Guild and the Red Cross redoubled their efforts; postmen, Boy Scouts and other volunteers collected clothing, women sewed and sorted and tons of clothes were shipped away. <sup>190</sup>

The National Patriotic Fund Board in September 1940 voted £100,000 to **London** relief, £10,000 to come from the over-subscribed Sick, Wounded and Distress appeal, and the government immediately sanctioned the whole transmission, confident that the payout would soon be made good. Response was wide and strong, speedily outstripping



area quotas. Newspapers ran collections, publishing contributors' names and stirring articles: thus the *Auckland Star* of 14 September wrote of the fiendish attack by the soulless air force that **Hitler** and his scum had launched on the afflicted people of **London**, whose fortitude and endurance were as much a part of the fight for deliverance from serfdom as were the magnificent courage and self sacrifice of the fighting men. The *Star's*, appeal in two weeks brought in £22,628 <sup>191</sup> and **Auckland** province gave more than £30,000, though its quota was only £8,000. For Wellington province the quota was £5,075, but by 10 October £11,242 had been paid in. <sup>192</sup> There was strong feeling that money given for this purpose should not be diverted to any other, <sup>193</sup> so it was decided to keep the surplus apart and remit it later for the relief of other bombed British towns as well as **London**. <sup>194</sup> Another £100,000 was sent in June 1941. <sup>195</sup> Over the years, often through the international **Red Cross**, New Zealand's national patriotic funds contributed goods and money to the relief of distress in many countries. By March 1943, amounts exceeding £283,000 had been sent: £7,000 to much-bombed **Malta**, £2,500 to **Belgium**, £6,726 to **France**, £28,750 to **Russia**, £10,500 to **Greece**, £622 to **Norway**, £20,377 to **Poland** and £206,834 to **London**. <sup>196</sup>

Children from **London** and other centres likely to be bombed had been partially evacuated in the early days of the war. When the expected bombing did not happen many returned, but as danger loomed higher they were again sent forth to remoter areas of England and **Scotland**. Some parents privately sent their children to places thought safe in England, or abroad, many going to **Canada** and the **United States**. The idea was widespread of large numbers of children going overseas, for safety and decent, unafraid living, leaving **Britain** more free to concentrate on fighting.

In New Zealand it was brought forward by T. W. Hercock, <sup>197</sup> Mayor of **Napier**, which city still remembered that other centres had helped by taking in its women and children when it was wrecked by earthquake in 1931. At the end of May, Hercock telegraphed 50 other mayors, asking them to petition the government to offer hospitality and, if necessary,

permanent adoption in private homes to 25 000 British children: there was likely to be a food shortage in **Britain**, and New Zealand could offer happier conditions, each district sharing in the task, with government help in organising and making arrangements with **Britain**. The suggestion had already been voiced in mid-May by W. E. Barnard, MP for **Napier**, at a Democratic Labour meeting in **Wellington**.<sup>198</sup> Hercock explained that C. Williams<sup>199</sup> of **Napier** had been working on the idea for eight months.<sup>200</sup>

Williams had proposed it to the government soon after the outbreak of war but, as he later wrote, 'the people of **Britain** were not ready to part with their children, and we here were not ready to receive them.'<sup>201</sup> The government then was dubious, but learned through the High Commissioner in **London** that a Children's Overseas Reception Committee had been set up, chaired by Geoffrey **Shakespeare**,<sup>202</sup> the Under-Secretary for the Dominions, to inquire into and accept such offers from the Dominions and the United States.<sup>203</sup>

In June 1940, public response was warm and on the 22nd the New Zealand government offered to take, in the first instance, 2500 children, adding that the maximum limit would be the country's ability to provide for them. Meanwhile as the threat grew, British parents by 5 July applied to send 200 000 children abroad; for about 20 000 New Zealand was preferred,<sup>204</sup> although no authority, British or overseas, had any intention of mass emigration, only of a safe refuge for a limited number on a well-ordered plan.<sup>205</sup>

The British committee, which alone selected the children, aimed to send a cross-section of the community. Where possible, parents should pay 6 s to 9 s or more a week, according to their means, towards the cost of organisation and fares, but no child would be excluded solely on account of its parents' inability to pay. The New Zealand government refused any of this money for the foster parents, who would maintain the children as part of their effort to assist **Britain**. The children should be healthy, between 5 and 16 years, and would stay only for the duration of the war. Mothers would not come with them,<sup>206</sup> except for approved

widows of servicemen of this war who would promise to take jobs in New Zealand.

In New Zealand, organisation was undertaken by the Child Welfare branch of the **Education Department** and the Local Government branch of the Department of Internal Affairs, working through local committees. On 25 June it was announced that for this purpose there were 26 zones in the country, in each of which one local authority (ie, city, borough or county council) was selected as the zone authority, which would appoint a zone committee of, say, the mayor, a Child Welfare officer, ministers of religion, and social workers. It would also arrange for the setting up of similar local committees within its area. Would-be foster parents applied to these committees, which had the exacting task of deciding whether or not they were suitable. Tactful vigilance was needed to ensure that there was no intention of exploiting the children, that the homes were of good average standard, handy to schools and not too crowded, that the foster parents were not too elderly and that they could adequately maintain their guests—for sometimes enthusiasm outran means. At the outset it was assumed that ministers of religion could readily advise on these points but, as a **Timaru** clergyman pointed out, quite a lot of applicants were not known to any ministers, and he doubted if his brethren were fitted to be investigation officers judging homes on one visit. <sup>207</sup> Inevitably a good deal of this responsibility fell on the Child Welfare branch. The local lists of approved homes were sent to the zone committees and thence, summarised, to Internal Affairs which, with the **Education Department**, decided on quotas to districts. When the children arrived, the zone committees settled who would go to which home. In these committees, Child Welfare officers had decisive roles, being in effect the final guardians of every child guest, reporting on each once a term. It was hoped that the local committees would also maintain contact with them.

A suggestion from the Mayor of **Sydney** to Hercock that French and other allied children, perhaps with their mothers, should be included, as

they needed help more desperately than did British children at the moment, was not taken up: New Zealanders were wary of foreigners. <sup>208</sup> At first it was intended to keep children for each area together for a few days while they became acquainted with their new environment and with their foster-parents. Some obvious difficulties were plainly voiced by the **Whangarei** zone committee: it would lead to 'picking and choosing', bad feeling and uncertainty, while one man likened it to 'herding them in a compound in which people picked their slaves'. <sup>209</sup> This arrangement was changed, the children going direct from railway stations to homes.

Many factors were weighed in making allocations. Members of families were to be kept together as much as possible; friends should be able to attend the same school; the children should go to families of their own religion and preferably of their parents' occupational background, while their age and sex should fit in with the other children in the family. Some of these things could be known only when the children actually arrived and, as security forbade advance notice of their arrival, final allocations had to be quickly made.

Late in June it was known that the British authorities desired that children who had friends or relatives wanting them in New Zealand should go to them rather than to strangers. <sup>210</sup> Relatives wrote to Internal Affairs asking for particular children and, through the High Commissioner in **London**, the parents were asked if they wished to send these children to them. The Department was flooded with applications, 1000 within three days. <sup>211</sup> It was not thought necessary to inspect homes in these cases, as the parents themselves would consent. Actually, many parents of these 'nominated' children did not wish them to come to New Zealand. There were also applications from England for children to go to friends or relatives, some of whom could not receive them.

On 12 July, after the loss off **Ireland** of the *Andora Star*, drowning 1100 interned aliens and their guards on their way to **Canada**, the British government announced that sending children overseas must be

postponed until naval escorts could be provided. Further, Churchill admitted: 'It was not foreseen that the mild countenance given to the policy would lead to a movement of such dimensions, or that a crop of alarmist and depressing rumours would follow at its tail.' Any large-scale exodus was most undesirable and, in view of the relative dangers between going and staying, he did not think that the military situation required or justified it. <sup>212</sup> In New Zealand it was held that the children would still come, perhaps several hundred at a time, under convoy. Preparations for securing the maximum number of approved homes went ahead, and at the end of August the government could report that there was accommodation for 10 000 children: 1844 families had nominated 3564 children, and 5800 other homes would welcome 6500 strangers. <sup>213</sup> It was decided that foster-children would rate as family members for income-tax purposes, but not for assessing military service liability; in approved cases family benefit would be paid; the New Zealand Dental Association offered free treatment, where clinic and hospital services did not suffice; hospitals would give out-patient treatment free to British children.

There was genuine zest to help **Britain** and to comfort children whose homes were or might soon become heaps of rubble. People who could not be soldiers, whose work did not involve them in the war, felt that here there was something they could do, simultaneously satisfying both their kindly and their loyal impulses, while for once remoteness from the gunfire made New Zealand more effective. Response was particularly strong in some country districts; at Morrinsville, for instance, 59 families offered to take in 70 children. <sup>214</sup> Some people whose own children were grown up turned warmly to the idea of a new little one, or two; some wanted a companion for only or lonely children; some felt that they could cheerfully cope with another young nipper anyway. There were few misgivings: when a doubtful zone member wondered about slums and the influence of a young Bill Sykes on other children, he was told 'they are British children and that is all that matters', that people with such worries should not concern themselves with the scheme, and that a good home might influence young Bill

Sykes. <sup>215</sup> Some districts expressed a strong preference for girls. <sup>216</sup> Perhaps this was due to fear of young Bill Sykeses, or to belief that girls would be gentler, more manageable than boys; perhaps to feeling that girls especially should be protected from war. <sup>217</sup>

Some wanted to adopt children permanently, <sup>218</sup> dreading to lose them after a few years, and forgetting that as yet, except in orphanages, there were very few British children who had lost both parents. A few newspapers held that 'orphans are best', for they would remain as citizens, compensating for 'the sluggish birthrate'. <sup>219</sup> Only one or two citizens publicly remarked on the keenness to adopt British orphans while local institutions held plenty of unsought New Zealand children. <sup>220</sup> There were proposals for a national patriotic fund devoted to British children, for assistance with clothing through the Lady Galway Guild, and there were offers of some large houses as special homes where children might be kept together and where people who were unable to take a child could contribute to their upkeep. <sup>221</sup>

The term, 'Little Britons', emanating from **Wellington**, <sup>222</sup> was warmly and widely used to avoid 'refugee children' and 'child evacuees', which were unpleasant and inaccurate. Government departments, however, fearing that the habit of contracting official designations might reduce Little Britons to LBs, 'which suggests possible variants of an offensive character', stuck firmly to 'British children'. <sup>223</sup>

At last, on 27 September 1940, a ship brought 89 Scottish children to **Wellington**. They were welcomed by all the important people, the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Mayor, the British High Commissioner, heads of departments. They were photographed, they were declared—and looked—a very fine lot. Thirty-one were girls. Relatives claimed 35; of the rest, 10 went to **Masterton**, 10 to **Palmerston North**, 10 to **Lower Hutt** and 24 to **Wellington**. They were billeted in children's homes for a day or two while individual allocations were made by the local committees, assisted by the escorts of the ship journey. <sup>224</sup>



A week later, a further 113 children arrived at **Wellington** from all over England, and were similarly welcomed. Of this party, 51 were girls. <sup>225</sup> Sixty-eight children went to relatives scattered over New Zealand and from the rest, four were allocated to **Wellington**, 10 to **Dunedin**, 15 to **Christchurch** and 16 went to **Auckland**, where homes were selected by ballot from the hundreds available. <sup>226</sup>

On 23 September, it was reported that from a **Canada**-bound ship, *City of Benares*, sunk by a U-boat in bad weather, 294 people had been lost, including 83 children. On 2 October, the British government announced that with winter gales and heavy seas in the **Atlantic** it would not take the responsibility of sending any more children abroad in the official scheme at present; so far, 2650 had gone under this scheme, while many others had gone privately. <sup>227</sup> New Zealand's High Commissioner in **London** explained further that the Admiralty was reluctant to provide the special escorts needed by child-carrying ships. Since the sinking of the *City of Benares*, another ship had actually embarked children, but she was recalled and the children went back to their homes. <sup>228</sup>

It was announced on 11 October that with approved homes listed for 10 000 children, no further offers would be accepted until the scheme was re-opened. <sup>229</sup> It had not been re-opened before **Japan**'s entry to the war totally precluded it. Indeed, anxious British parents were assured that while city populations were not fleeing inland ahead of attack, country areas were preparing to receive them if necessary, while trenches and shelters were being prepared in school grounds. <sup>230</sup>

Meanwhile Child Welfare officers learned that their care was needed by nominated children—those in homes approved by their parents—no less than by those sent to strangers, and decided that in future such homes would also be inspected. By December 1940 about 40 of the total 202 children had been transferred to different homes, for various reasons—such as expense, or relatives asking for them after arrival; a very few for objections to the conduct of the children, and a few because



certain homes, though satisfactory in other respects, proved unsuitable for particular children. In 1943–4 there were 41 more transfers, mainly for ill-health in foster parents or to facilitate employment or extended education for the children. <sup>231</sup>

Guardianship of all the children was vested in the Superintendent of Child Welfare, who kept in touch with his charges both directly and through district officers who regularly visited both schools and foster-parents. Apart from the death of one 16-year-old girl reported in 1944–5, <sup>232</sup> annual departmental reports told of continuing good health, buttressed by free attention from doctors and dentists. In general, the children adapted happily to their new situations and did well at school. ‘On the whole, their educational attainment is very satisfactory, and there are a few who show exceptional ability’, wrote the Superintendent in 1944. <sup>233</sup>

During 1941 a few left school to take up approved positions, but all were encouraged to pursue education as far as possible. By 1945, about 12 of the older boys and girls had returned to **Britain**, eight to join the forces. Only 38 children were still in primary schools, mainly in the upper classes, though there were still half a dozen in Standards II and III; 71 were in post-primary schools, and in all 32 had passed the University Entrance examination. Of the 82 who had left school, eight were full-time students at university, seven were at teachers’ training colleges, three of them already probationary teachers; 14 boys were farming, 10 were in various engineering jobs, seven girls were nursing, one boy was sign-writing, two were in the New Zealand Navy, about 22 boys and girls were in banks, insurance offices, the **Public Service** and other office work, and the rest were in shops, domestic work or dressmaking; ‘quite a few’ were attending night classes in various subjects and eight were at university part-time. <sup>234</sup>

From the start it was assumed that the children would return to **Britain**, and they were encouraged to keep in touch with their parents. A cable company arranged for each child once a month to send a free cable of a pre-arranged text to the parents, <sup>235</sup> and full use was made of

this concession. <sup>236</sup> Also, there were arrangements for parents to broadcast messages to their children at regular hours, the children being advised by letter a few days ahead in each case. <sup>237</sup> As soon as fighting ceased 145 children returned, in three main groups, but in March 1946 46 were still in New Zealand, staying on to finish examination courses, or until their parents could come and join them. A few had declared that they would remain regardless of their parents. <sup>238</sup>

In July 1940, when the idea of **Britain** becoming an island fortress, with children evacuated to remote areas or overseas, was at its height, parents of nearly 200 000 children applied for them to be fostered overseas. Commonwealth governments had by then offered to take 20 000 children, while indicating that this figure could be greatly increased. <sup>239</sup> As stated above, New Zealand at the end of August had homes listed ready to take 10 000 children. In the event just over 200 came: only they themselves could really judge the success of the enterprise, but it seems clear that it was attended with much sustained goodwill.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 May 40, p. 13

<sup>2</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 30 May 40, p. 9

<sup>3</sup> *Dominion*, 12 Jun 40, p. 3

<sup>4</sup> *Press*, 4 Jun 40, p. 8

<sup>5</sup> *NZ Herald*, 25 May 40, p. 10

<sup>6</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 31 May 40, p. 6

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jul 40, p. 8

<sup>8</sup> *Press*, 13 May 40. p. 15; *Auckland Star*, 12 Jun 40, p. 11

<sup>9</sup> *Southland Times*, 2 Jul 40, p. 6

<sup>10</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 Jun 40, p. 6

<sup>11</sup> *Press*, 11 Jun 40, p. 8

<sup>12</sup> *NZ Herald*, 5, 6 Sep 40, pp. 10, 6; *Evening Post*, 10 Sep 40, p. 8. The Industrial Emergency Council consisted of nine representatives of employers and nine of Labour, chosen and chaired by the Minister of Labour. They were selected not as representing any special sector or trades but for general ability in the industrial field. Hare, A. E. C., *Labour in New Zealand* 1942, p. 25

<sup>13</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 Jul 40, p. 10

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Sep, 16 Oct 40, pp. 11, 10; *Evening Post*, 18 Sep 40, p. 5

<sup>15</sup> In February 1941 the Auckland Metal Workers Union brought a court action against the firm for a deliberate breach of the award, which if approved 'would mean revolutionary changes in the industrial sphere'. The magistrate, noting that the firm had desisted when told to, held that the breach was excusable and dismissed the case; the Arbitration Court, on appeal, upheld his decision. *NZ Herald*, 1 Mar, 5 Nov 41, pp. 11, 9

<sup>16</sup> *NZPD*, vol 258, p. 509

<sup>17</sup> *Press*, 25 Jul 40, p. 8

<sup>18</sup> See p. 94

<sup>19</sup> *Press*, 11, 13, 15 Jul 40, pp. 6, 10, 6

<sup>20</sup> *Evening Post*, 4 Sep 40, p. 8

<sup>21</sup> *Press*, 15 Jun 40, pp. 17, 16

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Jun 40, p. 13, also 11 Jun 40, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 22, 23 Aug 40, pp. 11, 8

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 Jun 40, p. 6

<sup>24</sup> *Press*, 7 Jun 40, p., 8

<sup>25</sup> See *Baker*, pp. 447–8, 455–6

<sup>26</sup> *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* (hereinafter A to J) 1941, H–11, p. 11

<sup>27</sup> *NZ Herald*, 21 Mar 41, p. 6, also 30 May 40, p. 9; *Press*, 12 Jun 40, p. 6; A to J 1941, C–2, p. 5, C–2A, pp. 1, 3, 5

<sup>28</sup> *Evening Post*, 30 Mar 40, p. 11; *Southland Times*, 14 May 40, p. 5; *Palmerston North Times*, 14 May 40, p. 6; *NZ Financial Times*, Jun 40, p. 289

<sup>29</sup> *Baker*, p. 200

<sup>30</sup> *Press*, 7 Dec 40, p. 8

<sup>31</sup> *Southland Times*, 10 Jun 40, p. 4; see p. 158, fn 160

<sup>32</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Jul, 13 Aug 40, pp. 11, 8

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Sep 40, p. 12

<sup>34</sup> *Akaroa Mail*, 25 Jun 40

<sup>35</sup> *Palmerston North Times*, 7 Aug 40, p. 6

<sup>36</sup> *Press*, 3 Jul 40, p. 6

<sup>37</sup> *NZ Herald*, 5 Jul 40, p. 9

<sup>38</sup> eg, *Evening Post*, 25, 28 May; *Southland Times*, 11 Jun; *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Jul; *NZ Herald*, 22, 24, 25, 27 Jul, 2, 3, 6 Aug 40

<sup>39</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Sep 40, p. 6

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Jul 40, p. 9

<sup>41</sup> eg, to the Whakatane Red Cross, *ibid.*, 14 Sep 40, p. 12

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Aug 40, p. 11

<sup>43</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 3 Sep 40, p. 2; *NZ Herald*, 26 Oct 40, p. 10

<sup>44</sup> *Southland Times*, 24 Aug 40, p. 11

<sup>45</sup> Maher, James Joseph (1889–1964): MP (Nat) **Otaki** 1946–60; chmn Wgtn Dairy Farmers' Co-op Assn for many years

<sup>46</sup> *Evening Post*, 19 Oct 40, p. 11

<sup>47</sup> Some bodies which discussed these proposals sometimes

inconclusively: **Auckland** and **Dunedin Councils of Primary Production**, *Otago Daily Times*, 21, 23 May 40, pp. 6, 8; **Southern Hawke's Bay Farmers' Union**, *NZ Herald*, 17 May 40, p. 9; **Mayor of Hastings**, *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 23 May 40, p. 8; **Canty District Pig Council**, *Press*, 8 Jun 40, p. 10; **North Otago Farmers Union**, *ibid.*, 22 Jun 40, p. 7; **Dannevirke Council of Primary Production**, *Palmerston North Times*, 24 Jun 40, p. 2; **Rangitikei and Makirikiri Farmers' Unions**, *Wanganui Herald*, 24 Jun, 1 Jul 40, pp. 6, 6; **Bay of Islands and Hokianga farmers**, *NZ Herald*, 4 Jul 40, p. 3; **Hawke's Bay Farmers' Union**, *Dominion*, 28 Jun 40, p. 5, *NZ Herald*, 22 Jul 40; **One Tree Hill Borough Council**, *NZ Herald*, 9 Aug 40, p. 6; **Awahuri Co-operative Dairy Co**, *Palmerston North Times*, 29 Aug 40, p. 6

<sup>48</sup> *Press*, 8 Jun 40, p. 10

<sup>49</sup> *Palmerston North Times*, 16 Aug 40, p. 6

<sup>50</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Apr 40, p. 9

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Jun 40, p. 47

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9

<sup>53</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 Jul 40, p. 5. Under the Rural Housing Act 1939, to help farmers build for their workers, county councils would lend £500 at 3½ per cent, repayable over 25 years at 11 s 8 d a week. Further, in June 1940 the government offered a 10 per cent subsidy on such loans, so that a £600 house could be built for £540. Also, through the Public Works Department, houses of three rooms, plus a bathroom-wash house, could be obtained for 5 s weekly, or one-man huts for 2 s. *Point Blank*, 15 Aug 40. p. 7

<sup>54</sup> *Evening Post*, 9 Aug 40, p. 6

<sup>55</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 18 Jun 40, p. 6

- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Jun 40, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 7 Feb 40, p. 5
- <sup>57</sup> See *Baker*, pp. 216–18; cf. p. 736
- <sup>58</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Jul 40, p. 5
- <sup>59</sup> 1 bushel barley = 501b = 22.7 kg
- <sup>60</sup> *Palmerston North Times*, 14 Aug 40, p. 12
- <sup>61</sup> *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 8 Jul 40, p. 5
- <sup>62</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 10 Sep 40, p. 6
- <sup>63</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Jun 40, p. 7
- <sup>64</sup> *Palmerston North Times*, 24 Jun 40, p. 2
- <sup>65</sup> *Auckland Star*, 7 Aug 40, p. 10; also *Press*, 24 Sep 40, p. 6
- <sup>66</sup> *Palmerston North Times*, 10, 23 Jul, 20 Aug 40, pp. 2, 6, 6; *Press*, 22 Apr 41, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 5 Feb 43, p. 2
- <sup>67</sup> *Gisborne Herald*, 25 May 40, p. 12
- <sup>68</sup> *Press*, 17 Jul 40, p. 8
- <sup>69</sup> *Truth*, 10 Jul 40, p. 1
- <sup>70</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 May 40, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 29 May 40, p. 10



<sup>71</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Oct 40, p. 8

<sup>72</sup> eg, *Evening Post*, 19 Jun 40, p. 6

<sup>73</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 23 May 40, p. 8; *Auckland Star*, 6 Jun 40, p. 5, see also chaps 16, 21

<sup>74</sup> *Auckland Star*, 8 Jun 40, p. 10

<sup>75</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Apr 40, p. 4

<sup>76</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 19 Sep 40, p. 6

<sup>77</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 30 Aug 40, p. 6

<sup>78</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Jun 40, p. 8

<sup>79</sup> *Auckland Star*, 27 May 40, p. 9

<sup>80</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Jul 40, p. 9

<sup>81</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Jul 40, p. 13

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 May 40, p. 8

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Jul 40, p. 13

<sup>84</sup> *Southland Times*, 13 Jul 40, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 5 Apr 41, p. 11

<sup>85</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Mar, 27 Apr, 4 Jun 40, pp. 11, 7, 9

- <sup>86</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 Jun 40, p. 3
- <sup>87</sup> *Evening Post*, 24 Jun, 3 Jul 40. pp. 9, 9
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 Aug, 22 Nov 40, pp. 10, 9
- <sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Jul 40. p. 9
- <sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Jul 40, p. 7
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Jun 40, p. 10
- <sup>92</sup> *Patea and Waverley Press*, 3 Jun 40
- <sup>93</sup> Imperial Hotel, **Auckland**, *Auckland Star*, 15 Jun 40, p. 8; J. B. Ball, Ltd, **Auckland**, *Press*, 15 Jun 40, p. 10; W. Branson of Ngongotaha, *ibid.*, 17 Jun 40, p. 6; and the Hotel Cargen was given to the Auckland Hospital Board as a nurses' hostel for the duration. *Auckland Star*, 7, 13 Jun 40, pp. 9, 9
- <sup>94</sup> *Evening Post*, 10 Jun 40, p. 11; see p. 151
- <sup>95</sup> *Evening Post*, 20 Jun 40, p. 9
- <sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Jun 40, p. 9
- <sup>97</sup> *Press*, 30 May 40, p. 6
- <sup>98</sup> From May 1942 until the end of the war national security tax increased to 1 s 6 d in the pound.
- <sup>99</sup> *Press*, 28 Jun, 17 Jul 40, pp. 5, 8

<sup>100</sup> **Baker**, p. 260. War finance is lucidly discussed by **Baker**, pp. 251–77

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 265–6

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260

<sup>104</sup> There were nearly 1000 different patriotic funds in existence in 1918. *NZ Observer*, 21 Sep 39, p. 7

<sup>105</sup> *Press*, 23 Feb 40, p, 12

<sup>106</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6. 13 Feb 40, pp. 9, 10

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Jan 40, p. 6

<sup>108</sup> As described below, p. 151, a mid-December appeal had yielded less than £7,000 in an initial period when £20,000 was expected.

<sup>109</sup> *NZ Herald*, 3 Jan 40

<sup>110</sup> *Press*, 13 Jan 40, p. 12

<sup>111</sup> **Moncton-Arundell**, Lord George Vere Arundell, 8th **Viscount Galway**, GCMG, DSO, QBE, PC (1882–1943): Gov Gen NZ 1935–41

<sup>112</sup> *NZ Herald*, 2 Jan 40, p. 9

<sup>113</sup> *Evening Post*, 9 Dec 39, p. 15

**114** *Ibid.*, 14 Dec 39, p. 11

**115** *Press*, 4 Jan 40, p. 6. This sum excluded an unknown amount from a postal seals campaign.

**116** Lowry, Thomas Henry (d 1944 *aet* 79): sheepfarmer, Okawa

**117** *NZ Herald*, 29 Jan 40, p. 8

**118** *A to J1941*, H-22A, p. 2

**119** *Press*, 16 Mar 40, p. 14

**120** *Gisborne Herald*, 21 May 40, p. 4

**121** *A to J1941*, H-22A, p. 2

**122** *Evening Post*, 23 Mar 40, p. 12

**123** *NZ Herald*, 21 Feb 40, p. 10; *Press*, 23 Feb 40, p. 12

**124** *Press*, 15 Mar 40, p. 10

**125** *Ibid.*, 12 Mar 40, p. 10

**126** *Otago Daily Times*, 10 Apr 40, p. 8

**127** *Evening Post*, 11 May 40, p. 14

**128** *A to J1941*, H-22A, p. 2

<sup>129</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 Oct 40, p. 8; *Press*, 27 Feb 41, p. 8

<sup>130</sup> eg, *Evening Post*, 19, 20 Sep, 16, 21 Oct 40, pp. 13, 9, 8, 13

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Jul 41, p. 9

<sup>132</sup> *Press*, 15 Aug 41, p. 10

<sup>133</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 14 Apr 42, p. 4

<sup>134</sup> *Evening Post*, 14, 15 Apr 43, pp. 4, 4

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 May 42, p. 6

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Mar, 14 Apr 43, pp. 5, 4

<sup>137</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 Jun 42, p. 4; *Otago Daily Times*, 24 Aug 42, p. 2

<sup>138</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 42, p. 8, 8 Jan 43, p. 2

<sup>139</sup> *Evening Post*, 19 Nov 42, p. 3, 20 Jan 43, p. 4

<sup>140</sup> *Dominion*, 2 Mar 43, p. 4

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Mar 43, p. 4

<sup>142</sup> *Evening Star*, 1 Feb 43

<sup>143</sup> Late in 1942 donated books, paintings, prints, coins etc were auctioned at **Dunedin**, **Auckland** and **Wellington** in the Churchill Auctions, so called because a leading item Was a book entitled

*Divi Britannici* (1675) written by an ancestor of Churchill and autographed by both Churchill and Fraser. It sold for £350 and was then given to the **Wellington Public Library**. These sales realised £3,000 in all; for an example of prices, a fine copy of *The New Zealanders* by G. F. Angas (1847) fetched £46. *Evening Post*, 5, 6, 7 Nov 42, pp. 3, 4, 8

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Aug 43, p. 4

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Feb 46, p. 11

<sup>146</sup> *A to J*1947, H-22A, p. 1

<sup>147</sup> Aitken, Hon William Maxwell, Kt('11); 1st Baron of Beaverbrook, **New Brunswick** and Cherkley, **Surrey** ('16) (1879–1964): b **Canada**; MP ( **UK**) 1910–16; Min Information 1918, Aircraft Production 1940–1, of State 1941, Supply 1941–2; Lord Privy Seal 1942–5

<sup>148</sup> Or £6,250 in New Zealand currency. Nash, *Evening Post*, 23 Aug 40

<sup>149</sup> Turner, E. S., *The Phoney War on the Home Front*, pp. 291–2

<sup>150</sup> White, Charles Gilbert, OBE('46) (1880–1966): Dir Union Airways, TEAL; chmn Dom Exec Joint Council St John & **Red Cross** 4 years during WWII

<sup>151</sup> Ward, Rt Hon Sir Joseph, KCMG('30), PC (1856–1930): b Aust, to NZ 1859; MP (Lib) 1890–1919, 1925–30; Colonial Treasurer 1893–7, establishing State Advances office 1894; various portfolios 1897 ff, introducing universal penny postage 1901; PM 1906–11, 1928–30, Deputy PM, Min Finance, National govt 1915–19

<sup>152</sup> **Norwood**, Sir Charles, Kt('37) (1871–1966): b Aust, to NZ

1897; Mayor Wgtn 1925–7

<sup>153</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23, 24 May 40, pp. 10, 6

<sup>154</sup> Baden Powell, Roberr Stephenson Smythe, 1st Baron Baden-Powell (1857–1941): British army officer; service **India**, Afghanistan, Ashanti, Matabeleland (including Mafeking); founded Boy Scout Movement 1908 and with sister Agnes, Girl Guides

<sup>155</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 May 40, p. 11. The *Herald* paid the £1 into the National Patriotic Fund.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Jun 40, p. 13; *Evening Post*, 31 May 40, p. 8

<sup>157</sup> Kain, Flying Officer Edgar James, DFC (1918–40): b Hastings; joined **RAF** 1937; killed in flying accident 1940; acclaimed Empire's first air ace, credited with destruction of at least 14 enemy aircraft in **France**, probably more

<sup>158</sup> *Evening Post*, 6, 10 Jun 40, pp. 10, 8

<sup>159</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Sep 40, p. 6

<sup>160</sup> Hamilton, George Alexander (d 1971 *aet* 83): Southland farmer; Pres Southland Fed Farmers 1935–7; brother of Adam Hamilton

<sup>161</sup> *Southland Times*, 25 Jun 40, p. 3

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Jul 40, p. 8; the cost of two Spitfires was reckoned at £21,000 ( *Otago Daily Times*, 20 Aug 40, p. 6); Southland raised this in eight weeks; *ibid.*, 7 Sep 40, p. 4. According to information supplied from **London** in 1977 a Spitfire cost £UK5,000, ie, £NZ6,250, in 1940.



<sup>163</sup> *Evening Post*, 12 Jul 40, p. 9

<sup>164</sup> *Press*, 5 Jul 40, p. 14; *NZ Herald*, 6 Jul 40, p. 10

<sup>165</sup> *Press*, 5 Jul 40, p. 14

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jul 40, p. 6

<sup>167</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 Aug, 3 Sep 40, pp. 15, 6

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Aug, 3 Sep 40, pp. 8, 6

<sup>169</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 23 Aug 40, p. 6. They raised £5,000;  
*Evening Post*, 5 Dec 40, p. 14

<sup>170</sup> *Evening Post*, 29 Aug 40, p. 13

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 30 Aug 40, p. 3

<sup>173</sup> *Southland Times*, 17 Aug 40, p. 4; for Empire; Air Training Scheme, see Thompson, H. L., *New Zealanders with the Royal Air Force*, vol I, pp. 209–11

<sup>174</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 26 Aug 40, p. 8

<sup>175</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 30 Aug 40, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 5 Sep 40, p. 12; *Evening Post*, 3 Sep 40, p. 6

<sup>176</sup> *Evening Post*, 21, 29 Aug 40

**177 *Ibid.*, 30 Sep 40, p. 8**

**178 *NZ Herald*, 6 Sep 40, p. 6**

**179 *Press*, 6 Dec 40, p. 4**

**180 *Auckland Star*, 25 Sep 40, p. 9**

**181 *Press*, 6 Dec 40, p. 8**

**182 *Evening Post*, 8 Mar 41, p. 11 [ sic. £156,767]**

**183 *Ibid.*, 5 Apr 41, p. 11**

**184 *Press*, 2 May 41, p. 10**

**185 Knight, Group Captain M. W. B. DFC, Legion of Merit (US),  
RAF: b Dannevirke 1916; joined RAF 1935, cmd No 485 (NZ)  
Squadron from 1941**

**186 *Evening Post*, 7 Jun 41, p. 9**

**187 Thompson, p. 212**

**188 *Evening Post*, 8 Jun 40, p. 13**

**189 *NZ Herald*, 13 Jun 40, p. 11**

**190 *Otago Daily Times*, 7 Aug 40, p. 6**

**191 *Auckland Star*, 30 Sep 40**

<sup>192</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Sep, 10 Oct 40, pp. 11, 7

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Sep 40

<sup>194</sup> *Auckland Star*, 2 Oct 40. p. 10

<sup>195</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 Jun 41, p. 10

<sup>196</sup> *Auckland Star*, 3 Apr 43, p. 6

<sup>197</sup> **Hercock, Thomas William, OBE('46) (1889–1965): Mayor Napier 1938–50**

<sup>198</sup> *Dominion*, 16 May 40, p. 11

<sup>199</sup> **Williams, Charles W.: Napier resident from birth, one of city's oldest residents; d 1953**

<sup>200</sup> *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 30 May 40, p. 8

<sup>201</sup> **Williams to Min Int Aff, 8 Nov 40, IA 173/1, pt 3**

<sup>202</sup> **Shakespeare, Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey, PC, 1st Baron ('42) (1893–1980): MP ( UK) 1922–3, 1929–45; Parly Sec Min Health 1932–6, Bd Educ 1936–7; Parly & Financial Sec Admlty 1937–40, Dept Overseas Trade 1940, Parly Under-Sec State Dom Aff & chmn Children's Overseas Reception Bd 1940–2**

<sup>203</sup> **Report to Committee on Homes for British Children, 22 Nov 40, p. 1, IA 146/1**

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9

**205** *Bay of Plenty Beacon*, 28 Jun 40, quoting statement by Under-Secretary for the Dominions

**206** Some mothers in reception areas in **Britain** had proved to be a tougher problem than the children.

**207** *Timaru Herald*, 10 Jul 40, p. 6

**208** *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 12 Jun 40, p. 7

**209** *North Auckland Times*, 2 Jul 40

**210** *Evening Post*, 27 Jun 40, p. 13

**211** *NZ Herald*, 5 Jul 40, p. 8

**212** *Ibid.*, 20 Jul 40, p. 12

**213** *Ibid.*, 30 Aug 40, p. 10

**214** *Ibid.*, 3 Jul 40, p. 12

**215** *Press*, 2 Jul 40, p. 8

**216** *Wanganui Herald*, 1 Jul 40, p. 6; *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 10 Jul 40, p. 6; *Rotorua Morning Post*, 29 Aug 40; *Press*, 3 Sep 40, p. 8

**217** In the two shipments of children in 1940, there were 82 girls and 120 boys

**218** *Taranaki Herald*, 5 Jul 40; *Taranaki Daily News*, 10 Jul 40,

**p. 6; Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune, 4 Jul 40**

**219 Truth, 3 Jul 40, p. 11; NZ Observer, 26 Jun 40, p. 6; Palmerston North Times, 3 Jul 40, p. 6**

**220 NZ Herald, 14 Jun 40, p. 10**

**221 Timaru Herald, 11 Jul 40, p. 10**

**222 Evening Post, 28 Jun 40, p. 8**

**223 Report of Interdepartmental Committee on Homes for British Children, nd, IA 146/1**

**224 Evening Post, 28 Sep 40, p. 13**

**225 Timaru Herald, 5 Oct 40, p. 8**

**226 NZ Herald, 8 Oct 40, p. 9**

**227 Evening Post, 3 Oct 40, p. 12**

**228 NZHC, London to Min Internal Aff, 29 Oct 40, IA 173/1/1**

**229 Evening Post, 12 Oct 40, p. 12**

**230 UKHC to Sec Dom Aff, 29 Jan 42, IA 178/247**

**231 Report of Superintendent of Child Welfare, 20 Dec 40, IA 173/1/1; A to J 1943, E-4, p. 3, 1944, E-4, p. 6**

**232 A to J1945, E-4, p. 7**

**233** *Ibid.*, 1944, E-4, p. 6

**234** *Ibid.*, 1945, E-4, pp. 7-8

**235** *Evening Post*, 12 Oct 40, p. 12

**236** *A to J1945*, E-4, p. 8

**237** *Evening Post*, 6 May 41, p. 5

**238** *A to J1946*, E-4, p. 14

**239** Extract from House of Commons official report of 16 July 1940 on Children's Overseas Reception Scheme, read by the British High Commissioner, Sir Harry Batterbee, at a meeting of British Children Reception Committee, [Wellington](#), 4 Sep 40, IA 146/1

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 5 – PACIFISM



## CHAPTER 5

### *Pacifism*

**ALTHOUGH** pacifism was not a subject on which many New Zealanders thought often or clearly, it had two distinct sources. First, there was a small but sturdy stream of religious thought, stemming from the war of 1914–18 and running strongly through the churches, especially the Methodist Church and especially among their young members. This can be traced back to a Student Christian Movement conference at Woodville in 1913–14, where a travelling Quaker speaker caught the minds of several. One, H. R. Urquhart, <sup>1</sup> thereafter set forth in *Men and Marbles* (1917) and many other pamphlets that war could not be reconciled with Christianity. He was gaoled for a year, lost citizenship rights for 10 years, and came to be known as the father of Christian Pacifism in New Zealand. <sup>2</sup> Increasingly at Student Christian Movement conferences during the 1920s and 1930s pacifist discussions roused deep interest, while pacifists came to know and strengthen each other.

Ideas expressed in **Britain** were the second source of pacifist thought, appealing not only to people of religion but to a broad spectrum of those holding socialist and humane ideals. In Britain during the late 1920s the tide of pacifism ran very strongly, in 1929–30 producing—and being augmented by—books telling of slaughter without achievement in a war run on both sides by fools and knaves: notably Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero*, Ernest Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*, Richard Baker's *Medal without Bar*, and, most moving of all, Erich Remarque's translated *All Quiet on the Western Front*, from which an American film was made which some found even more haunting than the book. During the 1930s, anti-war writing, both imaginative and documentary, continued, with Beverley Nichols's expose, *Cry Havoc* (1933), probably the most widely read. The Depression, which shook faith in the established order and its leaders, while showing how unwanted war heroes could become, swelled the tide. In March 1933 at **Oxford** more than 250 élite young Englishmen declared that they would not fight for King and country; in October 1934 Canon Dick Sheppard's <sup>3</sup> *Peace*

**Pledge Union began to gather its 150 000 members totally renouncing war. In June 1935 the results of the Peace Ballot taken eight months earlier showed that more than 11 million Britons wanted continued membership of the League of Nations, nearly 10½ million wanted international armament reduction, more than 10 million supported non-military sanctions against an aggressor, while more than 6½ million would if necessary take military action against aggression. The idea of collective security was replacing absolute pacifism, but people were thinking more about negotiation and economic pressure than of international armed forces. <sup>4</sup>**

**New Zealand echoes of all this were faint and belated. Perhaps one index of public feeling on war and peace may be found in Anzac Day speeches. These began in 1916, a year after New Zealand troops were first tested in the sacrificial fires of Gallipoli, establishing a reputation and a self-regard which they were to sustain through at least two wars. Later, Anzac Day became a strict Sunday-type holiday, a day for remembering all New Zealanders dead or maimed, for telling children of effort and sacrifice and inspiring them in turn towards unselfish service. Speakers of the early 1920s were certain that the British Empire had fought in a righteous cause, but it was the war to end war, and the sacrifices of the dead imposed social obligations on the living. Thus in 1922, General Richardson <sup>5</sup> said that a man did not need a uniform to serve his country. <sup>6</sup> We should go forward to our duty, seeking to sweeten life for the community, said an Australian Gallipoli chaplain, 'Fighting Mac' (Colonel W. Mackenzie), in 1926, adding that in the day of trial we should acquit ourselves like men. <sup>7</sup> Many spoke like the Mayor of Christchurch who in 1924 said, 'May we all prove worthy of what has been done for us, by placing the interests of the community before those of self, and making the Dominion a sweeter and better place for those who will come after us.' <sup>8</sup> There were, of course, a few like Massey <sup>9</sup> who wanted defence maintained so that the British Empire, specially chosen by a Higher Power, might be handed on in growing strength for the benefit of peace and mankind, <sup>10</sup> but as early as 1924 a member of Parliament thought that the reign of peace would be helped if all**

governments prevented the manufacture of munitions by private enterprise. <sup>11</sup>

About 1930, there was a notable cry against war and for the League of Nations. One lieutenant-colonel in 1931 urged training college students to let their charges know something of the horrors of war—of the world's 10 million dead, with nearly as many disabled; of the crippled, the unsightly, the mad; of the overwhelming economic disruption—in order to bring them firmly behind the League of Nations. <sup>12</sup> A **Salvation Army** speaker, after saying that war was hell and settled nothing, regretted that the Motherland, while commendably forgiving war debts, had lately been spending £200 a minute on armaments and 2½ *d* on peace. <sup>13</sup> Another churchman prayed that hearts would revolt not only against the horrors of war but against the greater horrors that cause wars. <sup>14</sup>

In the educational field, also, this shift of feeling was recorded by the *New Zealand School Journal* where, between 1929 and 1933, accounts of Empire glory and sacrifice were succeeded by articles outspoken on the horror and waste of war. <sup>15</sup> In 1930 the successors to Massey's party suspended military training largely as an economy measure, but the Minister of Defence spoke of strong feeling everywhere for world peace and against militarism.

Towards the end of 1935 a writer in *Tomorrow* remarked on the growth of anti-war sentiment 'of the most mixed, the most diverse, frequently the most contradictory character.' Pacifists, supporters of the League of Nations, revolutionary socialists, ultra-left critics of communism, even supporters of **Britain's** imperialism, were jostling one another for leadership of the anti-war movement. <sup>16</sup> Another gauge of the anti-war climate of the mid-Thirties is provided by Colonel T. W. McDonald, an ardent wartime watch-dog of patriotism. Being a candidate in the 1935 election, he was asked if he favoured conscription, and replied 'No, I am dead against conscription. Conscription means lives, and the first thing I say should be conscripted is wealth.' <sup>17</sup>

A New Zealand section of the League of Nations Union arrived modestly, to enlist support for the League's policy. Though the League proposed, as a last resort, collective force against aggression, people thought of it primarily as a means of avoiding war through arbitration and economic pressure. In 1922 there were seven local branches of the section and a Dominion body was set up. It was a numerically small, élitist group with a core of about 2500 supporters and its office holders were highly respectable. <sup>18</sup> Its methods were dignified, being mainly infrequent meetings addressed by distinguished persons, and it had no continuing widespread appeal. But support of the League was advocated by all the churches and, particularly after 1935, by the government. Given this, the Union's limited activity and the absence of vigorous concern for or faith in the League itself were perhaps the measure of New Zealanders' *laissez-faire*, their sense of impotence in keeping the peace of the world.

Since 1911 a Peace Council, fragile but persistent, had sought to coordinate all efforts for peace. As well as the League of Nations Union, the Society of Friends and pacifist churchmen, several peace bodies flickered through the 1930s, with many of the same devoted people belonging to them. The No More War Movement, which grew out of the No Conscription Fellowship in **Britain** during the 1914–18 war, appeared in 1928, refusing support for any war and striving for the removal of all causes of war. In 1934 its membership was 270. <sup>19</sup> At Dunedin in 1935 it had about 50 members, including young men from the churches and university, and but for groundless fears that it had concealed political interests might have had more. <sup>20</sup>

The political interests of the Movement against War and Fascism were scarcely concealed. It arose overseas soon after **Hitler** came to power and appeared in New Zealand early in 1934, beginning in **Auckland**. <sup>21</sup> At Wellington on 4–5 August 1934 interested groups conferred, and its first New Zealand-wide congress of 2–3 February 1935 established an elaborate organisation. <sup>22</sup> While open to all opposed to

war and Fascism, or to war only, it declared support for the peace policy of the Soviet Union as the world's clearest, most effective opposition to war. It had support in some unions, and was lively in mid-1935, according to the *Workers' Weekly*. Membership was frowned on by the national executive of the Labour party in August of that year,<sup>23</sup> and though on Anzac Day 1936 at **Auckland** it produced a sizeable procession and an anti-war meeting,<sup>24</sup> it was too noticeably and confusedly Communist to have any wide support.

The New Zealand Youth Council, inspired by the World Youth Congress, was formed in **Wellington** in May–July 1937, but though admirably intentioned never came alive and evaporated early in 1939. The New Zealand University Students Association in September 1935 tried to test student opinion on peace and war by a questionnaire. Of all students, 49 per cent replied.<sup>25</sup> Of these, 62.26 per cent would resist without question a threatened invasion of New Zealand, 28.66 would not, 9.09 were doubtful. In any war at all, 28.19 per cent would assist **Britain**, 59.19 would not and 12.62 were doubtful. Against a nation declared aggressor by the League of Nations, 87.99 per cent would take economic sanctions, 6.94 would not, 5.07 were doubtful; 42.01 would resort to war, 40.03 would not, 17.96 per cent were doubtful. Replacement of national armies by an international League police force was favoured by 56.91 per cent with 30.61 against it, and 12.48 doubtful. Nearly 93 per cent wanted all-round international reduction of armaments and nearly 89 per cent opposed armament trading for private profit; only 22.37 per cent wanted reduction of British arms alone, 71.73 per cent did not, and 5.9 were doubtful. The revival of compulsory military training in peace time would be opposed by 64.78 per cent, while 31.1 would accept it, and 4.12 were doubtful. If war occurred next day, 27.23 per cent would enlist or urge their friends to do so, 56.15 would not, 16.62 were doubtful; 58.24 per cent would oppose conscription, 31.29 would not, 10.57 were doubtful. For 75.5 per cent, hopes for permanent peace were offered by development of the League of Nations, for 67.25 by general acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount, and for 20.93 by the overthrow of capitalism.<sup>26</sup> This last suggested that

voters were not merely or mainly the radical Left. One of the supervisors, Dr C. E. Beeby, while doubting if the government knew the country's views on war, said that the students' attitude would not represent the country; if it did, expensive education would have been wasted. <sup>27</sup> The *New Zealand Tablet* <sup>28</sup> found in it definite revulsion against useless and commercialised warfare. The *Otago Daily Times* <sup>29</sup> thought that the public would not seriously ponder this college questionnaire, and other papers, <sup>30</sup> beyond remarking a pacifist tendency, reported it briefly and incompletely. Probably most of the people who noticed it thought that it was typical of students, but that students usually grow up.

By 1936–7 faith in pacifism or in the League, never widespread, was wilting and under pressure. 'Are pacifists a menace to peace?' queried the Farmers' Union journal, <sup>31</sup> and it concluded: 'The tragedy is that they are so honest and so sincere about it all. They simply cannot see that the best guarantee for peace is *preparedness*.' At a 1937 Anzac service **Mr Justice Northcroft** <sup>32</sup> held that peace and pacifism were falsely valued, were often downright cowardice, and that for a proper defensive cause the nation must subdue its fears and fight. It was common to deplore war, he said, and many aspects were deplorable, but to the soldier it gave adventure, manly living, and relief from artificial conventions; many to whom the narrow life of good citizens was not satisfying found their manhood and won distinction in war; soldiers, as distinct from hate-filled civilians, had fought each other in a dispassionate spirit, almost of goodwill, 'as profound as it was surprising.' <sup>33</sup> Certainly this drew pacifist comment, <sup>34</sup> but the 'Come on, it's not too bad' note was probably acceptable to many ex-soldiers at this stage of memory, and heartening to younger men. Almost the same comfort was given by **Bishop St Barbe Holland** <sup>35</sup> at **Wellington**. Looking back over 22 years, he said, with time as always wiping out the tragic and beastly, a soldier's life was not so bad—he was carefree, his wife and children were provided for, he was not always in the trenches, there were cheerful things. Soldiers were better men than usual in some ways, unselfish and loyal. He spoke also of the sickening moment before



attack, of mud, gas, wounds, and of the dead, quoting 'Heaven is crammed with laughing boys'; their sacrifice demanded a world free from war, full of justice and brotherhood, and present dangers required men to open their hearts to God. <sup>36</sup> At Auckland there were no speeches, but at **Dunedin** W. Perry, president of the NZRSA, said that victory in 1918 had 'saved us from being hewers of wood and drawers of water' for a foreign power; German colonies had been annexed and mandated and such a fate would surely have befallen New Zealand. Democracy would perish if not prepared to withstand aggressors, but younger men were not making any sacrifices to preserve institutions kept for them by the dead. <sup>37</sup>

By such public but non-political leadership were New Zealanders guided from official pacifism towards the approaching conflict. In April 1939 the Peace Council, moved by Savage's well-hammered plea for a world economic peace conference, organised a petition for it. Many of the 890 bodies that signed—labour groups, school committees, friendly societies, churches, women's organisations, farmers' union branches—did so before the outbreak of war, and it was presented, faithful but late, in December 1939, <sup>38</sup> perhaps exemplifying the straggling, ineffective but persistent nature of peace movements in New Zealand.

Meanwhile, as League-based pacifism withered, two fresh springs of absolute pacifism appeared, the New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society (1936) and the New Zealand Peace Pledge Union (1938), drawing in the veterans of earlier peace organisations.

Inevitably pacifism, both religious and political, became more prominent as recruiting increased. Some pacifists, as individuals within various churches, held simply and passionately that all war was contrary to God's will. Others believed that the fruitless waste and suffering of war grew from the anguish, hate, greed and faulty settlements of previous wars. Many, in varying degrees, combined both streams of thought. Beyond their rejection of war, pacifists had no common set of beliefs; it was essential to them that each must be guided by his own mind and conscience.

The New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society, begun in **Wellington** in April 1936, was deeply Christian and inter-denominational, but found many of its supporters in the Methodist Church—in July 1938 about 50 of New Zealand's 150 Methodist ministers were members; some Baptist and Presbyterian ministers were associated with it,<sup>39</sup> and a few Anglicans. By September 1938 it had 270 members and the secretary, A. C. Barrington,<sup>40</sup> wistfully remarked that the Defence League gained as many members in a month as the CPS did in two years. There were small but active groups in **Motueka**, **Wanganui** and **Palmerston North**, and informal branches at **Auckland** and **Christchurch**. **Christchurch** held its first public meeting in May 1938 and began weekly street meetings in conjunction with the Peace Pledge Union. In Wellington, starting in August 1938, Friday night meetings were held near Courtenay Place preceded, after January 1939, for an hour by a three-man sandwich-poster parade, under city council permit.<sup>41</sup>

The Peace Pledge Union, a branch of Canon Dick Sheppard's Peace Pledge Union, was established in **Christchurch** in mid-1938 and later in **Wellington**.<sup>42</sup> Its adherents were often, but not necessarily, Christian. As 1939 advanced these bodies were active,<sup>43</sup> distributing literature and holding open-air meetings. Most of the ardent pacifists lived in **Wellington** and **Christchurch** but they tried to open branches in smaller towns—thus between March and June 1939 Peace Pledge Union branches were started at **New Plymouth**, **Cambridge**, **Lower Hutt**, and **Masterton**.<sup>44</sup> It could be said that proselytizing pacifists in New Zealand were a very small group of devoted people,<sup>45</sup> of very modest means, trying to put their point of view before a public which mainly preferred not to think about the issue while a fair proportion wrote off pacifists as 'cranks' or worse.

There were other religious pacifists, mostly from minor sects such as Assemblies of God and Jehovah's Witnesses. They did not preach pacifism outside their own churches, and their rejection of war was evidenced in military service appeals and defaulters' camps where they lived quietly, giving no trouble. There were also pacifists convinced on



intellectual not religious grounds that war achieved only destruction, and ready to face defaulters' camps rather than take part in it. There were others who drew their anti-war conviction mainly from distrust of capitalism. They did not, like the pacifists, oppose all war, and many would change their minds after mid-1941, when **Russia** was attacked. Till then they opposed the war as part of the capitalist design to enslave the workers, urging instead that the world's wrongs should be righted by socialist reforms, with **Russia** as the guiding star. They saw the government of **Britain**, actively supported by New Zealand, running the war in the interests of imperialism and the exploiting capitalist class, and strongly suspected that it would be 'switched' against **Russia**.

Christian and intellectual pacifists, in claiming that the policies pursued by **Britain** and **France** were in part responsible for the war, shared some ground with the Communists. By many, pacifists were regarded not only as cranks, but as dangerous cranks, closely linked with communism, the long-standing enemy of New Zealand's whole society, and there was little perception of gradations. Actually, the Peace Pledge Union, while co-operating often with the Christian Pacifist Society, had among its adherents socialists of varying degrees and those whose opposition to war was not derived from passionate Christianity. Its chairman was Gordon Mirams, <sup>46</sup> journalist and film critic, who incurred no penalties, though its secretary, Michael Young, was imprisoned for a subversive pamphlet. Apart from a few public meetings early in the war, the PPU sustained itself mainly through private meetings and newsletters.

The Christian Pacifist Society, as its name implied, drew its vitality from its intense belief that war was contrary to Christ's will. Some of its members believed that they must do their share in making a world in arms hear Christ's call to peace, no matter how sacrificial or futile their witness might appear to the unconvinced. Barrington was its secretary and originally the producer of its *Bulletin*, a newsletter through which its scattered members were informed and strengthened, although the conscience of each member remained independent. Of the *Bulletin*,

**Barrington later said: 'I kept a stencil in my typewriter. Everything went in, as and when I could, higgledy-piggledy, news flashes, jottings, reports, quotes, propaganda. When dispatch was needed there could be anything from one to ten stencils. And what a pain hand-duplicating was!' <sup>47</sup>**

**To reach the non-attached, the passers-by, pacifists depended on open-air meetings sometimes preceded by poster parades; it was no use preaching in a hall to the converted handful. Consequently pacifism was very closely involved with rights of assembly and free speech. When war was declared pacifists did not consider their cause lost, rather that it had become more urgent. They argued that the last war, won though at a great price, had brought only 20 years of uneasy peace; it had clearly achieved nothing that lasted. Was it not time to try the way of peace? The slow pace of the present war was another factor. Did not this slowness suggest that **Germany** too really wanted peace? Besides condemning all war and urging having no part in it, they examined the events leading to the present situation; inevitably this meant criticism of the governments of the Allies and was opposed to recruiting.**

**Prominent in the movement was Ormond Burton, chairman of the Christian Pacifist Society, a Methodist minister remarkable for his social salvage work in a near-slum area of **Wellington**, a former Labour party official at **Auckland**, a soldier in 1914–18, promoted from the ranks and twice decorated for bravery, but long convinced that no war could be justified before God. He held that the Christian Church in its first 300 years had refused to countenance war, but had then compromised with the Emperor Constantine for his support and had become a department of state. The so-called glory of war was that men endured hardship and terror believing that they would save or build something worthwhile, but this was a mirage that fled forever because out of the waste and loss, bitterness, poverty and revenge of each war, new fights arose. The present war was only an incident in a vast movement of the world towards conflict and chaos, which could be countered only by the Cross, by turning the cheek when smitten and resisting evil with the power of**

good. Such a policy would certainly not lead to ease and security, admitted Burton and the other pacifists; it would mean the 'haves' sharing with the 'have-nots', but they thought it the only means by which war could be overcome. It was not possible to distinguish between wars of righteousness and aggression: both sides believed they were fighting for right, but what the Allies regarded as right was based on the arrangements of **Versailles**, which thinking men now knew to be immoral. <sup>48</sup>

For a year before the outbreak, Burton and his colleagues had preached absolute Christian pacifism from their soapboxes at Courtenay Place, **Wellington**. The day war was declared Burton spoke outside Parliament Buildings and with two others was arrested for obstructing the police. He wrote later, 'The police were very courteous and from their point of view exceedingly long suffering. They argued and persuaded and tried to get me to stop speaking. They were so decent that I felt rather a pig at not complying, but from my point of view that would have painlessly yielded the whole right of free speech; so I had to go on.' <sup>49</sup> Remanded in court, they were told that they must promise not to address another meeting, refused, and were sent off to gaol, <sup>50</sup> whence they were speedily released by the intervention of **Peter Fraser**. Two days later, a magistrate, J. L. Stout, <sup>51</sup> decided that the meeting had been hostile, that trouble had threatened, and that Burton and the others, in refusing to stop when asked, had obstructed the police; they were convicted and ordered to come up for sentence if called within twelve months. Inside a week Burton was arrested again on the same charge, and fined £10 on 18 September. Although the City Council had cancelled the Society's permit for meetings, Barrington had quietly held a two-hour one on Friday 15 September. <sup>52</sup>

The charge of obstructing the police was repeated many times in the next few months, Burton and his colleagues claiming the right to speak to quiet meetings, while magistrates found the police entitled to stop any meeting which they thought might turn nasty. From November another charge was sometimes used: obstructing a public street or place.

Thus H. G. Lyttle and two others, on 9 December, were fined £5 each for obstructing blind lanes off Cuba Street in **Wellington** on 17 November 1939,<sup>53</sup> and on 19 January 1940 Burton and Lyttle, together answering seven such charges, were convicted and discharged on five of them and fined £5 and £10 respectively on the others; the Attorney-General deplored 'this stupid desire for self-immolation'.<sup>54</sup> On 25 January Barrington wrote that there had already been 14 prosecutions of pacifists in **Wellington**, and outside **Wellington** he himself had five convictions, all for obstruction,<sup>55</sup> while the *Observer* of 7 February pointed out that Burton had five different obstruction convictions and fines totalling £28. Clearly the pacifists were an acute minor embarrassment to a government which included several conscientious objectors of 1914–18, and was now responsible for the zealous running of a war. The arguments of Burton and his fellows clearly opposed recruiting and were therefore subversive under the censorship regulations of September 1939, but instead they were attacked obliquely for obstruction under the Police Offences Act, 1927. Certainly there were administrative difficulties in these regulations. There was no power of arrest, of stopping a speaker on the spot; it was necessary to lay an account before the Attorney-General and obtain his consent to a prosecution which might convict and punish an offender, but meanwhile he 'could address a meeting for two hours or more and with impunity make one subversive statement after another'.<sup>56</sup> The government was resolved to silence the pacifists, without a clash of principles which would make the dock their rostrum; obstruction charges were rather deflating. The *Otago Daily Times* of 10 January was relieved that the police had 'been able to secure convictions under a law which applies equally in time of peace and in time of war. It would be unfortunate if the emergency legislation should be employed to check free comment ... when the preservation of personal freedom is one of the aims which the Allies have set before themselves.' The *Observer* of 7 February, on the other hand, thought that if the Crown deemed Burton's campaign objectionable, 'let it tackle him in a direct and forthright way, instead of bringing irrelevant charges against him.'

Public and private persons, however, were very ready to attack the pacifists for their doctrines. Some were impatient at their untimely persistence—for instance, a writer to the **Christchurch Press** on 20 November demanded, ‘How much more rope is to be allowed to the so-called pacifists? This is no time to make a hobby of pacifism, to harp on the Versailles Treaty, to make odious comparisons, and, in effect to lay on **Britain** the blame for this war. The Prussian urge for domination is much older than **Versailles**.... Let us get the war over quickly and surely; and then the pacifists may have their turn.’ Some were indignant that pacifists would not fight for the society that nurtured them: what, they asked, would happen to pacifists in **Germany** or **Russia**; and fancy our brave boys going away to fight for such people. Some thought that pacifists should be silenced and all political privileges taken from them during the war.<sup>57</sup> Some, including the Minister of Defence, held that the views of sincere pacifists should be respected unless they tried to influence others.<sup>58</sup> Also, in the public mind pacifists were confused with Communists, who for their own reasons, between October 1939 and June 1941, opposed the war. Christian Pacifists on principle would speak from any platform, but always from their own point of view, as Christians. They thus spoke at peace and anti-conscription meetings, along with those of leftist views.

In January 1940, just as the **First Echelon** departed, Barrington and Lyttle toured the **North Island**, speaking in the open at Palmerston North, **Wanganui**, **Hawera**, **Stratford**, **New Plymouth**, **Te Kuiti**, **Hamilton**, **Auckland**, **Tauranga**, **Gisborne** and **Napier**, meeting various forms of hostility and some support.<sup>59</sup> Being a novelty in most of these places, they excited much attention—thus the *Wanganui Herald* of 3 and 4 January gave them four and a half columns, including a seemingly full report of Barrington’s speech, with questions and answers. The magistrate there, fining Barrington £3 for obstructing the street, said that he was not concerned with the nature of the speech but with the likelihood of an accident. At **Hawera** ‘it was well for the speakers that the police were there for several ... returned soldiers were anxious to go through and deal with the men in their own way’; the police moved the

speakers to an open place where they would not impede traffic, and when the Mayor, reminding the crowd that they had lately farewelled 50 young men, asked them not to listen, he was cheered and the crowd 'speedily dispersed'.<sup>60</sup> At Stratford a woman threw tomatoes, 'although they cost 10d a pound'; one speaker was pushed off the box by returned soldiers, and both were jostled by an angry crowd of 200; police took them to a side street and let them go.<sup>61</sup> At New Plymouth eggs were thrown, the second speaker was silenced by the National Anthem, a rush toppled him off his box, and 'the meeting dispersed as the central figures, with their box, made an inconspicuous exit'. There was no direct physical violence here although, in a desultory barrage of rotten eggs, one or two found their mark, not necessarily on the speakers. The spectators were mostly tolerant and good-humoured except for a few truculent spirits whose challenges to the pacifists to fight were not accepted. The crowd did not disperse immediately, 'thoughts on the subject of pacifism apparently being divided, although unequally'.<sup>62</sup> Te Kuiti's RSA had been forewarned by **New Plymouth** and feeling ran high in a large crowd that hustled the pacifists out of town with threats of the river, although a local clergyman and an unknown person pleaded for a fair hearing.<sup>63</sup> At **Hamilton**, where they spoke before several Army officers, there was 'a certain amount of dissention [*sic*]' before police led the speakers away.<sup>64</sup> Barrington said that he spoke for 25 minutes at **Tauranga**, then closed the meeting because of the action of a small irresponsible section of the crowd.<sup>65</sup> At Gisborne on 11 January he was again fined £3 for obstructing the police. Both the *Gisborne Herald*<sup>66</sup> and Barrington himself reported that interest in the meeting was mild and sluggish. Of the **Napier** meeting, one paper<sup>67</sup> said that it lasted about two hours with many and various interjections from a good-humoured audience of more than 100; another<sup>68</sup> remarked that the visitors' earnestness contrasted oddly with the derisive reception of their views by some 75 people, but there was no real hostility to the men themselves and a very good time was had by all except perhaps the speakers; Barrington called it a 'good lively meeting'.<sup>69</sup>

It seems worth quoting two letters that appeared in the *Gisborne*



***Herald*, one raucous in tone, one milder, as direct examples of how some New Zealanders thought about pacifists; in particular showing how, at different levels, pacifists were linked with Communism, then as now the label of extreme discredit. The first letter said:**

**... I would like to express my disgust that such doctrines should be voiced in [Gisborne](#).**

**We are engaged in a struggle against the forces of tyranny and injustice and the spectacle of an able-bodied man mouthing such weak-kneed drivel is pitiful. When he brings in the name of Christ to bolster up his specious arguments, then he becomes nauseating.**

**If these half-baked intellectuals had their way Nazism would be on the ascendant in New Zealand and the standard of living of which we are so justly proud would very soon be nothing but a memory. The sooner the Government takes action against the sob-sisters, Communists and their ilk, the better for us all. <sup>70</sup>**

**The other writer took a longer, less rugged path to the same conclusions: pacifism had gained ground in England and New Zealand because people loved peace and abhorred war. Pacifist leaders had intensified their propaganda, directed largely towards the young, leading to the shocking New Year resolution of the Methodist Bible Class convention which by 44 votes to 3 had rejected even non-combatant military service. The British Empire, although many things in it needed righting, was making progress, leading the world in justice and freedom; yet a short while ago [Gisborne](#) people, invited to a film on Soviet Russia shown in a local theatre, had been treated to a 'tirade against [Britain](#)'.**

**Similar abuse is to be heard from pacifist leaders. They make light of the persecution, concentration camps, godlessness, etc., in [Germany](#), and expect us to believe that we are probably no better off under our leaders than the German people are under theirs. I have no doubt they are sincere, but I would suggest that years of following the communistic doctrine has blinded them to the main facts and has made them**

intellectually dishonest.

The two pacifists who have been touring the **North Island** have perhaps gained a certain amount of sympathy, so I feel that their true motives for trying to secure support should be made known, that is, not merely because they profess to be Christian but because they hold the same opinions as the Communists regarding the British Empire. <sup>71</sup>

It is interesting that this writer thought that Barrington and Lyttle might have gained some sympathy; the newspapers spoke almost wholly of hostility. The same page that carried the first letter had a report from the *New York Times* saying that freedom of expression in **Britain** after four months of war was amazing compared with that in **France** at the same time or in the **United States** during the last war; recently published articles blamed Chamberlain's appeasement policy for the outbreak of war, and letters in newspapers dwelt more on **Britain's** faults than **Germany's**, while left-wing publications even debated whether the war merited support.

Peace Pledge Union speakers met varying receptions at a few West Coast towns in March. At Greymouth a Friday evening street speaker was pushed off his box in a crowd of about 200, including soldiers on leave, but good-humoured argument continued for nearly an hour, when a 'mere handful of people remained out of idle curiosity despite a drizzling rain.... No police intervention was necessary.' <sup>72</sup> The use of the town hall had been refused by the Council. <sup>73</sup> In the miners hall, Runanga, 200 heard the national organiser, Michael Young, and a local man, speak on the uselessness of war and the need to face past economic mistakes, offering the German people a better deal than they had in 1919. The Mayor, as chairman, spoke proudly of the tolerance and democracy of Runanga. <sup>74</sup> At Blackball on a wet night the same speakers had a small but enthusiastic audience which formed a Peace and Anti-Conscription Council on the spot. <sup>75</sup>

At Rangiora, where a branch of the Peace Pledge Union had been formed in July 1939, a public meeting of about 50 people on 8 April



1940 drew many hostile interjections, and subsequent criticism caused the Union to announce that it would hold no more meetings there. <sup>76</sup> The Rangiora County Council told the North Canterbury Power Board that one of its staff was the PPU's local secretary and asked what disciplinary action the Power Board was taking. The Board said that the man had been severely reprimanded, and drew attention to the loyalty evidenced by its staff's contributions to patriotic funds. <sup>77</sup>

Natural opponents to pacifist meetings were soldiers on leave, returned soldiers and recruiting agents. For groups of soldiers, some drunk and all looking for a bit of excitement, it was good sport to ruffle up the 'conchies' or 'commos' as the pacifists were loosely termed. Interjections, singing, counting out and shoving were the usual methods. The police preferred to arrest the pacifists rather than the disorder-makers, reasoning that it was the provocation of the speakers that made breaches of the peace likely to happen. Realising that the government was embarrassed and reluctant, those hostile to pacifists pressed for action from city councils, which usually contained some persons willing to give the government a lead. Pacifist meetings were part of the rights of freedom of speech and assembly which were tested by different bodies in several places. In Wellington, where pacifists and the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council were strong, with the Communist party much weaker, the two former clashed with authority; in **Christchurch**, again it was the pacifists who tried the issue. At Auckland, stronghold of the Communist party, the battle was shared. At Dunedin neither body was strong enough to hold meetings regularly. The varying attitudes of mayors and city councils in these places were important factors.

In Christchurch, changing attitudes towards the rights of free speech were neatly exemplified. On 2 October 1939 the City Council had resolved to continue issuing permits for street meetings, deciding each case on its merits; it thereupon gave a permit to a combined pacifist committee, while refusing the Communist party and the Christchurch Anti-Conscription League—though the latter, as the *Press* of 4 October

pointed out, was in line with current government policy, while the pacifists were not. There was sturdy advocacy of free speech from some of the councillors, though some others held that small groups should not be allowed to thwart the government and subvert impressionable people.

During January the **Christchurch** RSA, possibly chagrined by poor response to the recruiting campaign, <sup>78</sup> moved, both at their meetings and before the City Council, against the pacifists, who included a strong core of Anglican clergy. After several noisy meetings, on 12, 19 and 26 January, when pacifist speakers had been heckled, pushed off boxes, and escorted away by police, the Council debated the cancellation of their permit. A police deputation was heard in private, several free speech champions changed their minds, and one, **Mabel Howard**, <sup>79</sup> was absent. The Mayor, Labour member R. M. Macfarlane, <sup>80</sup> fervent to preserve law and order, questioned whether the pacifists were a law-abiding body, held that their propaganda was not genuine pacifism but showed an obvious bias towards the enemy, and stated that in **Auckland** pacifists and Communists had spoken from the same platform. 'Hands had been laid on soldiers and the soldiers were going to resent that. When that happened there was a prospect of trouble.' The Council decided to ban pacifist street meetings. <sup>81</sup>

Both the *Press* <sup>82</sup> and the right-wing New Zealand Freedom Association <sup>83</sup> disapproved of local authorities taking away a basic constitutional liberty from one section while leaving it to others, though the *Press* preferred that all political street meetings should be prohibited in war time. A later Council meeting maintained the ban, although **Mabel Howard** vigorously championed free speech, declaring that the Council had been panicked by a little RSA group, and reproached Labour members for scrapping the principles for which party pioneers had fought and suffered: 'They should remember that the Labour movement was built out of suppression.' <sup>84</sup>

In Wellington, the pacifists' permit for meetings had been cancelled in September but they continued their Friday night speaking, although frequently arrested. To the argument that they should use halls, not the

street, they could answer that open witness was their policy and also that halls were not available to opponents of the war. Thus the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council's booking of the Concert Chamber for 18 January was cancelled by the Mayor, and various other halls, though booked, were denied them at the last moment.<sup>85</sup> On 6 February, opening a recruiting rally, Hislop<sup>86</sup> made a fighting speech, attacking subversive propaganda at the so-called pacifist meetings of a group containing several 'gravely deluded' reverend gentlemen who should rather concern themselves with atrocities in **Poland**. 'I believe these people talk of holding a meeting on a piece of Corporation land by the Royal Oak Hotel<sup>87</sup> on Friday. I am going to do my best to see that that meeting is not held. I don't mind what they do in other parts of New Zealand, but if they want a fight in **Wellington** they can have it.'<sup>88</sup> The local *Post* approved: pacifism could be ruled out as not subversive only if it were completely futile and ineffective, but when sincere misguided idealism was joined to cunning Communism one could not afford to believe it would have no effect. Though freedom of speech should be preserved as far as possible in war, it was time that the State stopped this propaganda; if not, local authorities must act.<sup>89</sup>

Later Hislop said that he received appreciative letters from all over the country.<sup>90</sup> The *Post* also received a large batch, of which it published a representative selection.<sup>91</sup> Several approved the Mayor's forceful and courageous speech, one found it a 'violent and undignified outburst', one (W. J. Scott<sup>92</sup>) explained that if the Mayor and those who agreed with him exercised their power to silence dissident views 'they prove rather conclusively that they do not believe in some of the fundamental principles of the democracy they are asking others to fight for. The true test of our belief in democracy comes only when we are asked to allow others to express views with which we passionately disagree.'<sup>93</sup>

Not surprisingly, instead of the usual hundred or so, there was a crowd of several thousand when Burton arrived at the Dixon- Manners Street Reserve on Friday, 9 February. There were also many police: they

asked him to be silent, he refused, and was arrested. He wrote later: 'I barely managed to say, "Ladies and gentlemen" when the blue wave broke over me. I went down with a mass of them on top of me. It was quite the same homely feeling that a half-back has when he goes down under the feet of half a dozen big forwards.'<sup>94</sup> Two other pacifists, Barrington and J. Doherty tried to speak but were rushed away by the police and released.<sup>95</sup> A Communist, W. D. O'Reilly, independently began to speak on freedom of speech and was also arrested. The crowd remained for an hour or so but apart from a few arguments and incipient fights nothing happened. Mayor Hislop arrived, was greeted with cheers and boos, and his brief speech could not be heard for the noise. A witness in a later case, Gordon Mirams, referring to this incident said that there was a lot of opposition when the Mayor spoke, but no hostility earlier.<sup>96</sup> A party of young soldiers enlivened proceedings throughout, several persons fainted in the crush, and the crowd was generally good humoured.<sup>97</sup> In court, the police explained that when they arrested Burton there had been no breach of the peace but had he spoken there would have been: J. L. Stout SM, declaring that the police, if they had reasonable anticipation of violence, could stop a meeting at its outset, had the painful duty of sentencing both Button and O'Reilly to a month's hard labour.<sup>98</sup>

At Auckland circumstances closely linked the pacifists with Communists and free speech supporters. The Communists, who regularly held Sunday afternoon meetings at Quay Street, on 8 January gave the touring **Wellington** team, Barrington and Lyttle, use of their site before their own meeting. The police were courteous and there was applause from the 500-strong crowd, which presumably was at least partly made up of communist supporters, opposed to the war. Immediately after this they went to speak at the Domain, where a centennial service crowd was dispersing. The police here rapidly and rudely interrupted, wrote Barrington;<sup>99</sup> the crowd was hostile, said the police. A woman was stopped from striking Barrington with her umbrella; she was not arrested, but the pacifists were fined for obstructing the police.<sup>100</sup> On 26 January at Newmarket Reserve, from a crowd of about 70, there were

many interjections but no suggestion of serious disturbance, and when Burton and C. R. Howell were led away but not arrested by the police, a man from the crowd mounted the soapbox, shouting, 'As a private citizen I have just seen an example of what we are fighting against in **Germany**— Hitlerism—and as a believer in free speech I protest.' <sup>101</sup>

On 28 January, before the start of the communist meeting at Quay Street, Burton was speaking 'in deprecatory terms of Mr Chamberlain and disparagingly of the very causes for which men were going to war' when a group of soldiers, who had already been asked by the police not to make disturbances, surged round him, knocking him off his box, and one scuffled briefly with a civilian. Burton was warned to stop, arrested, and later fined £13 on two obstruction charges. The soldiers, said the magistrate, probably came to disturb the meeting, some were affected by liquor but not drunk. 'The stage was all set for a nasty bit of trouble. The police had a bounden duty to perform and they adopted the best course by arresting the accused.' <sup>102</sup>

The press and various other bodies called for government action against the subversion of both pacifists and Communists. Thus in the *Evening Post* on 10 February the National party caucus called the government's attention to the subversive activities of certain persons and organisations, and the National Council of the Federated Saddlers, Bagmakers, Canvas Workers, Umbrella Workers, Sailmakers, Riggers and Related Trades Union, declaring itself steadfastly behind Parliament and the war, concluded trenchantly: 'Take warning. Be ye not misled by pacifists, be they termed Christian or otherwise, nor fooled by the babble of anti-conscription opportunists. Quit ye yourselves like men in this war. The battle is one for the welfare of mankind the world over.' <sup>103</sup>

The Government was moving. On 25 January 1940 the Attorney-General had broadcast that while the government had not expected everyone instantaneously to realise that loyal men must all stand together to defend the Commonwealth, there had been ample time for reasonable and loyal minds to accept the new realities. The government would remain tolerant of legitimate comment or criticism on public

affairs, but it would not tolerate utterances 'designed to distract, divide or disturb' people in their war effort. He went on to give examples <sup>104</sup> of statements subversive under the Censorship and Publicity Regulations of September 1939 that pointed clearly to Communists but applied also to pacifists. Pacifists also had criticised Chamberlain, and denied that the cause of the Allies was any more righteous than that of the Germans, and they certainly intended to 'prejudice the recruiting' of the forces; yet they were not prosecuted under these Regulations.

The Labour Statement on War Policy of 21 February declared for freedom of speech and opinion, but added: 'Freedom of speech does not mean freedom to disorganise traffic by holding open-air meetings in busy streets or to wilfully court disorder, but facilities should be provided for meetings in suitable selected places approved by the recognised authorities to enable the expression of opinion by those who are willing to abide by the laws of the country.' Next week new Public Safety Emergency Regulations (1940/26) (which must have been shaped before this Statement was issued) appeared. As before, prosecutions for subversive statements had to be authorised by the Attorney-General, but such statements now included, besides those against recruiting, those promoting resistance to any law relating to military service (which could, of course, mean conscription, still five months away). Further, the police could now prohibit or stop any procession or any meeting in a public place or elsewhere if they thought the procession or meeting likely to be injurious to the public safety, and arrest without warrant any person involved. Fraser, introducing these regulations, clearly referred to recent pacifist meetings but subtly linked them with 'persons, some openly agents of a foreign Power'. <sup>105</sup>

That same day H. G. Lyttle was charged with obstructing the police at the Manners Street Reserve. It was, said Stout, sentencing him to three months in prison, time to deal with such offenders without kid gloves. People were getting restive because of this antirecruiting campaign under the guise of Christian pacifism, and the police knew that if these meetings continued there would probably be disorder as



different sections of the crowd were likely to come to blows. The police claimed that during the past three or four weeks a decidedly hostile attitude had been taken towards the pacifists. <sup>106</sup>

In the appeal from this verdict a witness, R. I. M. Burnett, <sup>107</sup> said that the crowd was so orderly he had carried a dozen eggs through it, and he thought that it had been the action of the police which had caused the crowd to surge forward. **Mr Justice Johnston** <sup>108</sup> upheld the sentence: the police should not only quell riots but prevent them; he did not for a moment believe that the police were concerned with Lyttle's opinions but it would be sheer lunacy for them not to take cognisance of the fierce resentment his views would now arouse in soldiers or their friends; Lyttle was honest and courageous but obtuse; he and his society should express their opinions in a retired place, remote from people likely to resent them. <sup>109</sup>

On 29 March Burton, coming to the same Reserve, was told that he could not speak because the police anticipated trouble. He said to the small crowd, 'The words of our Lord Jesus Christ call us to peace', and was arrested for obstructing the police. In court the police said that for more than two months whenever the pacifists spoke it was necessary to have extra men on duty, and they had been warned that this evening there would be organised opposition from the Army and **Navy**; they admitted that there were no soldiers present, nor any formed body of returned soldiers, when Burton was arrested. Several defence witnesses said that the meeting was very quiet—'as orderly as a **Salvation Army** prayer meeting'. Stout, complaining that it was very hard to know what to do with a man who should know better, and that as the war progressed the likelihood of trouble would increase, sentenced him to three months in prison. <sup>110</sup>

On appeal before the Chief Justice, Sir Michael Myers, <sup>111</sup> to test the whole matter Burton said, first, that beginning very gradually about Christmas there had been increasing interference from soldiers, whom the police allowed almost any latitude, while they warned, removed and arrested speakers; he thought that this would have been checked if the

military authorities had been consulted. Secondly, he thought that the police were in a difficult position under conflicting orders and with an unfamiliar problem: they wished that the meeting would be hostile, for then their course would be plain, and this wishing coloured their perception. Finally, if the police were to close any political meeting because they thought that a violent group might attend, there would be a very grave abuse of free speech.

Myers held that police apprehensions were reasonable in view of the situation and the Christian Pacifist Society's total rejection of war and even non-combatant war service. He was very sorry to see a person of Burton's attainments, education and culture in this position, through his persistent refusal to look things in the face and see for himself that his doctrines were likely to offend and insult soldiers and their friends. The penalty was not excessive. <sup>112</sup>

This case <sup>113</sup> had persisting importance for New Zealand civil liberties. Had Burton and other pacifists been gaoled for subversive statements under emergency regulations, their cases would have had no legal significance after the war. But by applying a-section of the Police Offences Act, under wartime tensions, and establishing the right of the police to stop any action, however orderly in itself, because the action might produce hostility, a wartime expedient was built into civil law. *Burton v. Power* remains, like an erratic boulder dropped by a retreating glacier, in the peacetime legal landscape.

The pacifists gave up street speaking for a while, withdrawing to private study groups. It is hard to guess how far the public conscience was troubled by their prosecutions—always remembering that in New Zealand, as elsewhere, the public conscience is housed in very few persons. But those who knew Burton in particular—his fine record and personality, his devotion to his God and to his needy unsuccessful people—were uneasy that such a man was sent to prison, and on the issue of free speech. Obviously newspapers would be unlikely to publish protesting letters, but in the provinces a few appeared—for example, one



in the *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 6 April, quoting Savage's statement that it would be terrible if those overthrowing Nazism themselves went Nazi, sacrificing liberty on the altar of efficiency; Burton and the men of HMS *Achilles* both thought that they were doing their duty to God and the right, but one was dishonoured and prosecuted, while the sailors were feted. A few other letters warned that Nazi-like authority could appear outside **Germany**, and one quoted Sir Herbert Samuel, <sup>114</sup> Home Secretary in 1916, as saying that there might be cases when the most patriotic service in time of war would be to arouse public opinion to demand speedy peace. <sup>115</sup>

It is clear, however, that on the issue of free speech the majority of New Zealanders accepted without much demur the doctrine that freedom must be curtailed to be preserved. Others again, though most loth to accept war, were perplexed and defeated by the inadequacy of the pacifist argument in the face of Nazi barbarism, reports of which steadily stippled the newspapers. 'Pacifism,' pronounced magistrate W. R. McKean <sup>116</sup> at the end of April, 'at the present time cannot lead to a peaceful examination of differences. It can lead only to abject surrender to Nazi aggression.' <sup>117</sup> Though regretfully, many had to agree. No doubt many echoed the Bay of Islands farmer who declared robustly, 'Pacifists who maintain their ideals at the present time are cranks'; all people were probably pacifists at heart, but there were times when all had to scrap their ideals. <sup>118</sup> Pacifism and free speech, linked ideas, were luxuries which should be sacrificed willingly to the war effort.

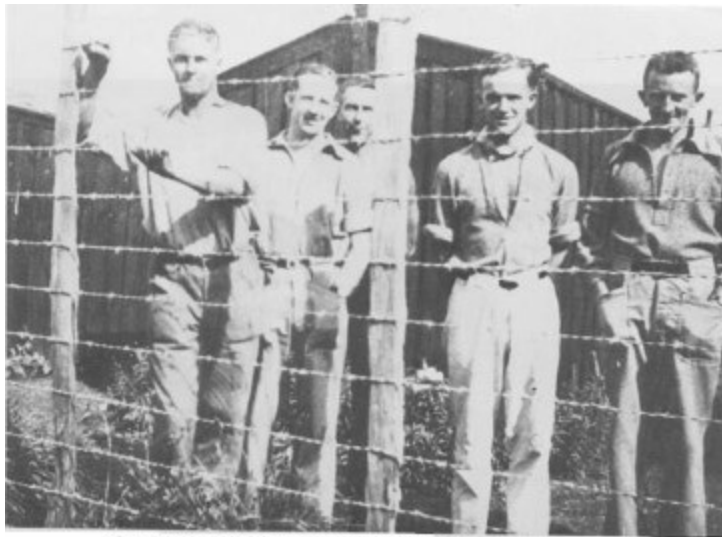
Pacifists were silent for a few months after the Supreme Court <sup>119</sup> in April 1940 upheld the three-month sentences on Burton and Lyttle. <sup>120</sup> It was difficult for them to have public meetings elsewhere, as newspapers would not print advertisements and only the trades halls would now receive them. In several towns besides **Wellington**, however, Christian Pacifists, often loosely associated with the Peace Pledge Union, maintained fellowship and purpose by meetings in private homes, notably in **Christchurch** and **Auckland**, but also at **Hamilton**, **Wanganui**, **Palmerston North**, the Hutt Valley, and **Motueka**. <sup>121</sup>

Since 1938 the Wellington City Council had permitted three CPS members on Friday evenings to walk the streets wearing sandwich-board posters, paying a fee of 1 s per person per hour. These parades were banned in October 1939, but persisted intermittently and were continued fortnightly during May and June 1940, often by girls. The slogans on the posters were carefully chosen; sometimes a traditional statement such as 'War is a sin against God and a crime against humanity', sometimes taken from the words of Christ or St Paul, sometimes from Robert Semple in 1916.<sup>122</sup> It must be remembered that placard-bearing was not then common, and for three people to walk the streets bearing their message on sandwich-boards, 'being conspicuous' and objects of derision to many, demanded devotion and resolve unknown to many demonstrators 40 years later. There was also the risk of being tackled by irate citizens or the police. Repeatedly boards were seized and torn by citizens, actions



Peter Fraser

**Peter Fraser**



Conscientious objectors in a detention camp.

### Conscientious objectors in a detention camp

Conscientious objectors.



### Conscientious objectors



Liberty Loan poster.

### Liberty Loan poster



Sheep droving in the Wairarapa.

**Sheep droving in the Wairarapa**

Draught horses in Awatere Valley, Marlborough, 1945.



**Draught horses in Awatere Valley, Marlborough, 1945**



Parliament grounds dug up for air raid shelters, 1941.

**Parliament grounds dug up for air raid shelters, 1941**

Entrance to an air raid shelter in Parliament grounds.



**Entrance to an air raid shelter in Parliament grounds**



Hutt Road, showing headlight restriction notices, 1943.

**Hutt Road, showing headlight restriction notices, 1943**

Installing blackout curtains.



**Installing blackout curtains**



Race meeting at Trentham, March 1943.

**Race meeting at Trentham, March 1943**

Soldiers working on the waterfront at Auckland.



**Soldiers working on the waterfront at Auckland**



The Somers Battalion, Home Guard, on a route march from Petone to Eastbourne, 1943.

**The Somers Battalion, Home Guard, on a route march from Petone to Eastbourne, 1943**



not always approved by others present, and at the end of June the police, anticipating breaches of the peace, threatened arrest. <sup>123</sup>

When Burton emerged from prison in July 1940, the mild phase of the war, when the idea of peace negotiations was not quite fantastic, had ended; fighting was on and conscription was in. During August the more militant pacifists still urged that fighting should cease and a world peace conference be called. In advance, **Britain** should offer concessions, such as immediate freedom for **India** and aid in reconstructing **Europe**; there should be self-determination for all colonial people, including those of mandated territories, open trade, open diplomacy, and disarmament. It was admitted that such offers were harder to make than earlier, but it was never too late. <sup>124</sup> A planned series of public meetings in the Wellington Trades Hall was prohibited by the police, whereon the CPS wrote to the Prime Minister that if the ban were sustained they must again take to the streets. <sup>125</sup> But even within the Society opinion was much divided, pacifists unlike Communists being strongly individual in thought and action. 'Many thought that we had done all that was possible', wrote Burton in his autobiography, <sup>126</sup> 'and all that we could do now was to remain quiet, help the conscientious objectors, where possible put in a quiet word, and meet needs arising from the war wherever there was opportunity. Others of us thought that irrespective of consequences we should go ahead.' All, however, felt that they should help in any way possible with the war's massive suffering.

To explore possibilities in this direction and to make their attitudes plain, in November 1940 a deputation met the Prime Minister and the heads of National Service, Censorship, and Police. Burton explained that their opposition to war was absolute and they must bear witness to it, but they would be frank and open with the authorities. They would do anything they could, without military control, towards healing the wounds of war and helping the community, such as working with nerve cases or venereal disease patients. He also explained that some of their young men, believing that they should not shelter behind church resolutions, would not appeal against military service, but take the path



of defaulters. They expected gaol, but hoped when they came out to attempt community farming, and hoped also that the government would not obstruct their efforts thus to build a unit which might be of real service to the community. <sup>127</sup>

The Prime Minister was 'at his very finest—courteous, controlled, and with a touch of real greatness', wrote Burton.

He showed sympathy and understanding but said he had to be practical. An individual conscientious objector who was willing could be given alternative service but when a person believed it his job to convince people that the war was wrong a conflict inevitably arose. The State was representing the general consensus of opinion of the people, and was compelled to uphold these views. They could not permit anything which was subversive of the country's war effort.... The salvation of the country depended upon winning the war, and it was necessary for the Government to prevent the expounding of doctrines which would strike at the foundations of the State. In their view it was better to suffer a temporary handicap in regard to expression of opinion rather than a permanent extinction of freedom of opinion. <sup>128</sup>

It was made clear that indoor meetings would not be permitted.

The activists decided that they must resume sacrificial witness against the war, speaking at the Methodist memorial in Manners Street, **Wellington**, on Friday nights, and volunteers were invited from all over the country. 'You do not need to be a good speaker as there will not be time for many words. You will be arrested and sentenced.... This may break your career and lose you your job but it will help to keep a light burning.' <sup>129</sup> In court they would not use counsel, but would again bear witness, stating their principles and hoping to be reported in newspapers.

The NZCPS secretary, Barrington, wrote a cyclostyled notice 'Defend Peace and Freedom at Home' which urged that evil should be met not by war but in 'the Christian way of unremitting friendliness, co-operation

and goodwill, at whatever risk or cost'. He declared the Society's right and determination to speak out, despite 'the totalitarian usurping of power by the State acting in the fear and frenzy inseparable from those who wage war'. As free men preserve their freedom only by exercising it, Friday meetings in Wellington would resume on 7 March 1941 at the Trades Hall. If locked out, pacifists would speak in the streets and continue each week while there was a volunteer to face arrest and imprisonment. Copies were circulated modestly, and one was sent to the **Wellington** police. <sup>130</sup>

On 7 March, in Manners Street, isolated cries of 'Give him a fair go', 'Where's our freedom of speech', greeted the arrest of Arthur Carman, <sup>131</sup> well-known citizen, Methodist lay preacher and bookseller. <sup>132</sup> Two months later in the Supreme Court he was charged with holding a prohibited meeting <sup>133</sup> and with publishing a subversive statement. He had enclosed about a dozen copies of 'Defend Peace and Freedom at Home' with his accounts, and eight were intercepted in the post. The jury held that his single statement 'We have been prohibited from the Trades Hall' did not amount to holding a meeting, whatever his expressed intentions may have been, but he was convicted on the second charge and received the maximum sentence of a year in prison. <sup>134</sup>

Meanwhile on 14 March, a 21-year-old school teacher, J. H. Woodley, had uttered his few words and on 9 May was sentenced to six months for attempting to hold a prohibited meeting. <sup>135</sup> On 21 March Barrington took the stand, was arrested, and in due course he was awarded a year's imprisonment both for holding a prohibited meeting and for publishing a subversive document, his cyclostyled notice. <sup>136</sup> After D. Silvester on 28 March made his brief witness, he was first sentenced in the Magistrate's Court to three months on the familiar charge of obstructing the police, then sent to the Supreme Court for holding a prohibited meeting, as were the speakers for the next four Fridays—J. R. Hamerton, J. Doherty, O. E. Burton and J. W. Boal. At Silvester's first trial on 2 April, J. H. Luxford SM <sup>137</sup> remarked that the law seemed inadequate. Christian

pacifists had become an asocial body because of their obsessions and their honest but, to the normal person, erroneous interpretation of Scripture; prison was not the place for them, but authority would be justified in putting them out of the way for the duration. It was, he said, almost Gilbertian that they should defy the law and get crowds out week after week while each time only one person was arrested. He had been told that there were 500 CPS members; if they all volunteered the process could continue for 10 years. <sup>138</sup>

No doubt trying to get at the root of the problem the police, when they charged John Hamerton with obstructing a policeman on 4 April, also charged Burton with aiding the offence. For this Burton was on 23 April sentenced to three months' gaol. On a further charge of obstruction, when he himself spoke on 18 April, he was sentenced to an additional three months. <sup>139</sup>

On 5 and 9 May these five speakers were convicted on the Supreme Court charge of holding prohibited meetings. <sup>140</sup> As they refused to be represented by counsel, and as a phrase in the Emergency Regulations Act 1939 stated that no person should be punished twice for the same offence, <sup>141</sup> the Chief Justice required that the Court of Appeal should decide whether this offence was substantially the same as that for which they had each already been sentenced by the magistrate. On 10 and 11 June, with counsel E. S. Parry, instructed by the Crown, appearing for the prisoners, five judges—Myers, Blair, <sup>142</sup> Callan, <sup>143</sup> Kennedy <sup>144</sup> and Northcroft—considered the legal problems. The pacifists could not follow the intricacies, but they enjoyed the spectacle: 'Everything was very homely and jolly.... The old gentlemen were very much like so many puppies with a good smelly bone', wrote the irreverent Burton. 'Strings and strings of precedents were quoted on both sides.... No attempt was made to get down to the real inwardness of it all as to what was just and fair and right.' <sup>145</sup> The double conviction was finally deemed proper; accordingly Burton, the 'head and forefront' of the movement, was sentenced to 11 months in prison and the others to five and six months, concurrent with the terms they were already serving. <sup>146</sup>

Meanwhile on 9 May, to counter the jibe that the attempted speeches and resulting sentences were a 'funk-hole' for men liable to be called in the ballot, <sup>147</sup> a young woman, Connie Jones, had spoken. She was charged only with obstruction because, said the police, they were being as considerate to her as possible. <sup>148</sup> The next three speakers, H. R. Bray, B. C. Dowling <sup>149</sup> and R. J. Scarlett, were treated likewise, as the prohibited meeting charge was then being referred to the Court of Appeal. <sup>150</sup>

On every Friday, except two, from 7 March to 6 June 1941 a Christian Pacifist demonstrated in **Wellington** and was arrested, sometimes before crowds of two or three hundred. In June, with 12 speakers under sentences ranging from three to twelve months, the **Wellington** meetings paused. They were renewed for a few weeks in October–November. John Doherty, just out of prison, told the police on 24 October that he would speak that evening, carrying on from where he had been interrupted six months earlier. He did so and was returned to prison for three months for obstructing, being followed on succeeding Fridays by J. Willets, D. Silvester again and A. Shearer, all duly arrested. <sup>151</sup>

Public witness was again taken up at **Auckland**, with speeches in the Domain on five Sundays of November and December 1941. No disorder occurred, for speakers were not allowed to get past their Bible-reading preliminaries. All five were sentenced to three months gaol for obstructing the police. <sup>152</sup> On the further charge of holding prohibited meetings Mr Justice Fair, <sup>153</sup> speaking of their intellectual and religious arrogance and taking into account their previous sentences for similar offences, sent Boal and Bray to prison for 10 months, concurrent with their lower court sentences. <sup>154</sup> To C. R. Howell, who had also published a pamphlet <sup>155</sup> and who made a 90-minute speech from the dock, Mr Justice Callan gave 12 months for the pamphlet, cumulative on the three he was already serving, and 10 for the prohibited meeting charge, concurrent with the other sentences. He remarked that Howell had considerable facility of expression, both in speech and writing, and it

was the plain duty of the Court to keep such a person quiet in war time. The other two speakers, J. Riddell and Hamerton, were not charged twice. <sup>156</sup>

At the **Wellington** trial of Silvester on 10 November 1941, the magistrate, J. L. Stout, remarked that if the leaders of the movement had been interned for the duration at the start of the war, much trouble might have been saved. Burton himself wrote later:

I think the Government from its own point of view was wrong. Immediately after my first meeting and without trial, I should have been removed—with Barry [Barrington] and our families—to the smallest of the inhabited islands of say the Cook group. We should have been given shelter and rations. If I was willing to teach the local school I should have been paid. Occasionally small notices should have appeared in the Press saying what good work I was doing with the children—but every line of communication with the outside world should have been cut. <sup>157</sup>

Short of such decisiveness, the police and armed forces appeal boards did what they could piecemeal. Michael Young, secretary of the Peace Pledge Union, whose conscience appeal had been dismissed and who served three months for failing to report, <sup>158</sup> was in May 1942 given two years' hard labour for subversive publishing (including Laval-like statements about **Britain** leaving **France** in the lurch). The Chief Justice said that the appropriate penalty would be incarceration for the duration and deprivation of civil rights for a lengthy period. <sup>159</sup>

Barrington, emerging from prison in February 1942, was immediately charged again with subversive publishing in the first *Bulletin* after his release, No 38. This *Bulletin* was throughout fairly mild, the identity of its editor confused: it was compiled by the **Auckland** group which had run the publication while Barrington was in prison; as the Society's national secretary, his home address was reinstated on the heading of *Bulletin* W38 and he was asked to write on how he then felt about things. His article, after remarking on the imprisonment of Howell, who had lately been CPS secretary, and on Howell's current trial

for a document headed 'Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men', <sup>160</sup> was chiefly concerned with the attitudes of pacifists both in their inner lives and towards Emergency Precautions activities, which lately had been made compulsory.

Barrington wrote that the war makers, who had enlarged their operations tremendously, talked in terms of tanks and planes, not of human misery. Pacifists needed a 'deepening sense of identification' with the world's suffering, in two ways. They should imaginatively think of, 'feel', the individual suffering of individual families like their own, Belgian, German, British, Russian or Japanese, or of a town caught in the blast of war. They should also identify

with the war makers themselves, the Hitlers, Stalins, Churchills and the others, and the millions of lesser lights, the soldiers who honestly feel they are fighting for noble ends and the greater number who fight because they are driven. We cannot share their war making in any way, we must continue to win them and all the world to peace, but we must always remember that our own sin and insufficiency, our own failures in charity, our own frequent violence of mind or of spirit, our own selfishness and compromise, our poor showing forth of the Christian life have helped to make the war and the war makers what they are. A big part of our work for peace must always be the bold showing forth of life as it should be in 'the good society'. 'Sensitiveness' is the key to the core of the matter. It is necessary continually to test ours in relation to those nearest to us, to prepare to love **Hitler** by practising nearer home.

As for fire-watching and EPS work, Barrington wrote that both were part of the organisation of the whole people for the more effectual prosecution of the war, making it less and less possible for the people to ask for peace, and as such he could not share in these activities. But pacifists could put out fires, tend the wounded, or rescue people from bombed buildings. They could work in separate units without becoming part of the general mobilisation and agitation. Such independent units had worked well in England, and had helped to lessen hostility towards



pacifists and conscientious objectors generally.<sup>161</sup> Elsewhere, the *Bulletin* contained reference to a new editor taking over,<sup>162</sup> there were branch notes including discussion of EPS service, comment on the *Auckland* witnessing, a long section of 'Fruit plucked from books', and a request for the names of all members who had appeared before armed forces appeal boards.

Four copies, postmarked 10 March 1942, were picked up by censorship, and Barrington was charged with publishing, or attempting to publish, a subversive document.<sup>163</sup> In the Supreme Court, on 13 May, a jury could not agree; another, on 18 May, convicted him on the second charge.<sup>164</sup> Chief Justice Myers, always punctilious in matters of law, said that certain points should be decided by the Court of Appeal, which heard the case on 10 June and on 28 July quashed the conviction.<sup>165</sup>

Meanwhile Burton<sup>166</sup> had become editor of the *Bulletin*, and he too was charged with subversive publishing, in No 41 of 6 June 1942, written while Barrington's Court of Appeal hearing was pending. The charge rested on some rather Sassoon-like poetry by a young *Waikato* girl, and a strong-toned editorial. This stated that Barrington's two trials were very significant. The war had never been popular: the British government was very vague about its purpose; all the things being said about freedom, democracy and a new world had been said in the last war and everyone knew the troubles that had followed. Ordinary men had no clear idea what they were fighting for: they had been 'bluffed, cajoled, or bullied' into taking part; but without belief men could not continue great suffering indefinitely. Lest Barrington's ideas—that love was stronger than hate and that a man crucified for love's sake was stronger than his executioner—should infect crowds of ordinary people, he had to be put in prison. The time would come when 'like the Russians in 1917, ordinary folk will just go home, and then the slaughter will come to an end.... The first sign of this movement towards sanity may well be that juries of the common folk will refuse to convict on subversion charges men, whose whole wish is for peace and universal brotherhood.' If the first jury had actually acquitted Barrington, or if the second one had



also disagreed, 'it would have been a major disaster for a Government that is leading us along the brimstone track to confusion and chaos. Sooner or later there will be acquittals and then the end of the bloodshed will be near.... The time is coming when men will refuse to continue with the useless, senseless, slaughter.'

Burton wrote out of burning conviction. G. H. Scholefield,<sup>167</sup> who was not a pacifist, noting in his diary on 13 May 1942 that the jury could not agree to convict Barrington, continued: 'I would not be surprised to find that there is a growing feel of uneasiness on the part of the public against these prosecutions. What people are openly calling the gestapo has been prominent in various prosecutions lately and is said to have insisted on some cases being brought against the advice of the government's counsel.'

But for Burton, on 23 October 1942, there was no acquittal. The jury convicted him, with a strong recommendation to mercy, generous in an anxious time.<sup>168</sup> Mr Justice Blair, who was kindly and courteous throughout the trial, acknowledged Burton's honesty—'a lot of mad people are honest'—but said that ordinary people believed it the plain duty of everyone to repel the attacker. There were too many conscientious objectors already, and these statements were intended to attract others. He stressed the duty of rendering unto Caesar what was Caesar's, and explained that although the statutory penalty was a year in prison he could also impose reformatory detention of up to 10 years; he would, however, impose only two and a half years in all, this being his—very accurate—estimate of the length of the war.<sup>169</sup>

The sentence attracted attention in British pacifist circles, and a few notable war resisters took up their pens for Burton. In July 1943, writing to the New Zealand government, three members of the House of Lords, and 14 of the Commons, expressed grave concern at Burton's sentence 'which appears to us to savour of persecution', especially as his statements were made in a duplicated news-sheet for private circulation among people holding similar views. As in [Britain](#) there was still a reasonable and tolerant attitude to the expression of opinion, even of

**opposition to the war, surely New Zealand need not fear allowing the practice of the principles for which the Allies were said to be fighting.**

170

**Not having received a reply by 1 December, they cabled a series of reminders to Fraser, Nash and others. Meanwhile the answer of the Minister of Justice, dated 12 October 1943, which reached England in January, assured Lord Ponsonby <sup>171</sup> and his friends that Burton's case had received careful thought; his character and record made this a 'most painful case' but he had been most persistent despite repeated convictions. New Zealand cherished freedom and justice, but this did not mean licence to incite others to action that would play into the hands of its enemies. <sup>172</sup> From America some 18 senior ministers in Protestant churches, including several bishops, wrote on lines similar to those of the peace-men of England. <sup>173</sup> With the normal remissions for good conduct, Burton actually served only 20 months, emerging at dawn on 2 June 1944.**

**This was the last major incident on the pacifist front. Already many of the sacrificial witnesses had gone into defaulters' detention, whence several graduated to prison for non-co-operation. Even with these the armed forces appeal boards displayed their well-known variations: thus the appeal of 40-year-old Arthur Carman, who had a very long and well attested record as a conscientious objector, was dismissed on 4 March 1943 but that of Barrington, several years younger, was allowed by the same board, with the comment that if there were two genuine conscientious objectors in New Zealand, they were Burton and Barrington. <sup>174</sup>**

**Despite the numerous prosecutions and stiff sentences, the Christian Pacifists' candour made their relations with the police oddly amicable. In all the investigations which the police were required to make in respect of this movement it was found that in essential things the organisation adhered to the principles indicated to the Prime Minister, <sup>175</sup> and on the numerous occasions when the law was infringed they displayed a total frankness, both in the commission of the offences and**

towards the investigating authority. <sup>176</sup> It was quite usual, especially during the period of the Manners Street meetings, for the police to telephone inquiring whether there would be a speaker that Friday, adjusting the number of men on duty according to the answer. <sup>177</sup> Police who visited Barrington to examine his typewriter and carry off miscellaneous papers etc were the 'height of courtesy and geniality', and they were served with tea and matching courtesy, <sup>178</sup> though, as Barrington explained later, he did not show them the stencils behind his father's portrait, the files hurriedly shoved into his daughter's cot or the pamphlets under a heap of sand in the basement. <sup>179</sup>

Pacifists had no organised line of conduct or belief, each thinking out his own position, deciding for himself what was God's and what Caesar's. Thus the total number was never actively behind any one form of protest. There were many, indeed, who for the sake of their jobs and their families remained quiet, though they gave sympathy and money to those convinced that they must oppose the war at whatever cost. Hopes that the government would be embarrassed by widespread, steady, respectable opposition were therefore disappointed. It was a lonely few who lost their jobs or went to prison, and inevitably these felt some bitterness towards those who did not stand shoulder to shoulder at the outer ditches of war resistance. For instance, *Bulletin* W33 remarked on the success of the State's 'divide and conquer' policy over the order, on 7 June 1941, that married men should at once register for service: all who obeyed assisted conscription to work smoothly, yet only a few refused, so that authority, instead of having to gaoil more than a hundred men, some in prominent positions, had to deal with a mere handful. Again, some when their appeals against military service were dismissed accepted non-combatant service, some disappeared quietly into defaulters' camps, while others found it necessary to resist all the way, courting imprisonment and hardship. Probably those who had strong religious faith, passionate belief in the crucified Christ, could fight the anti-war battle most stoutly, for fight they did. This strong faith, plus the vital personalities and steady work of a devoted core, were perhaps why in police estimation the Christian Pacifist Society was more

**formidable than the Peace Pledge Union, which was described as ‘a rather futile movement of little organisation’ which met in private homes in most of the larger centres, issuing fairly regular newsheets mainly about these discussions and quoting pacifist propaganda from other journals. <sup>180</sup>**

**A fair proportion of Christian Pacifist Society members were clergymen and many other clergy were pacifistic, but the churches with increasing firmness took the view that the war was necessary to preserve conditions in which Christianity could survive, and that church unity must not be endangered by unreasonable preaching. Even the most forthright few were silenced by these pressures. Burton provided a formidable warning. The 1940 Methodist Manifesto on War insisted that neither recruiting propaganda nor pacifism should be preached from pulpits but Burton, claiming that so long as he did not speak against Church doctrines he must be free to speak his mind, refused to accept this limitation, and in February 1942 was dismissed from the ministry.**

**<sup>181</sup> Other peace-minded clergy, while making no secret of their views, forebore to press them too strongly. The majority, knowing that otherwise they would create schism and lose their congregations, remained patiently silent, with how much unhappiness it is impossible to guess; presumably for them as for so many other people, as time passed the war moved out of the sensitive reaches of the mind, was deplored and accepted. Active pacifists stranded by the withdrawal lamented:**

**‘God!’ Shake the church wide awake! Here are men in your own midst gaoled because they dare to be Christian in the face of a Godless State. Some day when someone writes a supplement to Baxter’s book entitled, say ‘We Did Not Cease’ people will read the history of these times and with eyes hot with tears will ask whether these things really happened. But they are happening and the Churches are still more concerned with their tiddly winking problems and their endless discussions on trivialities than they are with the sweep of world trends as evidenced on a small scale by the gaoling of Christian men for being**

**Christian.... No church has raised an official voice about the treatment of C.O.s—and it seems hardly likely they will. No Church has raised a voice about the very dangerous curtailment of liberty of assembly and speech as shown recently in the high hand action of the Auck. City Council with regard to meetings of the Rationalists and the Aid to Russia Committee. The Church will pay heavily for its present unholy alliance with the State. <sup>182</sup>**

**Young men in detention camps bleakly watched those who in Bible classes had helped to mould their ideas now take an apologetic attitude towards them, <sup>183</sup> realising that one after another of these mentors had proved amenable to non-pacifist suggestion, at least to the extent of silence. For some the cup overflowed with the expulsion of Burton. ‘It was the influence of his writing and speaking and the selfless pattern of his living that to more than a handful brought the profound conviction that if men would go all the way with Christ they ... and society itself could be saved in a very practical as well as a mystical sense, and brought the knowledge that for them the choice had narrowed to that of giving Christianity over or going the limit. And yet when the showdown came O.E.B. had to go and go alone.’ <sup>184</sup>**

**Various social pressures beset pacifists. There was of course the distress of parents or friends who could not understand or respect their views. In the first year or so, until manpower needs were sharp, an outspoken pacifist was likely to lose his job, and mere anticipation of this, amid rising prices and Depression-bred fears, made for silence. So too did several subtle but strong influences described in the *Bulletin* of March 1944:**

**While rationally we know that all the alleged arguments to prove us heretics, traitors, cowards and members of a despicable sect are false, are often purely emotional, too often, by our actions and lack of action we show that the propaganda has been effective. Against our convictions we are being forced into silences and whisperings; into keeping our talk on pacifism and all related things among the initiated only.**

**We get new jobs and keep quiet so that we shall not be thought abnormal people. It was so uncomfortable in our last job where we and our views were so well known. Some of our friends are in Detention Camp. Since there is a stigma attached to C.O.s it is so easy never to discuss them, never to speak of corresponding with them, but to keep it a simple secret. And we can always be sure to post the letters ourselves so that no one shall see the addresses....**

**Often we are ashamed. The battle of the emotions has gone against us. The constant attacks have created a situation which we by our silences and artificial conversations admit to be real while denying it strongly with our wills. Not that we advocate constant profession of this one article of our faith.... Whatever be the subject, some of us always get round to pacifism and defeat our cause by sheer monotony. The fault, however, is more often to be found in the silence of shame. <sup>185</sup>**

**Further, a pacifist's adversities were fully shared by his family, which also had to face the disapproval of the community. A woman whose husband was away in the Army had the sympathy of everyone in her loneliness, but it was another matter for one with a husband in detention. Fortunately defaulters were mainly single or childless, but other pacifists had children and were vulnerable through them. Mothers grieved over children returning from school in tears or with shut faces, having been jeered at or avoided. There were of course some 'saints' who did not join in playground teasing, which teachers did not always combat, and a few even stood up for the oppressed. A few pacifist offspring managed to overcome prejudice by excelling in sport. <sup>186</sup>**

**The Christian Pacifists found themselves at odds with most other professed Christians: as the Chief Justice pointed out, either the vast majority had renounced Christianity or there was conceit and vanity in those protesting. <sup>187</sup> Some pacifists were themselves aware that they risked smugness. 'It would be foolish and snobbish', wrote one, 'for the pacifist to think of himself as the only person with a conscience towards war'; among the soldiers, multitudes had thought their way though the**

war situation, hated it, but took part in it as an ugly necessity, suffering discipline, heat, danger, wounds and death for consciences' sake. <sup>188</sup> Early in 1943, the *Bulletin* referred to 'mutual commiseration gatherings of pacifists' protesting about their own wrongs, not those of suffering humanity, and gave a parable. A soldier and a pacifist went to a church to pray. The pacifist was righteous, thankful he was not as other men; he had lost his job but saved his soul. The soldier was humble, saying 'I know it's all wrong Lord, but in honesty I can see no other way. Yet I love thee Lord.' <sup>189</sup> In April 1944 a front page article by a Presbyterian minister, A. A. Brash, <sup>190</sup> speaking of soldiers who were far better Christians than himself, warned pacifists against intolerance, against blundering outspokenness which hardened prejudice against them, and against conceit—'almost every pacifist I know is guilty of spiritual pride, and the pacifist I know best is myself.' <sup>191</sup>

A handful turned towards communal living on farms, pooling resources and joining in work, fellowship and prayer, in hopes of building centres of Christian living and of refuge for jobless pacifists. By August 1940, a tiny fruit-growing community was under way at Moutere, <sup>192</sup> and about April 1942 another was started on a dairy farm at Otorohanga. <sup>193</sup> The latter barely survived the war, but Riverside Community at Moutere was able to grow both in its acres and its people, <sup>194</sup> remaining prosperous and vital 40 years later.

---

<sup>1</sup> Urquhart, Henry Ritchie (1879–1963)

<sup>2</sup> 'Shocked by the khaki election in 1918, I surrendered to Henry Urquhart while still in uniform', wrote Ormond Burton to author, 31 May 1968

<sup>3</sup> Sheppard, Very Rev Hugh Richard Lawrie (1880–1937): Hon Chaplain to HM 1912–29, Chaplain in **France** 1914; Dean Canterbury 1912–29, Canon and Precentor St Paul's Cathedral from 1934



<sup>4</sup> Other indications of this shifting mood were such books as Robert and Barbara Donington's *The Citizen Faces War* (1936), and articles like C. E. M. Joad's 'Pacifism is not enough' in *News Chronicle*, 3 Apr 36, and Ritchie Calder's 'Peace or pacifism?' in *London Herald*, 30 Jul 36.

<sup>5</sup> Richardson, Major-General Sir George, KBE('26), CB('17), CMG('15), Legion d'Honneur, Belgian Croix de Guerre (1869–1938): b England; into **Royal Artillery** 1887; instructor and Dir Artillery NZ Military Forces 1891–1911; NZ rep IGS at UK War Office 1914, QMG Naval Div Gallipoli; GOC Admin, GOC NZ forces in England 1917; GOC Admin in NZ 1919–23; Administrator Western Samoa 1923–8; on return to NZ member Auck City Council

<sup>6</sup> *Evening Post*, 26 Apr 22, p. 8

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Apr, 26, p. 10

<sup>8</sup> *Press*, 26 Apr 24, p. 9

<sup>9</sup> Massey, Rt Hon William Ferguson, PC (1856–1925): b **Ireland**, to NZ 1870; MP (Cons) Franklin, from 1893; PM, Min Lands, Agriculture, Labour 1912–25 (inc Nat govt 1915–19)

<sup>10</sup> *Press*, 26 Apr 23, pp. 13–14

<sup>11</sup> T. M. (later Sir Thomas) Wilford, *Evening Post*, 26 Apr 24, p. 13

<sup>12</sup> Lt-Col W. T. Austin, *Evening Post*, 27 Apr 31, p. 5

<sup>13</sup> Brigadier C. Walls, MC, *ibid.*, 26 Apr 32, p. 5

<sup>14</sup> Canon P. James, *Dominion*, 26 Apr 35, p. 12

**15 Jenkins, D. & S., *Social Attitudes in the School Journal*, p.24**

**16 *Tomorrow*, vol II, 6 Nov 35, p. 5**

**17 *Evening Post*, 12 Nov 35, p. 7**

**18 Attwood, B. M., 'Apostles of Peace: the New Zealand League of Nations Union', research essay in history**

**19 *Peace Record*, Feb 34**

**20 *Otago Daily Times*, 11 May 35, p. 5**

**21 *Workers' Weekly*, 16 Jan 34**

**22 *Grey River Argus*, 5 Mar 35**

**23 *Ibid.*, 17 Aug 35**

**24 *NZ Herald*, 27 Apr 36, pp. 8 (photo), 11**

**25 32 per cent of **Auckland**'s 800 students, 37 of Otago's 1139, 53 of **Canterbury**'s 980, 73 of Victoria's 720, and 100 per cent of Massey's 54 students.**

**26 *Evening Post*, 17 Dec 35, p. 12**

**27 *Ibid.*, 14 Sep 35, p. 27**

**28 *NZ Tablet*, 1 Jan 36, p. 1**

<sup>29</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 19 Dec 35

<sup>30</sup> *Press*, 18 Dec 35, p. 14; *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 35, p. 14

<sup>31</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Aug 36, p. 53

<sup>32</sup> Northcroft, Hon Sir Erima Harvey, Kt('49) (1884–1953): INZEF 1916–19; Judge Advocate Gen NZ Military Forces 1933–5; Judge Supreme Court 1935–; Dir Artillery S Mil Cmd 1940; NZ Judge at International Military Tribunal Tokyo 1946–8

<sup>33</sup> *Press*, 26 Apr 37, p. 8

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 27, 28, 29 Apr 37, pp. 13, 4, 4; *NZ Methodist Times*, 8 May, reprinted in *Standard*, 20 May 37, p. 2

<sup>35</sup> **Holland**, Rt Rev Herbert St Barbe (1882–1966): b **UK**, to NZ 1936; Temporary Chaplain Forces, **France** 1918–19; Bishop Wgtn 1936–46, Norwich ( **UK**) 1946–52

<sup>36</sup> *Evening Post*, 26 Apr 37, p. 5

<sup>37</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 26 Apr 37, p. 6

<sup>38</sup> *Press*, 7 Dec 39, p. 10

<sup>39</sup> *Peace Record*, Jul 38

<sup>40</sup> Barrington, Archibald Charles, FCIS (1906–): Hon Nat Sec NZ Meth Young Men's Bible Class Movement 1933–6, Nat Sec, Pres NZCPS 1936–61; Sec WEA Wgtn 1937–47, Nat Sec 1938–47; Vice-Pres NZ Meth Church

<sup>41</sup> NZ Christian Pacifist Society *Bulletin* (hereinafter NZCPS *Bulletin*), 1938 report; *Peace Record*, May, Jun 38

<sup>42</sup> *Peace Record*, Apr, Jul, Dec 38

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, May 39

<sup>44</sup> *Tomorrow*, vol V, 26 Apr, 10 May, 21 Jun 39, pp. 413, 447, 525

<sup>45</sup> By 3 September 1939 there were 375 Christian Pacifists, and about 200 other pacifists in the Peace Pledge Union. By November 1939 the Christian Pacifists total was not quite 450. NZCPS *Bulletin* W8, p. 4

<sup>46</sup> Mirams, Gordon Holden (1909–66): journalist, *NZ Listener*, on secretariat UNESCO 1948–9, 1959; chmn educ & publicity cmte CORSO; chmn NZ Peace Pledge Union; Censor & Registrar Films, NZ, from 1949

<sup>47</sup> 'Trials of a Pacifist', script of broadcast talks by A. C. Barrington, Oct 69 (hereinafter Barrington broadcast)

<sup>48</sup> *Press*, 17, 18 Nov 39, pp. 2 & 10, 8; *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Nov 39, p. 8

<sup>49</sup> Burton, O. E., *In Prison*, p. 10

<sup>50</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 Sep 39, p. 4

<sup>51</sup> Stout, John Logan (1879–1952): SM 1918–47, from 1938 Wgtn

<sup>52</sup> *Tomorrow*, 27 Sep 39, vol V, pp. 763–4

<sup>53</sup> *Evening Post*, 9 Dec 39, p. 8; *Tomorrow*, 20 Dec 39, vol VI, p. 125

<sup>54</sup> *Truth*, 24 Jan 40, p. 9

<sup>55</sup> *Tomorrow*, 7 Feb 40, vol VI, p. 207

<sup>56</sup> WHN, 'Police Department', p. 215

<sup>57</sup> eg, letter in *NZ Herald*, 31 Jan 40, p. 12

<sup>58</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 18 Apr 40, p. 6

<sup>59</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W10, Report of tour, Jan 40

<sup>60</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 5 Jan 40, p. 6

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Jan 40, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 6 Jan 40, p. 8

<sup>62</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 6 Jan 40, p. 6

<sup>63</sup> *King Country Chronicle*, 8 Jan 40

<sup>64</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Jan 40, p. 8

<sup>65</sup> *Gisborne Herald*, 12 Jan 40, p. 5

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11

<sup>67</sup> *Napier Daily Telegraph*, 13 Jan 40, p. 8

<sup>68</sup> *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 13 Jan 40

<sup>69</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W10, Report of tour, p. 6

<sup>70</sup> *Gisborne Herald*, 15 Jan 40, p. 9

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jan 40, p. 10

<sup>72</sup> *Press*, 16 Mar 40, p. 12

<sup>73</sup> *Grey River Argus*, 5 Apr 40

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Mar 40

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Mar 40

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Apr 40

<sup>77</sup> *Press*, 13, 17 Apr 40, pp. 9, 8

<sup>78</sup> S. G. **Holland** complained that when recruiting meetings started 'bottles were thrown on the stage, pennies were thrown at the speakers, and they were counted out. That actually happened in my beloved **Christchurch**, in my own Cathedral Square.' *Ibid.*, 1 Feb 40, p. 15

<sup>79</sup> Howard, Hon Mabel Bowden (1893–1972); b Aust, to NZ 1903; MP (Lab) Chch East 1943, Sydenham 1946–69; 1st woman Cabinet member, Min Health, Child Welfare 1947–9, Social Security, Child Welfare & in charge Welfare, Women and Children 1957–60; chmn WWSA Chch

<sup>80</sup> Macfarlane, Hon Sir Robert, KCMG('74), CMG('54) (1901–82):

**MP (Lab) Chch South 1939–46, Chch Central 1946–9; Speaker HoR 1957–60; Mayor Chch 1938–41, 1950–8, Dep Mayor 1971–4; 2½ years 2NZE**

**<sup>81</sup> *Press*, 30 Jan 40, p. 6; *Star-Sun*, 30 Jan 40, p. 9**

**<sup>82</sup> *Press*, 31 Jan 40**

**<sup>83</sup> *NZ Herald*, 30 Jan 40, p. 9**

**<sup>84</sup> *Press*, 20 Feb 40, p. 8**

**<sup>85</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W12, p. 3**

**<sup>86</sup> Hislop, Thomas Charles Atkinson, CMG('35) (1888–1965): Mayor Wgtn 1931–44; HC *Canada* 1950–2**

**<sup>87</sup> The Dixon–Manners Street Reserve, at the head of Courteney Place, site of a Methodist Memorial, and the Christian Pacifists' regular place of witness from the end of September 1939 onwards.**

**<sup>88</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 Feb 40, p. 10**

**<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Feb 40**

**<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Mar 40, p. 8**

**<sup>91</sup> Scott, Walter James, CBE('74) (1902–): teacher, educationist, lecturer English, Wgtn Teachers' College 1936–48, Vice-Principal & Principal 1949–65; chmn NZ Council Civil Liberties 1952–72, Pres from 1972; Pro-Chancellor VUW from 1975; member NZ Council Educational Research 1965–73**



<sup>92</sup> *Evening Post*, 8, 10 Feb 40, pp. 12, 10

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Feb 40, p. 12

<sup>94</sup> Burton, *In Prison*, p. 11

<sup>95</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W13, p. 3

<sup>96</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 Apr 40, p. 13

<sup>97</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10 Feb 40, p. 10

<sup>98</sup> *Evening Post*, 12 Feb 40, p. 9

<sup>99</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W10, Report of January tour 1940; Barrington broadcast

<sup>100</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9 Jan 40, p. 9

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Jan 40, p. 12

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 Jan, 1 Feb 40, pp. 11, 11

<sup>103</sup> *Evening Post*, 10 Feb 40, p. 12

<sup>104</sup> eg, calling the war a capitalist struggle, with nothing to choose between the Allies and **Germany**; criticising Chamberlain for embarking on war for inadequate reasons or for sectional interests; advocating the fight on two fronts, against Hitlerism and against New Zealand's economic system.

<sup>105</sup> *Evening Post*, 26 Feb 40, p. 6; see p. 212

<sup>106</sup> *Evening Post*, 26 Feb 40, p. 9

<sup>107</sup> Burnett, Robert Ian McKenzie (1915–): 4 years with 2NZEF; Sec NZ Historic Places Trust 1964–70; Senior Research Officer Dept Int Aff 1971–6; Research Fellow Institute of Criminology VUW 1976–81

<sup>108</sup> Johnston, Hon Harold Leatherstone, KC (1875–1959): Judge Supreme Court & Court of Appeal 1934–45, Court of Review 1935

<sup>109</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 Apr 40, p. 13

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Apr 40, p. 9

<sup>111</sup> to test Myers, Rt Hon Sir Michael, PC, GCMG('37), KC (1873–1950): Chief Justice NZ 1929–46

<sup>112</sup> *Evening Post*, 12, 16 Apr 40, pp. 9, 15

<sup>113</sup> *Burton v. Power*, *New Zealand Law Reports 1940*, pp. 305–8. Power was the police officer leading the prosecution

<sup>114</sup> Samuel, Rt Hon Sir Herbert, 1st Viscount of Toxteth, Liverpool ('37), PC, GCB('26) OM('58) GBE('20) (1870–1963): Chancellor Duchy Lancaster with seat in Cab 1909–10, 1915–16; PMG 1910–14, 1915–16; Home Sec 1916, 1931–2; Leader Lib party 1931–5

<sup>115</sup> *Hauke's Bay Daily Mail*, 20 Apr, 2 May 40, pp. 8, 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 4 Mar 40, p. 9

<sup>116</sup> McKean, William Roy (d 1958): appointed Bench 1919

<sup>117</sup> Quoted in editorial, *Evening Post*, 22 Apr 40

**118** *Auckland Star*, 30 May 40, p. 14

**119** From 1 April 1980 the Supreme Court became the High Court, Magistrates' Courts became District Courts and magistrates were given new status as District Court judges. The work of both courts and the Court of Appeal was reorganised. *Yearbook* 1980, p. 228

**120** See pp. 191– 2

**121** NZCPS *Bulletin* W19, p. 7 (Jul 40), W20, p. 6 (Aug 40), W27, pp 2, 5 (Mar 41), W35, p. 2 (Oct 41), W43, pp. 4–5 (Aug 42)

**122** *Ibid.*, W15, p. 10

**123** *Ibid.*, W14, p. 1, W15, pp. 7, 10, W17, p. 1, W19, p. 1; Report of national conference. Labour weekend 1939, NZCPS papers

**124** *Ibid.*, W20, p. 4

**125** *Ibid.*, p. 8; Barrington to PM, 14 Sep 40, MS Papers 238, ATL

**126** O. E. Burton, typescript 'Autobiography' (hereinafter 'Autobiography'), p. 420, ATL

**127** Notes of deputation from NZCPS to PM, 18 Nov 40, War History File, 'Defaulters and Conscientious Objectors' (hereinafter WHF, 'Defaulters')

**128** *Ibid.*; Burton, 'Autobiography', p. 421

**129** Burton, 'Autobiography', p. 422, quoting letter written to NZCPS members at the time

**130** Barrington broadcast; *Evening Post*, 7 May 41, p. 11

**131** Carman, Arthur Herbert (1902–82): bookseller, author, Quaker, Wgtn Hospital Board member 1935–41, 1944–, chmn 1960–2, and other civic posts

**132** *Dominion*, 8 Mar 41, p. 13

**133** This charge, laid under the emergency regulations, was the first of its kind.

**134** *Evening Post*, 27 Mar, 7, 8, 10 May 41, pp. 11, 11, 11, 7

**135** *Ibid.*, 27 Mar, 10 May 41, pp. 11, 7

**136** *Ibid.*, 26 Mar, 6, 7, 10 May 41, pp. 11, 8, 11, 7. The terms were concurrent and with normal remission he actually served 10 months.

**137** Luxford, John Hector, CMG('52) (1890–): SM from 1928; Chief Judge Wn Samoa 1929–35; principal SM Auck 1953–6

**138** *Dominion*, 3 Apr 41, p. 11

**139** *Evening Post*, 10, 23 Apr 41, pp. 9, 10

**140** *Ibid.*, 6, 10, 16 May 41, pp. 11, 7, 9

**141** Clause 9 (2). 'Nothing in this Act or in any emergency regulations shall be so construed or shall so operate as to take away or restrict the liability of any person for any offence punishable independently of this Act, but no person shall be punished twice for the same offence.'

**142 Blair, Hon Sir Archibald, Kt('46) (1875–1952): Judge Supreme Court 1928–48**

**143 Callan, Hon John Bartholomew, KC (1882–1951): Judge Supreme Court 1935–49**

**144 Kennedy, Hon Sir Robert, Kt('49) (1887–1974): Judge Supreme Court 1929–50**

**145 Burton, 'Autobiography', pp. 436–7**

**146 *Evening Post* 10, 11, 27 Jun, 1 Jul 41, pp. 9, 9, 8, 8**

**147 *Ibid.*, 30 Apr 41, p. 11, at trial of J. W. Boal**

**148 *Ibid.*, 12 May 41, p. 8; NZCPS *Bulletin* W29, p. 10**

**149 Dowling, Basil Cairns (1910–): author; Presbyterian min 1939–41; librarian 1947–51, chmn Otago Branch NZLA 1948–9; since teaching English in **London****

**150 *Evening Post*, 19 May, 3, 9 Jun 41, pp. 8, 9, 9**

**151 *Ibid.*, 29 Oct, 1, 10, 17 Nov 41, pp. 9, 10, 9, 9**

**152 *NZ Herald*, 28 Nov, 9, 12, 17, 23 Dec 41, pp. 9, 6, 8, 9, 4**

**153 Fair, Hon Sir Arthur, KC('25) (1885–1970): Solicitor-General 1925; Judge Supreme Court, Court of Appeal 1934–55**

**154 *NZ Herald*, 6, 7, 13 Feb 42, pp. 7, 8, 2**

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Jan, 6, 7, 14 Feb 42, pp. 4, 7, 8, 4

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 17, 23 Dec 41, pp. 9, 4; NZCPS *Bulletin* W38, p. 5

<sup>157</sup> Burton, 'Autobiography', p. 389

<sup>158</sup> *Dominion*, 11 Dec 41, p. 3. Stout SM remarked that considering his subversive activities it would be foolish to send him to make trouble in a defaulters' camp.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Feb, 8, 15 May 42, pp. 8, 6, 3

<sup>160</sup> See p. 199

<sup>161</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W38, Mar 42, p. 2

<sup>162</sup> In NZCPS *Bulletin* W41, Jun 42, p. 2, Burton explained that the editor of W38 was Rev R. W. Mayson who, when Barrington was charged, wrote to the Registrar of the Supreme Court claiming full responsibility.

<sup>163</sup> *Evening Post*, 23 Apr 42, p. 9

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 20 May 42, pp. 6, 6

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Jun, 28 Jul 42, pp. 6, 3; *New Zealand Law Reports* 1942, pp. 502–22

<sup>166</sup> He had been dismissed from the Methodist ministry in February ( *Dominion*, 28 Feb 42, p. 6) and was stacking fruit boxes and making ice-cream. Burton, 'Autobiography', p. 451

<sup>167</sup> Scholefield, Guy Hardy, CMG('48), OBE('19), JP (1877–1963):

journalist, **London** correspondent NZ Associated Press 1908–19; Parly Librarian & Dom Archivist 1926–48; foreign aff broadcaster

<sup>168</sup> These were the worrying days before the breakthrough at **El Alamein** and before the American hold on **Guadalcanal** was certain.

<sup>169</sup> *Dominion*, 24, 28 Oct 42, pp. 10, 6

<sup>170</sup> Quoted in NZCPS *Bulletin* W61, May 44, p. 1

<sup>171</sup> Ponsonby, Lord Arthur Augustus William Harry, 1st Baron of Shulbrede ('30) (1871– 1946): diplomatic service 1894–1902; MP (Lib) 1908–18; Under-Sec State Foreign Aff 1924; Parly Under-Sec Doms 1929, Sec Min Transport 1929–31; Leader Oppos HoL 1931–5

<sup>172</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W61, May 44, pp. 1–2

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2. These overseas protests of 1943 could be seen as forerunners of the name-bearing advertisements (eg. *NZ Listener*, 7 Jun 68) that appeared in support of Dr Spock and others who 25 years later faced possible terms of 5 years in prison for inciting young Americans against service in **Vietnam**

<sup>174</sup> Barrington broadcast

<sup>175</sup> By the deputation of 18 Nov 40. See p. 195

<sup>176</sup> WHN, 'Police Department', p. 209

<sup>177</sup> Mrs Burton to author, 28 Jan 68. NZCPS *Bulletin* W29, p. 9, records such a conversation, on 24 Apr 41, the day before Good Friday. 'Detective Brown: Is your meeting tonight or tomorrow night? A.C.B.: Tomorrow night. That will save you coming out in force tonight. Detective Brown: Right. Thanks very much.'



**178** *Ibid.*, p. 5

**179** Barrington broadcast

**180** WHN, 'Police Department', p. 210

**181** 'For myself and Helen and the children it was the worst of all the things that happened.' Burton, 'Autobiography', p. 449

**182** *Bulletin* W32, p 8 [c. Jun 41]

**183** *Ibid.*, W68, p. 8

**184** Copy of unidentified letter from Hautu Camp, dated 'Feb. 1943', in Barrington MS Papers 439/81

**185** NZCPS *Bulletin* W59, p. 1, Mar 44

**186** 'I had to play football very hard', the son of A. C. Barrington told the author in 1967; one of his teachers said to his father 'Your son won't be a pacifist, Archie, he's too good at rugby.'

**187** *Evening Post*, 8 May 41, p. 11

**188** NZCPS *Bulletin* W34, p. 7, Sep 41

**189** *Ibid.*, W49, p. 3, Feb 43

**190** Brash, Alan Anderson, OBE('62) (1913-): Presbyterian minister *Wanganui* 1938-46, Chch 1952-6; Gen Sec Nat Cl Churches 1947-52, 1957-64; Sec E Asia Christian Conf 1964-7; Dir Christian Aid 1968-70; Dir World Cl Churches Cmsn on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service 1970-3, later Dep

## Gen Sec World Cl Churches

**191** NZCPS *Bulletin* W60, p. 1, Apr 44

**192** *Ibid.*, W20, p. 5, Aug 40

**193** *Ibid.*, W39, p. 5, Apr 42

**194** *Ibid.*, W58, p. 2, Jan 44, W67, p.8, Nov 44

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 6 – A DISSENTING MINORITY

## CHAPTER 6

### *A Dissenting Minority*

**PACIFISTS** were the first targets of the drive against subversion that gathered force along with the recruiting campaign. Then, as the question of conscription sharpened amid the deepening gloom of April, May and June 1940, Communists plus a wide range of 'subversive elements' came under fire.

The first prosecutions of Communists, as of pacifists, arose from street meetings. The Auckland Communists regularly held a meeting at Quay Street on Sunday afternoons. On 28 January 1940, after Ormond Burton had been arrested nearby, there was a large crowd, and boisterous soldiers chanted, sang and pushed about during the two-hour meeting, wherein W. Ashton <sup>1</sup> and T. Stanley were arrested, like Burton, for obstructing the police and obstructing a public place. <sup>2</sup> The acumen of their lawyer got them acquitted on the first charge, for which Burton was fined £10, but on the second they were fined £2. <sup>3</sup> Later two other speakers were convicted for obstructing a public place, but as further communist meetings had meanwhile been called off, the Court imposed no penalty. <sup>4</sup>

That same night, 28 January, again at **Auckland** some servicemen, a few wielding belts, tried to enter a Newton hall where Communists were holding a meeting, and threw eggs and tomatoes through a broken skylight. The police kept them out till an Army captain persuaded them to withdraw to one end of the street, while the people in the hall were escorted in the opposite direction, dispersing through side streets. Outside the hall a civilian jumped on to a window-sill, shouting 'I have never spoken in public before, and I won't be much good. But I am frightened, I am frightened for democracy....' He was arrested, but not convicted, the magistrate holding that he genuinely had had no desire to antagonise anyone or cause trouble, though his judgment had been wrong. <sup>5</sup>

To the Quay Street communist meetings on the next two Sundays came crowds of more than 2000, attracted largely by prospects of trouble, but including many who went 'not as Communists but as supporters of free speech and the right of assembly'.<sup>6</sup> On 4 February, a strong police force with the unwanted assistance of the crowd separated the Communists from the soldiers' party, which good-humouredly drowned the speakers' voices for more than two hours; differing opinions were expressed in the crowd and the 'general spirit of the meeting was anti-recruiting'.<sup>7</sup> On 11 February the first and only speaker was overwhelmed in a rush, and shreds of a calico banner decorated soldiers' hats. Thereafter, as most of the crowd was present to witness trouble rather than to cause it, 'excitement rather than bad feeling distinguished the rushes that were almost invariably aimless, ending as suddenly as they began. Indeed, in several spirited scimmages, in which there appeared to be no "beg pardons", police, soldiers and sailors jested together as they struggled. These encounters always ended in cheers by dishevelled soldiers and sailors for the police. As much by their good humour and jests, as by their weighty and scientifically-packed wedges, that always split any rush, the police restrained the crowds'.<sup>8</sup> One Communist was arrested for striking a soldier,<sup>9</sup> but the police clearly avoided arrests, though 'they suffered much provocation. Several were thrown down in the course of the struggles, in which wrestling and pushing was the general rule rather than hitting'.<sup>10</sup> This was all good clean fun and it seems possible that the soldiers were disappointed when on 14 February the Communists announced that there would be no further meetings at Quay Street. Both the **Auckland** press reports and the law had been tolerant and objective about these clashes, but an *Evening Post* editorial remarked on 'the absurd spectacle of a large body of police and detectives turned out to assure protection for Communist speakers.'<sup>11</sup>

**Auckland's** by-laws required permits for meetings only in Queen Street or within 50 yards of it, in other busy streets or in Albert Park.<sup>12</sup> On 2 February the Council, on the casting vote of the Mayor, Sir Ernest Davis,<sup>13</sup> decided to make no change, and communist street meetings

continued, producing several charges of subversion in the next few months. Most other civic authorities were more suppressive. In Wellington the Communists' permit, like that of the Christian Pacifists, was speedily withdrawn. **Christchurch** banned them, along with the Anti-Conscription League, on 6 October. The Petone Borough Council inconclusively debated on 11 December whether they should be allowed to hold meetings on the foreshore, <sup>14</sup> but decided against it on 12 February. At Whangarei, meetings likely to cause a breach of the peace were not to be allowed in any reserve or public building. <sup>15</sup> At Whakatane it was decided that henceforth any meetings must first be approved by the Council; one member spoke of **Hyde Park** and free speech, but even to him communist meetings were unthinkable. <sup>16</sup> The Hamilton Domain Board at the request of the police in May withdrew permission for communist meetings in their park. <sup>17</sup> The Mt Albert Borough Council in April permitted them fortnightly, subject to traffic control. <sup>18</sup>

In the early months of the war, police attended all public meetings of Communists and pacifists, not only to suppress disorder but to record the views expressed, which were referred to the Solicitor-General for advice on their degree of subversiveness.

A total prohibition was not imposed on the public meetings of the Communist Party, although several prosecutions were successfully taken.... Several of the more able speakers having been sentenced to terms of imprisonment, public meetings had almost ceased and were of little moment at the time **Russia** became involved in the war. <sup>19</sup>

The party did not, however, depend on public meetings to set forth its views. Through personal contact in work-places and in unions, in the weekly *People's Voice*, and in leaflets printed and distributed, by thousands, Communists attacked the war for advancing imperialist and sectional interests and attacked the government for betraying the workers to these interests. Such propaganda also praised and explained the ways of **Russia**. In some minds, doubt and dislike of the war grew into actual opposition, and party membership rose. According to police

estimates, in 1935–6 there were 243 Communists, about 111 of them in **Auckland**; immediately before the war there were about 300, and 690 in 1941. <sup>20</sup> The party also claimed an increase, though it did not publish membership figures. The *People's Voice* gave its circulation as 6700 copies in July 1939, <sup>21</sup> rising to 9500 by 15 December and more than 10 000 by 16 February 1940. In March the **Auckland** provincial secretary declared that the party's fight for free speech and its attitude to the war were attracting a steady flow of recruits: during the last month every branch in the province had increased, so that **Auckland** now had almost as many members as the whole country had had twelve months ago. **Wellington** numbers were also increasing, **Christchurch**, formerly a weak point, had seen a remarkable influx, and new branches were forming on the **West Coast**; even **Dunedin**, in April, decided to form a *People's Voice* readers' group. <sup>22</sup> At the **Auckland** West by-election in May, to replace Savage, **Gordon Watson** gained 368 votes, the highest till then recorded for a communist candidate, while Labour's man P. Carr <sup>23</sup> had 6151 and the Independent Conservative W. H. Fortune, <sup>24</sup> 2958.

The definition of subversive statements in the new Public Safety Emergency Regulations of 26 February 1940 clearly bore more directly against communist activities. False reports, reports likely to impair relations with a friendly state, and those likely to undermine confidence in government financial policy were no longer included. Statements likely to cause disaffection to the Crown, or to interfere with the success of the armed forces, to prejudice their recruiting, training and discipline, or to disrupt morale, remained subversive and to these were added statements likely to cause undue alarm, to interfere with any law relating to military training or service or the administration of justice, or to interfere with the production of anything associated with the war effort. As before, no one should do any act, or possess any thing with a view to making or facilitating the publication of a subversive statement. Still no prosecution could be brought without the consent of the Attorney-General, but now the police could stop or prohibit any meeting likely to injure public safety, and could arrest offenders without warrant, while their powers of search were much increased.



The mid-March discovery of communist-printed yellow stickers—‘Down with conscription and the imperialist war’—on boxes of butter bound for England <sup>25</sup> was one of the first forms of subversion to excite public attention, useful in that month of apathy. A cartoon by Minhinnick showed evil-looking rats crawling up ship mooring-ropes above the caption ‘Bigger rat guards needed’, <sup>26</sup> while Fraser declared that these misguided workers were doing the greatest wrong to their country: dockers in **London** or Liverpool might be disturbed, and their faith in New Zealand shaken. <sup>27</sup> In May a watersider was fined £10 for putting on such stickers in a coastal vessel, and the Court warned that in future penalties would be much higher, up to £100 or three months in gaol. <sup>28</sup>

The first subversive statement trials did not take place till mid-April 1940, though early in February it was decided to prosecute. <sup>29</sup> In a group, the acting editor of the *People’s Voice*, C. J. Gould, and its publisher, D. McCarthy, were tried for its issues of 9 and 16 February, along with W. Ashton and W. G. Dickenson, both of the Auckland Communist party’s provincial committee, for writing and publishing pamphlets in October, January and February. A non-communist printer was tried for printing them. The pamphlets denied the sincerity of the Allies’ war aims, and stressed the anti-Soviet purposes of Chamberlain’s government, the profits of bankers and industrialists, and the misery and loss of workers in war. Fines totalling £190 were imposed. <sup>30</sup> At the end of May, in the midst of the conscription crisis, several Communists were imprisoned for distributing leaflets. At Dunedin on 3 March, E. W. Hunter and I. M. Jamieson had quite openly put into letterboxes copies of *Soldiers and Workers*, <sup>31</sup> which claimed that soldiers were pushed off to fight by those who swindled and lied to them while remaining safe at home to rake in profits and encroach on workers’ living standards. It was clearly prejudicial to recruiting, the plea that it was honest criticism like much of the other criticism then being directed at the government was dismissed as specious, and they were gaoled for three months. <sup>32</sup> Two Invercargill Communists, who early in April had been found distributing leaflets, were gaoled, the lesser man, W. Sparks, for

two months, the magistrate saying that this was a warning and only a fraction of what future offenders might expect; the local party secretary, J. E. Lawrence, who chose to go to the Supreme Court, was sentenced to six months, Mr Justice Kennedy remarking that no country would tolerate this action at such a time and in **Russia** punishment would be swift and final. <sup>33</sup> H. G. Darbyshire, a roadman of Eketahuna, arrested in the street with a sandwich board and selling the pamphlet *The War and the Working Class*, was sentenced to six months. <sup>34</sup> Tom Stanley, chairman of the New Zealand Communist party executive and secretary of the **Auckland** General Labourers Union, in March had written and published 50 000 leaflets, *The Real Criminals*, which in June earned him nine months' gaol. <sup>35</sup> At Palmerston North, also in June, L. Sim, a farmer, and H. W. Klein, law clerk, were each sentenced to a year in prison for cyclostyling 'Spark' for the New Zealand Bolshevik party, which urged civil war in New Zealand and condemned the Communist party as pacifist, Trotskyite and dominated by petty bourgeois intellectual adventurers. <sup>36</sup>

At this time also there were prosecutions for speeches: R. Hurd, J. Angelo and J. Langdon (the last two from the Otahuhu railway workshops) for street speeches on 5 April were each sentenced to six months' gaol; <sup>37</sup> two months later W. G. Dickenson, who spoke on the same occasion, received the same penalty. <sup>38</sup> The Auckland West by-election, where **Gordon Watson** stood for the Communist party, brought forth a crop of subversion charges which, arising from election speeches, were considered with extra care and caution by the courts: Tom Stanley, on 13 May, had called the war 'another Imperialist slaughter', but F. H. Levien SM <sup>39</sup> considered it part of the pamphlet offence for which Stanley was already in prison, and convicted him without further penalty; he discharged J. Angelo, saying that his carefully equivocal statements on 7 May to 20 listeners could be called subversive only by roundabout methods and a man should not be found guilty in that way. <sup>40</sup> A 26-year-old bootmaker, J. D. Morey, chose trial in the Supreme Court, where he was strongly recommended to mercy as his speech on 8 May was at an election campaign meeting and to a very small audience.

Mr Justice Fair fined him £25 plus three years' probation, remarking that the situation then had not been as serious as it had since become, and election results showed that such speeches had been ineffective.<sup>41</sup> Next day in the same Court a veteran Communist, A. Drennan, for an open-air speech on 10 May, was similarly convicted and received the same sentence, though the judge added that had the jury known his record they might not have recommended mercy and he would have to be very careful in future.<sup>42</sup> The same judge heard the appeal of Roy Stanley, who on 1 July had been awarded four months' gaol for urging workers to stop the Imperialist war as they would get nothing even out of victory. The judge thought that he had been properly sentenced, his speech having been worse than those of the other two, but was loth to allow a sentence which appeared heavier, and thought that justice would be done if the sentence were halved.<sup>43</sup>

Meanwhile in **Wellington** two men, declaring from the dock that they must tell others the truth as they saw it and that punishment would make a martyr, light a torch, were each sentenced by the Chief Justice to a year in prison, the maximum penalty. On 10 March in the Trades Hall A. Galbraith, the local Communist party chairman, had said in a waterfront dispute that workers were being exploited in the war by the ruling classes and should form councils of action.<sup>44</sup> Douglas Martin, a former Presbyterian minister and a pacifist who had become a Communist, on 19 May had chaired a Trades Hall meeting called to protest against the imprisonment of Burton and Lyttle which was given a second purpose—to warn and to prepare against the growing threat of conscription. Also, on 26 May, he had chaired a Miramar meeting against conscription and Fascism in New Zealand. Sir Michael Myers explained that though conscription was not in force at the time, it was subversive to hinder recruiting. Widespread feeling that voluntary enlistment was unfair might have restricted recruiting unless it was clear that conscription would soon be applied; hence it was a proper inference that delay in enacting conscription, and certainly anti-conscription agitation, would be calculated to restrict recruiting. Normally a man might speak out his belief in pacifism, Communism,

etc, but in time of dire peril to the State he must keep silent; the prime purpose of law in such times was to preserve the safety of the people, hence the emergency regulations. These men were enemies within the gates, attacking the safety of the people at the very root, and their offences were much worse than ordinary criminality. <sup>45</sup>

At the same time W. McAra, a well-known Communist, was acquitted by his jury. His speech at the 19 May meeting had been mainly quotations from Semple, Fraser, Thorn <sup>46</sup> and others in 1916. It was, said Myers, much less inflammatory than Martin's; it was a rambling discourse by a misguided person which should never have been made, but that did not mean that it was subversive. He warned, however, that people could not with impunity quote statements made by others 20 years ago that would be subversive today. <sup>47</sup> Earlier, a non-communist speaker at this meeting had been acquitted in the Magistrates' Court. A major of the last war and a rejected volunteer of 1940, W. G. Bishop, <sup>48</sup> went there to speak for Burton, who he thought was suffering injustice. The prosecution suggested that his statements were intended or likely to interfere with recruiting, but A. M. Goulding SM <sup>49</sup> thought that his record made such intention improbable, and his speech, though 'injudicious and unfortunate in some respects', was not inflammatory or subversive. <sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile the government had struck at the main source of communist printing, the press of the *People's Voice*. On 26 May, in the speech that promised conscription 'as required', spoken above the rising outcry against Communists, subversion, and government insufficiency, Fraser had said that subversive propaganda would be stopped: 'The leaflets which have been flooding the Dominion have not done much harm, but the people and the Government are in no mood to stand any more of it.' <sup>51</sup> On 29 May new Censorship and Publicity Regulations (1940/93) empowered the Attorney-General to seize any press that had printed subversive material and was likely to do so again; in like case, to order any periodical to cease publication. Accordingly, on 30 May the *People's Voice* was suppressed and its machines taken by the police.

**The editorial of the issue which had just been printed, dated 31 May, exemplified its view of the war:**

**The New Zealand working class today faces the gravest crisis of its existence. All that two generations of politically conscious workers have fought to achieve is now at stake.**

**The hyenas of capitalist reaction, the enemies of the New Zealand people, see in the extended bloody slaughter in **Europe** the opportunity for which they have waited so long....**

**Nazi-ism threatens the people of New Zealand today—not primarily through the German military successes—but primarily through the pupils of **Hitler** in New Zealand, who are more concerned with winning their war against the New Zealand working class than they are with the outcome of events in **Europe**....**

**Those who left the bridges standing against which the enemies of the working class are now advancing are those who were pledged to defend them—the leaders of the **Labour Party**. They have proved themselves the ‘Fifth Column’ of capitalist reaction in the Labour movement of this country.**

**The *People’s Voice* continued underground, in meagre form. Restriction condensed its stridency. In its issues of a few cyclostyled foolscap sheets it set party devotees quite impossible targets of class struggle. It did not oppose the war against **Hitler**, as such, but trenchantly attacked every aspect of its management; it spoke of war on two fronts but was solely concerned with that on the home front. At **Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch** separate pamphlets were produced. On 5 September it was widely reported that some boys had found a duplicator and papers in a damp cave three miles from Papatoetoe, but generally the leaflets were produced now in one house, now in another. The Wellington leaflet on 26 September 1940 stated that since the suppression 14 editions totalling 11 200 copies, had been circulated in the **Wellington** district, sold for £140, and a further £100 had been donated. In mid-October the**

Wellington production began calling itself *Tribune*, and in September that of **Christchurch** became *Torch*, which lasted till early 1941, when it was the only illegal paper still being published.<sup>52</sup> *A People's Voice* reappeared on 21 May 1941 remarking that just over six months had passed since its last issue.<sup>53</sup>

According to the police, 'distribution was exceedingly well organised and done in the utmost secrecy'.<sup>54</sup> But when its agents were discovered they did not escape lightly. A young **Wellington** taxi-driver, W. McCready, found on 12 July with 50 copies of the *People's Voice* dated 10 July was censured by Sir Hubert Ostler<sup>55</sup> for an offence far worse than theft, affecting the well-being of every member of the community, a real danger to the British Empire in its lone-handed struggle. The jury, however, recommended mercy, so McCready got nine months' hard labour instead of twelve.<sup>56</sup>

Again, when E. Harrison, janitor of Weir House, a **Wellington** university hostel, was found with three copies of a booklet, *Peace and Socialism*, published in May, and six copies of *Tribune* of 15 October 1940 (the first of that name), **Mr Justice Johnston** said that the maximum 12 months was a light penalty in the circumstances, and that an offence against the State was accentuated when committed by a man whose good character gave him a job that was an excellent distribution centre. He gave little weight to a declaration from the students that Harrison had never attempted to spread subversive propaganda. To the grand jury the judge remarked that in most countries such an offender would be shot without trial, but in New Zealand the matter had to go before a jury.<sup>57</sup>

Earlier, at the end of August 1940, lamp-posts in several Wellington areas were stuck with crude leaflets from the underground, issued by the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council, which had for some time seemed defunct. The leaflets blamed three Cabinet ministers for the shipboard miscarriage by the wife of an Australian Communist, K. Bronson, prominent in the anti-conscription movement, who had been deported in June. It ended, 'Mothers! Would you entrust your son's life to these



people?’ The police, led by complaints of disloyal statements and Communism, found J. Kelman, a barber, with 127 copies and party instructions; Stout SM, saying that the leaflets were scurrilous and subversive, sentenced him to a year in gaol. <sup>58</sup> This was upheld on appeal by rehearing before Sir Hubert Ostler: the attack on the ministers, though grossly libellous, was not subversive; but, with the feelings of hatred this worked up, the purpose of the final words was to make women hostile to enlistment or conscription. <sup>59</sup>

One communist trial eclipsed all others, for in it press censorship was exercised to screen temporarily in the interests of public serenity a high official’s indiscretion. Late in 1940 at **Christchurch**, H. A. Ostler and T. C. Christie, local secretary of the Communist party, were charged with publishing subversive statements by producing the cyclostyled *People’s Voice*. <sup>60</sup> On trial in February 1941 Ostler, besides technical points, argued freedom of speech: the criticisms of the *Voice* were reasonable, and though it attacked capitalism and the lies of the New Zealand press, while upholding socialism and **Russia**, socialism’s only exponent, this was not subversive for New Zealand was not at war with **Russia**. <sup>61</sup> But Alec Ostler, the son of a judge, also told the Court that the Solicitor-General, H. H. Cornish, <sup>62</sup> had sought to bargain with him: Cornish had met him and suggested that he himself, the Attorney-General, and the Prime Minister would drop the prosecution if Ostler would put aside Communism and quietly join the Army, where a comfortable post could be found. <sup>63</sup> Ostler and Christie both received the maximum penalty, 12 months’ hard labour. <sup>64</sup> Their petition for bail while preparing their appeal, signed by more than 1300 persons, <sup>65</sup> was refused and their appeal was dismissed. <sup>66</sup>

Communists were credited, rightly or wrongly, with having distributed leaflets urging those called in ballots to refuse military service. On Monday 7 October 1940, many **Christchurch** men called in the first territorial ballot a week earlier found a circular delivered overnight, urging them not to serve. **Timaru** and **Ashburton** received the like by post. The *Press* reported that the circulars were distributed

**'practically throughout New Zealand', though it referred specifically only to [Christchurch](#), [Ashburton](#) and [Timaru](#). Semple said that it was a foul and treacherous document, the most treasonable he had ever read, and its wide distribution showed a large organisation, the 'fifth-column' against which he had warned so often. The Mayor of [Christchurch](#) thought that distribution was probably general, and not the work of pacifists but of Communists. <sup>67</sup>**

**Several papers repeated these explosive [Christchurch](#) opinions. A solitary copy of the circular reached [Dunedin](#), from which the *Evening Star* of 10 October concluded that its 900 words were well written and designed to 'drive the foul message home'. The Canterbury Provincial Committee of the Communist party firmly denied all responsibility, condemning the leaflet as provocative and contrary to communist propaganda. <sup>68</sup> Certainly the party did not propose pacifism, <sup>69</sup> but otherwise its opposition to the war was total. It seems probable, though it is mere guess-work, that this anti-Service circular might have been put out by the Peace and Anti-Conscription Council which was strong in leftist circles at [Christchurch](#).**

**After the second territorial ballot of 7 November, a similar circular was more widely scattered. According to the *Auckland Star* of 16 November and the *Standard* of the 28th, it reproduced the first circular but also attacked Semple and the *Standard*, and stated: 'Whatever happens, stand firm against the attempts of the Government, family and friends to force you into a uniform.' Though the extracts quoted by the *Star* had a communist sound, it was anonymous. The issue was confused further by the Christian Pacifist Society's Conscientious Objectors Committee which, at about the same time, sent out to some 1200 men chosen at random brief notices offering to help the conscience-troubled with information; these, of course, were not anonymous. <sup>70</sup>**

**In Auckland, late in November, the slogan 'No more troops for overseas' appeared in white paint on some [Papakura](#) lamp-posts, without any arrests being made. <sup>71</sup> The first overseas ballot on 5 December 1940 was greeted in [Dunedin](#) with night-delivered cyclostyled criticism of the**



government's war policy, <sup>72</sup> while in **Auckland** police caught four men with stickers saying 'No more troops overseas, New Zealand comes first.' One man against whom there was no direct evidence was acquitted; another, convicted of posting stickers, got four months; two, who also had copies of a subversive pamphlet *Forward*, got six months each. They claimed that the slogan was reasonable criticism and in the nation's interest, but Mr Justice Fair said that exemplary punishment was needed; the war effort must not be made ineffective by disputes among New Zealanders—propaganda of this kind led to the fall of **France**. <sup>73</sup>

Stickers and chalk signs appeared more frequently in the streets than did accounts of them in the newspapers, which usually reported them only in court proceedings, that is, when someone was caught. Editors were asked by the Censor not to mention such things as it was the object of the Communists to obtain wide publicity from relatively small efforts. <sup>74</sup> In May, with very minor press notices, two Christchurch Communists, E. A. Jackson, who had eight copies of *Torch* and 64 'No more troops overseas' stickers, and H. J. Greatorex, who had five copies of *Torch*, were sent to prison for 12 months, **Mr Justice Northcroft** remarking that Jackson was clearly a menace to the community and it would be appropriate if he could be imprisoned for the duration of the war. <sup>75</sup>

The Justice Department in 1940 recorded 59 charges of 'subversive statements, making, publishing, etc.' Of nine heard in the Supreme Court, eight were convicted; 37 were convicted in the Magistrates' Court, and 13 dismissed. <sup>76</sup> Some were Jehovah's Witnesses and one was plain anti-British, but the majority were Communists, as were all of those going to the Supreme Court. In 1941 there were six subversive offences. Thus popular excitement about subversion in 1940 produced relatively few charges, and for some the grounds appear rather slight. The above resumé of cases may also suggest that while the Bench was not carried away by popular alarm, magistrates and judges were not uniform in their attitudes to subversion. Some felt that the dangers of

the hour called for the silencing of all anti-war utterances by maximum penalties, often remarking how much tougher punishment would be in **Russia**. Others, despite personal antipathy, stuck to the law simply as the law, weighing greater and lesser offences. Some alternated between the two attitudes. It must be remembered that the law is not consistent or even-handed in any field or at any time, though it may try to be.

It was widely believed that Communists dominated many trade unions: certainly they tried to do so, and held leading positions in a few. But at the Federation of Labour conference in 1940 the communist delegates' proposals for immediate peace, for the recognition of the rights of all nations including **Czechoslovakia, India, Ireland and Poland** to national independence, for complete disarmament and immediate advance of socialism, were defeated by 224 votes to 26.<sup>77</sup> Again, in April 1941, their motion that in the interests of the working class New Zealand should withdraw from the war gained only 27 votes, against 229.<sup>78</sup>

Communists were held to be at the root of all industrial disputes, before, during and after the war. A notable instance occurred in March 1941, among the 1600 men of the Hutt railway workshops.<sup>79</sup> Semple declared that the trouble was caused by a handful of Communists taking instructions from a foreign source.<sup>80</sup> Fraser said fervently in Parliament on 19 March that if necessary he would again impose total censorship:

The Communist party in this country, not yet declared illegal but meeting as if it were an illegal organisation, in groups here and there, discusses matters like the railway workshops, plans trouble in them, and its agents carry out the plans. One of its methods is publicity—a resolution is framed, not expressing the honest opinion of those involved, but framed for propaganda purposes in order to stir up the other workers of the Dominion by misrepresentation. Do members of this House imagine that the Government is going to allow members of the Communist party to use such ammunition?<sup>81</sup>

In the outcry against censorship, the *Auckland Star* on 20 March noted

that all the men, including the handful of Communists blamed for the trouble, were back at work: if they were so dangerous surely it was necessary for the government to apply war regulations against them, rather than against the press. On 5 April the *Star* again asked why the government did nothing about the Communist party except abuse it; why was it not declared illegal? A correspondent in the same paper a month later wrote that the Communist party was not suppressed because it was useful: the government, having lost the support of many workers, requires an Aunt Sally—a bogey. Communism serves this purpose. When the workers complain of broken promises or of betrayal, the cry of Communism is raised. This wolf-cry scares the workers who do not wish to appear to be allied with Communists. Any criticism, any complaint, becomes, ipso facto, Communistic.... Communism is a negligible quantity in the political life of the Dominion. The genuine, loyal workers would welcome its suppression. The party leaders and the industrial bosses make no effort to have it suppressed. It is too useful as a bogeyman to silence the workers. <sup>82</sup>

The government had thought of suppression. On 26 March the Attorney-General had consulted the Commissioner of Police about the expediency of declaring the Communist party a subversive organisation. The Commissioner, replying on 7 April, was strongly in favour of doing so. The requisite orders were drafted but were not brought immediately into effect, <sup>83</sup> and on 3 July the Attorney-General told the Commissioner that, as **Russia's** entry to the war would probably modify communist activities, the proposed order would be deferred. <sup>84</sup>

Since Communists opposed the war it followed that all others who did so were tarred with the Bolshevik brush, and tolerance of them was merely licence. Thus an editorial early in January 1940 cautioned against imprudent liberalism. Citing some British students, the *Evening Post* assailed a 'so-called intelligensia' [ sic] to whom all wars were imperialistic and **Russia** always right, even when allied to Nazism and attacking **Finland**; New Zealand too had excessively vocal minorities like the West Coast Trades and Labour Council, which called the war an

**imperialist struggle. Such anti-social elements within the freedom of democracy might be dangerous in times of crisis and, while not a reason for suppressing freedom of speech, called for vigilance and surveillance by authority. <sup>85</sup>**

**To one side, the issue was freedom of speech; to the other, it was subversion. Some held that unless they uttered their doubts and criticisms they were already forsaking one of the principles for which the war was being fought. Others (including the Chief Justice) held that while a person was legally entitled to any beliefs such as Communism or pacifism he must, while the State was in danger, keep them to himself. Said Hislop, Mayor of **Wellington**, 'I stand for freedom of speech as much as anyone but there are limits to freedom of speech'. <sup>86</sup> A manufacturer said that there was a lot of loose talk about preserving democracy at all costs, but to win the war 'democracy would have to sacrifice some of its minor conveniences and take its war shape': <sup>87</sup> become, as it were, slimmer. The National party caucus warned against the cancerous growth of organised subversive propaganda not only by supporters of foreign influences, but by some high officials of the Labour party, even by members of Parliament and by employees of the State. <sup>88</sup> A magistrate, J. H. Luxford, summed up the apprehensions and linked ideas of many: 'The insidious attack from within may be just as dangerous as that from without. It may be launched under the guise of pacifism, freedom of conscience or of speech, or any other of these simple devices an unscrupulous and cunning enemy uses or causes to be used by unsuspecting cranks or dupes to disrupt order and good government and render the country less able to defend itself from without.' He called for complete subordination of sectional interests: any attempt to redress grievance, even genuine grievance, by direct action or the threat of it was tantamount to treason. It was better that a grievance should go unredressed while national existence was threatened than that the ground should be prepared for harvest by the Red sickle. The biggest fraud ever perpetrated upon the world was the Marxist doctrine that all men were equal, and the consequent demand for world revolution to bring about government by the proletariat. No**

sane person denied that all men have equal rights to social and legal justice but it was a monstrous fallacy to think all men equal; the proletariat never had ruled and never could rule in accordance with Marxist theory. The germs of Marxism had been disseminated in British countries and it was the duty of every citizen to sterilise them quickly. A form of propaganda recurring several times since the war began was the demand that the Allies should state their war aims. 'I firmly believe', said Luxford, 'that this demand has been fostered by the enemy. It is an attempt to embroil us in internal controversy and weaken our war effort by making people ask, "What are we fighting for, anyway?" Let me say, as forcefully as I can, if we start public discussions on war aims before we have won the war we will be doing one of the things the enemy wants us to do.' <sup>89</sup> This statement was widely printed, and the *Otago Daily Times* of 18 March backed it with a be-wigged photograph.

Irritation with the running of the war, plus anger growing out of fear for sons, husbands, lovers, brothers or friends in the Army, or likely to be there, directed itself, assisted by the press, against those opposing or criticising the war itself: 'the intellectuals', the WEA, the Left Book Club, the universities, the education system. To some, a wide range of even mildly non-conformist opinion appeared anti-British, disloyal and, by implication if not directly, pro-Russian. Teachers were a predictable target. Many responsible teachers, knowing that their pupils would have the task of making the peace work, were anxious that they should come to it with minds free from war fervour and hate. Consequently their words, especially when subject to juvenile reporting, often did not satisfy war-excited parents. Even before 1939 it was not uncommon for vague general charges to be made that teachers, from primary schools to universities, were tainted with disloyalty, or anti-Britishness, or communism. These charges, often in anonymous letters to newspapers and to educational authorities, multiplied as the war deepened. It must be remembered that newspapers may select and even produce letters that endorse their own viewpoint. The following by 'A New Zealander' is a succinct example:

Slowly, insidiously, unchecked, an influence has been permeating our land. We dare no longer live in a fool's paradise. We must face this menace of Communism. Yes, we have indeed been lax. How long are we going to pay men simply to influence, by propaganda and destructive criticism, the youth of our land—those who in a few short years will be holding positions of trust. <sup>90</sup>

Sometimes quite minor activities were taken as evidence of communist influences, such as lack of zest in singing the national anthem. <sup>91</sup> A committee of the Board of Governors of Otago Girls' High School believed that the loyalty of teachers could be determined by whether or not they attended morning assembly and stood for 'God Save the King'; <sup>92</sup> a writer to the *New Zealand Herald* on 26 June thought that this test could be applied by all head teachers.

In mid-March 1940 the **Dunedin** RSA expressed anxiety about extensive communist propaganda in high schools, universities and public libraries, advocating the dismissal of any public servants involved. <sup>93</sup> Letters in the *Otago Daily Times* vigorously supported this attack, while a few opposed it, including one by Dr D. G. McMillan MP in defence of the Left Book Club. <sup>94</sup> The Otago Education Board rapidly expressed faith in its teachers, saying that even if some did not conform to ideas generally held, that did not necessarily mean they were disloyal. In at least two districts there were similar moves: the **Pukekohe** RSA echoed **Dunedin's** protest, <sup>95</sup> while at **Ruawai**, Northern Wairoa, a Welfare Association was established to guard the district against anti-British communist propaganda. <sup>96</sup>

On 11 April the **Dunedin** RSA arranged a meeting representative of local bodies and political and sporting organisations. It was called a 'Communist-hunt' by all the main dailies, and most speakers held that the communist menace, though not yet formidable, was capable of spreading dangerously, especially in war time, and there was special mention of the WEA. Counter measures were discussed, such as forming an RSA national defence corps, ready to march at 24 hours' notice;



strict enforcement of regulations against meetings and the distribution of pamphlets, and inducing the saner members of trade unions to be as active as the Communists in union affairs. No decisions were made as few were authorised to vote for the bodies they represented, but further discussion was to take place in those bodies. The local Chamber of Commerce and the Territorial Association applauded, while the *Otago Daily Times* warned that 'Red prophets in pink cloaks' who used union membership or State positions to spread corrupting propaganda and subvert youth were more dangerous now than recognised Communists, and were perhaps the most difficult problem of the moment.<sup>97</sup> The Director of the WEA demanded specific charges,<sup>98</sup> and Chancellor W. J. Morrell<sup>99</sup> vigorously defended *Otago University* and the WEA against vague general accusations;<sup>100</sup> the Minister of Defence reminded that the Allies were fighting for freedom of opinion, provided it was not detrimental to the war effort.<sup>101</sup>

On 3 May the annual conference of the NZRSA demanded that communist activities be investigated and any persons involved be sacked from governmental or public office. Newspapers, notably the *Otago Daily Times*, had letters attacking universities and teachers in general, in such terms as:

History is perverted by these [so-called intellectuals] to serve their ends, and pupils of all ages have their minds poisoned.

These people are the most dangerous class in the community. Many of them, directly supported by the State, are using all their influence ... to create an undercurrent of feeling hostile to the national interest. The noisy Communist is easily tracked down; the danger from 'the intellectual' is that he works in the dark. If challenged he maintains that he is merely a 'Leftist'—a term which now serves as a cloak apparently for the pacifist, the anti-Godist, and every type of subterranean revolutionary. The activities of these subversive individuals are a challenge to constituted authority. When are our national, civic, and educational authorities going to take action?<sup>102</sup>

On 21 May, as the Blitzkrieg crisis gathered, an RSA deputation asked the Otago University Council to inquire into subversive elements on its staff, adding that they could name such. The Council decided to set up a committee of inquiry and asked the RSA to submit evidence. The RSA refused, saying that the Council should have its staff and WEA tutors answer a questionnaire on their attitudes to the Crown and the war, and listing the pacifist or leftist societies with which they had been associated. <sup>103</sup> Dr C. E. Hercus, <sup>104</sup> dean of the medical faculty and himself a returned soldier, said that the RSA had made sweeping and damaging assertions on hearsay evidence, that it could not support definite charges and should put its energy into more constructive war effort. <sup>105</sup> At an RSA meeting a minority criticised the executive <sup>106</sup> for making unsustained charges, but the majority commended its courteous, tactful and able methods, suggesting further that a royal commission should inquire into the loyalty of the whole educational and library system, claiming that not only should definitely subversive acts be dealt with, but the influence, atmosphere and curricula of the universities should be reviewed. <sup>107</sup> The RSA executive, in skilful rearguard action, explained that it had sought to draw the Council's attention to growing public criticism of some of its staff, maintained that academic tolerance of anti-British discussion should cease, and that the Council should have made a domestic investigation without waiting for outside evidence 'given in confidence, which could not accordingly be used'; instead, the Council had held that its staff was innocent until proved otherwise, which view might be justified in peace but not during war. However, the RSA executive believed that publicity had checked at least some of the evil. <sup>108</sup> Thereafter, the RSA took its anxieties to the Otago Farmers' Union, from which the Dominion conference passed a remit calling for drastic government action to stop all subversive propaganda and to dismiss all government employees concerned. <sup>109</sup> The Women's Division resolved to be on school boards and committees to see that children were trained to loyal and patriotic standards. <sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile the Auckland Education Board on 19 June declared alarm at the increase of communist activities, wanted searching inquiry into



their source and growth, and urged that the civil service should be closed to all concerned in such. A motion before the Canterbury School Committees' Association in support of academic freedom to teach unpopular philosophies, and regretting unjustified attacks on university teachers, was defeated 19:7. The chairman remarked 'You are dealing with Communism'.<sup>111</sup> In the House, J. A. Roy<sup>112</sup> of Clutha, who had not had time to check a complaint that things a child said he had been taught were definitely disloyal, wanted to know the Minister's attitude if the complaint should be found true. The Minister replied swiftly that he would exert all his powers to see that no disloyal teacher was in the schools, but it was unfair to bring forward such a report without verifying it.<sup>113</sup>

The New Zealand Educational Institute complained that widespread vague attacks, irresponsible and anonymous, were being made through press and radio;<sup>114</sup> so did the chairman of the Canterbury Education Board.<sup>115</sup> The Minister of Education on 20 June said that despite much talk of subversive teachers, no education board or school governing body, or the Department or he himself had been told of any real instance; proper complaints could be made close at hand to school committees, who had certain powers to remove or suspend teachers, but irresponsible allegations were unjust. The *Press* on 5 June urged anyone who knew or thought he knew a fact about a subversive propagandist to take it to the nearest police station, not merely pass on talk while complaining of government apathy; on 25 June it criticised the **Dunedin** RSA: 'If they have evidence they should produce it.... If they have no evidence they have no charge and should make none'. The *New Zealand Observer* of 5 June said that Communists had 'a certain qualified support among the liberal and academic classes', but these were neither disloyal nor revolutionary. 'A great deal of what passes for Communism is actually a sort of intellectual effervescence, which is certainly preferable to complete mental inertia, and does not in the long run do much harm.'

In the House, on 12 July 1940, C. W. Boswell<sup>116</sup> defended teachers

who had been accused of subversion all over the country and, amid outcry from the Opposition, said that a Communist could be a good citizen if he did nothing subversive. 'We do not gaol men merely because they are Communists but we do gaol men if they are subversive.' He added that it would be a good thing if the interpretation of 'subversive' included any untrue statement alleging disloyalty against perfectly loyal people. <sup>117</sup> Clyde Carr, pleading for freedom of thought even if there could not now be full freedom of speech, quoted Mr Justice Ostler who some months earlier had said, 'This is a free country, and any person can hold any political views he likes. He is doing nothing illegal being a Communist and holding Communistic views. He only does something illegal when he does anything seditious.' People must be careful in war time, continued Carr, not to destroy liberty of thought, not to cherish personal enmity, animus and vindictiveness against others simply because their ideas differed. <sup>118</sup>

The disciplinary zeal of education boards varied: the basic attitudes of their members were not uniform, but as time passed liberalism was inevitably eroded by events and the changing climate of ideas. The Wellington Board in April 1940 refused to take action about a teacher who had chaired a pacifist meeting. <sup>119</sup> The Auckland Board on 19 June had expressed alarm at communist activity, and in August, having disregarded a number of anonymous letters, investigated a training college student who, according to such a letter, had 'boasted' of intending to teach communism. In this the Board was backed by the Minister who declared strongly against the spreading of communism in schools, as it carried with it a view of life destructive of morals, religion and human values, the antithesis of everything desired from education. <sup>120</sup> In November the **Auckland** Board, having received a letter from the Minister giving details of the meetings attended by two probationary teachers, asked the Department to withhold their certificates; though they had as yet done nothing against the law they should not be in the schools as they had taken part in political activities of a communist nature. <sup>121</sup> It soon after dismissed a young woman reported to have refused to salute the flag. <sup>122</sup>

This withholding of certificates produced a conflict very similar to that between the **Dunedin** RSA and **Otago University**. Professor P. W. Burbidge, <sup>123</sup> though 'totally unacquainted' with the persons thus deprived, thought that the Board's action, in banning them not on professional grounds but for their political opinions, called for vigorous protest from those who valued freedom. There were laws to protect the community from subversion and conspiracy, but this sort of proscription could spread dangerously. 'It belongs to **Berlin**, is modelled on **Moscow**, and tainted with Tennessee.' <sup>124</sup> Sixteen members of the Auckland University College Council and staff then also protested, claiming that a person should not be penalised for political views so long as he did not use his position for political propaganda. As the action was initiated by an anonymous letter, the Education Board had given public recognition to a cowardly attack, repugnant to British traditions, a Nazi method which could expose any public servant to menace by unscrupulous persons. <sup>125</sup> Two members of the College Council and staff openly objected to this view, <sup>126</sup> and another correspondent pointed out that only a small part of the Council and staff numbering 77 had protested. <sup>127</sup> Some Board members agreed that disloyalty had not been proved, but others attacked the University itself and the WEA for teaching communism underground and corrupting young teachers. One, F. A. Snell, <sup>128</sup> said that the Board's right to accept those it thought fit to teach children and reject others was being challenged. It was time that the Minister had a purge of the universities and 'cleaned this element right out.' The chairman of the Board, W. J. Campbell, declared that for years there had been complaints about the university, the keystone of the educational arch, and no doubt the police would be glad to have the names of those signing the protest. <sup>129</sup> When W. H. Cocker, <sup>130</sup> president of the College Council, asked for instances of these complaints, <sup>131</sup> Campbell said that Cocker was retreating behind a legalistic red herring, and was obviously himself in sympathy with the subversive elements at the University, adding that this was now a personal matter, not one for Board action. <sup>132</sup> Cocker replied that this was sheer nonsense and probably libellous, and advised production of evidence or silence. <sup>133</sup>

There the public exchange ended, but in the next two months the Board received several approving letters, three from school committees, while another school committee wanted to confirm that the Board had acted upon an anonymous letter; a branch of Lee's Democratic Labour party, and five trade unions protested. <sup>134</sup> At its February meeting the Auckland University College Council strongly disapproved of Campbell's making public charges and refusing to support them. <sup>135</sup> The Board however had the last move, for it required its teachers to reaffirm their oaths of allegiance; only 6 out of more than 2400 did not do so. <sup>136</sup>

**Dunedin's** RSA had led the attack against the enemy who did not sabotage factories or bridges but who might distort young minds. Returned soldiers sincerely felt themselves necessary guardians against the inner enemy, alien or native born, and the community likewise largely felt that they were experienced and competent in all fields of defence. The Wellington RSA in the May crisis had advised its members to report all subversive activities to the police. <sup>137</sup> In Christchurch the RSA secretary commended public keenness to wipe out the Fifth Column by reporting to the RSA office persons either making unpatriotic statements or thought to be potentially dangerous aliens. <sup>138</sup> The information was passed on to the police when warranted. An article in the *New Zealand Herald* on 12 June <sup>139</sup> said that government measures had not fully allayed public concern. Recently, returned soldiers, meeting at regimental reunions, had been discussing possible dangers. Some indignantly, some sadly, spoke of complacent handling by civilian Ministers who could not understand the effrontery and daring of trained spies and the Fifth Column. 'These ex-soldiers who are not readily disturbed or inclined to submit to mass emotion' had talked of land-buying by refugees in certain areas, of foreigners at meetings of a communist character, of the local Jewish community being hoodwinked by spies sent out in the eviction to establish an organisation behind the lines; they wanted a 'thorough clean-up' of aliens.

This expression of anxiety was directed mainly against aliens, but others were alert for the local subversives. Their line of thought was

conveyed by a letter signed 'Remember Narvik', which explained to other writers, 'Anti-Hun' and 'Safety First', that

the real enemy in our midst is not the unfortunate refugees, but the Communists, with allegiance sworn to Soviet Russia, Nazi **Germany's** partner and first cousin in frightfulness, treachery and anti-Godliness. These constitute the fifth column danger here in case of invasion. Mr Semple could, if he would, tell us who are responsible—and have been for years—for go-slow policy, stop work meetings, strikes in mines and on wharves, sabotage and general mischief-making in the ranks of the workers.... This is where New Zealand should start its home defence by interning the ringleaders, who are unfortunately now well entrenched in key positions. <sup>140</sup>

The New Zealand Permanent Forces Old Comrades Association passed Colonel T. W. McDonald's motion to report any subversion, adding that if the authorities did not take adequate action in reasonable time the Association would do all in its power to bring the offenders to account; they did not have to be Nazis or Fascists, there were far more Communists than all the others combined. Further, it elected two senior policemen to its executive. <sup>141</sup> Six weeks later the **Wellington** RSA at a special meeting set up a vigilance committee. Proposing it, A. B. Sievwright <sup>142</sup> referred to Semple's Home Guard-raising remarks about a Fifth Column and thought that people would go to a citizen's committee with information more readily than to the police, to whom the committee could pass it on. H. Haycock spoke of earlier pacifist meetings, saying that he had told the Commissioner of Police 'that if the police did not prevent this sort of thing we would make a regular Donnybrooke in the streets'; the police had acted firmly and pacifist meetings had ceased. The police now had too much work; he was sure that they would welcome vigilance committees, which he hoped would appear in every city. Other speakers warned against various forms of subversion and Colonel McDonald reminded that such people were in the schools, influencing children. <sup>143</sup> A lawyer, Eaton Hurley, protested that such a body would undermine and embarrass the police, <sup>144</sup> while *Truth*

declared that 'Vigil-Aunties or Cooper's Snoopers' <sup>145</sup> were not wanted in New Zealand, or it might as well accept secret police of the **Gestapo** sort. <sup>146</sup> No further groups appear to have been formed.

Despite all the patriotic fervour of mid-1940, it seems that only one prosecution resulted from information directly laid by citizens, though it is probable that many more tales of subversive speech or actions were taken to the police by those anxious or zealous. Four railway surfacemen working in the **Lyttelton** tunnel, disturbed by the anti-British, pro-Nazi talk of their ganger, went to the police. The ganger, W. E. Aitken, was charged with saying, on 24 May, 'I do not care if the British get beaten', 'I would just as soon be under **Hitler** as under the British Government', 'We would be better off under Nazi rule, anyone who goes to fight for the British Empire is a fool'; and on 21 June, 'I hope the Pommy ... get beaten', 'I would rather fight for the Nazis than the British Empire', 'I would never fight for **Britain**'. In court it appeared that he was 'not an agitator', and that these statements had been made in arguments, but similar remarks had been reiterated over several months. His counsel urged that the regulations were concerned with statements made to larger groups of people. The Crown agreed that it was not a case of a member of the intelligentsia putting over specious and insidious arguments to a large crowd; fortunately these statements were made to men 'strongminded, honest and decent, and not likely to be swayed in their loyalties', but E. C. Levvey SM, <sup>147</sup> saying that these offences were very serious, sentenced him to six month's hard labour. <sup>148</sup>

Nine months later a similar charge was tried: a railway carpenter, in a **Timaru** barber's shop after a few beers and thinking he was among friends, produced a pamphlet about censoring news of strikes. He said that if such Fascist methods continued he might as well be under **Hitler** as under Fascist Churchill and Fascist Fraser; that those going to the war were 'bloody fools'. **Mr Justice Northcroft** warned the jury against the natural indignation of British subjects hearing such words and urged a calm, dispassionate approach. The man was acquitted. <sup>149</sup>



**Some pacifists and Communists directly opposing the war were imprisoned for subversion, but the only organisation as such declared subversive was a religious sect, Jehovah's Witnesses or the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. This world-wide organisation originating in America in 1879 was active in Australia, where it had a printing press. In New Zealand it had, by the 1936 census, only 450 members but they proselytized vigorously, playing records through loudspeakers from cars. By car, bicycle and on foot they went from house to house distributing pamphlets and preaching their message. Holding that the end of the world was not far off, they urged people to study the Bible, forsaking established religions and clergy who weakened the strong truth of Jehovah's word. They asserted the authority of Jehovah God above all other authority, thus refusing to salute flags, take oaths of allegiance or serve in armed forces; they believed that those chosen by Jehovah as his servants, his special flock, must teach others.**

**The Police Department War History Narrative states that their canvassers gave offence by their intrusiveness and by their pamphlets. These attacked other religions, especially Roman Catholicism which they alleged was the cause of world unrest and the war; they contained defeatist statements such as that ' Hitler would win the war but after that God would destroy Hitler and Hitlerism' and advocated a 'Government of the peoples of earth administered by the immediate direction of Almighty God'. <sup>150</sup> Army Headquarters stated on 21 February 1940 that in some cases Witnesses had discouraged enlistment, and in some districts it was reported they had an unsettling, mischievous effect on Maoris. <sup>151</sup>**

**The Roman Catholic Church had long complained of this sect, <sup>152</sup> and in August 1940 declared that the Witnesses of Jehovah were a religious body but not Christians: 'To attribute the anarchical, subversive and mendacious rubbish which appears under the name of an American ex-convict and bogus judge to Christ is blasphemy, even if it be unconscious blasphemy on the part of most of the "Witnesses" .... Scurrilous lying sectarian venom and theories subversive of all law and**



order have nothing in common with the Gospel of Christ.’ <sup>153</sup> A reprint in the *Anglican Church Chronicle* was similar: ‘Perhaps the most debased of modern heresies is that cult known as “Rutherfordism” or Jehovah’s Witnesses.... The Church must realise that this is a virulent and dangerous attack. Masquerading as a religion, and claiming all the privileges of such, it spends its whole energy on traducing the British Empire and calumniating the clergy and congregations of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by our Lord.’ <sup>154</sup>

*Truth* on 10 July 1940 claimed to have received many complaints in the previous two years of people being pestered by ‘canvassers of offensive trash’ who ‘littered the country with lying scurrilous propaganda’; it said that **Canada** had recently outlawed the sect, and called for similar government action against ‘the activities of this crowd of racketeers and the religious mania they are developing right under our noses.’ Further articles stressed subversion. <sup>155</sup> Perhaps stimulated by the Canadian ban, the New Zealand government, through the Customs and Postal departments, stopped the import of pamphlets, and in August the police seized stocks at the sect’s **Wellington** headquarters, but supplies were already well scattered. <sup>156</sup>

On 7 August the *Observer* had reported Australian agitation against Jehovah’s Witnesses: the visit of their leader, Judge Rutherford, <sup>157</sup> to **Australia** was opposed by the Returned Servicemen’s League, while the governments of **New South Wales** and **Tasmania** wanted to ban them as subversive in that they taught converts not to fight and to refuse to recognise the King. In New Zealand there had been similar outcry but, said the *Observer*, ‘there is no evidence whatever of any subversive activities’; they might have unusual ideas about certain conventions normal to loyal and patriotic citizens, such as saluting the flag and standing for the national anthem, but these things, while reprehensible, did not amount to active disloyalty. The sect’s **Auckland** secretary, Robert Reid, stated that for Jehovah’s Witnesses, loyalty to King and country was quite secondary to the cause of Christ, but otherwise they shared in normal patriotic feelings and in detestation of **Hitler**; a few

had sons in the fighting forces. They obeyed the laws of the land except where these conflicted with the laws of God, which meant that they must not take part in any movement that would prevent them from preaching the Gospel, or would bring about the death of a fellow man. They had no political affiliations; in **Russia** they were persecuted and 6000 Witnesses were in Nazi concentration camps. In Auckland there were about 150 brethren, not all of them canvassers, and many adherents. <sup>158</sup>

Flag saluting in schools raised a few unhappy little issues. According to letters in the *Taranaki Daily News* it led to one man, a returned soldier, being dismissed from his job as a cheesemaker. He had asked, when his 5-year-old daughter started school, that she be excused from religious ceremonies and flag saluting. The school did not perform these rites but 'this was seized on by some self-styled super-patriots and brought before the directors of the dairy company who are reported to have unanimously voted on the dismissal of the father of this child from their employ'. <sup>159</sup> In a few cases where parents asked that children be excused from flag saluting teachers and school committees were uneasy. To one teacher, who asked if she should suspend such pupils, the Wellington Board replied that it had no authority to enforce attendance; in a general sense, flag saluting was a history lesson, and pupils, for conscientious reasons, could stay away from history lessons. <sup>160</sup> The Timaru South school committee reluctantly accepted the Canterbury Board's ruling that such children should be 'tactfully excluded' where there was no doubt about the religious conviction. <sup>161</sup> The Witnesses explained their attitude to flags in letters to papers, asking, 'Is it right to compel people to salute a flag?', referring to God's specific commandment against it (Exodus XX, 3-5), and stating that Jehovah's Witnesses were in Fascist and Nazi prisons on this issue. They were refusing the ceremony not because they were disloyal to the country, but because their first loyalty was to Jehovah God. <sup>162</sup>

A more unhappy incident occurred on 13 October at **Oamaru**. A meeting had gathered to hear a recorded speech, 'Government and

Peace', by Judge Rutherford, the leader of the sect, that in New York's Madison Square Garden had sparked a riot with the followers of Father Coughlan, <sup>163</sup> the radio priest. A returned soldier, W. Meehan, armed with a rifle and bayonet and talking about Fifth Columnists, intruded. In a scuffle with the doorkeepers one man's hand was cut with the bayonet and the rifle went off, wounding a man in the thigh. <sup>164</sup> The Oamaru RSA secretary on 16 October telegraphed the NZRSA to urge the government, in view of this 'tragic occurrence' and strong public resentment, to ban the sect before more trouble occurred, referring to its Nazi and pacifist activities as expounded in *Smith's Weekly* <sup>165</sup> of 5 October, and complaining that Oamaru people had been much annoyed at the Witnesses advertising their meeting 'by a loud speaker in public places, denouncing the Catholic religion in terms calculated to cause a breach of the peace'. <sup>166</sup>

The Police Department Narrative, referring to this, states that 'at one place a serious act of violence was found to have arisen out of [the sect's] activities. Having regard to all the circumstances, the Commissioner of Police, on 18 October 1940, referred the papers to the Prime Minister with the comment that its activities were a disturbing influence and it appeared that the movement could be declared a subversive organisation.' The Prime Minister and the Attorney-General concurred in this view, and by a notice issued under section 2A of the Public Safety Regulations 1940, it was so declared on 21 October. It was thus an offence to use or permit to be used any premises for the purpose of the organisation; to put up any signs or to organise or address any meetings for any such purpose; to participate in, or to encourage in any way the organisation's continuance, activities or objects, or by any badge or banner to identify oneself with or express approval of it. <sup>167</sup>

The Attorney-General, Mason, explained that Jehovah's Witnesses had been unfavourably noticed for some time: their propaganda seemed devoted to vilifying other religions, the State and government. 'Under each heading the propaganda was clearly subversive. It tended to disrupt national unity and destroy national morale when the nation was

fighting for its life.’ <sup>168</sup> *The Observer*, on 30 October, held that whether or not Jehovah’s Witnesses were subversive, all who disliked religion clothed in strident commercialism would welcome the suppression of their activities. High-pressure sales methods had built a vast and wealthy organisation around the American Messiah, Judge Rutherford, and New Zealand could well do without such enterprises. ‘But it has taken the exigencies of war to bring about a prohibition which common sense had always demanded.’

There followed a small crop of prosecutions on charges of participating in the activities of a subversive organisation. Police, usually acting on information, found Jehovah’s Witnesses delivering pamphlets, or admitting posting pamphlets, or going to people’s houses to explain the Bible. Often they would not promise to cease doing such things. Sentences varied from three months in prison to fines of a few pounds or being ordered to come up for sentence within three months. Several charges were dismissed for insufficient evidence, or doubt whether the regulations applied: for example, when the police made what *Truth* called a ‘dramatic early morning raid’ on a tent by the Tutaekuri River, **Napier**, they found two young men and a boy with 363 books and 27 records, but no evidence that they had been selling them since the prohibition. <sup>169</sup>

The ban and the first arrests aroused some protests and questioning, causing the government to deny having suppressed a religious body as such. On 19 November the sect’s Australasian headquarters in **Sydney** cabled the King to restore Christian freedom to Jehovah’s Witnesses in New Zealand, saying that their homes had been raided by the police, standard Bibles confiscated and their study banned. <sup>170</sup> The Australian Federal Attorney-General, W. M. Hughes, <sup>171</sup> said that his government would ask New Zealand its reasons for the ban; Alexander Mair, <sup>172</sup> Premier of **New South Wales**, had for some time claimed that their religious activities cloaked subversion, but so far the Federal government had not accepted this view. Hughes did not know what the position was in New Zealand, but under **Australia’s** constitution

everybody was guaranteed freedom of religious belief. 'It is said that Jehovah's Witnesses are not a religion. Perhaps that is a matter I am not competent to determine. Certainly I am not in favour of shutting people up simply because they do not believe what I believe. As far as I have heard, this sect seems to be a rather weird and barbaric interpretation of Christianity.' <sup>173</sup>

Fraser, commenting on the cable to the King, said that the government had not interfered with the right of people to worship according to their religious beliefs and conscience; if Jehovah's Witnesses would confine themselves to ordinary religious observances there would be no interference.

The difficulties in New Zealand arose through Jehovah's Witnesses constituting themselves a propaganda body against other churches, and thereby causing widespread ill-feeling, resentment and bitterness, which resulted in at least one unfortunate incident in this country. Such provocative conduct and incitement would be inimical at any time, and cannot be tolerated during wartime, when the greatest amount of unity—and co-operation—among members of all religious faiths is essential. There has been no interference with the right to worship; but there has been a prohibition imposed on the dissemination of literature and other propaganda directed against religious organisations. <sup>174</sup>

A week later a writer to the *Otago Daily Times*, who claimed that he had no connection or sympathy with the sect and who had found in his letter-box a booklet *Government and Peace*, the substance of an address by Rutherford, suggested that in fair play some facts should be known; the booklet set out beliefs about God's plan of the ages and the manner of the future establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth. <sup>175</sup>

In the House on 4 December 1940, F. W. Doidge wanted to know why the sect's 'pitiful rubbish' should be suppressed; New Zealand was fighting for freedom of speech and in *Australia* and Great Britain it was not banned but presumably treated with the contempt it deserved. <sup>176</sup>  
John A. Lee blew all round the compass: in Jehovah's Witnesses'

literature there was a good deal that did not accord with his opinions but he could not find anything subversive in it. 'There was an attack on certain institutions which the Jehovah's Witnesses claim played the Fascist game in **Spain** and destroyed democratic privilege.' The community should not allow what would promote violent feeling between groups, but must respect others' opinions. The Prime Minister and Attorney-General should provide means whereby Witnesses could express their viewpoint while refraining from all talk likely to produce a breach of peace. Lee did not favour pushing pamphlets on to people or hawking records denouncing certain churches, or effort by any creed, large or small, to thrust its doctrines down other people's throats. Finally, he realised that to defend an obscure sect, with few votes, was politically risky. <sup>177</sup>

Fraser's reply revealed a good deal of the current criticism. Opinions, harmless in normal times, might now become very dangerous, affecting the war effort and peaceful civil relationships. In war it was absolutely essential that there should be no sectarian warfare. He had himself requested representatives of the leading churches to refrain from anything leading thereto. 'It is hard to lay down an exact rule', continued Fraser, 'but, after all, a man's home is supposed to be his castle, and if people go to, say, a Catholic home and thrust into the hands of people there literature that was not sought and that attacks the dearest faith of those people, is not that looking for, and instigating trouble.... Does not the House think that the Government is absolutely justified in preventing that kind of thing? That is all that was done in regard to Jehovah's Witnesses.' The government would not object to literature that expressed only their own faith, without attacking others'. Every officer of the law did not have the cultural background necessary for enforcement of the law as it was intended to be enforced; some might not have recognised bibles, concordances etc, which did not come under any ban. But the government knew from the rumblings of the gathering storm that what had happened at **Oamaru** would happen all over the country: widespread acrimonious controversies, sectarian bitterness and religious enmity leading to trouble and violence. The



government had no quarrel with Jehovah's Witnesses as such and he hoped that the Attorney-General could make some arrangement whereby they could worship normally like other churches. <sup>178</sup>

Fraser had the unwonted support of Polson, who said that he had read in a recent *Saturday Evening Post* that it was necessary to suppress the sect in **America**, a country at peace, so that New Zealand could not be blamed if it took similar action when at war. <sup>179</sup>

On 18 November Fraser had received a deputation of Jehovah's Witnesses asking that the order against them be rescinded and that they be allowed to meet for worship. <sup>180</sup> On the latter aspect some *de facto* arrangement must have been made, for on 2 December newspapers reported that gratitude to the Mayor of **Auckland**, Sir Ernest Davis, and the Superintendent of Police, **James Cummings** <sup>181</sup> for their 'kindly courtesy and simple commonsense' had been expressed by R. Reid, principal speaker at a religious gathering of Jehovah's Witnesses in the **Auckland** town hall concert chamber. About 300 were present; proceedings were entirely orderly with a constable in the background. It was announced that further weekly meetings would be held in another hall. <sup>182</sup> *Truth* was indignant that a proscribed body should meet for any purpose by arrangement with such officials; was it proposed 'to permit the Witnesses of Jehovah to worship in whatever manner they worship—in other words, to recognise as a religion an organisation that defames other religions and constituted authority.' <sup>183</sup>

There was no further outcry against this relaxation and on 16 January the Commissioner of Police instructed that no action should be taken when Jehovah's Witnesses met only for worship or religious study. <sup>184</sup> A *Gazette* notice on 8 May 1941 announced that Jehovah's Witnesses could meet for Bible study or worship within a building or tent provided that only members or former members of their organisation were present and that the meetings should not be publicly advertised save with police consent. The government, said the Attorney-General, had been told that it was interfering with the right to meet for worship, prayer and Bible study. There was no intention to interfere with these



rights if exercised without detriment to the community; consequently activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses which could not be construed as subversive would be permitted, with adequate safeguards against mischief. <sup>185</sup>

That the Presbyterian Church had spoken for religious freedom in this area was indicated by an Auckland Presbytery decision, on 6 May 1941, to take no further action on behalf of Jehovah's Witnesses. At the same time it urged that the Public Questions Committee should be vigilant against any actions which would confine the Christian Church to worship and prevent the exercise of the right to proclaim religious truth, denounce error and remedy social wrong. <sup>186</sup> The Whangarei County Council in April decided, although some ratepayers had objected, to take no action against a surfaceman, a Jehovah's Witness, as he was not taking part in disloyal gatherings. <sup>187</sup> In July occurred the Teachers' Board of Appeal ruling that the Auckland Education Board was *ultra vires* in dismissing a Jehovah's Witness for refusing, from sincere religious conviction, to salute the flag. <sup>188</sup> An appeal against the regulations themselves as *ultra vires* and void, argued before the Supreme Court in March 1941, was dismissed. <sup>189</sup>

Some Jehovah's Witnesses continued to canvass. They admitted that they were welcomed in about only one house in 2000. <sup>190</sup> A few persisted in distributing leaflets. <sup>191</sup> Others more cautiously offered Bibles to householders, where possible directing attention to certain passages which could lead to exposition of their doctrines. Frequently they refused to avoid penalties by promising to give up these activities. <sup>192</sup> In some cases magistrates were resolute against the Bibles as the thin edge of the wedge; <sup>193</sup> others were uneasy about convictions over Bibles. <sup>194</sup> One, faced with a 17-year-old youth on such a charge, said: 'I cannot see that this is anything but a technical breach, but what am I going to do with him.... There should be a straight-out ban on this organisation or else nothing at all. Then we would know where we are'. <sup>195</sup> In November 1942 a Supreme Court judge upheld the appeal of a convicted Bible-canvasser, saying that there was no evidence of propaganda but adding

that his decision should not encourage belief that such activities would in all circumstances be within the law. <sup>196</sup>

After 1942 Jehovah's Witnesses seldom appeared in the news. On 15 October 1943 **Canada's** ban on the organisation was removed. <sup>197</sup> New Zealand's was not officially revoked until 5 April 1945. <sup>198</sup> The Attorney-General said that their leaders had assured the government that their activities would not give rise to objection. In other countries, including **Australia** where the policy, principles and methods of Jehovah's Witnesses were the same as in New Zealand, they had been free from restrictions for some considerable time, with entirely satisfactory results, and the government expected the same in New Zealand. <sup>199</sup> Counsel before the Defaulters' Revision Authority said on 28 June that New Zealand was the last country in the Empire to lift the ban. <sup>200</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Ashton, William (d 1965 *aet* 73): foundn member Otago Plasterers' Assn

<sup>2</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Jan, 1 Feb 40, pp. 6, 11

<sup>3</sup> *Tomorrow*, 21 Feb 40, vol VI, p. 254

<sup>4</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10, 17 Feb 40, pp. 8, 13

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 Jan, 1 Feb 40, pp. 6, 11

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Feb 40, p. 9

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Feb 40, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 12 Feb 40, p. 9

<sup>9</sup> He was later fined £1. In two other fights in these Sunday

frolics F. H. Levien SM found that soldiers had been aggressive.  
*NZ Herald*, 17 Feb, 9 Mar 40, pp. 13, 15

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Feb 40, p. 8

<sup>11</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Feb 40

<sup>12</sup> *NZ Herald*, 3 Feb 40, p. 10

<sup>13</sup> Davis, Sir Ernest, Kt('37) (1872–1962): Mayor Auck 1935–41

<sup>14</sup> One councillor thought that they should be allotted a 'decent place on the beach', adding 'The Hon. Robert Semple is after the Communists at the present time and I think we can leave them to him.' *Evening Post*, 12 Dec 40, p. 4

<sup>15</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10 Feb 40, p. 12

<sup>16</sup> *Bay of Plenty Beacon*, 14 Feb 40

<sup>17</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 May 40, p. 8

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Apr 40, p. 8

<sup>19</sup> WHN, 'Police Department', pp. 228–9, 216

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 240–1

<sup>21</sup> *People's Voice*, 10 Nov 39, p. 1

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 21 Mar, 12 Apr 40, pp. 4, 5, 1

<sup>23</sup> Carr, Peter (1884–1946): MP (Lab) Auckland West from 1940;

## **Pres Auck Tramways Union 1928–40**

**<sup>24</sup> Fortune, Wilfred Henry (1897–1961): MP (Nat) Eden 1946–54; Min Police, etc 1949–54**

**<sup>25</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Mar 40, p. 7**

**<sup>26</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Mar 40, p. 8**

**<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 Mar 40, p. 15**

**<sup>28</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 May 40, p. 8**

**<sup>29</sup> War History Narrative, ‘Censorship of the Press’, chap III, p. 4a, quoting police file S40/180**

**<sup>30</sup> *Standard*, 18, 25 Apr 40, pp. 7, 7**

**<sup>31</sup> Printed in *People’s Voice*, 23 Feb 40**

**<sup>32</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 25 May 40, p. 12**

**<sup>33</sup> *Southland Times*, 27, 28 May 40, pp. 9, 9**

**<sup>34</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 Jun 40, p. 7. Ormond Burton, who saw him in gaol, described him as a simple and harmless man. NZCPS *Bulletin* W 18, p. 8. According to the *People’s Voice* of 26 September, he was released at about that time, one month in six being the normal remission for good behaviour.**

**<sup>35</sup> *NZ Herald*, 5, 8 Jun 40, pp. 15, 12. Four months later the printer, E. J. Brooks, was also charged for his share in this leaflet; the magistrate, finding some doubts, fined him £30. *Ibid.*, 12, 16 Oct 40, pp. 8, 11**

<sup>36</sup> 'Spark', 23 Jun 40, quoted in WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap III, p. 10; *Dominion*, 19, 25 Jun 40, pp. 11, 9

<sup>37</sup> *NZ Herald*, 5, 8 Jun 40, pp. 15, 12

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 8 Aug 40, pp. 14, 14

<sup>39</sup> Levien, Felix Hector (1882–1964): SM 1918–49, INZEF 1917–18

<sup>40</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15, 18 Jul 40, pp. 13, 4

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Jul 40, p. 8

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 Jul, 3 Aug 40, pp. 6, 14

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Jul, 14 Aug 40, pp. 8, 12

<sup>44</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Jun, 17, 18 Jul 40, pp. 9, 9, 8, 13

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 15, 16, 18 Jul 40, pp. 9, 11, 13

<sup>46</sup> Thorn, James (1882–1956): Sec Canty Farm Workers Union 1907–8; helped form NZ Lab party 1909, Pres 1929, 1930, Nat Sec 1932–5; Lab & socialist propagandist **UK** 1909–13; Ed *Maoriland* (now *NZ*) *Worker* 1918–32; MP (Lab) **Thames** 1935–46, Parly Under-Sec PM 1943–6; HC **Canada** 1947–50; NZ rep 5 sessions **UNESCO**

<sup>47</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Jul 40, p. 9

<sup>48</sup> Bishop, Walter George (1873–1970): b **UK**; Pres Miramar Branch Lab party, then joined J. A. Lee's Democratic Labour

**party**

**<sup>49</sup> Goulding, Arthur Morice (1888–1973): lecturer AUC 9 years; SM from 1938; chmn Licensing Control Cmsn 1949–59**

**<sup>50</sup> *Press*, 15 Jun 40, p. 12**

**<sup>51</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 27 May 40, p. 6**

**<sup>52</sup> WHN, ‘Censorship of the Press’, chap III, p. 12, referring to letter Cmsnr of Police to Sec ONS, 26 Feb 41, file PM 84/3/8**

**<sup>53</sup> Copy in [General Assembly Library](#)**

**<sup>54</sup> WHN, ‘Police Department’, p. 218**

**<sup>55</sup> Ostler, Rt Hon Sir Henry, Kt(’39), KC (1876–1944): Crown Solicitor 1910–15; chmn VUC Council 1913–14; NZU Senate 1915–19; Judge Supreme Court 1924–42**

**<sup>56</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Sep, 18, 19, 24 Oct 40, pp. 11, 8, 13, 13**

**<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 7, 11 Feb 41, pp. 9, 9, 8**

**<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, 16 Sep 40, pp. 13, 9**

**<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 24 Oct 40, pp. 9, 12**

**<sup>60</sup> *Press*, 6 Nov 40, p. 13**

**<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Feb 41, p. 10**

**<sup>62</sup> Cornish, Hon Henry Havelock, KC (1882–1952): Prof Law VUC**

<sup>63</sup> For details of this trial and discussion of its implications see p. 898ff

<sup>64</sup> *Press*, 19 Feb 41, p. 12

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Mar 41, p. 12

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 19, 21 Mar, 4 Apr 41, pp. 10, 3, 12, 10. They were released on 11 October, and Ostler, whose name had appeared in an overseas ballot earlier in the year, was immediately drafted into the Army by the procedure usual for defaulters. *In Print*, 29 Oct 41; *NZ Herald*, 15 Oct 41, p. 6

<sup>67</sup> *Press*, 8 Oct 40, p. 8

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Oct 40, p. 12

<sup>69</sup> For instance its slogan, ‘No more troops overseas, New Zealand comes first’ and such statements as: ‘The idea that the Imperialist war can be ended by refusal of military service is as illusory as to think that exploitation can be ended by refusal to work for a capitalist exploiter’; or ‘The People’s Voice has always ... pointed out the futility of advising workers to “Boycott the war” or adopt the standpoint of conscientious objectors.’ *People’s Voice*, 17 Jun, 26 Sep 40

<sup>70</sup> NZCPS *Bulletin* W25, p. 2; *Press*, 14 Nov 40, p. 8

<sup>71</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 27 Nov 40, p. 6

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Dec 40, p. 7

<sup>73</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6, 7, 17 Dec 40, pp. 8, 13, 12; 6, 7, 8, 15 Feb 41,



pp. 6, 9, 10, 11

<sup>74</sup> Telegrams sent to newspapers, 23 Jan 41, Censorship and Publicity file D.20, quoted in WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap IV, p. 2

<sup>75</sup> *Press*, 14, 17 May 41, pp. 10, 5. They were discharged on Christmas Eve, and their letter to the Prime Minister, thanking him for this timely release and approving the democratic action of freeing political prisoners, was published in *In Print*, 7 Jan 42

<sup>76</sup> *A to J*1941, H-16, p. 14

<sup>77</sup> *Standard*, 28 Mar 40, pp. 7, 14

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Apr 41, p. 3

<sup>79</sup> See p. 902

<sup>80</sup> *Evening Post* 10, 14 Mar 41, pp. 8, 8

<sup>81</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, p. 79

<sup>82</sup> *Auckland Star*, 9 May 41, p. 6

<sup>83</sup> Perhaps they were held ready to be applied to a fresh disturbance.

<sup>84</sup> WHN, 'Police Department', pp. 240-1

<sup>85</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 Jan 40

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Feb 40, p. 10

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Mar 40, p. 8. He was a member of the Coach and Motor Body Builders Association.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Feb 40, p. 12

<sup>89</sup> *Evening Post*, 15 Mar 40, p. 6, headed 'Hand of Moscow and Berlin'

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Mar 40, p. 8

<sup>91</sup> A Dunedin RSA speaker, *Press*, 12 Mar 40, p. 8

<sup>92</sup> *NZ Herald*, 2 Jul 40, p. 8

<sup>93</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Mar 40, p. 6

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Mar 40, p. 3

<sup>95</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Mar 40, p. 12

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Mar, 1 May 40, pp. 14, 10

<sup>97</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Apr 40, p. 10

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Apr 40, p. 13

<sup>99</sup> Morrell, William John (1868–1945): Rector Otago BHS 1907–33; Council Otago Univ 1912, Chancellor from 1933

<sup>100</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 12, 17 Apr 40, pp. 6, 6

<sup>101</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Apr 40, p. 6

<sup>102</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 10 May 40, p. 2; also 11, 13, 14 May 40, pp. 7, 4, 14

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Jul 40, p. 3

<sup>104</sup> Hercus, Sir Charles, Kt('47), OBE('19) (1888–1971): Dean OU Medical School 1937–59

<sup>105</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Jul 40, p. 3

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Jul 40, p. 8. A letter on 24 June had also complained of 'the antics of this small party', not supported in its 'mischief-making campaign' by the majority of RSA members.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Aug 40, p. 8

<sup>109</sup> *Press*, 5 Jun 40, p. 6; *Point Blank*, 15 Aug 40, p. 41. Similar motions has been passed earlier by NZRSA.

<sup>110</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Aug 40, p. 47

<sup>111</sup> *Press*, 15 Aug 40, p. 6

<sup>112</sup> Roy, James Alexander McLean (1893–1971): MP (Nat) Clutha 1935–60

<sup>113</sup> *NZPD*, vol 257, p. 721

<sup>114</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 4 Jun, 9 Jul 40, pp. 5, 6

**115** *Press*, 22 Jun 40, p. 7

**116** Boswell, Charles Wallace (1886–1956): headmaster Kawakawa DHS 1935–8; MP (Lab) Bay of Islands 1938–43; NZ Min Soviet Union 1944–9

**117** *NZPD*, vol 257, pp. 473–4

**118** *Ibid.*, p. 553, with quote from *Police Journal*, Feb 40, p. 5; *Evening Post*, 17 Jul 40, p. 13

**119** *Ibid.*, 17 Apr 40, p. 10

**120** *Ibid.*, 8 Aug 40, p. 8. The *Southland Times* of 9 Aug reprovingly remarked that it would be unwise to make a practice of basing police investigations on anonymous letters. In fact, the police and the National Service and Army departments checked on all charges of subversion, evasion of service, etc, made in anonymous letters: ‘often these letters give helpful information, but more often the complaints they contain are founded on a tissue of fabrications’. Report in *Otago Daily Times*, 4 Oct 41, p. 8

**121** *NZ Herald*, 21 Nov 40, p. 10

**122** *Evening Post*, 12 Dec 40, p. 15

**123** Burbidge, Professor Percy William, CBE('57) (1891–): Prof Physics AUC 1921–57; member Academic Bd NZU and Research Grants Cmte; Defence Scientific Advisory Cmte 1939–45, chmn Auck War Tech Development Bd 1939–45; war service 1917–18

**124** *NZ Herald*, 23 Nov 40, p. 15

**125** *Ibid.*, 12 Dec 40, p. 11

**126** W. Anderson and L. K. Munro, *ibid.*, 13, 14 Dec 40, pp. 11, 13

**127** *Ibid.*, 13 Dec 40, p. 11

**128** Snell, F. A. (d 1948 *aet* 79): Auck Educ Bd for more than 20 years, Hamilton School Bd Govs & Technical College Bd Management

**129** *NZ Herald*, 12 Dec 40, p. 11

**130** Cocker, William Hollis, CMG('50) (1896–1962): member NZ Broadcasting Board 1935–6, NZU Senate; Pres AUC Council 1938–; chmn Nat Council Adult Education

**131** *NZ Herald*, 14 Dec 40, p. 13

**132** *Evening Post*, 25 Jan 41, p. 13

**133** *Ibid.*

**134** *NZ Herald*, 23 Jan, 20 Feb 41, pp. 11, 9

**135** *Ibid.*, 18 Feb 41, p. 8

**136** *Ibid.*, 6 Mar 41, p. 10; *Auckland Star*, 3 Sep 41, p. 9

**137** *Evening Post*, 30 May 40, p. 10

**138** *Press*, 7 Jun 40, p. 8

**139** Also *Otago Daily Times*, 18 Jun 40, p. 8

**140** *Press*, 22 May 40, p. 9

**141** *Evening Post*, 22 Jul 40, p. 5

**142** Sievwright, Archibald Burnett (1890–1978): barrister & solicitor; INZEF 1914–18, Judge Advocate WWII; 2 years Vice-Pres Wgtn RSA

**143** *Evening Post*, 3 Sep 40, p. 4

**144** *Ibid.*, 6 Sep 40, p. 6

**145** A home intelligence section in the **UK** responsible to Duff Cooper, Minister of Information 1940–1.

**146** *Truth*, 11 Sep 40, p. 15

**147** Levvey, Ernest Charles (1877–1947): SM from 1918, **Gisborne**, **Invercargill**, Chch

**148** *Press*, 23 Oct 40, p. 12

**149** *Ibid.*, 11, 16 Jul 41, pp. 9, 8; *Truth*, 16, 23 Jul 41, pp. 7, 27

**150** WHN, 'Police Department', pp. 213–4

**151** *Ibid.* The Wairoa Harbour Board complained of subversive literature 'against the British government, the government of this country and Christianity' which was 'creating discontent among Maoris'. *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 17 Apr 40, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 18 Apr 40, p. 11

**152** eg, *NZ Tablet*, 3 Jun, 1, 15 Jul 36, pp. 3, 33, 33, 11 Aug 37,

p. 5, 24 Apr, 8 May 40, pp. 9, 10

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Aug 40, p. 9

<sup>154</sup> *Church Chronicle*, 1 Dec 40, p. 164

<sup>155</sup> *Truth*, 10, 17 Jul 40, pp. 13, 8; 4, 18, 25 Sep 40, pp. 8, 9, 15; 23, 30 Oct 40, pp. 39, 3

<sup>156</sup> WHN, 'Police Department', p. 234

<sup>157</sup> Rutherford, [Judge] Joseph Franklin (1869–1942): US religious zealot

<sup>158</sup> *NZ Observer*, 7 Aug 40, p. 9

<sup>159</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 22, 31 Jul 40, pp. 8, 8

<sup>160</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Oct 40, p. 13

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 Oct 40, p. 4; *Press*, 19 Oct 40, p. 11

<sup>162</sup> *Press*, 24 Oct 40, p. 12; *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Oct 40, p. 12

<sup>163</sup> Coughlan, Charles Edward (1891–): b **Canada**; US radio priest 1930–40

<sup>164</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 14 Oct 40, p. 6. The leg was amputated at the hip. *Press*, 11 Dec 40, p. 12. When Meehan was tried in February for attempted murder and several lesser crimes, Mr Justice Kennedy pointed out that the sect was not on trial, but it seems clear that the Witnesses' having meanwhile been banned argued strongly for the defence. Meehan was convicted on the minor charge of assaulting two men by threatening them with a



loaded rifle and fixed bayonet, and in view of his having already been four months in prison was sentenced to two months' hard labour. *Otago Daily Times*, 5, 6, 7 Feb 41, pp. 5, 9, 10

<sup>165</sup> A popular Australian weekly with a considerable New Zealand circulation.

<sup>166</sup> *Press*, 26 Oct 40, p. 12

<sup>167</sup> WHN, 'Police Department', p. 235; *NZ Gazette*, 24 Oct 40, p. 2752

<sup>168</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Oct 40, p. 8

<sup>169</sup> *Truth*, 27 Nov 40, p. 11; other trials were reported in, for example, *ibid.*; *Evening Post*, 2, 19, 26 Nov 40, pp. 11, 11, 9; *Press*, 18, 21 Nov, 6, 19 Dec 40, pp. 10, 8, 14, 8; *Otago Daily Times*, 22, 30 Nov 40, pp. 6, 13; *NZ Herald*, 5 Mar, 9 Apr (appeal to Supreme Court), 13 Jun 41, pp. 8, 9, 8

<sup>170</sup> 'Homes of Jehovah's Witnesses have been raided by the police. Common version **Oxford Bibles** have been confiscated, and the study of same banned. Innocent Christians have been imprisoned for refusing to cease preaching the Gospel of God's Kingdom ... such proceedings accord with the totalitarian action of **Berlin** and Rome, and not with that of British justice. The Attorney-General has so far refused to answer the following question:—"Does the **New Zealand Government** refuse to Jehovah's Witnesses the right of assembly to worship God with song, prayer and Scripture study? Answer: Yes, or No." We appeal to Your Majesty to act on our behalf in harmony with your Coronation oath .... We respectfully request that you should advise the **New Zealand Government** to restore Christian freedom to Jehovah's Witnesses'. *Press*, 27 Nov 40, p. 10

<sup>171</sup> Hughes, Rt Hon William Morris, PC, CH('41), QC (1864–1952): b Wales; PM Aust 1915–23; Min Ext Aff 1921–3, 1937–9; Attorney-General 1908–21, 1939–40; Min **Navy** 1940–3

**172 Mair, Hon Alexander: b 1889: Premier NSW 1939–41, Ldr Oppos 1941–5**

**173 *Evening Post*, 19 Nov 40, p. 11. But in January 1941 Canberra decided that Jehovah's Witnesses should be declared an unlawful organisation. *Ibid.*, 17 Jan 41, p. 6**

**174 *Press*, 20 Nov 40, p. 8**

**175 *Otago Daily Times*, 29 Nov 40, p. 11**

**176 *NZPD*, vol 258, pp. 500–1**

**177 *Ibid.*, p. 515**

**178 *Ibid.*, pp. 502–3**

**179 *Ibid.*, p. 522**

**180 WHN, 'Police Department', p. 235**

**181 Cummings, James, CBE('50) (d 1976 *aet* 91): Superintendent i/c Auckland Police 1939; to HQ Wgtn 1941; Commissioner Police 1944–50**

**182 *NZ Herald*, 2 Dec 40, p. 9**

**183 *Truth*, 11 Dec 40, p. 9**

**184 WHN, 'Police Department', p. 236**

**185 *Evening Post*, 9 May 41, p. 6; *NZ Gazette*, 8 May 41, p. 1298**

- 186 *NZ Herald*, 7 May 41, p. 11
- 187 *Ibid.*, 12 Apr 41, p. 11
- 188 *Evening Post*, 11 Jun 41 p. 8; See p. 236
- 189 *NZ Herald*, 5 Mar, 9 Apr 41, pp. 8, 8
- 190 *Press*, 22 May 42, p. 4
- 191 *Evening Star*, 27 Jun 42, p. 2
- 192 *NZ Herald*, 3 Jun 42, p. 4; *Evening Star*, 12 Aug 42, p. 4
- 193 *NZ Herald*, 2, 4 Apr 42, pp. 6, 6
- 194 *Ibid.*, 11 Aug 42, p. 2
- 195 *Ibid.*, 13 Jun 41, p. 8
- 196 *Evening Star*, 12 Aug 42, p. 4; *Press*, 21 Nov 42, p. 6
- 197 *Auckland Star*, 28 Oct 43, p. 4
- 198 *NZ Gazette*, 5 Apr 45, p. 371
- 199 *Press*, 29 Mar 45, p. 6
- 200 *Dominion*, 29 Jun 45, p. 8
-

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

# CHAPTER 7 – CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS AND DEFAULTERS

## CHAPTER 7

### *Conscientious Objectors and Defaulters*

**NEW ZEALAND** faced its conscientious objectors and defaulters with attitudes largely derived from the First World War. By the Military Service Act of August 1916 only the man who could satisfy a board that before and since August 1914 he had been a member of a religious body to which the bearing of arms was contrary to divine revelation, that he himself conscientiously held such beliefs and was prepared to do non-combatant work in or beyond New Zealand, could be recognised as a religious objector and be exempted from military service. The Society of Friends, the Christadelphians and Seventh Day Adventists were the only creeds which qualified, and only a handful of their adherents convinced boards of their personal religious sincerity. These happy few, numbering between 20 and 30 by February 1918, were sent to alternative service with the Department of Agriculture. <sup>1</sup> The remainder, some hundreds, were treated with varying severity that included gaol sentences, deportation, compulsory front line service or non-combatant duties. The distinction between defaulters and conscientious objectors was often very slight.

With this background, New Zealand faced its defaulters in the new war with mixed feelings. There were precedents for severity, honoured by time and the RSA: 'we are united in a common love of Empire and of home, and we are united also in a common belief that those who are living under the Union Jack and are not willing to fight should be made to do so,' said Mr Justice Ostler at an RSA luncheon in May 1940. <sup>2</sup> On the other hand *Truth*, a paper by no means tender to objectors, a month earlier had contrasted current conscience tribunal decisions in **Britain** with 14 New Zealanders shanghaied to **France** in 1917: 'Briggs's case is an almost unbelievable story of sheer sadism and vicious atrocity, perpetrated in the name of patriotism and freedom, the details of which almost make the blood run cold....' <sup>3</sup> Again, a year later, while demanding equality of sacrifice, a *Truth* article began: 'No right-thinking citizen wants to see a repetition of the grave injustices and

vicious treatment that were meted out to some objectors in the last war'.  
<sup>4</sup> In Parliament, F. W. Doidge, an Empire stalwart, declared: 'We on this side of the House have every sympathy for those who are "honest-to-God" conscientious objectors and for those who are truly troubled in their conscience. I do not want to see conscientious objectors forced to go through what they had to go through during the war of 1914-18.'<sup>5</sup> A few plain men spoke of tolerance and useful work on farms or other production.

I did my bit in the last war, and there were a few conscientious objectors in those days. One or two I knew personally, and I found them quiet God-fearing people. Although I could not see eye to eye with their views I had at the same time every respect for them, and I may say that although I was full of fight in those days I could not muster enough pluck to stand up to what was said to these sincere people.... It is much easier to go into camp.<sup>6</sup>

Another practical man stated:

These individuals, whether genuine in their beliefs or merely super 'lead-swingers', are nothing but an embarrassment and a nuisance to the army. I had some slight contact with them during the last war. Some spent their period of military service alternately doing terms of imprisonment and in the awkward squad. There is no doubt that they suffered a good deal of unnecessary brutality. At one time there was a hut full of them at **Trentham** camp, some doing home service, some doing nothing but eat good army rations. These men could have been much better employed, from a national viewpoint, in a non-military occupation. It would be unwarranted and unjust, however, to leave them in their present safe and well-paid jobs.<sup>7</sup>

Labour had opposed 1914-18 as a capitalist war. Fraser, Semple, Armstrong, O'Brien<sup>8</sup> and Webb had each served a year for opposing conscription or for seditious utterances. Webb in June 1918 was also sentenced to two years as a military defaulter and in 1919 lost civil rights for 10 years. Others in the non-Parliamentary Labour hierarchy

suffered similarly, and most of those gaoled or gaoled were working men. Even when the government in 1940 accepted the need for conscription, Labour and liberal circles believed that conscientious objectors in this war would have sympathetic treatment.

Labour's opponents and RSA critics waited expectantly for such softness, ready to assert effectively that these men were by their pasts unfit to be leaders in war. Against their gibes Labour argued that this war was different, that it was not a capitalist brawl but a fight for freedom, a fight for unionism and the rights of workers who under a Labour government each had a stake in the country. But people of any party whose sons or husbands, fiancés, friends or brothers were dead, suffering, in peril, or in any case absent, very readily flamed against those who refused to share the battle and all who favoured them. The government felt insecure and uneasy in this area, and was exasperated that current objectors would not join them in perceiving the difference between 1914 and 1940, as had such noted overseas pacifists as [Bertrand Russell](#)<sup>9</sup> and C. E. M. Joad.<sup>10</sup> As the years unfolded, the paradox appeared that in New Zealand, where the government's background might have led to considerate handling of conscientious objectors, those who would not fight received much harsher treatment than did those in [Britain](#) and other Commonwealth countries.

Uneasily, the government set aside its past and its inclinations, and thought about the unwelcome topic as little as possible. On this subject its opponents could make political capital, while if Labour lost office objectors would suffer more and lose civil rights as in 1919. Its uneasiness appeared in the slowness with which it tackled the problems, the long delay in devising alternative service and in setting up defaulters' camps, delay that fostered public irritation. Mason, Minister of Justice, gave liberal counsel to the boards which judged conscience, but despite the British example no appeal body was set up, and indefinite prison sentences could be imposed on men still not called criminals. The boards, drawn from the responsible and respected layers of society, reflected broad-based feeling that unless the path of conscientious



**objection was rough and narrow, there might be thousands with delicate consciences undermining the sacrifices of brave men and making prosecution of the war impossible.**

**The conscription regulations provided for six, later nine, Armed Forces Appeal Boards, appointed by the Minister of National Service. Each had as chairman a stipendiary magistrate, with another senior legal man as his deputy; each had a member with some knowledge of workers' interests, another with knowledge of production and industry, and a Crown representative who was always an experienced lawyer. They dealt with all appeals against overseas service, on grounds of public interest, status, undue personal hardship and conscientious objection; they also handled conscience appeals against Territorial service, other Territorial appeals being heard by local manpower committees.**

**Besides being men of standing in the community, appeal board members had to be over military age and without sons eligible for service. They were well qualified to discern and weigh the merits of appeals in the public interest, which were by far the most numerous sort, deciding whether a man would assist the war effort better by remaining at his job or being in the Army. The few problems of status did not perplex, nor was it too difficult to assess undue personal hardship, as of a widowed mother struggling against sickness, poverty or an unmanned farm, though it did not rate that a man's business would collapse without him, unless that business was of value in the war. But matters of conscience were more elusive. In August 1914, [Walter Nash](#) had said: 'My own opinion has been confirmed by that of eminent legal authorities that, while our Courts are eminently fitted for the ascertainment of facts, there is no machinery devised by the human brain which can unerringly detect the state of a man's conscience.'<sup>11</sup> However, this task was handed to the appeal boards and their decisions were final. In the United Kingdom, by contrast, there were local tribunals which dealt solely with conscience cases, and those dissatisfied could go to appellate tribunals, which by December 1944 had heard 18 653 cases and varied the decisions of the local boards in 9422**

Initially, boards were guided by National Service Emergency Regulations 1940/117, clause 21, which said that to succeed the conscientious objector must satisfy the board that he held a genuine belief that it was wrong to engage in warfare under any circumstances. Active and genuine membership of a pacifist religious body might generally be accepted as evidence and in particular to have been an active member of the Christadelphians or the Society of Friends for a substantial period before the war would be sufficient proof.

On 9 July 1940 churchmen representing Anglicans, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, **Methodists**, Baptists, Congregationalists, the Church of Christ, the **Salvation Army** and the Society of Friends wrote to the Prime Minister. They were anxious that appeal boards should regard conscientious objection as a general moral principle, not the monopoly of particular sects, for while most of their churches did not adopt the pacifist view they recognised the right of individual members to do so. They hoped that work serving the community, or non-combatant duties in the armed forces, would be arranged for objectors; that, in the interests of uniformity, appeal board chairmen would consult together before beginning their duties and that there would be an appellate tribunal, as in **Britain**. In conclusion they realised that the government was anxious, for the sake of the country's morale in times of strain, that the work of the churches should not suffer; they therefore suggested that all ministers of religion, all home missionaries, and theological students accepted prior to September 1939 should be exempt from military service.

The Prime Minister replied on 9 September that the **War Cabinet** had decided that conscience appeals would be considered on their individual merits. The appeals of those who established genuine belief that it is wrong under any circumstances to engage in warfare would be allowed, and alternative service recommended. Whenever ministers of religion, including Marist Brothers and theological students, were called in

ballots, the head of the church should appeal on public interest grounds; such appeals would cause little difficulty or embarrassment and probably no actual hearing would be needed. <sup>13</sup> This was published in the *New Zealand Herald* and other dailies of 5 October, and in the *Presbyterian Outlook* of October. It was repeated in a National Service circular sent to appeal boards, along with an Army statement, dated 29 November 1940, that men posted to Medical or **Army Service Corps** must understand that the exigencies of war might require combatant service. The circular considered the desirability and difficulties of uniformity in the decisions of boards, offered the services of the Department in maintaining the 'closest liaison', and urged chairmen to consult each other whenever possible. It also stated that, while the onus of establishing his conscientious belief fell on the appellant, there was grave difficulty in distinguishing the genuine from the false, quoting from the Year Book of Edward IV 'the thought of man is not triable, for the devil himself knows not the thought of man.' Cases based on such recognised religions as the Society of Friends and the Christadelphians would not be unduly difficult, but since the last war there had undoubtedly been a marked growth of conscientious objection, of which the most important instance was perhaps the Peace Pledge Union, which promised never to support or sanction another war. The circular also pointed out that in England the term 'conscientious objection' had not been defined by the tribunals which, rather than laying down general principles, dealt with each case on its merits. <sup>14</sup>

The exemption of the clergy was smoothly implemented, but when the appeal boards had been working for a few weeks it was clear that in several of them the individual conscience met a rough passage and a narrow gate. In February 1941 the combined churches wrote to the Prime Minister <sup>15</sup> and sent a deputation to Semple and other heads of the **National Service Department**. <sup>16</sup> The appeal boards, they said, were not interpreting the regulations as expected from the Prime Minister's letter of 9 September 1940. The boards were concentrating on the church membership of appellants and on whether such churches absolutely rejected war, with the result that 'many of our young men

who have seemed to us to have been genuine conscientious objectors and whose sincerity has been vouched for by their own Minister have had their appeals summarily dismissed.' There was no provision for alternative service outside military control, nor was there any surety that the Army would keep those whom appeal boards recommended for such service in non-combatant units. Further, tribunals differed enormously in their treatment of objectors.

Semple gave the government's position quite simply: 'We do not want wholesale exemptions. By 1943 every young man at present of military age will be out of the country or in camp. If we are too liberal and too sympathetic with the fellow who wants to dodge, we will have trouble.' The government could not interfere with the decisions of tribunals, even if they were inconsistent, but amendments to the regulations were necessary and had already been drafted. Appeals should depend on each man's genuine conscientious belief that it was wrong to take part in any war, and independent corroborative evidence of conscience would be strongly advised. Successful appellants would perform alternative civilian tasks at soldiers' pay; the Services must ensure that those granted non-combatant duties were required to do only these, and if such duties were not available a non-combatant might be allotted alternative civilian service. Reference to the Society of Friends and the Christadelphians, which had tended to provide an absolute yardstick, would be omitted along with the demand that such beliefs should have been held for a substantial period before the war, which was too exacting, especially for young Territorials.

In general these proposals placated the clergy, though they remained anxious lest some tribunals would still not accept that honest conscientious objection existed. They were particularly concerned about the Wellington Board where the Crown representative was by profession a Crown prosecutor, and largely took over the questioning. The Bishop of [Wellington](#) declared himself 'honestly staggered.... They are just catch questions, every one of them, given by a skilled legal mind. It seems to me to be absolutely unfair.' Semple soothingly promised to 'do our best

to give these boys a fair go' with the new regulations. <sup>17</sup>

On 15 May 1941 new regulations (1941/73) established in detail the changes proposed in February. Where an appellant, assisted by corroborative evidence but not necessarily dependent on it, convinced a board that he genuinely believed that it was wrong under any circumstances to engage in warfare, the board should allow the appeal, and thereafter the Minister of National Service might direct the man to any civilian work and at such pay and conditions as he thought fit. If the appellant established his genuine belief that it was wrong to do combat duty, the board should 'dismiss' the appeal, directing that he should go to non-combatant duties only, and if these were not available in the armed forces, he should be directed to civilian work by the Minister likewise. <sup>18</sup> All other appeals would be dismissed unconditionally. Those who had appealed successfully or been allotted non-combatant duties could at any time change their minds and enter the forces; if applied for within a fortnight, appeals previously dismissed could be reheard under the new regulations. It was also decreed that conscientious objectors were to be medically examined before their cases were heard, and against those unfit no further action would be taken, thus reducing the number of these vexed issues. <sup>19</sup>

The Minister of Justice, Mason, explaining the changes to a conference of chairmen, Crown representatives and secretaries of appeal boards, spoke of the difficulties of assessing conscience and the need for approaching a uniform standard. There had been criticisms of boards' decisions by churchmen and others, most of them not pacifists but anxious for the genuine objector; he was sure much of it was ill-founded on abridged newspaper reports or on disappointed appellants' complaints. But the previous regulations did not convey the government's policy. The government, he said, earnestly desired to prevent the coward and slacker from sheltering under an invented conscience, but to extend every consideration to the sincere objector. 'To this end the standard of proof should not be harsh. Until and unless an appellant shows himself to lack sincerity, I suggest he should be handled by a friendly

examination rather than by a rigorous cross-examination.’<sup>20</sup>

This was liberal-minded direction, but laws depend on those who actually administer them. There was no notable change in the boards that felt their first duty was to prevent slackers dodging their obligations. Further, although Semple had publicly announced that military exemption now definitely involved alternative service and sacrifice, there was no machinery to effect this: it was all left to the direction of the Minister, who remained inactive. As weeks and months passed public opinion, spearheaded by the RSA and newspaper editorials and sharpened by the military disasters of **Greece** and **Crete**, pressed for clarification of this alternative sacrifice. Possibly lack of definition increased the reluctance of some appeal boards to accept conscience easily, and it is likely that they were confirmed in that tendency by an influential British judgment during April 1941, in a case of appeal against wrongful dismissal, which ruled out politically-based objection, no matter how sincere.<sup>21</sup>

The question of alternative service and sacrifice was tackled in August 1941 by more regulations, which created a Special Tribunal to examine every recognised conscientious objector, directing him where necessary to essential work and arranging, by levies varying from *2s 6d* to several pounds a week paid into the Social Security Fund, that he receive only the equivalent of Army pay and allowances, the basic rate for a single man being £4 a week. Many of the young men concerned were not earning more than this. Grade III men were totally exempted. Members of the Tribunal, all distinguished lawyers,<sup>22</sup> worked alone, examining each objector in camera and checking with his employer, Social Security and National Service. In most cases men were not ordered to change their work except where it was of no use to the community or their employers did not wish them to continue. This Tribunal, which began work late in November 1941, was generally accepted by both pacifists and public, though some newspapers, notably *Truth* and the *Dominion*,<sup>23</sup> found the sacrifice insufficient and the secrecy disturbing. By the end of 1944 the Tribunal had dealt with 500



recognised objectors, plus 72 of those given non-combatant duties whom the Army did not require, and during 1945 defaulters released from detention camps also came before them. Financial orders were made in 343 of their total 826 cases, with an estimated annual yield to Social Security of £6,502. <sup>24</sup> Some orders had to be reviewed frequently, to fit variations in the amounts earned. <sup>25</sup>

Despite the regulations of May 1941 and Mason's liberal directions, appeal boards continued to judge objectors by their own differing standards. On 8 August 1941 J. A. Lee said that boards varied so much from place to place that they were making the law, not administering it. In Auckland, for instance, the Labour representative had 'taken up at times a most ferocious attitude to conscientious objectors.... It was an outrage that in some centres men were hectored for the attitude they took up, while in other centres they were exempted for the same attitude.' Some boards were still making conscience dependent on belonging to certain religious groups. There should be definite instruction and effort towards co-ordinating their decisions so that the tribunals might work uniformly. <sup>26</sup>

Clergymen often testified to the sincerity of appellants, and they were disturbed when their evidence was ignored. Towards the end of 1941 Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist churches, while earnest in loyalty and in support of a righteous war, expressed dissatisfaction with the boards, and also with magistrates who sentenced defaulters. The Baptist Assembly on 22 October deprecated 'humiliating and unfair treatment'; it was wrong, said Dr Alexander Hodge, to conclude that all who resisted being in the forces were malingerers and cowards; some magisterial comments savoured too much of Judge Jeffreys. <sup>27</sup> Dr J. J. North, <sup>28</sup> principal of the Baptist training college, wrote more comprehensively of the world's current danger and its debt to conscience in the martyrs of the past. Those sitting in judgment must remember that conscience existed and was recognised by law; the exonerating reason for exemption must be a man's own, related to God and human society, and its final proof was his willingness to suffer for

it, to pay cheerfully the price of his costly convictions. <sup>29</sup>

The Presbyterian General Assembly, disappointed that National Service regulations were being 'so unsatisfactorily administered', offered its sympathy to those who suffered in consequence. <sup>30</sup> Its Public Questions Committee stated that in accepting the regulations of May 1941 it had expressed its view that they could be administered satisfactorily only by special tribunals, as in England. 'It is impossible to follow the decisions of the Boards; and it is hard to understand why the evidence of a minister concerning the conscientious beliefs of a young man he had known intimately should be entirely ignored. As a result a number of young men have already been imprisoned for conscience sake.' <sup>31</sup> St John's Church, **Wellington**, under Gladstone Hughes vigorously dissented, declaring that such statements misrepresented the Presbyterians of New Zealand. <sup>32</sup>

The Methodist Church, with Burton, Barrington and their company so prominent, was anxious to avoid the label 'pacifist', while also concerned for justice. In November the synods of **Auckland**, **Wellington** and North Canterbury deplored that appeals by young men of undoubted sincerity had been dismissed, thought that there should be a higher tribunal, as in England, and regretted that there was no alternative service other than defaulters' camps for those whose appeals were dismissed. <sup>33</sup> The synod of Otago and Southland, however, regretted the indiscretions of some ministers at appeal boards and wanted discipline from Conference, <sup>34</sup> while the church at Hataitai, **Wellington**, approved by the RSA, strongly affirmed its loyalty to the war and the British Empire. <sup>35</sup> In the *Observer*, a paper somewhat prone to pacifist-hunting, the president-elect of Conference, Reverend W. Walker, <sup>36</sup> an ex-president of the **Christchurch** and Canterbury RSA, stated stoutly that the Methodist Church was not pacifist, that hundreds of young **Methodists** were fighting valiantly in a war which they believed to be righteous, and that fully three-fourths of the current trouble was due to the government not producing worthy forms of alternative sacrificial service; young men of deep sincerity and sterling character had had



appeals dismissed and been imprisoned, even when vouched for by men of high standing who knew them well. <sup>37</sup> At the Methodist Conference, while stating clearly 'It is right to fight', he saw need for Church and State to clarify the position regarding genuine objectors for the guidance of appeal boards and suggested a little more sweet reasonableness all round. <sup>38</sup> In its resolutions Conference itself was cautious: while most members would be active in the war effort, freedom of conscience should be respected but those sincerely unwilling to bear arms should render alternative sacrificial service. <sup>39</sup>

The conduct of appeal boards and the clergy's attacks drew differing comments, both critical of the boards, from two **Wellington** lawyers. One, O. C. Mazengarb, <sup>40</sup> regretted that certain ministers of religion in their support of pacifists were doing real disservice to their denominations and to the State by fostering antagonism to civil law. There was, he said, no real conflict between divine and civil law; the conflict arose only when people sought to interpret the unrevealed law of God in a way that opposed the duties of citizens. If such a conflict occurred, the obvious course was to ask the legislature to amend the law so as to bring it into harmony with the presumed will of God. Newspaper reports showed that there was urgent need for change in the law, but while the law was there the clergy should respect it and not criticise the tribunals which had the unpleasant task of trying to penetrate into the real minds of men.

Churchmen should confine themselves to their proper province; 'any movement which white-ants the law is quite capable of white-anting the Church itself.' Cabinet ministers were currently wrestling with problems that they had helped to create by nurturing pacifists in days gone by, and churchmen doing likewise might easily split their congregations, might drive a wedge between Church and State. <sup>41</sup>

Another lawyer, A. Eaton Hurley, saw the statements of these churches as

primarily a protest against the taunts and insults delivered against some

conscientious objectors by certain public men and by some Magistrates who have forgotten the historical position of Quakers and other pacifists who for their faith have suffered. Such taunts lower the dignity of the Magistracy and impair the impartial administration of justice... we pride ourselves on our tolerance, but it is absent from our midst; in its place are growing bitterness and hatred... Unless we are able to retain respect for individuals with whose opinions we are not in sympathy, there can be no real solidarity within our country.

New Zealanders were standing for the common people against the despot, for the right of each to the freedom of his own conscience, freedom recognised by the law of the land. 'The measure of our sincerity is the measure by which we ourselves in New Zealand are able to live with respect for beliefs that are not our own.'<sup>42</sup>

An *Evening Post* correspondent feared that newspaper reports of appeal board dialogues gave 'ready-made arguments and excuses', encouraging other objectors to 'give it a go'.<sup>43</sup> The *Evening Post*, in an editor's comment, thought that more would be deterred than encouraged. Another correspondent, **Oliver Duff**,<sup>44</sup> wrote that while he did not sympathise with five per cent of appellants, and if on a board might not allow two per cent of them, yet the law gave every man called up the right of appeal, and every citizen the right to know on what grounds appeals were granted or rejected. 'Justice with the blinds down is an experiment that we can't afford to risk.'<sup>45</sup>

Meanwhile, on 24 October when an Opposition member, W. P. Endean,<sup>46</sup> asked for an appellant tribunal, Fraser answered that the government had considered this but found it 'neither desirable nor practicable'; the boards were fully competent to deal fairly and impartially with the evidence submitted and they could grant a rehearing if they had reason to suppose that a decision had been fraudulently obtained or if new and material evidence had been discovered.<sup>47</sup>

Two incidents may be cited here, one to show how decisions could

vary in apparently similar cases, one to suggest the zeal of some boards against conscientious objectors. A member of the Brethren sect got a month's imprisonment for failing to report for military duty. His lawyer explained that his appeal had been dismissed by the same board that had allowed an identical appeal by his elder brother, brought up in the same religion; the only difference was that the elder brother had employed counsel while the younger had not, thinking that the earlier decision would be followed. <sup>48</sup> The zeal of the **Auckland** board was shown in its reception of an amendment to the regulations in mid-November. Previously, if a conscientious objector also appealed on other grounds his conscience appeal was heard first, before undue hardship or the value of his work were considered, but now these grounds were to be heard first. The *New Zealand Herald* of 15 November had promptly protested that this amendment would favour the objector on work of national importance, who would continue on full pay, while the pay of recognised conscientious objectors was reduced by the special tribunal. The chairman of the **Auckland** board, C. R. Orr-Walker, <sup>49</sup> was surprised that boards had not been consulted before the amendment was made; possibly a man exempted in the public interest might be a 'fraudulent conscientious objector, or even a disloyal subject or a fifth-columnist, in a very important position, but his employer would know nothing of that and the Board would have to exempt him.' <sup>50</sup> By this amendment, 1096 conscience appeals were adjourned *sine die*, appeals on other grounds taking priority. <sup>51</sup>

In Britain an advisory board for conscientious objectors was officially recognised. In Wellington in October 1940 several senior pacifists offered to act in this way, but after one appearance their advertisements were refused on instructions from the Prime Minister's Department. A deputation explained to the Prime Minister that this group would not proselytize but merely advise young, inexperienced men of their legal rights, <sup>52</sup> but on 24 October Fraser told them that as the **National Service Department** would give conscience objectors full legal information, any other organisation was unnecessary, would lead to misunderstanding and resentment and would not be conducive to the

interests of the country's war effort or of the conscientious objectors themselves. <sup>53</sup> The group thereon sent out its notices to 1200 names chosen at random from the second ballot. <sup>54</sup> Several newspapers made disapproving comment, but while the *Press* obligingly printed the document, giving the names of the committee members and an address, the *Evening Post* spoke of 'subversive letters' and the *Observer*, with a large heading 'A School for Shirkers', urged the government to stamp out the suppliers of 'bullet-proof consciences'. <sup>55</sup>

Another body, the Fellowship of Conscientious Objectors, formed in **Wellington** on 5 June 1941, also denied having propaganda purposes. But despite its lofty aims—to give fellowship, advice and financial relief to objectors, and to be a channel of communication with government <sup>56</sup>—its secretary, John Davis, in mid-1942 was sentenced to a year in prison for subversive newsletters. <sup>57</sup>

Conscience objectors whose appeals were pending or allowed met various sorts of hostility. Their services were rejected by some branches of the Emergency Fire Service, <sup>58</sup> the St John Ambulance Brigade <sup>59</sup> and the EPS, <sup>60</sup> which did not want to be regarded as refuges for 'conchies', and which claimed that as they would be in the forefront of action in a crisis, persons opposed to war would be unsuitable. Apart from known pacifists, who usually signed newspaper letters with their own names, there were very few who took the line of one anonymous writer to the *Press*:

... ordinary submissive citizens ... take a lot of annoying, and so we have not said anything publicly about the way conscientious objectors are hounded by a few noisy publicists. J. B. Priestley <sup>61</sup> in 'Postscripts' says the Nazi is found in every community, that he is the intolerant and stupid bully who wants to bash everybody who does not think as he thinks. Well, he is here. What I am getting at is the way women teachers are refused jobs because their husbands are in defaulters' camps, the venomous way people write about c.o.'s in these columns, the way the W.E.A. is criticised for sending lecturers to defaulters' camps. We plain, sober folk believe in British justice and we take the side of the underdog.

**We think the C.O. is not getting a fair spin and we are getting annoyed. If a man is paying the penalty of his opinions, let him be.** <sup>62</sup>

**This letter was applauded by one correspondent, a veteran pacifist, but strongly attacked by three others.** <sup>63</sup>

**The regulation that prohibited dismissing a man because he had enlisted or been called up was, on 14 May 1941, extended to protect those who appealed against military service on any grounds, but when on 14 June 1941 an officer of the **Labour Department**, R. T. Bailey, <sup>64</sup> stated clearly that it was an offence, liable to prosecution, to dismiss a man who exercised his legal right to appeal and perhaps to be exempted on conscience grounds, there was considerable outcry. What would the men overseas feel, what would their brothers feel, queried the *Star-Sun* on 15 June. The Wellington Manufacturers Association challenged Bailey's statement; the head of a large Wellington firm said, 'If I find anyone who even looks like a conscientious objector among our employees he will get his walking shoes'; <sup>65</sup> a correspondent asked if the **Labour Department** expected an employer with a son overseas to keep on a conscientious objector <sup>66</sup> and the **Labour Department** remained silent.** <sup>67</sup>

**Sometimes the presence of such a man was actively resented by his work-fellows. A firm appealing in public interest for a clothing cutter who had appealed on conscience grounds, withdrew its appeal when other workers opposed it, one having a son who had lost an arm overseas. <sup>68</sup> At the Ruakura Animal Research Station when the Minister of Agriculture refused to dismiss an objector, saying that though his views were repugnant he should be allowed freedom of conscience, 25 employees protested emphatically, with plans for a public meeting and pressure in the coming election. <sup>69</sup>**

**There was strong feeling that objectors should not hold government or local body jobs, drawing money from the public purse. The Waitemata County Council decided not to employ one any longer, although Semple wrote that the government considered that no special action should be**

taken by individual bodies, that so long as a man fulfilled his obligations to his employers the rest should be left to the government.<sup>70</sup> Several letters heartily supported the Council<sup>71</sup> but one held that a man released by law from the Army had as good a right as any to a public job and should not be persecuted for his opinions.<sup>72</sup> This view was also put forth a few months later by A. R. D. Fairburn, who wrote that among several recent dismissals of successful conscience appellants by local bodies, the latest was of a hospital orderly by the Auckland Hospital Board, its chairman, A. J. Moody, saying, 'We do not want the type of man who preaches the rubbish he does.'<sup>73</sup>

The Wellington Hospital Board adopted a motion against employing any active pacifist, brought forward by a member anxious that hospital service should not be 'used as a funk hole by people with distorted ideas', but the chairman and others thought that it was unnecessary, outside the range of the Board, and would be so ineffective as to be innocuous.<sup>74</sup> The Wellington City Council decided not to employ any objector who would give no community service at all, but would take each case on its merits.<sup>75</sup> The Temuka Borough Council disapproved of the Health Department retaining a successful appellant as an inspector.<sup>76</sup> A questionnaire issued by the Christchurch City Council to its staff included questions on their attitudes to war service that were resented as 'Fascist and Gestapo methods' by a meeting of 200 employees.<sup>77</sup> One councillor said that this data was needed to answer critics who 'twitted' the Council about its staff being a 'hot bed of pacifism, conscientious objectors, and subversion', but another said that if all bodies were going to set up their own authorities, they might as well do away with State tribunals; it was decided that those questions need not be answered.<sup>78</sup>

All this helped to show the government how the wind of opinion was blowing, and by the regulations of August 1941 no employer was obliged to retain an exempted objector. Late in 1942, however, the **Dunedin City Council** braved the displeasure of the local RSA by declining to inquire into the attitudes to war of applicants for jobs, though there were instructions to avoid those known to have expressed subversive views.<sup>79</sup>



Moreover, an attempt by the Hastings Rugby Union to bar all who refused the King's uniform from rugby clubs and grounds was promptly rejected by the provincial union. One member held: 'There are worse people than conscientious objectors. There are any amount of them hiding behind their jobs as an excuse for not wearing uniform', and another declared, 'I would not undertake the responsibility of debarring a man from Rugby grounds.' A similar response was made at [Wellington](#).

80

Rugby might remain open to conscientious objectors but the minds of children were another matter. There had been in mid-1940 alarms lest school children be corrupted by disloyalty or pernicious doctrines about [Russia](#),<sup>81</sup> and during 1941 a movement against conscientious objector teachers gathered strength till in December all who lodged appeals were excluded from State schools.

Some teachers, when questioned by appeal boards, made statements that excited indignation, for example, that they would not help wounded men, or use force to defend women or the children in their care. There was delay, often of months, between the lodging of an appeal (readily known of in school circles), the hearing of it, and the calling up of those rejected. Meanwhile objectors with pending appeals continued in their jobs, along with any whose appeals were successful and those found to be unfit and therefore free from military obligations but whose unwillingness to serve was known and resented by parents. It was, these parents said, hard on children whose fathers and brothers were overseas to have such teachers, and if they were allowed in the schools there would grow up a nation of conscientious objectors.

In May, the Canterbury Education Board wanted the Department to stipulate that those 'war profiteers', the pacifists and exempted conscientious objectors, should not be eligible for positions carrying higher salary and temporarily vacated by soldier teachers.<sup>82</sup> A ground swell of protest was also rising in several country districts.<sup>83</sup> By July the Hawke's Bay Education Board had taken the stand that if a man was not prepared to defend the British Empire he was not fit to teach British

children; it was promptly congratulated by the Nelson Board. <sup>84</sup>

The erosion of more liberal attitudes was instanced by the Wellington Education Board. On 16 July, Colonel T. W. McDonald and T. K. Moody proposed that a list should be made, for use in future appointments, of all teachers, men and women, who were pacifists or who had appealed on conscience grounds. The Board refused this 'inquisitorial list'; people were entitled to their opinions and it was not the Board's duty to decide who was a pacifist. <sup>85</sup> Soon, however, the combined **Wellington** school committees, with Moody prominent in their counsels, recommended such a list to the board; <sup>86</sup> the country-wide clamour was rising. The central executive of the RSA declared that it would bring forward instances of disloyal attitudes. <sup>87</sup> Education boards, pressed by school committees and parents, were either dismissing teachers who had appealed <sup>88</sup> or asking the government for regulations enabling them to dismiss conscientious objectors as such and at once. <sup>89</sup> When saluting the flag was discussed in the House on 8 August, Clyde Carr's remarks about ritual observances and totem poles drew strong protest. <sup>90</sup> A national conference of school committees meeting in **Wellington** on 25–6 August was fervent for flag saluting, teachers' loyalty, and penalties against those not conforming.

The Wellington Board on 20 August had turned down another McDonald/Moody motion that no teacher who was a conscientious objector or a pacifist should receive promotion, but decided to ask the government for authority to terminate the engagements of conscience objectors immediately, when warranted. On 26 August a deputation told the Minister of Education, Mason, that from the nature of their occupation 'a very fierce spotlight' bore on the few teachers concerned. The statements of some to appeal boards, that they would take no action even if their own mothers or the children in their charge were attacked, had created very strong public opinion against children remaining under such influences. Conscientious objectors should not remain in the schools, even at soldiers' pay, if their appeals were accepted or, if rejected, even for the month or two until they were called up. <sup>91</sup> The



**Minister pointed out that such dismissal was punishment for being an objector, which was not a crime; he hoped that the special tribunals for arranging alternative service which were just about to emerge would provide remedy, but if they did not he would consider increasing the education boards' powers. <sup>92</sup>**

**These tribunal regulations did not oblige an unwilling employer to retain a recognised objector, even with his pay reduced to Army level, and they did nothing about appellants who proved to be medically unfit and were therefore exempted. <sup>93</sup> When the NZEI tried to support teachers whose appeals were accepted by appeal boards, the Minister of Education thought that no further regulations would be needed, <sup>94</sup> but pressure on and by boards continued. On 2 October a conference, between them, the Minister and departmental heads, set in train the regulations of 10 December 1941 which banished all conscientious objectors from State school staffs. The Minister explained that the removal of conscientious objector teachers was necessary because of their close contact with children, a factor affecting no other occupation. When a teacher in any State school lodged an appeal he was given a month's notice to go on leave without pay for the duration; if considered a bad influence he might be required to leave at once, though with the month's pay. Teachers who became defaulters by refusing service without making an appeal could, with the Minister's consent, be dismissed immediately or, if not dismissed, go on leave without pay for the duration.**

**By February 1942, 120 teachers had appealed on conscience grounds, <sup>95</sup> and altogether 123 made such appeals, though a number later joined the forces as servicemen or non-combatants. <sup>96</sup> At the end of the war, despite many requests that these regulations should be revoked, the Education Boards' Conference of April 1946 firmly refused to re-engage defaulters and did not favour the return of recognised objectors. <sup>97</sup> In October 1947 it was decided to bar defaulters permanently from the teaching service; recognised objectors, and defaulters whose consciences had satisfied the Revision Authorities,**

could re-join when the regulations that excluded them were revoked, which happened at the end of 1948. <sup>98</sup>

Education boards, anxious to clear the slur of disloyalty with evidence of military service, would not appeal for any teachers, refusing in February 1942 to hold even headmasters of Grade IV schools and high school teachers of mathematics and science. By mid-1942 shortage of teachers was so acute that boards were forced to make appeals, and in November teaching was declared an essential occupation. This meant that teachers could not readily transfer to other work, but did not fend off the demands for military service. In Roman Catholic schools from the start teachers (Marist Brothers) were exempted on the formal application of their Archbishop. In the furore of August 1941 the small voice of the Randwick School committee, in **Lower Hutt**, was hardly heard as it asked for the same consideration that was extended to Archbishop O'Shea, and for the Wellington Board to make a definite stand in claiming exemptions. <sup>99</sup>

In April 1942, Canterbury University College recommended that the regulations excluding conscientious objector teachers should be extended to universities. The other colleges firmly rejected the idea, and the government assured them that it would not interfere. <sup>100</sup> **Canterbury** imposed its ban on 31 August 1942, and placed one of its staff on leave without pay for the duration. <sup>101</sup> A month later, and again in February 1944, some college council members failed to have this measure rescinded. <sup>102</sup> The students, through their executive and a petition in 1942 and at a general meeting in April 1944, opposed the ban. <sup>103</sup>

With Japan in the war, ballot swiftly followed ballot. From February 1942 fathers were called in age groups regardless of how many children they had. After June, all soldiers were liable for overseas service, though in practice those under 21 years were not sent abroad. In this climate few felt over-delicate about conscientious objectors.

When Pacific tension slackened, however, uneasiness emerged from within the government. On 16 April 1943, in reply to questions raised by

the Minister of Justice (Mason), the Director of National Service, J. S. Hunter, <sup>104</sup> thought that inconsistencies in appeal board decisions were not serious, especially as in some districts there were groups of particular religious beliefs, and in the smaller centres cases were few. It would be unwise at that time to set up an appellant tribunal; there might be 'grave embarrassment' for the government if decisions on those in detention were reversed. An accompanying table showed that in conscience appeals from the 13th ballot of 20 January 1942 to 10 November 1942 the percentage of those allowed ranged from 14 at Napier, and 15 at Wellington, Wanganui and Greymouth, to 20 at Auckland and Hamilton, 24 at Dunedin and 29 at Christchurch. Those given non-combatant duties ranged from 32 per cent at Whangarei, 44 per cent at Dunedin, 48 per cent at Auckland, 57 per cent at Christchurch, and 66 per cent at Wellington, to 70 per cent at Greymouth and 73 per cent at Hamilton. Appeals dismissed outright were 7 per cent at Hamilton, 14 per cent at Christchurch, 19 per cent at Wellington, 32 per cent at Auckland and Dunedin, and 68 per cent at Whangarei. The countrywide average was 20 per cent of appeals allowed, 55 per cent granted non-combatant service and 25 per cent dismissed. <sup>105</sup> However, returns published later that year showed that of the total appeals, 2869, heard up to 10 November 1942, 19.3 per cent (554) were allowed, 39.2 per cent (1124) were dismissed subject to non-combatant duties, and 41.5 per cent (1191) dismissed outright. <sup>106</sup> This suggests that in the early ballots, before January 1942, boards were harder to satisfy than they were during the 10-month period that Hunter reviewed for the Minister.

To further queries from the Minister, Hunter replied on 24 May 1943 that some inconsistency was inevitable but he had no evidence that the boards had not dealt fairly and reasonably with conscience appeals. The views of many appellants, though sincere, were 'purely political', while the legal authorities available (he cited two legal articles and Atkinson's judgment <sup>107</sup>) were clear that the basis of belief must be religion. Had the boards been lax or set an easy standard the consequences would have been 'more serious and gravely embarrassing'. <sup>108</sup>

**On 17 July 1943 criticism from the *Press* further perturbed Mason. In matters of conscience, said this editorial, the sole task of the boards was to establish**

**whether the appellant's objection is genuine. Too frequently members of Appeal Boards take a far wider view of their responsibilities, with the result that they resort to long and aggressive arguments with appellants about the rights and wrongs of their views, possibly to the neglect of their purely judicial function. Occasionally their attitude is hectoring, not to say insulting. This is not the judicial, impartial attitude expected by the law of Appeal Board members, and is therefore incompatible with their functions. Moreover, it wastes many hours of the time of their fellow members and of appellants who, objecting on other grounds, are waiting for their cases to be heard. To say this is in no sense to uphold the views of conscientious objectors. But it is necessary to draw attention to the precise and proper limits of Appeal Board functions in determining their appeals, and to say that these limits should be more carefully respected than they have sometimes been.**

**The National Service Director, stirred on by Mason, sent copies to the appeal boards; the Minister had said that these comments were justified if newspaper reports he had seen bore any relation to the facts of hearings, in which it often seemed doubtful just what boards were deciding. Hunter added that allowing for the difficulty of understanding conscientious objectors, it seemed from newspaper reports that questions were not always such as to enable an appellant fairly to disclose his beliefs and outlook so that the board could decide whether he had genuine belief that it was wrong to engage in warfare. Often it seemed that he was placed on the defensive by a volley of questions obviously hostile and not always relevant. 'Examination must be clothed both with the fact and the appearance of complete impartiality.'** <sup>109</sup>

**From when balloting began in October 1940 to 31 December 1944, after which appeals on conscience grounds were negligible, 5117 conscience appeals were lodged, 1.7 per cent of the 306 352 men called**

by ballot. Of these appeals, 1096, or 21 per cent, were adjourned *sine die* because they succeeded on other grounds, mainly that of essential civilian work; in 944 other cases the appellant was unfit for service, or the appeal was withdrawn or dismissed for lack of prosecution.<sup>110</sup> The remaining 3077 were determined by appeal boards. Of these 606 (19.7 per cent) were allowed, 1226 (39.8 per cent) were dismissed subject to non-combatant duties, and 1245 (40.5 per cent) dismissed outright.<sup>111</sup> Most were judged within the first two years: up to November 1942, appeals allowed numbered 554 (19.3 per cent of the total to that date), those given non-combatant service 1124 (39.2 per cent), those dismissed outright 1191 (41.5 per cent), totalling 2869.<sup>112</sup> Awareness of past and possibly continuing variation in the boards' standards continued to trouble Mason as the years of detention ticked by, and led to arrangements for wholesale review in the latter half of 1945.<sup>113</sup>

About a quarter of the men whose appeals were dismissed outright or who were assigned to non-combatant duties were resolute in refusal;<sup>114</sup> the rest accepted service rather than face a future of penalties. The stubborn or steadfast quarter were in due course brought to court as defaulters, along with those who refused service without having lodged an appeal.<sup>115</sup> At the start, they faced a £50 fine or three months in prison or both, and thereafter, if still unwilling, military detention as in the First World War.<sup>116</sup>

In Britain during the Second World War an appeal could be allowed outright, with no conditions, or a man might be directed to specific civil work; it could also be dismissed subject to non-combatant military duties, or dismissed outright. Those dismissed who refused service were gaoled for terms ranging from three months to two years, and thereafter recognised as conscientious objectors, having proved their sincerity by accepting prison. In New Zealand, the government was reluctant that young men, who though lawbreakers were not ordinary criminals, should be kept indefinitely in civil or military prisons. But public opinion could not accept that men whose consciences had not convinced an appeal board should go free, even after a prison sentence. Defaulters' detention

was the compromise. <sup>117</sup> Introducing it in August 1941 Nash had said that there was no machinery which could unerringly detect the state of a man's conscience. Many dismissals had been correctly given because the appellant failed to satisfy the appeal board that his objection was genuine; 'his subsequent conduct, however, may show that there is some substance in his objection.' It was bad for the Army to have unwilling and unsatisfactory soldiers in its ranks, and it was bad for the community to place these men in gaol. They would be detained in special camps, doing useful work under strict discipline. <sup>118</sup>

By Regulation 44A, clause 2, of 27 August 1941, when a man refused service 'the Magistrate, if in the circumstances of the case he thinks fit to do so, may in addition to or instead of imposing any other lawful penalty, order that the man shall be committed to defaulters' detention... for the duration of the present war.' The government considered sending out circulars instructing magistrates that they should probe cases to ascertain whether non-compliance 'was based on conscientious objection and was not merely a contumacious refusal or the act of a deliberate shirker', but it was decided that magistrates could not be asked to review a matter already determined by a more experienced board, and that they would properly resent any such interference in their judicial discretion. <sup>119</sup>

Variations in magisterial discretion soon appeared. At Wellington, J. L. Stout stated that he intended to impose a short term of imprisonment to let a defendant think it over and decide to accept military service; on a second appearance he would be committed to defaulters' detention for the duration, however long that might be. <sup>120</sup> Stout also stated plainly, 'There is no such thing as a conscientious objector in this court'; all those with dismissed appeals were considered ordinary defaulters. <sup>121</sup> At Auckland J. H. Luxford and F. H. Levien declared that a straight-out slacker would go to prison. 'If he is betwixt and between he will go to prison for a shorter term and then be sent to defaulters' camp. If he is just a poor, misguided person with an inflexible idea he will be sent straight to defaulters' camp.' <sup>122</sup> At Rotorua, W. H. Freeman, <sup>123</sup> who



probed the beliefs of a man whose appeal had been dismissed in order to decide what to do with him, came to the conclusion that he was a genuine conscientious objector. 'What other tribunals have done is nothing to do with this court, which must preserve its judicial viewpoint', said he; until a defaulters' camp opened, the man should remain free, reporting daily to the police. <sup>124</sup> At Christchurch Levvey, hoping that 'the other establishment' would soon be available, repeatedly remanded a man who had refused military service on 2 July 1941. <sup>125</sup>

A pacifist observer, noting that in 48 **South Island** cases 14 men were sentenced to three months in gaol, 18 to two months, 11 to one month and 5 sent direct to defaulters' camp, said, 'The position is, roughly, that if you are sentenced in Southland you may be sent direct to the detention camp; in Otago you receive one month; but if you belong to **Canterbury** or the **West Coast** you are sentenced to two or three months.' <sup>126</sup> J. A. Lee in October 1942 also remarked that whether a man went to gaol or defaulters' camp depended on where he lived. <sup>127</sup> The magistrates, however, were within the margins of the regulations, and similar variations have been noticed in, say, the treatment of drunken drivers.

During 1941 about 168 men went to prison for breaches of military obligations, <sup>128</sup> and in 1942 the number of persons sent to prison, then averaging about 2300 a year, was notably increased by the committal or transfer <sup>129</sup> of more than 500 military defaulters; there were 39 such committals in 1943 and 24 in 1944. <sup>130</sup> Later, L. J. Greenberg, <sup>131</sup> Controller of Defaulters' Detention, remarked that as the camps were designed to avoid having these young men in gaol, 'It is difficult to realise what good purpose was served by this initial term of imprisonment', which in many cases soured youths only 18, 19 or 20 years old. It also caused them to view prison lightly; for compassionate reasons, they were, where possible, placed under favoured conditions, 'which left them with the impression that prison life wasn't so bad after all, and that the men they met in prison were just as good as any other



citizens. Hence the hankering for prison life on the part of so many of the younger defaulters... who found by experience, that defaulters detention was far more irksome than a short term spent in prison.’<sup>132</sup>

Originally there was some thought of graded camps. ‘I understand that there are to be two classes of camps, one for *bona fide* conscientious objectors, and the other for defaulters’, the Under-Secretary for Justice wrote rather surprisingly<sup>133</sup> and a *Press* article also ‘understood that those considered to be genuine on religious, ethical, or political grounds will be committed to the camp near **Rotorua**, and those regarded as being not genuine will be sent to the more isolated camp.’<sup>134</sup> The British High Commissioner was told in January 1942 that defaulters detention ‘was not intended for the obvious shirker or the man whose refusal of service has no background of conscientious objection.’<sup>135</sup> No specific provision was made for the obvious shirker, however, apart from the three months’ prison sentence for refusing a military order, which was a frequent preliminary to detention for the duration. The several main camps established in due course took all sorts together, though Hautu also became a punishment centre for ‘bad boys’ and the unco-operative, who were not necessarily insincere in their convictions, while the smaller sub-camps took the most docile.

In mid-November 1941 Strathmore camp at Whenuaroa, 30 miles from **Rotorua**, received its first inmates, 40 men whose resolution had already been tested by imprisonment and who were subsequently in military detention at **Trentham**.<sup>136</sup> Greenberg had no prison-officer background. In 1941 he was working in the broadcasting service, but he had had lengthy organising experience with the **YMCA** and he was known as a youth leader. In the mid-Thirties he had expressed sympathetic understanding of the resolute pacifist<sup>137</sup> and pacifists welcomed his appointment as showing that the government had the objectors’ personal welfare at heart to some extent.<sup>138</sup> But much had changed since 1935, and Greenberg as Controller had wide and final disciplinary powers. There were basic difficulties arising from the

environment, the staff, and the defaulters themselves, many of whom had a sense of grievance and some a compulsion not to co-operate. Hardening of attitudes was inevitable in these remote, inward-turning communities and it was not surprising that Greenberg, despite his sympathetic background, became as chief gaoler widely and heartily disliked. <sup>139</sup>

About the camp scheme, pacifists were divided. Some considered it an honest attempt by a partially sympathetic government to solve a very thorny problem. <sup>140</sup> A Quaker, advocating co-operation to make the camps work smoothly, said that Nash had done his best to avoid the penal side of the issue, and he himself felt that 'we ought now to co-operate in showing that the genuine man with genuine Christian principles is able to go the other mile.' <sup>141</sup> Others felt that it would be too easy to accept the government's kindly intentions by living quietly in comfortable camps while conscripted men faced horror; their purpose was not merely to keep their own hands unbloodied but to witness against war, and by fighting all the way make what stand they could against conscription. <sup>142</sup>

At the outset Greenberg and his officers were faced with a raw, half-built camp, a mixed and rapidly growing bunch of defaulters, and insufficient staff, too often poor in quality. For the first 12 months at Strathmore both defaulters and staff lived under improvised conditions, in mud, on their bleak treeless plain, with monotonous rations and many shortages, for defaulters had no priority rating and some private traders even refused supplies. <sup>143</sup> Gradually, by the inmates' own labour, the one-man huts, <sup>144</sup> the kitchens and community rooms were built, water and sewage systems installed; vegetables, milk and meat were produced on the camp farm, distinct from the regular task of developing a block of Crown land; a 'splendid corps' of carpenters, gardeners, garage and electrical mechanics and domestic helpers made it all work. <sup>145</sup>

This pattern was repeated more or less in other camps. By January 1943 there were 614 men at Strathmore, Hautu, **Shannon**, Galatea, Balmoral and Conical Hill, doing farm or forestry work, cutting firewood,

weeding and cultivating flax. In all, there were 13 camps and sub-camps, and 803 men occupied them; they were, claimed official spokesmen, neither spartan nor soft. <sup>146</sup> The guiding principles were segregation, useful occupation and strict discipline, along with wholesome, adequate food, reasonable living conditions, and social amenities above prison standard. These included libraries, stocked by the **National Library Service**, approved hobbies and educational pursuits. Camps were not geared to the severity of prisons, but they were intended to be substantially less attractive than Army life. <sup>147</sup> There was no leave; pay, at 1 s 3 d a day, depended on good conduct and industry; books were censored, visitors limited, mail both limited and censored (though letters to the Minister of National Service went to him unopened and in large numbers). There were checks and roll-calls; there were rules such as that men might not congregate together and that work must satisfy the overseer. Inmates wore borstal grey uniforms and blue denims for work. There were penalties and boundaries and barbed wire. <sup>148</sup>

Penalties ranged from fines to bread and water and solitary confinement in the camp or terms in gaol. Regulation 44B (11) of 12 November 1941 ran:

Instead of imposing a minor punishment on any inmate for any breach of the rules, the Camp Supervisor may refer the matter to the Controlling Officer, who may in his discretion, impose on the inmate a minor punishment as aforementioned or a punishment involving close confinement within the camp or a reduction in the dietary scale, or both such confinement and such reduction. In any case where he considers it necessary, the Camp Supervisor may place the inmate in close confinement pending the consideration of the matter by the Controlling Officer.

*The Auckland Star* commented:

In plainer English, this means that the controlling officer can punish a man by having him locked up, and fed on bread and water, apparently for no specific period. Why should this be necessary, and why should

such power be given the controlling officer when it is not given to experienced prison officers? If a man merits this punishment, as he may, his place should be no longer in a detention camp [but in prison where] he could be sentenced to bread-and-water confinement but... only by a magistrate after hearing evidence. <sup>149</sup>

From the start, such offences as disobeying an order could bring defaulters before a magistrate who could send them to prison for a set term, <sup>150</sup> and in all 66 men were so sentenced. <sup>151</sup> After May 1942, if a magistrate were satisfied by the camp authorities that a defaulter's presence was prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the camp, he could order his removal to prison for the duration, though the Minister could transfer him back to camp. During 1942, 28 men were gaoled for the duration, and 48 had been by the end of 1944, when the Controller-General of Prisons was 'constrained to conclude that the transfer of military defaulters to criminal prisons has not been an altogether satisfactory or happy arrangement', because in many of them a long-held sense of grievance and injustice had become obsessional; <sup>152</sup> this did not lessen when they were still there a year later.

Short terms proved almost popular, or perhaps something those dedicated to non-co-operation must incur. 'For a period there was an epidemic of escapes', wrote Greenberg; at one time 30 were out, some using their liberty to complain publicly about the detention scheme. When regulations against escaping were stiffened in February 1944, escapes almost ceased and the protestors then refused to obey orders, aiming to be put in prison. 'The trickle out of the Camps into the Prisons threatened to become a flood', <sup>153</sup> and 38 in that year went to prison for set terms. <sup>154</sup> To combat this, Hautu camp, closely associated with a nearby prison and already holding the more difficult defaulters, became a penal centre for close confinement in locked huts in a separate wired compound. It was cold, dull and lonely. Greenberg wrote with satisfaction: 'A block has been placed across the road to Prison and it has been found that the defaulter inclined towards non-co-operation thinks very carefully before becoming bold enough to declare himself'.

He quoted from a letter written by a man in close confinement who looked back to a recent spell in Mt Eden as 'happy days'. The Crown Solicitor recommended that such confinement should not be for an unlimited time, and at first 90 days was the maximum; 'After consultation with the Minister, this was reduced to thirty days, subject to renewal', and later again it was thought that 30 days in itself would be sufficient. <sup>155</sup> Only if men were still defiant thereafter were they sent on to prison for the duration.

'Possibly the most valuable result of the detention scheme, with its penalties of incarceration for the duration of the war and its restriction of liberty, etc., has been its deterrent effect upon others', wrote Greenberg. 'The numbers who eventually arrived at detention were well under those originally anticipated'. <sup>156</sup> The expected figure was 2000, <sup>157</sup> the actual total 803.

There was, however, continued criticism by those who suspected the government of pampering objectors: the camps were too comfortable, food was too good, privileges were too many. On 12 February 1942, when **Singapore** was falling, the House heard questions and answers about defaulters living better than soldiers, with sheets and pyjamas. <sup>158</sup> The *Matamata Record* on 23 February headed a report, 'The Strathmore Hotel, "Conchies" Comforts, **Rotorua** seething with Indignation.' The *Observer* <sup>159</sup> and *Truth* <sup>160</sup> were vigilant, and so was the RSA, although many of the camp staff were returned soldiers. RSA officials were asked to see for themselves, and their vice-president, B. J. Jacobs, <sup>161</sup> having inspected Strathmore in June 1942, reported that while defaulters were better treated than they should be, exaggeration had produced most of the complaints and small departures from the regulations by camp authorities had had reasonable grounds. The men were treated as human beings but there was no pampering. <sup>162</sup> The charges, however, were made again and again. <sup>163</sup>

The RSA, remembering the ten year disenfranchisement of defaulters after 1919, was prominent in the pressure that produced emergency electoral regulations in July 1943 by which persons committed to

**defaulters' detention and not discharged therefrom were deprived of the vote.**

**It was hard to draw suitable officers, overseers and patrolmen to these remote camps. Staffing, wrote Greenberg, 'was of more concern to the authorities than many of the difficulties involving the inmates', whose customary good behaviour was remarkable considering the inadequacy of some members of the staff, though others 'rendered conspicuous service in the most difficult circumstances'. <sup>164</sup> Obviously it was not possible to avoid the officious, the unreliable, even the dishonest 'screw'.**

**It must be remembered that most defaulters had entered a camp by the end of 1942 and thereafter, shut away among themselves, were excluded from all the influences that might have drawn them into the national effort. Apart from their original beliefs, they were held by the forces of inertia, pride, and loyalty to battered ideals and fellow-defaulters. Whatever had set them on their path, most by now felt committed to pursue it. Many defaulters were well grounded in the dubious nature of the atrocity stories from the First World War. For those unwilling to believe in the necessity of war it was easy to extend these suspicions to accounts of the starvation, torture and death of Jews, Czechs, French, Poles and others.**

**The 803 men in detention varied widely, ranging from a few minor criminals, as, for instance, a man sentenced to a month's gaol for theft and then sent on to defaulters' detention, <sup>165</sup> to the 'intellectuals' whom Greenberg thought 'perhaps ought not to have been there.' He described the latter as quiet and thoughtful, reasonably accepting the penalties of being out of step with the State in war time, and so much 'all that an ordinary citizen envisages concerning the true conscientious objector' that it seemed strange that appeal boards had not been convinced of their intellectual honesty. <sup>166</sup>**

**Besides the 'intellectuals', Greenberg classified his charges as escapists, indifferentists, exhibitionists and recalcitrants, with some**

overlapping and interweaving among these types. Right or wrong, his opinions shaped the administration. The 'escapists' simply wished to escape from the war, to forget it and their obligations as far as possible. Some 'were just plainly frightened and were only too satisfied to find shelter in a detention camp.' Many belonged to religious sects which had no standing with appeal boards and which opposed war largely because it made demands on time and allegiance due to their God, and many of these had refused even non-combat service. Of 592 men reviewed in October 1944, 231 belonged to such sects; Christian Assembly (107), Jehovah's Witnesses (78), Brethren (35), Pentacostal (11).<sup>167</sup> These men, though often fanatical in their religion, were usually docile and cooperative in other respects, and were vital in making the detention scheme workable.

Greenberg applied the term 'indifferentists' to those, not religious escapists, who were indifferent to the war and its issues: 'in the first place, those who appeared to be confused and immature, or perhaps frightened, in their thinking about the war, and obviously didn't bother to pursue the matter far enough to ascertain what the war did mean to themselves or others; and in the second place, this category included those who found a comfortable "funk hole" for their indifferentism in their glib and plausible use of the word "Humanitarian".' Many rationalised their decision after making it, and were confirmed therein by segregation with other defaulters; many 'would have become tired of detention, and would have joined the Army, if it had not been for their fears of others, especially the so-called politicals in the camps.'<sup>168</sup>

'The exhibitionist strutted across the war scene as the one person who had the right idea and whose main urge was to let the world know what this idea was.' His mission was to witness to his own idea, not by seeking alternative service in dangerous zones, but by assuming 'a peculiar personal kind of arrogance and superiority, which demanded exemption from every duty, but required rights and privileges which were not given to ordinary citizens in war-time.... His conceit in his own ideas was colossal! His conscience apparently said little to him about



peaceful nations trodden under-foot by a wicked invader; or millions of innocent victims cast into extermination chambers and furnaces.... <sup>169</sup> All these evils were just summed up in the one word "War"... all war was wrong and all nations participating in it were equally culpable.' When the camps were closed, men of this type inscribed on the walls such words as: 'In this hut lived James Thomas Smith, so-called defaulter, from May 4th 1942 to March 8th 1946, because of his refusal to murder his fellow men.' Though many came from 'an honoured religious organisation', <sup>170</sup> these young men were among the most difficult to handle, and were very ready to ally themselves with 'the non-religious-quasi-political-agitator group', often with the express object of embarrassing the government and detention officials. To the latter they were the 'greatest moaners, agitators and trouble-makers' in the camps. As a last resort, in prisons they hunger-struck and, in the cells of Mt Eden, shouted and battered on the walls. <sup>171</sup>

Greenberg's 'recalcitrants' pushed these attitudes just a little further. They grew around the 'so-called politically-minded individuals who, with the agitator's technique, quickly found the detention community suitable soil for the propagation of their quasi-political ideas', some of which could have developed into sedition and subversion. Although a minority, they soon became the most vocal and difficult inmates, 'and quite early in detention history, a trial of strength took place between them and the authorities, with the result that the camp at Hautu, near Turangi, was devised as a special disciplinary centre' for them. Co-operation or non-co-operation, whether one should accept the camps and their routine, or whether one should carry rejection of war and all its works to the logical extreme of refusing orders to work, remained burning questions for many inmates. Finally, by the amendment of 23 May 1942, the real non-co-operators, in Greenberg's estimate one-sixth of the total number, would be sent to prison for the duration: 58 were so transferred and 66 others served set terms. In January 1943 there were 614 men in the camps, 610 in March 1944 and 608 in March 1945; in all, 803 entered, 69 later deciding to accept military service. <sup>172</sup> Between officials and recalcitrants there was

**'unending conflict', and the persistence of their nuisance tactics, Greenberg held, showed the value of retaining the offenders in camps, for outside they would have attempted illegal meetings, unauthorised street speaking, subversive publications, and efforts to influence members of the forces. <sup>173</sup>**

**The total cost of the camps, from November 1941 to 31 March 1946, was £502,535, of which £109,076 was capital expenditure, while running expenses totalled £393,459. It could be worked out that the average cost of maintaining each inmate was £164 a year, or £3 3 s 1 d a week, but the value of work done reduced this to £2 5 s 5 d. <sup>174</sup>**

**The work actually performed varied from place to place, from time to time, from man to man. For instance, at Balmoral in North Canterbury, a camp without barbed wire for about 40 good conduct men, the pruning of trees, making of roads and cutting of firewood was approved by the Director of Forestry, A. R. Entrican, <sup>175</sup> a man by no means automatically pleased; <sup>176</sup> at Shannon during one period, some men contrived to weed a very small area of flax each day. <sup>177</sup> A good many fenced, cleared and drained land, cut manuka and other firewood, or worked at camp upkeep industriously; others put in their 40 hours adequately but without drive. It was dull work, almost without pay or any positive incentive except willingness to do the job before one, and for some there was the persisting problem: should one, by working, cooperate in a system which, however remotely, was part of the war effort, or resist it by minimal work, plus protest and complaint wherever possible? The zealots, often most sincere in their objection to war, who inevitably appeared to authority as political agitators and recalcitrants, sought to influence others, and all the attitudes associated with trade unionism and loyalty to one's fellows, including moral intimidation, were involved.**

**Many were willing to do essential non-war jobs at a soldier's pay, sacrificial work for the community, such as in the acutely short-staffed mental hospitals, or among VD patients, but these proposals were not taken up by authority sensitive to the difficulties of organisation,**

opposing alteration to what had been established, and fearing outcry and repercussions. <sup>178</sup>

Throughout 1943–5, despite ministerial assurances that defaulters were doing useful work, <sup>179</sup> there was a trickle of complaint that the camps were unproductive and expensive, and that defaulters should work under supervision on farms or in essential industries. <sup>180</sup> A few such comments came from ex-overseers, <sup>181</sup> though one wrote of hard work and good administration at Strathmore. <sup>182</sup> The letter from ‘Disgusted Overseer’ in the *Dominion* on 20 March 1943, describing futility and frustration at Shannon’s flax camps, was accompanied by an editorial questioning whether the camps should not be abolished and the defaulters supervised in essential industry, and this was not the *Dominion*’s only criticism on these lines. <sup>183</sup> The remarks in court of a Shannon man, sentenced on 2 July 1943 to three months’ gaol for refusing an order to cut kindling wood, that in 14 months he had not done one day’s useful work and that hundreds of men were twiddling their thumbs, gained wide publicity. <sup>184</sup> The government, concerned to protect its projects from criticism and not to excite further attacks for pampering ‘conchies’, ignored such proposals. To put defaulters into essential industry would greatly lessen the distinction between those recognised by armed forces appeal boards and those dismissed. There would also be uneasiness about assigning them to employers like the North Otago farmer who demanded of a Minister, ‘How many miserable, damned crawlers have you got tucked away in conscientious objectors’ camps? Why can’t they be made use of?’ <sup>185</sup> On 4 March 1943, when a Labour member inquired about their doing firewatching or other war work, the Minister of Justice stated that about 650 men were in the camps, which was the first public statement of their number, and ‘the question of utilizing the services of defaulters on outside work has been considered but deemed to be inadvisable.’ <sup>186</sup>

However, proposals for change and for making the work-force more effective came from the Controller of Detention himself. In March 1943, with 35 refractory men in prison and a total of 614 in three main and

**four small camps, Greenberg wrote that they were**

**a weird collection of individuals, some of them quite cold blooded and calculative in their designs to frustrate the present Government and anything in connection with the war effort. Others again have an intense fiery passion for the cause which they believe they are serving, the cause of witnessing against war and of suffering for their beliefs. Religion in many instances intensifies their fervour. In between these two extremes there is a large bunch of inmates who are not sure of themselves, some lazy, many cowards, and mostly ignorant of the real issues involved.**

**The large camps seemed a mistake: they posed the threat of mass action, slowed down work, 'and kept the staff on nerve ends', while the smaller groups on extension jobs showed better work and healthier spirit.**

**With the passing of time, camp routine and loss of liberty had become more irksome, increasing the sense of grievance held by many. 'Unrest and unsettlement' were growing and Greenberg thought that the scheme should be reviewed. Releasing defaulters to essential industry had many difficulties, but men whose objection to war seemed genuine and who had six months of good conduct in camp should join civilian service units. Each would have 100 men, in five 20-man sections, available for essential work anywhere, on military pay or slightly less, under National Service supervision but not required to live in camps, and with one week's leave a year. Technically they would still be in detention, but work would be more effective and would not be forced labour. Less staff would be needed, though at least one camp should be maintained for those who had not qualified for civilian work and those who proved unreliable. <sup>187</sup>**

**With the war at full pitch and an election in the offing, nothing came of this except some more small, lightly guarded camps to which the more tractable were transferred, mainly the other-worldly Christian fundamentalists. <sup>188</sup> In October 1943, with the election over, Greenberg**

again stated his 'urgent plea' for reform, stressing that the present system offered no incentive or hope to any inmates till the war's end. There were humbugs and rascals who opposed the war effort and who should not be at large, but some men who had not convinced their appeal boards had in camp clearly shown the genuineness of their objections; others were weak and confused but bolstered in resistance to the war by those about them; others were deeply afraid. Greenberg believed that particularly in these last two sorts camp life promoted mental deterioration. He advocated that all cases should be reviewed, unhurriedly and in camera, by a judge or magistrate who would make recommendations to the Minister, based on genuineness and good conduct; knowledge that this was going on would improve morale and lessen the escapes that were causing 'utmost concern'. There should also be stiffer penalties for escapers and those who harboured them. <sup>189</sup>

This opened up far-reaching principles, commented the Director of National Service, J. S. Hunter. The real penalty for refusing service after failing in an appeal was loss of liberty for the duration; any change would have to preserve the difference between those who won their appeals and those who did not. That a policy which had been designed to extend toleration and sympathetic understanding to the conscientious objector resulted in the detention of many whom Greenberg showed must be considered genuine, in an atmosphere of frustration and mental deterioration, could not be regarded as satisfactory but he could not offer an alternative. <sup>190</sup>

Reforms based on Greenberg's ideas were proposed to the War Cabinet by Mason in December 1943. All who had been in camp 12 months or more should be re-examined and, under powers already held by the Minister of National Service, <sup>191</sup> those showing genuine conscientious objection, or medical or mental unfitness, provided that they did not oppose the war effort and otherwise behaved themselves, should be released to work of public utility, on the terms that Greenberg had suggested. Similarly, defaulters for whom there was now no military service, ie, 18 and 19-year-olds, men over 41 years and those of medical

Grade III, should be released, to work as directed by the Special Tribunal. There should be penalties for harbouring escapers, and escapers should serve the time of their illegal freedom after the war. <sup>192</sup> Measures against escapers, gazetted on 10 February 1944, were the only outcome of these proposals.

However, the government now inquired how conscientious objectors were treated in **Britain**, learning that up to 31 December 1943 there were 57 329 registered objectors, 0.83 per cent of those eligible for service; the higher appellate tribunal had varied 50.4 per cent of the 17 657 decisions taken to it from local boards, mostly in favour of the applicants; of all appeals finalised, 6 per cent were recognised unconditionally, 48 per cent were recognised conditionally, that is, directed to essential work, 25 percent were given non-combatant duties and 21 per cent were dismissed. For those refusing to comply the penalties were up to 12 months' imprisonment or a £50 fine. Usually after serving three months or more, in one dose or more—'a sentence of imprisonment of three months or more is regarded as substantial'—they were directed to vital civilian work. <sup>193</sup>

Again, in May 1944, Mason advocated large changes. Internees, he wrote, were mainly those whose appeals had been rejected. This did not mean that an internee was not a conscientious objector but often merely that he had failed to prove it. 'The camps largely comprise those whom the law in accordance with Government policy was intended to exclude therefrom. This fact has been troubling me for well over a year.' The position was 'illogical in the extreme', offending humanity and commonsense, while the camps had cost a quarter of a million pounds. Two magistrates should interview every man, consider his record and decide whether any worthwhile purpose was served by keeping him in camp; otherwise he should be released to useful civilian work under Manpower direction. <sup>194</sup> The reforms thus forthrightly proposed by the Minister were not accepted by his colleagues, and instead Cabinet on 7 June 1944 set two detention administrators, Greenberg and C. J. Hay, <sup>195</sup> to review defaulters with conditional release in mind; they also



decided that men with good records for 12 months should have two days' parole each quarter, plus travelling time, to visit their homes, at their own expense. Payments for good conduct and industry could be doubled, giving a top rate of 2 s 6 d a day. These two morale-lifting arrangements were effective from October 1944. <sup>196</sup>

The Greenberg–Hay report, completed in October 1944, described the problems and sorted 592 defaulters into categories; <sup>197</sup> 82 of sincere mind and good conduct were recommended for immediate release; 354 for deferred release, under special supervision; 98 should be considered for release later, if their detention records improved; 37 should not be released and 21 would not be interviewed. No immediate releases were made but, 'in pursuance of information contained in the report', the **War Cabinet** on 20 November 1944 directed that regulations should be drafted setting up one-man Revision Authorities to deal with defaulters' applications for release on parole. <sup>198</sup>

All this, of course, was unknown to the public, though some rumours arose of intended release <sup>199</sup> and in 1944–5 there was increasing pressure towards it. Interested persons wrote persistently to the government. <sup>200</sup> In July 1944, four petitions, with 6641 signatures in all, including some from university staffs, trade unions and the Labour party, <sup>201</sup> were made to Parliament. These urged that detention was wasteful both economically and in human values. It was no longer a deterrent, as ballots were exhausted; indeterminate sentences were not British justice, and there should be appellate tribunals as in **Britain**. The Petitions Committee (including several members of the National party which was firm against any softening) shelved the matter as one for government decision. The *New Zealand Tablet* on 16 February 1944 had stated boldly that defaulters should be released in the national interest; the *Auckland Star* on 28 July 1944, and again on 2 March 1945, while not forgetting the thousands of soldiers and prisoners-of-war detained indefinitely, began to think that appeal boards could have made a few mistakes; by April 1945 it disapproved of unlimited sentences and found the lack of appellate tribunals remarkable. <sup>202</sup> The Dunedin Presbytery



on 3 April 1945 gave out disturbing figures on the unevenness of appeal boards in New Zealand and the tolerance towards defaulters in **Britain**.<sup>203</sup> A letter from England appeared in many newspapers between May and July,<sup>204</sup> signed by nine notables including Bertrand Russell, C. E. M. Joad, Dame Sybil Thorndike,<sup>205</sup> Vera Brittain<sup>206</sup> and the Bishop of **Birmingham**,<sup>207</sup> contrasting the rigid severity of New Zealand's system with the flexibility of **Britain's** which enabled conscientious objectors to do widespread useful work and, in many cases, sacrificial service for the community. In New Zealand in February 1945 five defaulters in gaol refused work and went on hunger strike to draw attention to their indefinite sentences and the lack of any appeal. Magistrates J. H. Luxford and J. Morling<sup>208</sup> spoke against 'morbid sentimentality' and firmly sentenced them to 30 days' confinement;<sup>209</sup> *Truth* was sure that, 'If a bunch of these troublemongers want to starve themselves the people of New Zealand aren't likely to worry much',<sup>210</sup> but a spate of letters appeared in the *Auckland Star*, and made further impact when repeated in H. R. Urquart's pamphlet, *The Searchlight on R.S.A.'s and C.O.'s*. On 16 May a protest meeting under the Howard Penal Reform League's banner filled the **Auckland** concert chamber, and two more pamphlets were seeking publication.<sup>211</sup>

Meanwhile the RSA and its supporters, including the Farmers' Union,<sup>212</sup> mounted a powerful counter-offensive demanding that the government should impose the penalties which the RSA had advocated since October 1941: that defaulters should be detained for at least six months after troops were demobilised and should lose civil rights and government employment for 10 years. Pressure was exerted directly, backed by a threat to publish previous correspondence<sup>213</sup> which the government rejected, saying that it would add little to existing publicity.<sup>214</sup> Strongly worded articles appeared repeatedly in the *RSA Review*;<sup>215</sup> there were well publicised branch resolutions, supported by newspaper editorials, and a forceful deputation attended Nash and others on 7 March 1945.<sup>216</sup>

Fighting in **Europe** ceased on 7 May 1945 and in **Britain** all detained

defaulters were released, <sup>217</sup> but wars do not officially end until so proclaimed and a long battle against **Japan** was still expected. On 7 June regulations appointed two Revision Authorities, <sup>218</sup> each to hear, with counsel if desired, applications from any defaulters, save those in prison, for release on parole. The defaulter had to establish that he held conscientious beliefs against participation in war. His good conduct was not directly a key to release for, as Nash said in debate, it did not necessarily follow that a 'good boy' was a real conscientious objector, while the man most difficult to handle might prove to be so. <sup>219</sup>

It was carefully established that the purpose of the Revision Authorities was not to lessen severity to defaulters but to find whether any would not have been committed to detention had the original appeals been more uniformly judged, as was suggested by variations ranging between 14 per cent allowed in one district and 33 per cent in another, with an over-all average of 19.7 per cent. If it were decided that a defaulter had thus suffered injustice, the original decision would not be reversed, nor would he be classified as a proven conscientious objector, but he would be released on parole, under Manpower direction, forfeiting to Social Security all pay above what a private received; he must notify changes of address and do nothing to oppose the war effort. <sup>220</sup>

It was a practical compromise, a device to get the genuine objectors out of the camps quickly, avoiding the legal difficulties of admitting error and wrongful detention, while minimising the outrage of frustrated RSA spokesmen, whose arguments about 'betrayal' were fully and fiercely put forth by **Holland** and the Opposition. The Inter-Church Council on Public Affairs thought that revision would be approved by all right-thinking people, <sup>221</sup> but most papers, inflamed by two misconceptions, that proceedings would be in camera and that the Crown would not be represented, strongly disapproved at the outset. Several said that appeal proceedings should have been arranged right from the start. A few approved temperately: 'a commonsense step' said the *Auckland Star* of 8 June; the *Wanganui Herald* on 12 June quoted

Churchill saying 'Anything in the nature of persecution, victimisation or man-hunting is odious to the British people'; the *Grey River Argus* of 8 June said that New Zealand had been singularly severe on objectors; so did the *Hawke's Bay Daily Telegraph* of 29 June. The *Pres* and the *Southland Times* on 27 June rebuked the attacks of the RSA.

In the next six months 467 men, 76 per cent of those in detention, appealed to the Revision Authorities, who released 283 of them. <sup>222</sup> Review of those in prison also began, 14 being released by 31 December 1945. <sup>223</sup> Under ministerial powers (Regulation 44A, 5b), 226 others who were over-age, medically down-graded or who had been in detention more than four years, quietly emerged and by 31 March 1946 only 132 men remained in camps and 26 in prison. <sup>224</sup> Having so belatedly sorted out the 'conscientious', it was awkward to free the rest at almost the same time, and the RSA was not sleeping. Cabinet decided on 14 December 1945 that all defaulters would be released by 30 April 1946 but that they would remain under Manpower direction. <sup>225</sup> On the night of 16 January 1946 a government *Pacific* news broadcast stated that defaulters in the camps would be released in April and that the cases of those in prison would be reviewed individually. Next day it was announced that the Auckland Watersiders Union had asked that a deputation from *Auckland's* Trades Council and Labour Representation Committee should urge the Minister of National Service to release the defaulters. If the deputation gained no satisfaction, the *Auckland* watersiders, whose president was also president of the national union, proposed a one-day strike each week until the defaulters were released. <sup>226</sup> For a few nights previously a group of defaulters in *Auckland* prison, who for offences such as escaping had been sentenced to 12 days' close confinement on bread and water for infringing against prison discipline, had begun noisy nightly protest against their situation. <sup>227</sup> Not surprisingly, the NZRSA was critical of the government's 'hasty decision', under threat of direct action, and the 'indirect method of publicity given to the impending release of military defaulters.' It called on the government to reconsider the decision, reiterating its own demands: that defaulters should be detained for 12 months after the end of the war (calculated to cover the

return, furlough and rehabilitation of all loyal servicemen), be banned from government employment at the taxpayer's expense and be deprived of civil rights for 10 years.<sup>228</sup> Instead, Cabinet decided on 15 March that defaulters who had escaped would be released in the first or second half of May according to the length of their period of escape.<sup>229</sup> A fortnight later Cabinet dismantled the last controls on defaulters and conscientious objectors: Manpower direction of defaulters who had been released on parole would cease on 29 June 1946 and at the same time the Special Tribunal curbing the earnings of conscientious objectors would cease to function along with all its orders.<sup>230</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Conscientious Objectors*, a pamphlet issued by the Defence Dept, 28 Feb 18, p. 1

<sup>2</sup> *Evening Post*, 29 May 40, p. 11

<sup>3</sup> *Truth*, 1 May 40, p. 17. The 14 had included Mark Briggs (1884–1965), whose sufferings were described by H. E. Holland in *Armageddon or Calvary* and who in 1936 became a member of the Legislative Council, and Archibald Baxter (1861–1970), author of *We Will Not Cease*.

<sup>4</sup> *Truth*, 25 Jun 41, p. 9

<sup>5</sup> *NZPD*, vol 260, p. 573; *Evening Post*, 11 Sep 41, p. 5

<sup>6</sup> *Southland Times*, 24 Jun 41, p. 7

<sup>7</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 10 Mar 41, p. 5

<sup>8</sup> O'Brien, Hon James (1875–1947); b Aust, to NZ 1904; MP (Lab) Westland 1922–46, introduced Invalid Pensions Bill 1930 (effective 1936); Min Transport, Marine from 1942

<sup>9</sup> Russell, Bertrand Arthur William, OM('49), 3rd Earl (1872–1970): Brit philosopher, author

<sup>10</sup> Joad, Cyril Edwin Mitchison (1891–1953): Brit philosopher, author, Head Philosophy & Psychology Dept Birkenhead College, Univ London from 1930

<sup>11</sup> *NZPD*, vol 260, p. 327

<sup>12</sup> Efford, L. A. W., *Penalties on Conscience*, p. 34; cf. *A to J* 1945, H-11A, p. 26 for 1943 figures

<sup>13</sup> Copies of both these letters are on WHF, 'Defaulters'

<sup>14</sup> Copy of pp. 19–21 National Service Department Circular A. B. No 1, undated, but apparently early 1941, on WHF, 'Defaulters'

<sup>15</sup> Bishop of [Wellington](#) to PM, 21 Feb 41, on *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Notes of a deputation from various churches to Min Nat Service, 26 Feb 41, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> It was not in a sense always accurate to say that such an appeal was dismissed, when sometimes a man got all that he asked for, but perhaps the government was not unwilling to heighten harmlessly the impression that appeals did not often succeed.

<sup>19</sup> *Press*, 16 May 41, p. 10

<sup>20</sup> Remarks by Hon H. G. R. Mason on the Conscientious Objector, WHF, 'Defaulters'

<sup>21</sup> Atkinson J, in *Newell v. Gillingham Corporation*, *All England Law Reports* 1941, pp. 553–4; endorsed by the *English Law Journal*, 3 May 1941, XCI, p. 176. Copies of both were sent to appeal boards. Dir Nat Service to Min Justice, 24 May 43, WHF, 'Defaulters'. This judgment was also widely reported in the daily press, eg, *Evening Post*, 20 Jun 41, p. 9

<sup>22</sup> A. H. (later Sir Alexander) Johnstone, Kt('50), OBE('46), KC('34), of **Auckland**, d 1956; H. F. O'Leary (later Rt Hon), KCMG('47), PC('48), KC('35) (1886–1953), of **Wellington**, Chief Justice NZ from 1946; A. T. (later Sir Arthur) Donnelly, KBE('49), CMG('39) (1890–1954), Crown Solicitor Chch from 1920, Dir NZ Newspapers, member CUC Bd Governors, chmn Directors Bank NZ from 1937, chmn Economic Stabilisation Cmsn during WWII; Maurice James Gresson (1884–1948), barrister & solicitor, dep chmn **Red Cross** 1917–18, of **Christchurch**

<sup>23</sup> *Truth*, 13 Aug, 1 Oct 41, pp. 16, 23; *Dominion*, 30 Aug, 29 Oct, 5, 12 Dec 41, 22 Feb, 30 Apr 43

<sup>24</sup> Report of Nat Service Dept, *A to J* 1946, H-11A, pp. 25, 129

<sup>25</sup> *Press*, 3 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>26</sup> *NZPD*, vol 260, pp. 65–6

<sup>27</sup> Jeffreys, George, 1st Baron of Wem (1644–89): Lord Chief Justice Britain from 1682; notorious for injustice and brutality and his 'Bloody Assize' after Monmouth's rebellion against James II 1685

<sup>28</sup> North, Dr John James (d 1950 *aet* 79): b **UK**, to NZ 1882; principal Baptist Training College Auck from 1928, Pres Baptist Union 1931

<sup>29</sup> *NZ Herald*, 12 Nov 41, p. 11, quoting *NZ Baptist*, Nov 41;

**Auckland Star, 22, 23 Oct 41, pp. 6, 8**

<sup>30</sup> ***Evening Post*, 10 Nov 41, p. 9**

<sup>31</sup> ***Timaru Herald*, 6 Nov 41, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 26 Nov 41, p. 11**

<sup>32</sup> ***Evening Post*, 1, 4 Dec 41, pp. 8, 10, letters 4, 11, 12, 20, 27 Nov 41, pp. 8, 6, 6, 8, 8**

<sup>33</sup> ***NZ Herald*, 20 Nov 41, p. 10; *Press*, 19, 21 Nov 41, pp. 8, 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 20 Nov 41, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 21 Nov 41, p. 7**

<sup>34</sup> ***Otago Daily Times*, 20 Nov 41, p. 8**

<sup>35</sup> ***Evening Post*, 1, 10 Dec 41, pp. 8, 7**

<sup>36</sup> **Walker, Rev William Walter (d 1969 aet 89): b [UK](#), to NZ 1909; superindendent Methodist Central Mission Dunedin 1923–9; Pres Methodist Church 1942–5; foundation member RSA**

<sup>37</sup> ***NZ Observer*, 10 Dec 41, p. 7**

<sup>38</sup> ***NZ Methodist Times*, 21 Feb 42, p. 348; *NZ Herald*, 20 Feb 42, p. 7**

<sup>39</sup> ***NZ Methodist Times*, 7 Mar 42, p. 372**

<sup>40</sup> **Mazengarb, Hon Oswald Chettle, CBE('52), KC (1890–1963): MLC 1950**

<sup>41</sup> ***Evening Post*, 27 Nov 41, p. 8**



**42 *Ibid.*, 4 Dec 41, p. 8**

**43 *Ibid.*, 23 Oct 41, p. 8**

**44 Duff, Oliver, OBE('59) (1883–1967): Editor *NZ Listener*, 1939–49**

**45 *Evening Post*, 24 Oct 41, p. 4**

**46 Endean, William Phillip (1884–1957): MP (Nat) Parnell, Remuera 1930–43**

**47 *NZPD*, vol 260, p. 1254**

**48 *Evening Post*, 24 Oct 41, p. 6**

**49 Orr-Walker, Charles Rutherford (d 1947): barrister & solicitor 1896–1920; Chief Judge Dept Admin Western Samoa 1921–3; SM from 1920**

**50 *NZ Herald*, 20 Nov 41, p. 11**

**51 *A to J*1945, H-11A, p. 23**

**52 *NZCPS Bulletin* W22, p. 5**

**53 *Ibid.*, W23, p. 8**

**54 *Ibid.*, W25, p. 2; See p. 220**

**55 *Press*, 14 Nov 40, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 22 Nov 40, p. 9; *NZ Observer*, 25 Dec 40, p. 14**

<sup>56</sup> *Dominion*, 28 Feb 42, p. 10

<sup>57</sup> *Evening Post* 9, 15 May 42, pp. 6, 6

<sup>58</sup> *Press*, 20 Aug 41, p. 6

<sup>59</sup> *Evening Post*, 26 Aug 41, p. 6; *Press*, 12 Dec 41, p. 8

<sup>60</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Jul, 22 Aug, 24 Nov 41, pp. 6, 7, 9; *Press*, 12 Dec 41, p. 8

<sup>61</sup> Priestley, John Beynton (1894–): UK author, dramatist, literary critic, popular wartime broadcaster

<sup>62</sup> *Press*, 22 Jul 42, p. 4

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Jul 42, p. 6

<sup>64</sup> Bailey, R. T. (d 1950 *aet* 72): Labour Dept officer 1909–44, including officer-in-charge Lab Dept Chch, certifying officer for Unemployment Board during Depression

<sup>65</sup> *Evening Post*, 17, 18 Jun 41, pp. 8, 8

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jul 41, p. 6

<sup>67</sup> Its silence was remarked on by the *Evening Post*, 22 Aug 41

<sup>68</sup> *Evening Star*, 28 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>69</sup> *NZ Herald*, 3 Aug 43, p. 2

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Feb, 22 Mar 41, pp. 8, 11

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 13, 15, 21 Mar 41, pp. 9, 13, 12, 10

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Mar 41, p. 10

<sup>73</sup> *Auckland Star*, 17 Jul 41, p. 6

<sup>74</sup> *Evening Post*, 30 Aug 41, p. 6

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Jun 41, p. 10

<sup>76</sup> *Press*, 14 Apr 42, p. 6

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 23 Jun 41, pp. 6, 4

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Jun, 15 Jul 41, pp. 8, 8. Later it transpired that there had been 5 conscience appeals among about 700 employees. *Ibid.*, 23 Dec 41, p. 4

<sup>79</sup> *Auckland Star*, 22 Dec 42, p. 6

<sup>80</sup> *Evening Post*, 25, 26 Mar 42, pp. 6, 9; *Auckland Star*, 28 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>81</sup> See p. 228

<sup>82</sup> *Evening Post*, 26 May 41, p. 5

<sup>83</sup> For example: at Kaiti near **Gisborne**, prompted by the RSA, and at a school near Dannevirke where parents would not send their children to school while a teacher whose appeal had been

rejected remained there. *Ibid.*, 7, 10, 19 Jul 41, pp. 8, 10, 11. Of a teacher's appeal allowed at Lynnford near **Ashburton**, *Truth* said that it was heard late in February, the decision announced in June and that since February parents had been twitted on letting the teacher's views go unchallenged. At a public meeting there were angry references to his statements to the Appeal Board, and the general feeling was that he should not be allowed to continue in an easy job, at good pay, accepting the protection of soldiers in the **Middle East**. *Truth*, 16 Jul 41, p. 4

<sup>84</sup> *Evening Post*, 19, 22 Jul 41, pp. 11, 5

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jul 41, p. 8

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 21 Aug 41, pp. 8, 11

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Jul 41, p. 8

<sup>88</sup> They had power to dismiss summarily for immorality or misbehaviour.

<sup>89</sup> Wanganui Board, *Evening Post*, 19 Aug 41, p. 8; Southland Board, *ibid.*, 23 Aug 41, p. 11, *NZ Herald*, 6 Nov 41, p. 8; Canterbury, *Evening Post*, 19 Jul 41, p. 6, *Press*, 22 Sep 41, p. 6; **Auckland**, *Evening Post*, 3 Sep 41, p. 9; Otago, *Press*, 19 Sep 41, p. 6; Marlborough College Board of Governors, *Evening Post*, 12 Aug 41, p. 9. Col McDonald (*Ibid.*, 9 Sep 41, p. 9) claimed that one reason for the hostility of the Minister of Education towards himself was the strong stand that he had taken against pacifist teachers, which attitude was being adopted by other boards; outside the **Wellington** area the Colonel was not visibly in the lead.

<sup>90</sup> eg, *Evening Post*, 11, 13, 14, 20, 22 Aug 41, pp. 6, 6, 10, 6, 7

<sup>91</sup> Report of deputation from Wgtn Educ Bd to Min Educ, 26 Aug 41, WHF, 'Defaulters'

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*; *Evening Post*, 26 Aug 41, p. 9

<sup>93</sup> National Service Emergency Regulations 1940 Amendment 5 (1941/148)

<sup>94</sup> Deputation from NZEI, referred to in War History Narrative, 'Education Department', (hereinafter WHN, 'Education Department'), p. 166

<sup>95</sup> *Press*, 13 Feb 42, p. 4, quoting a circular received by school boards

<sup>96</sup> WHN, 'Education Department', p. 168

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 170–1

<sup>99</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Aug 41, p. 11; see p. 1123

<sup>100</sup> *NZ Herald*, 21, 29 Apr, 19 May 42, pp. 6, 5, 2; see p. 1165

<sup>101</sup> WHN, 'Education Department', p. 169

<sup>102</sup> *Press*, 29 Sep 42, p. 4, 29 Feb 44, p. 4

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Apr 44, p. 4. The voting was 66:47.

<sup>104</sup> Hunter, James Stanley, CBE('46) (1889–1975); Dir Social Security Dept 1938, Nat Service 1940, Organisation Nat Development 1944

**105 Hunter to Mason, 16 Apr 43, WHF, 'Defaulters'**

**106 A to J1943, H-11A, p. 33**

**107 See p. 251, fn 21**

**108 Hunter to Mason, 24 May 43, WHF, 'Defaulters'**

**109 Dir Nat Service to Appeal Boards, 30 Jul 43, *ibid.***

**110 A to J1946, H-11A, p. 24**

**111 *Ibid.*, 1945, H-11A, pp. 23, 68**

**112 *Ibid.*, 1943, H-11A, p. 33**

**113 See p. 283**

**114 A to J1943, H-11A, p. 7, 1945, H-11A, p. 23**

**115 In January 1943 there were 68 of the latter among the 614 men in detention camps. *Ibid.*, 1943, H-11A, p. 39**

**116 In one instance a member of the Assembly of Christians, refusing to don uniform or obey orders after his appeal was dismissed, was sentenced by court-martial to six month's hard labour in **Auckland's** gaol. *NZ Herald*, 2, 9 Aug 41, pp. 12, 10**

**117 In the First World War defaulters court-martialled into prisons had been a severe problem to their administrators, who did not regard them as ordinary criminals and strove to keep them separate, working on afforestation, roadmaking and building for the State. Their highest number was 293 in March**

1918, and in August 1919 the Permanent Head of the Prisons Department wrote that in any future war 'I sincerely trust that an endeavour will be made to confine military offenders in camps or other places entirely outside the jurisdiction of the Prisons Department.' *A to J* 1919, H-20, p. 2, 1918, H-20, pp. 1, 3

<sup>118</sup> *NZPD*, vol 260, pp. 62, 327

<sup>119</sup> Under-Sec Justice to Min Justice, 9 Oct 41, and Minister's comment, PM 83/10/1

<sup>120</sup> *Evening Post*, 24 Oct 41, p. 6. Actually prison was not the only place where a defaulter could change his mind; 13 did so there, but the regulations of May 1941 provided that he could accept the Army at any time, and 69 left the camps for service.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Nov 41, p. 6

<sup>122</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Nov 41, p. 12

<sup>123</sup> Freeman, William Henry (b 1891): SM from 1935

<sup>124</sup> *NZ Herald*, 12 Nov 41, p. 6

<sup>125</sup> *Dominion*, 8 Oct 41, p. 8

<sup>126</sup> *Press*, 27 Feb 42, p. 8, and 28 Feb, p. 2, where a letter tells of a 20-year-old and six others receiving a second dose of two months in the Paparua shingle pit

<sup>127</sup> *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 871

<sup>128</sup> *A to J*1942, H-20, p. 1



**129** There were 39 transfers. *Ibid.*, 1946, H-20, p. 4

**130** *Yearbook* 1946, p. 156

**131** Greenberg, Len Joseph, OBE('46) (1891-1957): broadcasting administrator; b Aust; 27 years Gen Sec Wgtn YMCA; army & navy **YMCA** work Aust 1939; Controller Defaulters' Detention NZ from 1941; Sec Juvenile Delinquency Cmte 1954

**132** L. J. Greenberg, 'The Men Who Would Not Serve', War History Narrative, p. 54 (hereinafter WHN, 'Greenberg')

**133** Under-Sec to Min Justice, 9 Oct 41, PM 83/10/1

**134** *Press*, 10 Nov 41, p. 6

**135** ONS to UKHC, 27 Feb 42, PM 83/10/1

**136** WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 12

**137** '... nothing short of sincere conviction and superlative courage can make a man a Christian "conscientious objector." The story of the treatment of many "objectors" in New Zealand during the last war makes very sorry reading indeed.... There are indications that no amount of bullying will change the views held by these young men, and certain it is that the martyrdom of the pacifists will not kill pacifism any more than the Crucifixion of Christ killed Christianity.' *Evening Post*, 17 Sep 35, p. 11

**138** NZCPS *Bulletin* W36, supplement

**139** Paul Oestreicher, 'They would not Fight', unpublished thesis, p. 101

**140 NZCPS *Bulletin* W36, supplement**

**141 *Ibid.*, W33, supplement**

**142 *Ibid.*, W33, p. 6, W35, p. 7**

**143 WHN, 'Greenberg', pp. 10, 11**

**144 They were unheated but lined with building paper to make them draught-proof, and cost £14 10 s each. *Dominion*, 17 Mar 42, p. 6**

**145 WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 37**

**146 *Dominion*, 17 Mar 42, p. 6**

**147 A to J1945, H-11A, p. 24**

**148 *Dominion*, 19 Mar 42, p. 8**

**149 *Auckland Star*, 19 Nov 41**

**150 For example, two men who persisted in walking to a job by a track through scrub instead of through allegedly wet grass got two months' gaol; they had previously 'just kept within the regulations'. *Rotorua Morning Post*, 22 Dec 41**

**151 A to J1946, H-20, p. 4**

**152 *Ibid.*, 1945, H-20, p. 2**

**153 Controller Detention to Dir Nat Service, 2 Sep 44, WHN, 'Greenberg', App F**

**154** *A to J*1946, H-20, p. 4

**155** Controller Detention to Dir Nat Service, 1 Sep 44, WHN, 'Greenberg', App F. Mr Justice Fair, sentencing an escaper to nine months reformatory detention, stated that close confinement, while sometimes necessary for persistent, troublesome offenders, should never exceed 30 days and often could well be less, depending on the person concerned. *Evening Post*, 3 Mar 45, p. 6

**156** WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 15

**157** Parry/Hamilton report to War Cab, 18 May 44, PM 83/10/1

**158** *NZPD*, vol 261, pp. 52-3

**159** eg, *NZ Observer*, 4 Mar, 10 Jun 42, pp. 5, 12

**160** eg, *Truth*, 19 Nov 41, p. 4, 11 Mar, 22 Apr 42, pp. 9, 10

**161** Jacobs, Bertram Joseph, OBE('46) (d 1964 *aet* 79): 10 years Vice-Pres, 4 years Pres, NZRSA

**162** *Otago Daily Times*, 19 Jun 42, p. 4

**163** eg, *NZ Herald*, 7 Jul 42, p. 2; *Taranaki Daily News*, 16 Oct 42, p. 2; *Press*, 21 Jul 42, p. 6, 21 Jan 43, p. 4; *Evening Star*, 10 Jun 42, p. 7

**164** WHN, 'Greenberg', pp. 9-10

**165** *NZ Herald*, 25 Nov 41, p. 8

**166 WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 24**

**167 *Ibid.*, pp. 20–1 and App B. Among adherents of the main churches (which broadly considered the Allies' struggle a necessary and justified evil, while advocating respect of conscience on the one hand, and, on the other, willingness to pay the penalty for it), **Methodists** led with 68 members, followed by Anglicans (32), Presbyterians (28), Roman Catholics (23), Seventh Day Adventists (9), Christadelphians (8), Baptists (6), others 30; 156 were non-religious.**

**168 *Ibid.*, pp. 22–3**

**169 This was written in 1947; these details were not fully known until late in the war.**

**170 The Methodist Church. WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 35 and App B**

**171 *Ibid.*, pp. 18–20**

**172 A to J1943, H-11A, p. 39, 1944, H-11A, p. 14, 1945, H-11A, p. 23, 1946, H-11A, p. 27**

**173 WHN, 'Greenberg', pp. 24–7**

**174 Figures from *ibid.*, pp. 43–5**

**175 Entrican, Alexander Robert (1898–1965): Dir Forestry 1939–60; Dir-Gen Forests 1960; Permanent Head NZ Forest 1939–61, Timber Controller 1939–48; member Nat Parks Authority 1953–61**

**176 *Press*, 15 Apr 43, p. 4**

<sup>177</sup> *Dominion*, 20 Mar 43, p. 4; *NZ Listener*, 10 Jan 72, p. 13

<sup>178</sup> *Auckland Star*, 20 Feb 45, p. 6

<sup>179</sup> eg, *Standard*, 1 Oct 42, p. 4; *Press*, 11 Jan, 15 Apr 43, pp. 2, 4; *Dominion*, 5 Mar 43, p. 4; annual reports of the Nat Service Dept

<sup>180</sup> eg, *Otago Daily Times*, 10, 14 Mar 41, pp. 5, 7; *Southland Times*, 24, 26 Jun 41, pp. 7, 3; *Press*, 13 Apr 42, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 3, 11 Nov 42, pp. 2, 2; *Auckland Star*, 4, 12 Nov 42, pp. 4, 4; 9, 12, 13, 18 Mar 43, pp. 2, 2, 4, 4; *Dominion*, 10, 17, 19 Feb, 10 Mar, 25 Jun 43, pp. 6, 4, 5, 6, 6

<sup>181</sup> *Auckland Star*, 7 Dec 42, p. 4; *Otago Daily Times*, 12 Mar 43, p. 3; *Dominion*, 20 Mar 43, p. 4

<sup>182</sup> *Gisborne Herald*, 15 Jan 43, p. 5

<sup>183</sup> eg, *Dominion*, 6 Mar, 6 Jul, 11 Aug 43

<sup>184</sup> eg, *Evening Post*, 5 Jul 43; *Hawera Star*, 8 Jul 43, and the Nat party's *Freedom*, Jul 43, with a 4-column heading 'Men Who Twiddle Their Thumbs'

<sup>185</sup> *Press*, 11 Jan 43, p. 2

<sup>186</sup> *NZPD*, vol 262, p. 99; *Dominion*, 5 Mar 43, p. 4

<sup>187</sup> Controller of Detention to Dir Nat Service, 29 Mar 43, PM 83/10/1

<sup>188</sup> *Oestricher*, p. 120

**189** Controller of Detention to Dir Nat Service, 8 Oct 43, PM 83/10/1

**190** Dir Nat Service to Min Justice, 13 Oct 43, *ibid.*

**191** Regulation 44A, 5b (1941/148, 27 Aug 1941), whereby the Minister could temporarily release any defaulter to work as directed by the Special Tribunal.

**192** Min Justice to all Mins, 1 Dec 43, PM 83/10/1

**193** Cables from Ext Aff to NZHC, **London**, 4 Feb, 1 Mar 44, and replies 24 Feb, 18 Mar 44, *ibid.*; *A to J* 1945, H-11A, p. 26

**194** Min Justice to War Cab, 1 May 44, PM 83/10/1

**195** Hay, Caryll James, JP (d 1966 *aet* 68): 20 years Pres Miramar Branch Lab party; asst organiser **Home Guard** throughout NZ WWII; Immigration Office London 1946–8; liaison officer immigration ship *Atlantis* 1948–50; Dir State Advances Corp 1950–3

**196** WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 39

**197** 49 others were in prison, 25 had escaped and 10 were missed in transit; See p. 274

**198** Dir Nat Service to Sec Cab, 4 Apr 45, PM 83/10/1

**199** eg, *NZ Herald*, 19 Sep 44, p. 4

**200** By June 1945 Nash had received 118 such letters. Tabulation on PM 83/10/1

**201 Efford, p. 45**

**202 *Auckland Star*, 28 Jul 44, 2 Mar, 20 Apr 45**

**203 *Ibid.*, 5 Apr 45, p. 3; *Southland Times*, 6 Apr 45**

**204 eg, *NZ Herald*, 1 May 45, p. 3; *Press*, 6 Jun 45, p. 3; *Standard*, 5 Jul 45, p. 10**

**205 Thorndike, Dame Sybil, CH('70), DBE('31) (1882–1976): **UK actress & manager****

**206 Brittain, Vera (d 1970): **UK writer and world lecturer 1934–63****

**207 Barnes, Rt Rev Ernest William (1874–1953): **Bishop Birmingham 1925–53****

**208 Morling, Joseph (d 1959 *aet* 78): practised law **Napier 25 years. SM from 1937****

**209 *Auckland Star*, 20, 21 Feb 45, pp. 6, 3**

**210 *Truth*, 28 Feb 45, p. 8**

**211 *The C.O. and the Community*, by 'Humanist', S. Wignall, a returned soldier, was ready in March 1945; Efford's *Penalties on Conscience* was ready in April.**

**212 Sec NAFU to PM, 22 Nov 44, PM 83/10/1; in *Evening Post*, 17 Jul 41, p. 11, the NZFU had urged the loss of civil rights.**

**213 Sec RSA to PM, 29 Mar 44, PM 83/10/1**



- 214** Dep PM to Sec RSA, 9 Jun 44, *ibid.*
- 215** *Review*, Apr, Aug, Dec 44, Jan, Mar, Jun 45
- 216** Record of RSA deputation to Acting PM and members of Cab and War Cab, 7 Mar 45, PM 83/10/1
- 217** *Dominion*, 11 May 45, p. 7
- 218** The eminent A. H. Johnstone KC and W. H. Woodward SM, who as an appeal board chairman had shown unusual understanding.
- 219** *NZPD*, vol 268, p. 61
- 220** A to J1945, H-11A, pp. 23, 25; 'The case for the Appointment of Revision Authorities and for the review of defaulters in defaulters detention', circular issued to MPs by H. G. R. Mason, in WHF, 'Defaulters'
- 221** *Dominion*, 7 Jul 45, p. 6
- 222** WHN, 'Greenberg', p. 41
- 223** A to J1946, H-20, p. 5
- 224** *Ibid.*, H-11A, p. 27
- 225** War Cab Minute, PM 83/10/1
- 226** *Evening Post*, 17 Jan 46, p. 8
- 227** *Auckland Star*, 12, 15 Jan 46, pp. 4, 6

**228** *Ibid.*, 2 Feb 46, p. 6

**229** Cab Minute, 15 Mar 46, PM 83/10/1

**230** *Ibid.*, 28 Mar 46

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 8 – BLOOD IS SPILT

## CHAPTER 8

### *Blood is Spilt*

**THE Battle of Britain faded. For security reasons its worst dangers were kept from the public; only when the battle had become history was it known how slender British air defence had become in the August-September crisis of 1940. Accounts vary on just when the battle began, and it did not end distinctly: attacks on shipping and scattered bombings of coastal areas began in July; early in August these were intensified, concentrating on defence aerodromes; late in August and September came the mass raids on London, and in October these settled into the regular nightly bombings of London and other centres that, with varying intensity and sometimes with lulls lasting several weeks, continued till in mid-1941 the main Luftwaffe strength turned to the Russian front.**

**Newspapers built a picture of German might inflicting woeful losses but impotent before the resolution and superior quality of Spitfires and Hurricanes, ack-ack barrages, fire-fighters, factory workers and the British public. British losses were officially minimised, German losses exaggerated: for instance, in the last great day raids of 15 September 1940 accounts at the time said that 185 German planes were destroyed, while the post-war figure is 56. Indeed, the massive lists of day-by-day German losses published by many New Zealand papers inevitably gave the feeling that the Luftwaffe was being bled white. At the same time RAF bombardment of German targets was given full value—‘blow for blow’ was the note, and British aircraft losses were much lighter. Thus the *New Zealand Herald* had two large headlines on 9 September: ‘War Comes to London in Earnest’ and ‘Many Fires in Berlin’, and on 12 September, ‘Intensive Bombing of Berlin’ and ‘London again Raided, Damage rather less Severe’. By early October newspapers were giving slightly less space to the raids on Britain though every few days the headlines sprang high: ‘New German Fury’, ‘Bomb on St Paul’s’, ‘Long Night Raid’, <sup>1</sup> with balancing prominence to the RAF’s smashing blows on invasion and naval bases, on German industry and oil targets, on**

**Berlin** and Italian centres such as Milan and Turin. Despite the bleak monthly statements of thousands of civilians killed and wounded in the Blitz, it was obvious that England could take it and the **RAF** was giving it. And still the only New Zealanders actively fighting were the 400 in the **RAF** <sup>2</sup> and those in the **Navy**. The new tough war was still far away; New Zealand got used to it, excitement ebbed. The conscription issue had been settled, the **Home Guard** and Emergency Precautions Services formed, absorbing the energy of those most anxious to contribute, and the Industrial Emergency Council was modestly extending working hours 'as required'. Effort had been increased on farms and in most factories, patriotic giving had drawn in almost everyone, waste materials were being salvaged. There seemed little else immediately to do. The 1940 King's Birthday holiday, postponed on 3 June amid widespread feeling that this was no time for holidays, was taken on 25 November. Nearly 50 per cent of those in the first Territorial ballot, due for camp from January to March 1941, appealed, many asking merely for postponement during the farming season. <sup>3</sup>

Local interests and conflicts re-asserted themselves. A five per cent wage increase in August 1940, to meet the rising cost of living, reopened the old issues between employers and workers, the latter finding the rise inadequate, the former deploring the inevitable further pressure on prices, while dairy farmers renewed demands for a rise in the guaranteed price of butterfat. <sup>4</sup> Farmers and members of the National party opposed the Small Farms Amendment Bill designed to obtain land for ex-soldiers as altogether too drastic, striking at fundamental rights; <sup>5</sup> the government was using the conscription of men as an excuse for the conscription of everything else, <sup>6</sup> complained W. S. Goosman MP; <sup>7</sup> the Farmers' Union would oppose it with all its strength. <sup>8</sup> The National party, having just acquired a vigorous new leader in S. G. **Holland**, was looking expectantly to the general election in 1941. New Zealand, said **Holland**, was fighting on two fronts, overseas for the Empire and for national freedom, and at home for private enterprise and ownership. <sup>9</sup>

It was, in fact, business as usual in many areas. Fraser's New Year

speech declared that the tide had turned in favour of the Commonwealth. Admittedly, the same papers reported **London's** worst blitz in three weeks, but in other theatres there was positive brightening during the first three months of 1941, in which it could almost be said that the government's battle with the British Medical Association over Social Security services competed with the war for New Zealand's attention.

In Somaliland, during August, the capitulation of **France** had compelled British withdrawal, and in September Italian forces in North Africa had advanced to **Sidi Barrani**, some 50 miles within the frontier of Egypt. Then, late in October Italy, intending a quick-profit trawl of troubled waters, attacked **Greece**. The Greeks, however, held their own handsomely, while early in 1941 British forces defeated the Italians in Somaliland and **Abyssinia**, and drove them back along the Libyan coast to **Benghazi**, captured on 7 February. New Zealanders were not in these advances, but about 15 February, many newspapers printed in general terms the 'thrilling story' of the 'raiders of the sands', the Long Range Patrols <sup>10</sup> which included some New Zealanders and which for months had harassed the enemy, attacking isolated forts and depots, supply columns and grounded aircraft. Then, on 10 March 1941, the Lend-Lease Agreement promised more and speedier American supplies to **Britain**.

It was possible for the Bishop of **Wellington**, <sup>11</sup> celebrating the King's special day of prayer on 23 March, to look over the past few months with reverent awe, recollecting an almost miraculous opening of the door of hope when things seemed desperate: after six months of agony England was adorned with new lustre and glory, there was the miracle of Greek courage, the lightning stroke of the Libyan campaign, and now the strong friendly hand stretching out across the **Atlantic**, all showing the work of God. The Bishop was not, of course, a strategic commentator, though he perhaps voiced the hopeful views of some men in the street, and he overlooked the portents in both **Libya** and **Greece**, areas of combat which at that very moment were giving many New Zealanders

painful thought.

The Battle of the **Atlantic** had had relatively little public notice: there was no advantage in stressing U-boat successes, which rose steeply in June, following the French collapse. The impact of statements of shipping losses was lessened by their irregular appearance, but they were given uncouth reality by the announcement in January 1941 that shortage of refrigerated ships was obliging **Britain** to buy her meat from across the **Atlantic**. Some 350 900 tons of meat had been sent from New Zealand in 1939–40,<sup>12</sup> but on 20 December the government was told that in the coming year **Britain** wanted only 217 650 tons, plus 21 000 tons of bacon; by 5 March another cable reduced this to 180 556 tons in all. Bacon, which had earlier been specially requested and for which there had been a vigorous New Zealand campaign, was now excluded; the government, at first thinking that the cable about this unkindest cut must have been mutilated, withheld the bad news till it was confirmed.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, while in full cry for more production, New Zealand had an embarrassing food surplus. The glut of apples was met by eating more: they were sold at two shillings a case and were distributed free to school children. The shrinking demand for butter was partly answered by the change to cheese production. But how were New Zealanders to eat 300 000 baconers in place of their usual 150 000,<sup>14</sup> or dispose of thousands of tons of unshipped export meat?

Late in March 1941 the government announced that to make the best use of storage space freezing companies should take only lambs, prime beef, porkers of up to 120lb, and ewe mutton of up to 52lb. Farmers were distressed, for although the amount of wool sold had risen, the price had not,<sup>15</sup> and there had been an exceptional season for fattening mature sheep. Extensive canning was called for, and it was not forgotten that delays at the wharf had contributed to the length of New Zealand voyages.

Urgently the government negotiated with **Britain**, built more cool



stores and declared that it would not evade its promise to buy all exportable meat in the current season; it was merely delaying the killing. <sup>16</sup> The mutton restrictions were gradually eased and the government paid for meat before shipment, while it was still in store. <sup>17</sup>

The crisis was eased by the British government agreeing, at the end of April, to take 248 000 tons of meat including about 8000 tons of bacon then in store. Actual liftings for the season ending 30 September 1941 were 268 650 tons, leaving 77 902 tons in store. <sup>18</sup> The new figure was much less than the 350 900 tons of 1939–40, but much better than the 180 556 of March. During April and later months the ocean battle had more space in public utterances than before, though Admiralty reports of losses were made only once a month until June, <sup>19</sup> and thereafter at selected intervals.

In the midst of the meat worries New Zealand troops, despatched overseas in echelons from January 1940 onwards, came into the fighting, 19 months after the war's start. German pressure through the **Balkans** and **Britain's** resolve to strengthen support of **Greece**, victim of Italian aggression since October 1940, led to British, Australian and New Zealand troops being sent to **Greece** from Egypt during March 1941. This troop movement was not made public. **Britain** in fact was seeking to create a **Balkan** front to oppose **Hitler** and, as well, sought to honour the pledge to **Greece** renewed in September 1940 of British protection from Axis invasion. <sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, since January, control of Axis forces in North Africa had been taken over by **Germany**, and at the end of March they struck. On 3 April British forces withdrew from **Benghazi**, their furthest west holding in coastal **Cyrenaica**, a 'strategic move', and a few days later were besieged at **Tobruk**, about 75 miles west of the Egyptian border. But North Africa was already eclipsed. On 7 April came news that **Germany** had invaded **Greece** and **Yugoslavia** and that New Zealanders, along with British and Australian troops, were in **Greece**. <sup>21</sup>

There was scarcely time for editors and office strategists to begin to prophesy before the Germans were winning again. As in **France**, they struck at a weak point between two commands and had seized **Salonika**

by 10 April, compelling the Allies to shorten their lines. **Yugoslavia** crumpled in a week. The papers of 19 April told of New Zealanders holding the pass on **Olympus**; on the 21st they had withdrawn from it, and by 26 April the news was all of rearguard action, orderly embarkation and retreat to **Crete**.

New Zealand had been certain that its troops, many of whom had been about a year training overseas, would stand up to the Germans. Then, like the Poles and the French, they had been bombed and strafed from undefended skies, and had retreated, though fighting hard and making the enemy pay. While faith in the troops was not lessened there was feeling that they had been mismanaged, the cold clutch of defeat. But there was also the precedent of **Gallipoli**,<sup>22</sup> hallowed almost into victory, and prophets of doom were far fewer than those possessed of a vague certainty that things would be better soon. In a mid-April newspaper, a correspondent wrote that in the past few days he had met several people who felt unhappy about events but not one carried foreboding any distance into the future.<sup>23</sup>

All through the fighting, and for days afterwards, reports of German air mastery were balanced by reports of New Zealand gunners and others exacting a terrific toll. The fighting qualities of the troops, their resistance to the nerve-strain of screaming dive-bombers, the accuracy of the artillery and Maori prowess with the bayonet were all stressed: almost daily there were comments on the splendid hand-to-hand fighters of the **Maori Battalion** who covered themselves with glory at **Olympus** and other places. There was 'sickening sacrifice' of German troops. They were thrown in wave after wave by the high command, mown down in swathes;<sup>24</sup> 50 000 were estimated dead by 19 April. The *London Times* correspondent's statement that German casualties outnumbered the entire British force was 'starkly eloquent'.<sup>25</sup>

As the retreat developed, Australian concern for the Australian Imperial Force in **Greece** demanded an immediate session of Parliament.<sup>26</sup> There was no such move in New Zealand. Here there was widespread

editorial endorsement of honour outweighing all, a good deal of silence coupled with interest in other matters, and there were a few questioning articles. The Christchurch *Star-Sun* found it hard to imagine any good purpose at this stage in criticism or debate; it was easy to say that the Allies should have left Greece and held Cyrenaica, but the Imperial Cabinet, knowing all the facts, judged otherwise, and 'while the Anzacs are fighting grimly in Greece there is no call for blethering in Canberra.'<sup>27</sup> The *Dominion* called for sober calm and a sense of proportion; there was nothing to be gained by raising doubts and casting aspersions; to have broken the solemn pact with Greece would have been an indelible blot on British honour, and would not have ensured Cyrenaica against later attack.<sup>28</sup> The *Evening Post* said that by hearkening to the call of Greece and of honour the British government had risked the charge of unduly dispersing its forces, but only 'unanswerable argument' should embolden a critic to attack the Churchill leadership at such a time, and 'picking small holes in vast problems' was rebuked.<sup>29</sup> Those who in 1938 accused Britain of selling the Czechs down the river would, had Britain not sent its army, have said that Greece was thrown to the eagles;<sup>30</sup> the worst that could attend the honouring of the pledge to Greece would not outweigh the moral disadvantage of failing to honour it;<sup>31</sup> the British Empire had entered into the alliance in much the same way as a man marries, for better or for worse.<sup>32</sup>

Some papers wanted the 'full story' of the campaign, and felt that steadfast British people deserved and could thrive on truth, even harsh truth. The *Otago Daily Times* on 28 April remarked on a 'disconcerting lack of definite official information as the situation developed from the perilous to the parlous.' The *New Zealand Herald* on 26 April, asking why the key point Salonika had been seized so quickly, called for a clear account of the plans and course of the campaign as soon as possible. It repeated this demand on the 29th, remarking that so far there had been only disconnected reports of resolute stands and grim fights against great odds, and that Greece was a lesson against the dispersion of limited forces on secondary objectives. The *Auckland Star* probed rather near a tender point, saying that Australia and New Zealand were entitled

to know whether their war cabinets had been fully consulted beforehand—consulted not in the sense of being informed of what was about to happen but informed of all the foreseeable dangers and disadvantages of the campaign, as well as of its advantages if successful. <sup>33</sup>

On 24 April Fraser said that the British government had fully consulted the Dominions concerned, they had consulted each other, and his government fully accepted its share of responsibility for the decision, taken with the best military advice available. While the prospects of effective resistance to German aggression in Greece had been reasonable, though hazardous, every consideration of honour had impelled New Zealand to join in helping the gallant Greeks; he added that in like circumstances he would do the same again, a phrase that did not pass unnoticed. He did not, of course, explain that his government had believed that Freyberg had been fully consulted by the British command and had actively approved the enterprise; neither of which was true. <sup>34</sup>

On 27 April Churchill put the Greek affair into perspective. While admitting that in Libya the Germans had advanced sooner and more strongly than expected, he stated that honour must be the only guide for British policy: a pre-war pledge to help the Greeks was binding and they could not be left to their fate: 'there are rules against that kind of thing'. Though it was known that the forces Britain sent could not stem the tide alone, there was very real hope that intervention might cause neighbour countries to stand with Greece, and 'how nearly that came off will be known some day'. This campaign was only part of the wider strategy of the Middle East, which in turn was not the decisive area of the war. The war could not be lost while Britain was unconquered, and the recent United States decision to patrol the West Atlantic had vastly improved the life-line to America. <sup>35</sup>

On 1 May concern about losses was eased by Churchill: only 60 000 Imperial troops had been sent and 45 000 were taken off, there were about 3000 casualties and the rest would be prisoners. <sup>36</sup> On 2 May Freyberg's first report soothed local fears: 100–200 killed, 500–600

wounded and about 800 missing. Newspapers brightened, some citing with minor variations the more savage losses of the last war: **Gallipoli's** 2721 dead, 4752 wounded; the **Somme**, in September 1916, nearly 1100 killed, nearly 5000 wounded; Messines, three days in June 1917, total casualties 3633, with 473 killed, 2726 wounded, 434 missing; **Passchendaele**, October 1917, 1536 killed, 4309 wounded, 233 missing, total 6078. <sup>37</sup>

While relieved that losses were not worse several papers noted that air power was crucial. A critic not widely reported was J. A. Lee who said that in view of home defence needs, New Zealand's manpower was over-committed. It was astounding that while 4 million soldiers were needed to defend **Britain**, the Allies invaded **Europe** with four divisions. Fraser's saying that he would do the same again 'appalled' Lee: 'mistakes are inevitable in war, disasters reparable, but only if we profit by them and not if we insist on a willingness to repeat them.... It was the "do the same again" strategy that gave us **Passchendaele**.' <sup>38</sup>

People were still reading about the Greek campaign and about small parties escaping in fishing boats, were still waiting for casualty lists to be checked, when on 21 May came the first reports of German paratroops attacking **Crete**, where **Freyberg** was in command. At first the slaughter of these paratroops seemed to promise victory but by 23 May Churchill had explained that in this 'most strange and grim battle' there was no local air support because there were no usable aerodromes nearer than **Africa**. The picture emerged of New Zealanders and other troops pinned down by dive bombers, trying by desperate sorties, especially at evening when air attack ceased, to check the Germans who from parachutes, gliders and recklessly landed troop-carriers, swarmed from all directions to capture airfields. On these, heavy carriers landed, spilling out more and more men who drove the defenders back to the western end of **Crete**. The Navy prevented a sea landing, there were reports of beaches littered with drowned Germans, while stubborn rearguard fighting exacted a fearful price for every foot of ground won. Hopes rose a little on 30 May with news of British troops landing on the

south side of the island and cutting their way towards **Freyberg's** garrison, but continued air attack and the now superior enemy numbers made escape the only success. 'Battle of Crete Ended' headlined the papers on 2 June: losses were severe but 15 000 men had got away, after 12 of the war's fiercest days, having inflicted huge penalties, with the only air support coming from **Africa**.

In the midst of this debacle came the bill for **Greece**. On 25 May, in a Sunday evening broadcast, Nash gave the hard news that 2200 men were missing, probably prisoners, and in the next six days just over 2300 names of missing men were printed, along with those of a few wounded and killed and some no longer missing.<sup>39</sup> As the *Press* put it, hitherto most New Zealanders had read about the war, discussed it, understood it in their minds; now, when thousands saw familiar names, they began to feel it.<sup>40</sup> 'Missing' gave room for both fear and hope: a man might be dead, a prisoner, befriended by Greeks, or somewhere on the way back to Egypt.

As much consolation as possible was wrung from another Middle East theatre. In Iraq, main source of British oil in the **Mediterranean**, a pro-Nazi, Raschid Ali,<sup>41</sup> had seized power at the beginning of April. Early in May, attacks on British forces were seen as the start of an Axis drive on Egypt and **Suez**. British aircraft and troops moved in, Raschid Ali fled and the rebellion ended at the same time as the last ships left **Crete**. It was clear, and it was stated on all sides, that the defence of **Greece** and **Crete** had delayed **Hitler's** strike towards **Suez**, so that the Iraqi rebellion was premature and, without German aid, could be suppressed, while Egypt's defences were improved. Nash, as Acting Prime Minister, explained this on 3 June; he also explained that only by magnificent effort had the men who had lost so much in **Greece** been re-equipped; that **Crete** was part of a wider struggle, that there were other advantages which would later be revealed. He quoted a cable from Fraser about the overwhelming odds, with German troop-carriers coming in 'like trams' every five minutes.<sup>42</sup>

Newspaper editorials played the theme of **Iraq** saved and time gained,



with minor variations, and sometimes fingered the darker theme of Germanic air mastery. The *Dominion* was cheerful throughout. After initial optimism, it dwelt on the Navy's success in preventing a sea-borne landing, even at the price of two cruisers and four destroyers.<sup>43</sup> Thereafter it discoursed on the heavy losses of German aircraft and highly trained men, on the delay in Hitler's timetable, on Raschid Ali, oil and Egypt. Hasty criticism and unsound conclusions were to be avoided; there was ample evidence that the reasons for defending Crete were strong enough to justify the known risks.<sup>44</sup>

The *Otago Daily Times* news reports on 30 May stressed the fierceness of the fighting, Maori valour and German losses; a Cairo report told of beaches thick with washed-up dead, and the slaughter of parachutists who were splendidly equipped but 'rotten marksmen, and all mongrels when our chaps get among them.' The editorial on that day stated, in leisurely phrases, that the Allied air disadvantage 'is so considerable as to have what may prove to be a decisive effect on the outcome.'

The *Press*, dignified, almost academic in its few remarks on the campaign, concluded that Crete should not be too readily written off as a military failure; its tenacious defence must be related to the absence of German aid in the Iraqi rebellion and to the Suez timetable. But it criticised the ground defences of the aerodromes, saying that the British had held the island for six months, and it must have been obvious that if Germany invaded the Balkans, Crete's aerodromes would be a target.<sup>45</sup>

The *Evening Post*, which as early as 22 May had seen the Crete attack as part of the drive on Iraq and Syria, gave little more editorial comment till 2 June, when it spoke of evidence 'that probably will be amplified later', that the 12 to 14 day delay would be of great time value in the battle for the east Mediterranean as a whole. Its war news column of that day found the 'conclusion inevitable' that Crete was 'inadequately equipped' against air invasion; whether such overwhelming attack was or could have been foreseen by British High Command was

uncertain and would probably always be a matter of opinion.

The strongest immediate criticism came from **Auckland**. The *New Zealand Herald* was sharp about the lack of air strength, particularly the inadequate ground defence that made **Crete's** three airfields unusable from the outset, even though the British had occupied the island for more than six months. It was a fortnight since Churchill had said that **Crete** would be defended to the death—'This default is inexplicable'. None but the best troops could have withstood such an ordeal and 'none should ever again be left to do so. Air support must be assured in advance of commitments'.<sup>46</sup> Next day it deplored the lack of tanks which might have compensated for weakness in the air, while praising the stubborn resistance which by deranging **Hitler's** timetable might still defeat his wider aims. Wavell<sup>47</sup> was gaining time to finish off the Italians in east **Africa**, organise an outpost in **Cyprus**, take a firm hold in **Iraq**; and build up the defences of **Suez** in Palestine and the **Western Desert**. Also, highly trained airborne divisions, men not easily replaced, had been smashed on the rock defences of **Crete**; 'Hitler's wings have been clipped before he can spread them for the flight to the **Levant**'.<sup>48</sup> The *Auckland Star* went even further: if **Crete's** airfields could not be used by the **RAF**, the next best thing was to be sure that they did not come into enemy hands, yet it seemed that the Germans gained control of **Maleme** airfield in half a day, from which moment nearly everything became possible to them. The men who had fought so magnificently had a right to ask, and those safe at home had a duty to ask for them, 'Why, in **Crete**, so soon after the experience of **Greece**, have they been sent into battle without adequate protection from the **Luftwaffe**?'<sup>49</sup> A few days later it pressed the attack: 'Machines against men. How often have we heard of that before? How often are we to hear of it again? How long before it will be possible to say that British soldiers are being sent into battle on even terms with the enemy? That is the question for British people to ask their leaders, and it is for the leaders to give a straight answer, or be replaced.' It was impossible to say, went on the *Star*, whether the dogged delaying action in **Crete** and the surrender of rebel forces in **Iraq** were connected, but it was clear that the magnificent



defenders would have been successful had they been adequately armed. There must be no repining, but insistence that the sacrifice should not be in vain and should not be repeated. The Australians were still in **Tobruk**, holding up the whole German advance, because they had something like parity in the air. <sup>50</sup> Later again the *Star* noted a British tendency to treat **Crete** as a glorious episode, but to New Zealand losing one-third of its division was of more than episodic importance. Though used to accepting losses, New Zealand should be assured beyond any doubt against a repetition. <sup>51</sup>

On 4 June, when it was announced that 2800 New Zealanders were missing from **Crete**, and that 768 wounded had reached Egypt, the cable pages told that the British public and press were asking questions more widespread and heart-searching than on any previous withdrawal. The general conclusion was in line with an Australian war correspondent who wrote: 'A brutal fact, proved in two campaigns, is that the Allied Forces were without hope from the beginning, because it is admitted that there was no chance of adequate air support.... no commander should still be allowed to nurture the delusion that... his men can hope to avert defeat from the sky by hiding in holes or relying on ground defences.' 'We cannot afford in **Cyprus** a repetition of the events of **Crete**', pronounced *The Times*. 'Mr Churchill declined to believe that there was uneasiness about **Greece**. Perhaps he can be persuaded that the people are deeply disturbed about **Crete**', said the *Daily Mail*. <sup>52</sup> Other overseas criticisms appeared during the next week or so: Hore-Belisha's <sup>53</sup> complaints about the repeated immolation of the Empire's best fighting material through lack of foresight and through misjudgments, <sup>54</sup> the American Naval Secretary's comments on the 'appalling' lack of unified command which had led to the defeat in **Crete**. <sup>55</sup> At home *Truth* on 11 June, under headlines 'There must be no more Cretes, Tell the Nation the Facts', stressed the failure to protect **Crete**'s air fields with anti-aircraft guns or to mine them against German use, blunders through which thousands of New Zealanders were sacrificed. Speaking for Lee's Democratic Labour Party, W. E. Barnard asked questions: was the New Zealand government consulted over

sending troops to **Greece** and **Crete**? Would it require assurance from **Britain** that in future they would have better air support? Was not the Division, having lost half its strength in eight weeks, due for a rest? He was concerned about New Zealand being undefended against a possible aggressor, and warned against smashing the industrial front by putting too much into the fighting forces. <sup>56</sup>

From Cairo on 9 June came reports of Fraser telling the troops that the government would make sure—‘we must and we will see to it’—that when they next went into action they would have the air support and ground equipment that would give them crushing victory. This won brief approving comment from several newspapers which did not often approve of the Prime Minister. Years later **Freyberg** revealed that Fraser had bluntly told him that in future operations he must personally find out in advance about air cover and tank support, and tell his government if he were satisfied or not. <sup>57</sup> This, of course, was between the Prime Minister and the General. Fraser’s public pledge to the troops was tacit admission that they had been wrongly used without such support, but it was tacit only. In the House on 12 June Nash stoutly maintained that the campaigns in **Greece** and **Crete** had been essential to Commonwealth war plans; strategically they had had splendid results, not as good as they could have been, but justifying the sacrifice, and he thought that the men if asked would want to go again. He also thought that an official statement on the campaigns should be given to the people, and meanwhile he assured them that no action taken by the government was not fully justified by facts. <sup>58</sup>

On 11 June came Churchill’s authoritative statement that **Crete**, that ‘sombre and ferocious battle’, was only one part of an important, complicated campaign. The decision to hold it with minimal air defence had been made in the expectation of air-borne invasion. What would have been said if the enemy had advanced unopposed, overrunning any place that could not be held for certain? Might not the Germans already be masters in **Syria** and **Iraq**? Aircraft had been withdrawn from **Crete** by the **Middle East Command**, on the recommendation of **Freyberg**. Anti-

aircraft guns were needed in many places, needed by **Britain** and by merchant ships. Killed, wounded and missing totalled 15 000, and 17 000 had been retrieved; the **Navy** had lost more than 500 men. The Germans lost at least 12 000 killed and wounded, and about 5000 drowned, plus 180 fighters and bombers, and at least 250 troop-carriers.

59

Churchill's words, as usual, carried weight; but the *Auckland Star* on 12 June still doubted whether there was soundness in hoping that an army on the ground without air support could destroy an air-borne attack, and said that stubborn resistance quickly overwhelmed had a bad effect, not on British troops, but on British prestige abroad. Also on the 12th, J. A. Lee criticised both **Greece** and **Crete**, his speech being off the air at his own request. Lee repeated that New Zealand must not consent to the Division being again in a situation where it had not a chance of winning, and must be ready to recognise mistakes quickly, not deny them because such admissions would be politically disadvantageous. Against the argument that sending troops to **Greece** was a matter of honour, Lee said that to send them where they could not possibly win was to pay debts of honour with other men's lives; he did not believe that 'our fellows' had had a chance in **Greece**, and he believed that most of the House thought likewise. <sup>60</sup>

**Sir Apirana Ngata**, <sup>61</sup> taking Lee's speech as claiming that New Zealand should be able to choose what battles its troops took part in, said that very soon after the evacuation of **Greece** all the tribes on the East Coast had something to say on similar lines and after **Crete** still more. They complained that the authorities in Egypt and **Britain**, with the consent of the Dominion prime ministers, 'had agreed that with all the risks, even to the extent of it being a forlorn hope, the Forces of the Empire should take part in the fighting in **Greece** and **Crete**. What they resented most of all was the lack of air support. And they singled me out as the representative of the combined intelligence of the Empire authorities—military and Civil—to be battered over the telephone.' Their attitude, said Ngata, amounted to saying to Wavell and Churchill, 'All

right, we will pick and choose where the fight shall take place. We will go in for safe battles, but if there is a risk, for God's sake do not send any New Zealanders there.' <sup>62</sup>

In all, there was little public outcry over **Greece** and **Crete**. Awareness that such outcry might reach and hearten the enemy made for silence, especially in the newspapers. The heavy losses of 1914–18, the retreat from glorious **Gallipoli**, were precedents. Easy victory was not really expected and there were not enough details known to sustain questioning. There was widespread feeling that New Zealand men were good soldiers, better man-to-man than the Germans, but the Germans were fighting from aeroplanes. Churchill, on 10 June, said: 'I have been asked a lot of questions about the Battle of **Crete**. Why for instance were the air fields not mined beforehand or commanded by long range gunfire, or why were not more tanks allotted to their defence. I could answer all those questions but I do not propose to do so here. If defeat is bitter, there is no use trying to explain defeat. People do not like defeat or its explanation. There is only one answer to defeat and that is victory.' <sup>63</sup>

This probably voiced the feelings of many New Zealanders, who linked it with Fraser's statement that next time there would be the tanks and aircraft needed for success. Neither government nor public wished faith in ultimate victory to be disturbed by carping at the high command. Criticism of criticism may be instanced at two levels. First, at grassroots, a writer to the *New Zealand Herald* on 23 May who questioned the optimism of early reports and whether it was worth while 'for our boys to fight to the death for **Crete**' was bitterly answered by others. One said that nothing could be more cruel, or crippling of effort, than raising doubts about the truth of the news; another said that, as the war developed, the buzz of mosquito-like, uninformed criticism, if not voluntarily withheld, must be suppressed: what leaders, military or other, could function healthily when exposed to numberless, fierce little suggestions from interested but irresponsible spectators? <sup>64</sup>

Secondly, in the House, on 12 June, J. A. Lee, on behalf of Barnard

and backed by **Holland**, pointed to debates on **Greece** and **Crete** in the Commons and called for open discussion. <sup>65</sup> Nash replied that the government would allow and welcome criticism of generals or decisions when it would help win the war. But if criticism became factious, fed the enemy with the idea that this country was discontented with the decisions of its own government or with Imperial arrangements, and tending therefore to pull out of the war effort, it ought to be silenced, as should any criticism likely to retard effort. He explained that in the Commons much could be said without harming the war effort, but if similar things were said here Goebbels <sup>66</sup> could claim that the Commonwealth was disintegrating; there was no difference in the standard of freedom, but there was difference in the effect of words spoken here and the same words spoken in **London**. <sup>67</sup>

New Zealand Army officers assumed that the campaigns were valuable, while admitting defects. On 13 June the cable pages bore a message from **Freyberg**: our troops had done everything that they could do and, though eventually forced to withdraw, they had the satisfaction of knowing that their fight was not in vain. Colonel R. A. Row, <sup>68</sup> who had left **Crete** on 11 May, had already stated that the Allies had the better men but needed more tanks and aircraft; that attack from the air, while a great strain on the nerves, caused fewer casualties than the old style of war; that the defence of **Crete** had been vital, giving time to clear up **Iraq** and killing the cream of the Nazi army. <sup>69</sup> Towards the end of June, **Brigadier L. M. Inglis**, <sup>70</sup> commander of 4 NZ Brigade, in **London** to report on **Crete**, said that lack of air support was the chief reason for its loss. He explained other difficulties more fully, such as that equipment lost in **Greece** could not be made up because shipping and the harbour were damaged by regular heavy bombing long before the attack; that vehicles were hard to land and many were affected by sea-water in half-sunken ships. An air force sufficient to cope with the attack could not have been based on **Crete**'s small airfields; it would have been blitzed out of existence very soon. Narrow, hilly roads made transport difficult, and attack had to be expected all over the island. <sup>71</sup>

Overseas news continued to produce scattered items on aspects of the **Greece** and **Crete** disasters. In the *Auckland Star* of 10 July a **Fleet Air Arm** lieutenant was reported from the House of Commons as speaking of almost chronic lack of weapons; of no heavy anti-aircraft guns at **Maleme** airfield and of many British tanks in **Greece** breaking down before they saw the enemy. The more informed and critical readers added up credit and loss as these emerged, while admitting that much was still obscure. For instance, early in July, when Wavell was replaced as commander by Auchinleck,<sup>72</sup> the *Press* remarked: 'Whether or not the campaign in **Greece** was a blunder is a question on which there must be two opinions, and for the present so little is known of the reasons behind the decision to intervene in **Greece** that it would be unwise to attempt a final judgment ....The failure to provide more adequately for the defence of **Crete**, and the painfully slow progress of the campaign in **Syria**, are evidence of bad organisation....'<sup>73</sup>

The *Evening Post*, on the same day, in its notes on the war news, said that in **Greece** the 'corporal's guard', hopelessly outnumbered and out-munitioned, suffered disaster relieved only by prodigies of valour, then continued: 'It is believed in some quarters now that **Crete** even at the eleventh hour might have been held, if one last effort could have been made at all costs to recapture the lost Malemi [ sic] airfield. The Germans had by that time exhausted their supply of parachute troops and were loth to attempt air-borne landings on an insecure airfield. Sea-landings had failed. But the moment passed, and Malemi was secured by the Germans, and the rest of the story is known. The loss of **Crete**, however minimised, was a terrible blow to **Britain** and in the **Middle East**.'<sup>74</sup> This perception of the airfield situation came very close to that of historians.<sup>75</sup>

Continued discussion, although low-keyed, caused Major-General E. Puttick<sup>76</sup> to state on 3 September: 'I do not agree with those who imagine those campaigns were a waste of men and material. The defence of **Crete** in particular has had far reaching consequences, and was, in my opinion, a necessary operation.' The Germans, he said, lost



practically all their best parachute troops, hundreds of aircraft, and ten critical days, giving the Allies time to consolidate their hold in **Iraq** and prepare to advance in **Syria**; otherwise the Germans would have moved into **Syria** and **Iraq**, captured **Tobruk** and threatened the **Suez Canal**. **Greece** and **Crete** were, in military language, 'a tactical defeat and a strategic victory'.<sup>77</sup> In response, a correspondent wrote: '... few of us object to the undertaking of the Cretan defence, but to a man we do object to its pitiful muddlement.' Generals on the spot must have known the importance of **Crete**, but let months go by without adequate preparation.<sup>78</sup>

Early in June casualty lists began to appear. The names of killed and wounded were carefully checked and issued in small groups. Lists of missing were longer and were revised repeatedly as scattered men rejoined their units, or it became known, through **Red Cross** headquarters at Geneva, that they were prisoners-of-war. On 11 June, using the latest available figures (which failed to check in totals), Nash reported that of 16 530 New Zealanders who went to **Greece**, 7100 were in **Crete** when 'fighting began there. From Crete, 4650 were taken off, some wounded; 87 were set down as killed, 671 were wounded, 2450 not accounted for, a total of 3208 casualties, though figures were subject to correction. From Greece the lists so far were 126 killed, 516 wounded, 41 known prisoners, 1892 missing, making 2575 in all. Thus the total casualties of the two battles were 5783 men.'<sup>79</sup>

Later reckonings would show that in **Greece**, from a total strength of 16 720, there were 261 killed, 387 wounded, 1856 prisoners including 212 wounded and 30 who died of wounds, 2504 in all. In Crete, out of 7702 New Zealanders, there were 671 killed, 967 wounded, 2180 prisoners, 488 of them wounded, 3818 casualties in all. The grand total was 6322 or 37 per cent of the original force.<sup>80</sup>

Inevitably in these months the friends and kindred of the Division knew grief, anxiety, hope, fear and long-drawn uncertainty. For those less close, aware how units were jumbled in the exodus, it was easy for a while to hope vaguely that all would be well for particular people, that

they would turn up safe in Egypt, or at worst be prisoners. Occasional stories of arduous escapes, of sheltering Greeks and helpful fishing boats, nourished hopes.

Prisoners-of-war were a new feature. Amid the trenches and machine guns of 1914–18 only a few hundred New Zealanders were captured. In this war, a few flying with the **RAF** had already come down in German territory but now, in the first few weeks of its fighting, the Division had lost 4030 men as prisoners, of whom 700 were wounded and 30 others had died of wounds,<sup>81</sup> although the full number was not known for months; thus the *New Zealand Herald* on 13 October 1941 noted that some 2000 New Zealanders were definitely reported to be prisoners. In April newspapers began printing information on international conventions governing prisoners-of-war, allaying confusion between their camps and concentration camps. There were reassuring reports from **Red Cross** officials<sup>82</sup> and some photographs of hearty-looking captured airmen.<sup>83</sup> There were directions to next-of-kin about sending letters and parcels, and appeals for helpers to pack the **Red Cross** parcels, one per man per week, that were to prove their mainstay for so long.

On 10 July the hospital ship *Maunganui* brought home the first 338 invalids from **Greece** and **Crete**.<sup>84</sup> The papers bloomed briefly with photographs and with stories of bravery against great odds, and there were heroes' welcomes in **Wellington** and the home towns. This was repeated when more came back on 10 September in the *Oranje*. Fraser's return at about the same time led Nash to tell how in Egypt Fraser, pointing out that each man lost to our small country would be more serious than forty times the loss to **Britain**, had helped to persuade Admiral Cunningham<sup>85</sup> to send a 'suicide ship' back to **Crete** after all chance of rescue seemed gone, a ship that managed to bring off a further 2000 men, mainly New Zealanders.<sup>86</sup>

On 9 October 1941, under headlines stressing the value of the campaigns, newspapers quoted large portions of a short, unofficial



account of the fighting in **Greece and Crete**, prepared by **Freyberg** for the Minister of Defence, and now presented to Parliament. The concluding paragraph was given prominence:

In Crete the enemy underestimated our strength and expected to capture the island with parachutists alone. He failed and had to lay on a full scale attack which used up in all 35 000 highly-trained and perfectly-equipped troops. Although successful, his losses were great and he was severely mauled. He lost at least 4000 killed, 2000 drowned and 11 000 wounded. By having to fight he was delayed a month in his plans, and, when the time came, he had neither material nor the troops nor the inclination to face further air landings in either the **Western Desert** or in **Syria**. What is even more important, he has now no illusions about the fate which awaits any attempt at air-borne operations against Great Britain. <sup>87</sup>

The figures for German wounded and drowned were too high, but this evaluation, straight from **Freyberg**, had the ring of authority. A few days later came the proud news that Lieutenant C. H. Upham <sup>88</sup> and Sergeants A. C. Hulme <sup>89</sup> and J. D. Hinton <sup>90</sup> had each been awarded the Victoria Cross, which so far in this war had come to only one other New Zealander, J. A. Ward. <sup>91</sup> Their impressive citations reinforced the sense that New Zealanders had fought well and proved their quality. <sup>92</sup> A year later Air Commodore R. V. Goddard <sup>93</sup> was to say that the defence of **Greece and Crete** had delayed the German attack on **Russia** by a month. <sup>94</sup> Both Churchill and Halder, <sup>95</sup> Chief of the **German General Staff**, have agreed. <sup>96</sup>

Throughout the campaigns New Zealanders, apart from the friends and kindred of the Division, kept the even tenor of their ways. There were a few public marks of concern, mainly in religious services and the chiming of Big Ben. England had lately, with the approval of the King and of Churchill, taken to a minute's silent prayer during the broadcast striking of Westminster's great clock at 9 in the evening. On 8 April, the Bishop of **Wellington** suggested that now, with New Zealand troops in the front line, was the 'psychological' moment to introduce this practice to

New Zealand. <sup>97</sup> He was supported by other church leaders, the Governor-General and the Prime Minister. The noble Empire-binding boom of Big Ben striking nine was heard on 13 April, and on every evening of the war thereafter, heralding the news from Daventry.

Another attitude in the post- **Crete** days was indicated by a large advertisement by the Paramount, a small **Wellington** cinema. 'A monster cheer-up week, Just the kind of show you want right now ... Wholesome, Real, Human, Happy, Entertainment. It doesn't attempt to solve World Problems or propound an Important Message—unless it be that a good laugh and a good time is what we all need right now.' The films were *My Love Come Back*, with Geoffry Lynn, Olivia de Havilland, Jane Wyman and Charles Winn, all freshness, gaiety and music; *Desire*, with Gary Cooper and Marlene Dietrich—'a boy, holiday-bent, thinking of gay senioritas and romance—a girl, expert jewel thief, exquisitely beautiful... losing her own heart'. <sup>98</sup> Other Wellington cinemas were offering various escapes from the war: *Gone with the Wind*; *A Despatch from Reuters*; *Goodbye Mr Chips*; *Wuthering Heights*; *Pride and Prejudice*; *The Invisible Woman*; *Son of Monte Cristo*; Gene Stratton-Porter's *Laddie*; *The Thief of **Baghdad***; *The Tree of Liberty* (in Virginia); *Dark Streets of **Cairo*** (jewel mysteries); *A Date with Destiny* (mystery); and *Give us Wings* starring the Dead End Kids. <sup>99</sup>

A similar note was sounded in another advertisement:

Life must go on! In times of stress and strain it is well to give some attention to those things from which we can draw new inspiration, and keep up our morale.

Here, then, James Smith's present for your inspection an arresting array of spring Fashions in Frocks, Suits, Coats and Millinery. <sup>100</sup>

**Greece** and **Crete** sent some ripples of uneasiness over the large area of New Zealand life devoted to racing, which had been almost untroubled during the crisis of mid-1940. In April 1941 a few newspaper correspondents thought that race meetings, drinking etc, were now

unsuitable pleasures: **Greece** was lost through lack of aircraft while thousands were spent on liquor and the 'tote'. <sup>101</sup> These killjoy sentiments, 'the last thing that the boys at the front would wish', were deplored by another correspondent who wrote that hanging round the radio with gloomy faces would not win the war, while racing kept up morale, filled the **Treasury**, gave to patriotic funds and employed hundreds. <sup>102</sup> The day after the capitulation on **Crete**, 2 June, was King's Birthday observance day. In 1940 the holiday had been postponed because of the French crisis. In 1941 the *New Zealand Herald* remarked that the mines were working, though with some absentees, but elsewhere leisure and pleasure held sway. At Ellerslie, 31 500 people put £ 106,283 through the tote. On the second day of the meeting, when 15 000 people bet £73,097, about 150 Westfield butchers stopped storage killing in the afternoon to see the Great Northern Steeplechase. 'You'd never think there was a war,' lamented a Westfield official, <sup>103</sup> and disapproving comment appeared in many papers. Alone on 2 June the *Auckland Star* said that mid-week meetings should be banned during the war. But a day later A. S. Elworthy, <sup>104</sup> chairman of the Canterbury Jockey Club and president of the New Zealand Racing Conference, spoke out his private thoughts without consulting his committees. For some time, he said, he had been troubled; there were 240 racing days in New Zealand and 80 for trotting. His confreres should set an example and refuse to cater for a public that seemed unaware of the war. Could those at home, with the troops facing death and worse, really make themselves believe that they were facing up to their responsibilities? He knew the arguments of revenue, and necessary relaxation, but he doubted if those most in need of relaxation, the friends and relatives of the fighting men, sought peace of mind at the races; they were more likely to achieve it by work. He urged not a stop to racing, but reduction of the days given to it. <sup>105</sup>

These views were hailed as wise and courageous by several leading papers <sup>106</sup> and a few racing men, while the Waimate Farmers' Union hastened to pass a supporting resolution. <sup>107</sup> Trotting authorities, however, did not follow Elworthy's lead. The president of the New

Zealand Trotting Conference, H. F. Nicoll, <sup>108</sup> would not comment without consulting his Executive except to say that in England, with suffering and bereavement the daily lot and every ounce of effort demanded, there were races three days a week: New Zealand racing authorities had already declared that they would, if it could be shown that their sport was interfering with the war effort, be the first to reduce it. <sup>109</sup> The Wellington president, J. E. August, said bluntly that less racing would not make things any better for the boys overseas, and while people would cheerfully pay revenue through gambling, they hated paying taxes. <sup>110</sup>

Elworthy's argument that in seeking relaxation people were not facing up to their responsibilities applied equally to other amusements. <sup>111</sup> In the House W. J. Polson, complaining of wasted petrol, said that Elworthy's proposal should have come from the government; Webb, Minister of Labour, said that Elworthy should first have consulted his Conference and the Minister of Internal Affairs; S. G. Holland called Webb's remarks 'colossal cheek'. <sup>112</sup>

The New Zealand Racing Conference on 11 July, while not endorsing Elworthy's proposals on curtailment, unanimously reelected him president. The *Press* and the *Evening Post* on the 12th joined the *Auckland Star* in criticising unlimited racing. But support by a large sector of the community merely proved that New Zealanders were content to leave judgment to the government and the racing clubs: while taking what was offered, not all would think it wisely offered, and reduction would be accepted either approvingly or with grumbling resignation. <sup>113</sup>

Racing officials and some newspaper letter writers still spoke of the relaxation of races, their part in the social structure and their large contributions to war funds, painlessly extracted, in contrast to raffles and national savings campaigns. <sup>114</sup> Polson repeated his complaint of time, energy and petrol wasted; <sup>115</sup> a few critics wrote to newspapers. <sup>116</sup> There were some military encroachments on race courses (notably at

**Trentham** when an outbreak of measles and mumps coincided with the winter meeting of 8, 10 and 12 July 1941), <sup>117</sup> which amounted to twelve days in the 1940–1 season. Otherwise the sport of kings continued substantially unchanged till the Japanese war checked mid-week racing.

The 40-hour week was again challenged. The usual advocates for longer hours, the Chambers of Commerce, Farmers' Unions, employers and newspaper editors, raised their voices. The Lakes County Council circulated other local bodies advocating a petition to the government for cessation of the 40-hour week. Only by increased effort could the war be fought and paid for; as it was not going well, current effort was clearly not enough. <sup>118</sup> However, rank and file Labour defended the *status quo*, the Wellington Trades Council calling on its 36 000 unionists to defend hard-won living standards and working conditions against unscrupulous attack. <sup>119</sup>

On 9 May, attacks by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce on the Industrial Efficiency Act and import control <sup>120</sup> were answered by Sullivan, <sup>121</sup> Minister of Industries and Commerce, who charged all Chambers of Commerce with indiscriminate opposition to the government. This became linked with the question of lengthening hours, <sup>122</sup> but there was much less noise than in May–June 1940. Perhaps the meat and butter piling up in the cool stores dulled it, while many realised that the **Industrial Emergency Council** was extending hours where necessary. The Wellington Trades Council and the secretary of the Coal Mine Owners Association (T. O. Bishop) <sup>123</sup> both said that this Council, on which workers and employers were equally represented, was dealing harmoniously with applications for extended hours when these proved necessary for the war effort or where the burden of overtime would be too heavy. <sup>124</sup>

The issue was smoothed down with great amiability on 18 June. To a large deputation of employers' representatives Webb, Minister of Labour, said that the bogey of the 40-hour week had been raised where no law prevented 80 or even 100 hours being worked; it was a question not of

hours but of overtime. The Industrial Emergency Council, and the fairness of the workers on it, were commended by the Coal Mine Owners Association (and coal mines were notorious for hold-ups in 1941). The president of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, Gordon Fraser,<sup>125</sup> said that the 40-hour issue had been raised by the counties, whose agitation had received more notice than it warranted, and that his body was resolute against political propaganda, though some local Chambers had been less careful. Webb admitted that some **Wellington** speakers had excited his ire, but the **Wellington** president had been very fair and Labour irritation was passing. The Wellington president, R. H. Nimmo,<sup>126</sup> said that people in public places were too reticent in giving credit where deserved to the government, and urged the clearing out of prejudice in labour-employer relations.<sup>127</sup>

The contrast, the gap between the few thousand men who were losing their lives, limbs and liberty in **Greece** and **Crete** and the rest of New Zealand which in the main worked its 40 hours, was disturbing, even though in many areas at this stage more effort could not be effectively directed into the war. Several advocates of all-round longer hours seemed as much concerned with moral aspects as with practical issues. As the *Evening Post* of 4 June put it 'Over and above the economic argument there is the great and important consideration of what is fitting and seemly. It is not seemly that we should retain all our plenitude of welfare, all our leisure, and all our relaxation while overseas there is blood, and in bereaved and anxious homes, tears.'

On 30 June Webb, stressing that working hours were increased where necessary without overtime payment, surveyed the more important adjustments made by the **Industrial Emergency Council**. Already 14 labour legislation suspension orders had, in certain industries or factories, lengthened hours on ordinary pay, permitted shift work, slackened apprenticeship conditions and increased the overtime permitted for women and boys.<sup>128</sup> A recent order, on 25 June, had prescribed 48 hours at ordinary time rates in cheese factories during 43 weeks of the year (Regulation 1941/100). Another (1941/99) on the



same day permitted shift work up to 1 am for women and boys in biscuit factories, now busy with big British service contracts; on 7 July a further order (1941/110) extended the overtime that these women and boys could work, including Saturdays and holidays.

The other long-standing anti-Labour theme, the need for coalition government, was also sounded firmly. The election due late in 1941 seemed untimely in the steepening war, and to Nationalists the alternative was coalition. The National party, with S. G. **Holland** its leader since November 1940, had renewed criticism of the government's continuing 'socialization' policies such as the Small Farms Amendment Act and the Industrial Efficiency Act.<sup>129</sup> In February **Holland**, backed by caucus, had proposed that members returned at the next election should hold office for the duration of the war, and that both parties should undertake to form a national government regardless of which held the majority.<sup>130</sup> Fraser had declined public comment on this proposal,<sup>131</sup> whereupon **Holland** called for elections later in the year to last for the duration.<sup>132</sup>

On 16 April the National party caucus unanimously held that the gravity of the situation could be met only by a truly national government; mere inclusion of the Opposition's leader in the War Cabinet could not be sufficient. Next day Fraser stated that he had already discussed with **Holland** the war situation and his own projected visit to the **United Kingdom**, inviting **Holland** to join the **War Cabinet** in order to reduce public controversy as much as possible in his absence. Now, on the eve of his departure, it was not possible to form a national government; he would decide on the proposal when he returned, in the light of circumstances then prevailing. He added that as the war developed, postponement of the election might be advisable, even inevitable, and this would necessarily involve the question of forming a national government— 'neither I nor my colleagues would even suggest postponement if its only effect was to retain the Government in office'— and he hoped for a party truce in his absence.<sup>133</sup>

This statement was later taken in some quarters as clear indication



that if the election were postponed in November a national government would be formed. Said the *Press* on 18 April:

Mr Fraser says one thing very plainly and usefully. If it is... undesirable or impossible to hold a General Election, he will regard this as a decisive factor. The present Government will not carry on without a further mandate; and a national Government will be formed. In the meantime—and if this is not political astuteness it is candour which deserves a candid response—Mr Fraser suggests that party campaigning should cease. The National Party need not hesitate to agree and to look to the **Labour Party** for equal forbearance.

In the *Standard* of 24 April, Fraser repeated that if the war situation made elections difficult he would consult Cabinet, caucus, and the executives of the Labour party and the Federation of Labour, ‘and if it seems then that the formation of a National Cabinet is the only hope for the Dominion we will not hesitate. We will summon the conference together and tell you what the situation is.’ Further, he would not tie the hands of his trusted colleagues in his absence: if national danger developed or if he were cut off by an extension of hostilities, they would act on their own initiative. <sup>134</sup>

Newspaper editorials, as usual, advocated coalition as the only road to the unity still more necessary now that New Zealand troops were fighting and as the alternative to a divisive election. The *Evening Post* on 4 June quoted several widely scattered speakers calling for national unity. <sup>135</sup> Among other advocates, the South Island Dairy Association, focusing on economic rather than military issues, on 5 June called not only for a truly national non-party government but also for a council competent to advise government on economic, financial and other matters. <sup>136</sup> At Hawera 400 residents, drawn from the farming and business communities, returned soldiers and Maoris, adopted a resolution calling for a non-party cabinet, not necessarily limited to members of Parliament, on lines already taken by Churchill. <sup>137</sup> The secretary of the Farmers’ Union, A. P. O’Shea, <sup>138</sup> said that only a national government,

devoted to New Zealand but not to any party, could deal with sectional difficulties such as apprentices and watersiders getting too high wages while excess profits tax pressed hard on other sections. <sup>139</sup> The Farmers' Union Dominion conference in July called for unity and a national government. <sup>140</sup>

**Holland** pressed hard against delaying the election. In the House on 12 June he said that a national government was long overdue, and if the government would not establish it, people should be told that there was going to be an election; he personally could see no reason for postponing it. <sup>141</sup> Possibly many advocates for coalition took Fraser's words as indication that coalition would come out of the war situation without political uproar, and there was nothing like the clamour for it that had been raised in May 1940.

The Westland Labour Representation Committee early in June, writing to other Labour committees, was 'gravely perturbed' by the possibility that the Prime Minister, after consulting the national Labour executives, might form a coalition. That would be the 'greatest disaster' for Labour. It would be better to face the polls and be defeated, thus retaining 'our national organisation, our enthusiasm, our fighting spirit and our souls', than to form such an unholy alliance. <sup>142</sup>

Most papers advocating coalition spoke of current lack of decision, uncertainty of function, devotion to party and excessive officialism, without relating these sins to **Greece** and **Crete**, <sup>143</sup> but the *Auckland Star* on 26 April held that 'we shall not, by a re-shuffle of the Cabinet in which a number of National Smiths will replace a number of Labour Browns, gain the kind of administration that is needed'. Getting things done was slow and difficult even when there was agreement on what should be done. There was need at the top for a small executive with the will and power to act swiftly and decisively, to cut through the meshes of bureaucracy which, with the mass of war regulations, at present gave New Zealand the disadvantages of a totalitarian regime without the advantages.

In the decision to send troops to **Greece**, **Holland** had been consulted, <sup>144</sup> and there was no suggestion that a national government would have acted otherwise. After the first shock, stirring the sense that bad times required more unity and effort, the reverses had little direct political effect, but coming just as the election tide was about to rise they promoted feeling that an election was now an untimely diversion. Growing tension in the **Pacific** consolidated this, although the parties announced candidates and made other preparations. <sup>145</sup> After Fraser's return on 13 September deputations and discussion led, on 15 October, to the unopposed Act that prolonged the current parliament for one year. <sup>146</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Evening Post*, 10, 11, 19 Oct 40

<sup>2</sup> See Thompson

<sup>3</sup> *Press*, 8 Nov 40, p. 10

<sup>4</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Nov 40, p. 3

<sup>5</sup> *Press*, 26 Nov 40, p. 10

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Nov 40, p. 8; *NZPD*, vol 258, p. 315

<sup>7</sup> Goosman, Hon Sir William, KCMG('65) (1890–1969): MP (Nat) **Waikato**, Piako, Waipa 1938–69; Min Works, Electricity 1949–60

<sup>8</sup> *Point Blank*, 15 Nov 40, p. 5, 14 Dec 40, pp. 3, 14, 17; *Evening Post*, 22 Nov 40, p. 8

<sup>9</sup> *Press*, 19 Dec 40, p. 8

<sup>10</sup> Later renowned as the **Long Range Desert Group**

<sup>11</sup> Owen, Rt Rev Reginald Herbert (1887–1961): b **UK**; chaplain RNVR 1939–45; Bishop **Wellington** 1947–60, Archbishop NZ 1952–60

<sup>12</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 Mar 41, p. 6

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Mar 41, p. 9; *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 181, 182

<sup>14</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 9 May 41, p. 8

<sup>15</sup> The wool cheque for 1940–1 was nearly £14 million, for a record 798 365 bales, average price 12.222 *d* per lb. This had been exceeded only by that of 1936–7, of £15,344,231 for 686 994 bales. *NZ Herald*, 29 May 41, p. 8

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Feb, 26 Mar 41, pp. 8, 9

<sup>17</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Apr, 4 Jul 41, pp. 4, 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 21 Apr 41, p. 4

<sup>18</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 May 41, p. 8; *Press*, 27 Jun 41, p. 6; *A to J*1943, H-30, p. 10

<sup>19</sup> April, 488 000 tons, *Evening Post*, 10 May 41, p. 9; May, 461 330 tons, *Dominion*, 23 Jun 41, p. 8; June, 329 300 tons, *Evening Post*, 16 Jul 41, p. 7

<sup>20</sup> See McClymont, W. G., *To Greece*, chap 6

<sup>21</sup> *Evening Post* 7 Apr 41, p. 8

<sup>22</sup> eg, 'The engagement in **Greece** was foredestined to be as hard, as cruel, and perhaps in material ways as unrewarded as the adventure of Anzac.' *Otago Daily Times*, 24 Apr 41

<sup>23</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Apr 41, p. 10

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 21, 22 Apr 41, pp. 7, 7; *Evening Post*, 23 Apr 41, p. 10

<sup>25</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 28 Apr 41. Post-war casualty figures: German official sources gave their Greek campaign losses as 1160 killed, 3755 wounded, 365 missing. British losses, out of a total presence in Greece of 62 612, were 903 killed, 1250 wounded, and 13 958 prisoners. Of 16 720 New Zealanders there, 291 were killed, 599 wounded and 1614 prisoners, ie, 2504 in all; while of 17 125 Australians, 320 were killed, 494 wounded, and 2030 prisoners. McClymont, p. 486

<sup>26</sup> *Star-Sun*, 22 Apr 41, p. 7

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Apr 41

<sup>28</sup> *Dominion*, 19 Apr 41

<sup>29</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Apr 41

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Apr 41

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Apr 41

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Apr 41

<sup>33</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 Apr 41

<sup>34</sup> Wood, pp. 182–6; McClymont, pp. 103–4; Murphy, W. E., ‘Blamey’s and Freyberg’s “Charters” a study in civil-military and Commonwealth relations’ (hereinafter ‘Charters’), pp. 10–12

<sup>35</sup> *Dominion*, 29 Apr 41, p. 7

<sup>36</sup> By the final **UK** figures, the Allied force in **Greece** was 62 612 and had 16 111 casualties, 13 958 being prisoners; included were 4670 Palestinians and Cypriots, of whom 36 were killed, 25 wounded and 3806 prisoners. See p. 291, fn 25

<sup>37</sup> eg, *NZ Herald*, 26 May 41, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 7 Jun 41, p. 8

<sup>38</sup> *Auckland Star*, 1 May 41, p. 5

<sup>39</sup> *NZ Herald*, 31 May 41, p. 11

<sup>40</sup> *Press*, 27 May 41

<sup>41</sup> Raschid Ali (b 1892): PM ( **Iraq**) 1933, 1940–41; fled after unsuccessful *coup d'etat* 1941

<sup>42</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Jun 41, p. 6

<sup>43</sup> *Dominion*, 23, 28, 29, 30 May 41. Total naval losses for **Crete** were: 2 battleships and 1 aircraft-carrier damaged; 3 cruisers and 6 destroyers sunk; 6 cruisers and 7 destroyers damaged. Roskill, vol I, p. 446

<sup>44</sup> *Dominion*, 30 May, 2, 4 Jun 41

<sup>45</sup> *Press*, 2 Jun 41. This point was again made in a **Sydney** article reprinted in *ibid.*, 10 Jun 41, p. 6

<sup>46</sup> *NZ Herald*, 30 May 41

<sup>47</sup> Wavell, Field Marshal Archibald, PC, GCB, 1st Earl ('47),

Viscount Wavell of **Cyrenaica & Winchester** ('43), Viscount Keren of **Eritrea & Winchester** ('43) (1883–1950): C-in-C **Middle East** 1939–41, **India** 1941–3; Supreme Commander SW Pac 1942; Viceroy & Gov Gen India 1943–7

<sup>48</sup> *NZ Herald*, 31 May 41

<sup>49</sup> *Auckland Star*, 30 May 41

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Jun 41

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Jun 41

<sup>52</sup> All quoted in *Evening Post*, *NZ Herald* etc, 4 Jun 41

<sup>53</sup> Hore-Belisha, Leslie, 1st Baron of **Devonport** ('54) (1893–1957): Sec State War 1937–40; War Cab 1939–40

<sup>54</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Jun 41, p. 10

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Jun 41, p. 7

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Jun 41, p. 8

<sup>57</sup> Wood, pp. 188–90; speech by **Freyberg** in House of Lords, 1953, quoted in Murphy, 'Charters', p. 11

<sup>58</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Jun 41, p. 6; *NZPD*, vol 259, p. 297

<sup>59</sup> *Press*, 12 Jun 41, p. 5. Davin, D. M., **Crete**, p. 486, remarks that British reports of German losses were exaggerated. From German army records it appears that about 4000 Germans were killed attacking **Crete**, and about 2700 wounded; probably 324 were drowned, certainly not more than 600. British casualties



totalled 15 743, of whom 12 254 were prisoners, 1728 wounded and 1751 dead. The final **Royal Navy** losses were 1828 killed and 183 wounded. Playfair, I. S. O., *The Mediterranean and Middle East*, vol II, p. 147

<sup>60</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 292–4

<sup>61</sup> Ngata, Hon Sir Apirana Turupa, Kt('27) (1874–1950): MP (Lib) Eastern Maori from 1906; Min Native Affairs, Cook Is, i/c Govt Insurance depts etc 1928–34

<sup>62</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 294–6

<sup>63</sup> *Auckland Star*, 6 Aug 41, p. 13

<sup>64</sup> *NZ Herald*, 27 May 41, p. 12, also 24 May 41, p. 12

<sup>65</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 285, 286–7

<sup>66</sup> Goebbels, Dr Joseph Paul (1897–1945): Nazi Min Propaganda & Nat Enlightenment from 1933; committed suicide 1945

<sup>67</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 288, 297

<sup>68</sup> Row, Colonel Robert Adams, DSO (1888–1959): OC Central Military District 1940

<sup>69</sup> *Dominion*, 9 Jun 41, p. 6

<sup>70</sup> Inglis, Major-General Lindsay Merritt, CB, CBE, DSO, MC, VD, ED (1894–1966): barrister & solicitor; INZEF 1915–19; cmdr 4 Inf Bde 1941–2, 4 Armd Bde 1942–4; temp cmdr 2 NZ Div twice during 1942–3; Dep Dir Military Govt Courts, British Zone of Occupation, **Germany** 1945, Dir 1946; Chief Judge Control Cmsn Supreme Court, Pres Court of Appeal 1947–50; SM

## **Hamilton from 1953**

<sup>71</sup> ***NZ Herald*, 25 Jun 41, p. 8**

<sup>72</sup> **Auchinleck, Field Marshal Sir Claude John Eyre, GCB, GCIE, CSI, DSO, OBE (1884-): C-in-C Northern Norway 1940, Southern Command England 1940, **India** 1941, 1943-7, **Middle East** 1941-2**

<sup>73</sup> ***Press*, 3 Jul 41**

<sup>74</sup> ***Evening Post*, 3 Jul 41, p. 8**

<sup>75</sup> **Davin, pp. 114-5, 134-8, 180-2, 462-4; Murphy, W. E., ‘**Crete: a Command Failure**’, in *Comment*, Dec 63, pp. 28-30**

<sup>76</sup> **Puttick, Lieutenant-General Sir Edward, KCB('46), DSO and bar, MC(Greek), Legion of Merit(US) (1890-1976): 1NZEF 1914-19; cmdr 4 Inf Bde Egypt, **Greece** 1941, 2 NZ Div Crete; CGS and GOC NZ Military Forces 1941-5**

<sup>77</sup> ***Auckland Star*, 3 Sep 41, p. 6**

<sup>78</sup> ***Ibid.*, 11 Sep 41, p. 6**

<sup>79</sup> ***NZPD*, vol 259, p. 285-6**

<sup>80</sup> **Davin, p. 486; McClymont, p. 486; **Kay, Robin**, *Chronology, New Zealand in the War, 1939-1946* (hereinafter *Chronology*), pp. 25, 29**

<sup>81</sup> ****Kay**, *Chronology*, pp. 25, 29**

<sup>82</sup> **eg, *Auckland Star*, 10 May (supplement), 20 Jun 41, pp. 6, 6;**

*Evening Post*, 2 Jul 41, p. 6; *NZ Listener*, 13 Jun 41, p. 3

<sup>83</sup> *Auckland Star*, 13 May 41, p. 6

<sup>84</sup> Stout, T. D. M., *Medical Services in New Zealand and the Pacific*, p. 300

<sup>85</sup> Cunningham, Admiral of the Fleet Andrew Browne, 1st Viscount (46), 1st Baron of Kirkhope ('45), Kt, GCB, OM (1883–1963): Dep CNS 1938–9; C-in-C **Mediterranean Fleet** 1939–43; 1st Sea Lord & CNS 1943–6

<sup>86</sup> *Evening Post*, 15 Sep 41, p. 9

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Oct 41, p. 11; *A to J*1941, H-19A, p. 4

<sup>88</sup> Upham, Charles Hazlitt, VC & bar (1908–): sheepfarmer; won VC, **Crete** 1941, bar, Ruweisat 1943; POW 1943–5

<sup>89</sup> Hulme, Alfred Clive, VC (1911–): company dir; VC, **Crete** 1941

<sup>90</sup> Hinton, John Daniel, VC (1909–): former Works Dept employee; VC, **Greece** 1941; wounded & taken POW

<sup>91</sup> Ward, James Allen, VC (1909–1941): school teacher; served **RNZAF**, won VC returning from German bombing raid 2 Jul 1941; killed on air operations Sep 1941

<sup>92</sup> *Evening Post*, 15, 16, 18 Oct 41, pp. 8, 7, 10

<sup>93</sup> Goddard, Air Marshal Sir Victor, KCB, CBE, DSM(US), **RAF** (1897–): b **UK**; Royal **Navy** 1910–15; RNAS 1915–18; **RAF** 1918; Dep Dir Intelligence Air Ministry 1937–9; Dir Military Co-operation 1941; CAS **RNZAF** 1941–3; AOC i/c Administration, **SE Asia** 1943–6; British Joint Services Mission USA 1946–8; Air

**Council Member for Technical Services and Commandant Empire Flying School 1948–51; Principal College of Aeronautics 1951–4**

<sup>94</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 29 Jun 41, p. 4

<sup>95</sup> Halder, General Franz (1884–1971): CGS **Germany** 1939–42

<sup>96</sup> McClymont, p. 484

<sup>97</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 Apr 41, p. 8

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Jun 41, p. 3

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Jun 41, pp. 2, 3

<sup>100</sup> *Dominion*, 25 Jun 41, p. 4

<sup>101</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17, 21, 24 Apr 41, pp. 13, 10, 12

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Apr 41, p. 12

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Jun 41, p. 6

<sup>104</sup> Elworthy, Arthur Stanley (1874–1962): farmer; Pres NZ Racing Conf 1939–42; chmn Canty Jockey Club 1945–58

<sup>105</sup> *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 41, p. 8. See also p. 321

<sup>106</sup> *Star–Sun*, *Auckland Star*, *Press*, 4 Jun 41; *Otago Daily Times*, *Evening Post*, 5 Jun 41

<sup>107</sup> *Evening Post*, 4, 6, 11 Jun 41, pp. 11, 9, 6; *Press*, 9 Jun 41, p. 6

**108 Nicoll, Harry Frederick (d 1955 aet 86): Pres NZ Trotting Conf 1922–47**

**109 *NZ Herald*, 5 Jun 41, p. 6**

**110 *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 41, p. 8**

**111 *Auckland Star*, 5 Jun 41, p. 9**

**112 *NZPD*, vol 259, pp. 309, 313, 322–3**

**113 *Press*, 19 Jul 41**

**114 *Evening Post*, 7 Jul 41, p. 6; *Press*, 18, 23 Jul 41, pp.6, 6; also letters in *Press*, 10, 12, 14, 18, 27 Nov 41**

**115 *Evening Post*, 1 Aug 41, p. 6; *Press*, 17 Nov 41, p. 6**

**116 *Press*, 4, 7, 10, 14 Nov 41, pp. 10, 10, 9, 10**

**117 *Evening Post*, 2 Jul, 10, 16 Sep 41, pp. 8, 9, 6**

**118 eg, *NZ Herald*, 31 May 41, p. 12, letter; *Auckland Star*, 3 Jun 41, *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 41, editorials; Wellington Chamber of Commerce, *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 41, p. 8; Auckland Primary Production Council, *ibid.*, 10 Jun 41, p. 5; Bureau of Importers, *ibid.*, 11 Jun 41, p. 4; Otago Farmers' Union, *Otago Daily Times*, 4 Jun 41, p. 4; Lakes and Riccarton County Councils, *Press*, 10 Jun 41, p. 6; Foxton Harbour Board, *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 41, p. 8; Hamilton Borough Council, *NZ Herald*, 5 Jun 41, p. 3**

**119 *Evening Post*, 10 Jun 41, p. 8**

<sup>120</sup> *Dominion*, 9 May 41, p. 6

<sup>121</sup> Sullivan, Hon Daniel Giles (1882–1947): MP (Lab) Avon, Bay of Plenty from 1919; Mayor Chch 1931–5; Min Rlwys 1935–41, Industries & Commerce from 1935, Supply & Munitions 1939; Acting PM 1942, 1944

<sup>122</sup> *Evening Post*, 10, 21 May, 4 Jun 41, pp. 14, 10, 5 & 8

<sup>123</sup> Bishop, Hon Thomas Otto (1878–1952): MLC from 1943; Speaker Legislative Council 1950; Acting Under-Secretary Mines 1918–20; Sec Employers Fed 1922–40, NZ Coal Mine Owners Assn 1921–47; chmn **Industrial Emergency Council** 1940–45

<sup>124</sup> *Evening Post*, 10, 18 Jun 41, pp. 8, 9

<sup>125</sup> Fraser, Gordon Mackintosh (1888–1958): Pres Taranaki Chamber of Commerce four times, of Assoc Chambers of Commerce 1940–1; sometime chmn, Managing Dir *Taranaki Daily News*, exec Racing Conf

<sup>126</sup> Nimmo, Robert Hamilton, OBE('46) (1892–1965): b **Scotland**; past Pres Wgtn Chamber of Commerce, nat exec Assoc Chambers of Commerce; Wgtn city councillor from 1944; **YMCA** work from 1926

<sup>127</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Jun 41, pp. 6, 9

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Jun 41, p. 8

<sup>129</sup> eg, *Star-Sun*, 26 Feb 41, p. 8; *Press*, 14 Feb 41; *Dominion*, 28 Feb 41, p. 8; *NZPD*, vol 259, p. 68

<sup>130</sup> *Dominion*, 20 Feb, 1, 3 Mar 41, pp. 8, 12, 9

- 131 *Ibid.*, 21 Feb 41, p. 8
- 132 *Ibid.*, 4 Mar 41, p. 8
- 133 *Press*, 18 Apr 41, p. 6
- 134 *Standard*, 24 Apr 41, p. 10
- 135 *Evening Post*, 4 Jun 41, p. 8
- 136 *Ibid.*, 6 Jun 41, p. 9
- 137 *Dominion*, 14 Jun 41, p. 10
- 138 O'Shea, Hon Alexander Paterson, CMG('62) (1902-): Dom Sec NZ Farmers' Union 1935-45, Fed Farmers 1946-64; MLC 1950
- 139 *Dominion*, 14 Jun 41, p. 10
- 140 *Ibid.*, 17 Jul 41, p. 8
- 141 *NZPD*, vol 259, p. 326; *Evening Post*, 13 Jun 41, p. 6
- 142 *Press*, 2 Jun 41, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 6 Jun 41, p. 8
- 143 eg, *Press*, *Evening Post*, 7 Jun 41
- 144 *Auckland Star*, 24 Apr 41, p. 8
- 145 *Standard*, 28 Aug 41, p. 8
- 146 Wood, pp. 170-1





# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 9 – THE MENACE OF JAPAN

## CHAPTER 9

### *The Menace of Japan*

AT the start of the war there was suspicion of **Japan** rather than fear. Its war with **China** was remote, although the **Tokyo Agreement** of July 1939 wherein **Britain** promised to avoid any action which might obstruct the Japanese or benefit the Chinese was attacked by some Labour members as the 'Eastern Munich'.

There was strong faith in **Singapore**. Few realised that the effectiveness of the naval base depended on a fleet being sent there and that by 1939 this basis of **Pacific** strategy had become highly improbable. <sup>1</sup> The fall of the **Netherlands** and **France** in mid-1940 withered the last prospects of British naval protection from Singapore and made unstable their mosaic of imperial holdings around **Japan**; Fraser saw that he must look to **America**.

In July 1940 **Japan's** demand that **Britain** close the **Burma Road** through the Yunnan mountains, by which supplies trickled to **China**, was perforce obeyed for three months in which peace with **China** was supposed to be attempted. The embargoes which **America** imposed at this stage, nominally for its own defence needs, on high quality scrap-iron and on aviation gasoline were of limited force as other grades of oil were available and could be converted to aviation fuel. There were 23 million barrels of American oil in the 37.1 million which **Japan** imported in 1940. <sup>2</sup> In September the government of French Indo- **China** permitted **Japan** to establish garrisoned air bases in the north and to use the area as a corridor for troops and supplies against **China**, thus providing stepping-stones for later southward moves by **Japan**. At the same time the Tripartite Pact between **Japan** and the Axis proclaimed the leadership of **Japan** in greater East Asia, of **Germany** and **Italy** in **Europe**, and the three powers agreed to help each other should any be attacked by a power not yet in the war. It was designed to frighten **America** away from upholding the existing order in the **Pacific** and, although met with outward nonchalance, it hardened American

attitudes towards the approach of war. <sup>3</sup>

During the following year there were repeated assertions of Japanese plans for its 'greater co-prosperity sphere' in a vaguely defined Asian-Pacific area. New Zealand comforted itself with certainty that, if these went too far, **America** would check Japanese expansion, and also that **Japan** was bogged down in **China**. A succession of minor crises in Japanese-Western relations bubbled through newspaper columns with alternating hopes of peace and fear of war. In March 1941 Indo- **China** and **Thailand** accepted Japanese mediation in a border dispute, emphasising **Japan's** leadership in East Asia. At about the same time **America's** support of **Britain** was notably strengthened by its Lend-Lease Act. April brought the five-year Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact, while a **Canterbury** farmer, deploring his neighbours' **Home Guard** apathy, pictured such delinquents 'in the shafts of a rickshaw trotting a Japanese officer over the property from which they once derived a comfortable living.' <sup>4</sup> In late July, when **Japan** obtained bases in southern Indo- **China**, the **United States**, **Britain** and the **Netherlands** government-in-exile denounced aggression and froze Japanese assets, notably checking its imports of oil. The *Press* on 20 August explained that the democracies' half measures achieved a sort of balance: giving **China** just enough to keep it fighting, squeezing **Japan** hard enough to make it aware of their power, not hard enough to provoke war. In August Churchill and Roosevelt, meeting in the **Atlantic**, established that if **America's** efforts for peaceful settlement failed, **Britain** would be a forthright ally. Japanese negotiators continued to discuss their differences with Cordell Hull, <sup>5</sup> urging that **America** should stop helping **China**, encourage **China** into peaceful economic collaboration with **Japan**, and lift restrictions on shipping and commerce. **America** required that **Japan** should separate from the Axis, withdraw troops from **China** and Indo- **China**, renounce further aggression and permit equal trading rights to all nations in the **Pacific**. The likelihood of war persuaded New Zealand politicians, without dispute, to postpone the distraction of the election due towards the end of the year.

The see-saw of news and opinion continued between forecasts of **Japan's** attack, triggered by that country's narrowing oil supply and the expected collapse of **Russia**, reeling under the German advance, and confidence that **Japan** could be held in check by the combined strength of **America**, **Britain** and the Dutch.

On Monday 8 December 1941, morning papers reported that very large Japanese convoys had been sighted in the Gulf of **Siam**, that in **Singapore** all able-bodied men could be conscripted either into the forces or to assist them at the 'moment of actual or apprehended attack', and that **Australia** was arranging to convoy its ships on vital routes.

Across the dateline, at **Hawaii** at 7.50 on the morning of Sunday 7 December (1.50 am, 8 December, New Zealand time), Japanese carrier-borne aircraft surprised and bombed **Pearl Harbour**, where most of the United States Pacific fleet was anchored. Within hours came reports of attacks on **Guam**, the **Philippines**, **Thailand**, northern **Malaya**, **Hong Kong**, northern **Borneo**, on Wake, Midway, Nauru, **Tarawa** and Ocean islands, on **Rangoon** and **Singapore**. All began with air and naval strikes but, save at **Singapore**, **Rangoon**, Midway, Nauru, Ocean Island and at **Pearl Harbour** itself, land assaults speedily followed.

That Japan had struck was not surprising; peace in the **Pacific** had grown very thin. But the lightning-swift blows at so many places almost at once, and in particular the skill and audacity of the Pearl Harbour attack staggered New Zealand as it staggered **America**. **Pearl Harbour's** strength had been extolled for months. It was the headquarters of the **Pacific** fleet, the emblem of **America's** technological supremacy; it was 3400 miles from **Tokyo** and not much more than 2000 from **San Francisco**. Such attack, by all expectation, should have been blasted from the skies. Pan American Airways' staff at **Auckland** were incredulous; not till late on Monday afternoon were successive bulletins accepted as facts, along with certainty that the raiding ships would be cut off, that **Japan** had sent its oldest ships and was prepared to sacrifice them. 'Those aircraft carriers will never get back to **Japan**.' <sup>6</sup>

The attack was a diplomatic short-circuit, without the formality of an ultimatum, made while Japanese envoys were still talking in **Washington**. **Cordell Hull** spoke of lies and distortion, Roosevelt of infamy, while New Zealand editors dwelt on the success of surprise and treachery, with expectations of swift Allied riposte, and some criticism of American complacency. 'Why do the nations ... so furiously rage against the Japanese.... The blame rather lies with those who allowed themselves to be so thoroughly gulled, and the watchmen who slumbered'. <sup>7</sup>

The jolt of **Pearl Harbour** was made worse by the loss on 10 December of the British battleship *Prince of Wales* and the battlecruiser *Repulse*, lately arrived at **Singapore**, which had steamed north to check landings on the Malay isthmus only to be sunk by land-based aircraft. <sup>8</sup> Thereafter, a dreary cycle of attack, brief resistance and collapse was tediously repeated. **Thailand** yielded in a day, easing access to **Burma** and **Malaya**. British Borneo was invaded on 16 December, Wake Island was taken on the 23rd, **Hong Kong** yielded at Christmas, with no immediate mention of the 12 000 prisoners taken; **Kuching**, capital of **Sarawak**, was occupied on 30 December, and paratroops seized airfields in **Sumatra**; **Manila** fell on 5 January, though on Bataan peninsula MacArthur's <sup>9</sup> forces were stubborn.

After Pearl Harbour, for a few days, the sound of an aeroplane caused ordinary people to wonder for a moment, 'Is it ours?', and as the Japanese continued to strike unchecked, an astonished and almost defenceless New Zealand faced up to the idea of attack within weeks or even days. 'Preparation without panic' was the phrase of Jones, the Defence Minister; there were no calls for massive volunteer movements, and most people continued their routine lives until the government or civic authorities encroached upon them.

Obviously the first step was to increase home defenders; 4600 men of Territorial and **National Military Reserve** units were immediately summoned as fortress troops to the defended ports, to coast guarding,

and other vital areas. <sup>10</sup> For some 21 000 Territorials due to start two months' training on 10 January, mobilisation began on 15 December 'for the duration', and several schools were taken over as temporary accommodation. A ballot due to be gazetted on 20 January would call up 27 104 single and childless married men for Territorial service, but to hasten military intake the Minister of Defence, on 19 December, called for volunteers to the National Military Reserve, aged between 21 and 55 years with not more than three dependent children. Previously the Reserve was for ex-servicemen only, but now the limitation was cast aside: an early start in the Reserve, urged Jones, would give men soon to be called up an opportunity for military training that would stand them in good stead when they were balloted.

What were the domestic effects, if any, wrought by this nearer war, breaking three weeks before Christmas? There was at once a

<b>N. Z. R.</b>	
Control No. _____	Station. _____
Date: 19 JUN 1944, 194	
<b>PERMIT FOR RAILWAY JOURNEY.</b>	
ON presentation of this permit, together with the requisite passenger ticket, the bearer, <u>Mrs Denise</u>	
may be permitted to travel by train from <u>Waiwera</u>	
to <u>Waiwera</u> , on or before <u>24.6.</u> , 194	
Stationmaster.	
<small>This permit, and any ticket issued hereon, carries no undertaking on the part of the Department to convey the holder by any particular train or on any particular date.  Any ticket issued to the holder of this permit is issued subject to there being room on the train.  This permit must be presented without alteration or erasure thereon, and must be given up on demand.</small>	
<small>[3,000 N.Z.R./12/41-1386]</small>	

rush, speedily checked by the government, of private motorists to buy petrol with all available coupons; there was also a rush, checked by the limits of retail supply and the discretion of grocers, to buy sugar and tea. Then, on 16 December, came restrictions on train travel, and heavy reductions in petrol for public and commercial use, which cut transport services in all directions and gradually reached far into daily life. There was also, for about 10 days, a check in pre-Christmas routines, almost a wondering whether everything would continue as usual, induced by the news, the trench-digging, and the military stand-to.

With minor adjustments, New Zealand had been set for a normal



Christmas, with heavy bookings for trains and holiday resorts. Apart from mobilisation, and cancellation of leave and travel, the season passed largely as planned. Shops were well stocked with gifts and general goods. For about ten days after **Pearl Harbour** there was a marked flattening of trade, but by 18 December shopkeepers were saying that tension was easing, people were adjusting; by Monday the 22nd a **Wellington** manager believed that even an enemy landing at Waikanae beach would not stop the city celebrating Christmas in the time-honoured fashion,<sup>11</sup> and on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day most of the main dailies reported a brisk season with returns as high as or higher than the previous year's. Lack of overseas goods, which had long caused irritation, was now accepted, making shopping easier. Unable to travel, people spent more freely on gifts and provisions, with a 'Let's have a decent Christmas while we can' feeling. As yet petrol was the only thing rationed. Most items of the usual cheer, such as hams, nuts, raisins and chocolates, were plentiful, though canned fruit, especially popular as a holiday luxury when most households did not have refrigerators, was scarce. Christmas cakes were as abundant as ever,<sup>12</sup> though wine and spirits were not, and there was a shortage of bottles of beer.<sup>13</sup> High prices for fowl food and fewer small producers had lessened the supply and raised the cost of poultry.<sup>14</sup>

For various reasons, including a late, cold spring and the demands of military camps, vegetables were scarce and dear. Even potatoes were selling at £46 a ton wholesale instead of the £12 to £14 usual at this season, retailing at 6 *d* and 7 *d* a lb—which put the humble potato into the rank of luxury foods. The Price Tribunal ordered growers to charge no more than £20 a ton and brought the retail price down to 3½ *d* a lb or lower.<sup>15</sup>

On Christmas Eve, though in most places shops were open till 10 pm, there was no last-minute rush. Streets were darkened, few soldiers were about as leave was restricted, and there were very few cars or taxis, while trams and buses were crammed; **Auckland's** crowds were smaller than usual, and went home earlier; they were a little subdued and the

boisterous hilarity customary among the young people was missing. At Wellington the *Post* noticed less frivolity, more sense of family reunion, a feeling that pleasure and ease were slipping behind, and that heedless expense was not only unwise but not in the best form. At Christchurch, where Christmas Day was usually welcomed by a cheery gathering in Cathedral Square, the streets emptied soon after the cinemas, and when the Post Office clock struck midnight the only sign of festivity was one 'cheerful gentleman' singing *Silent Night*. **Dunedin**, perhaps helped by its twilight, perhaps by a southern sense of security, had large and happy crowds shopping till 10 pm, and 10 trams left the city at midnight. Though coloured lights and festoons were missed, there was much gaiety in the streets, even after the shops closed, with fireworks exploding, and with squeakers and other noisy instruments, as at other Christmas Eves; the spirit, especially of younger people, 'was happy and often boisterous—perhaps a reaction from so much grimness during the year.' <sup>16</sup>

Christmas holidays, focal point of much family life, were eroded by lack of petrol, restriction of train travel, and, in some industries, by work continuing. On 11 December Fraser strongly urged people to stay at home, cancelling holiday arrangements; after 13 December all petrol for private cars was stopped indefinitely and people were asked to conserve what was in their car tanks 'for themselves or the country' in the emergency. <sup>17</sup> From 20 December till after New Year, all excursion and extra trains for distances of more than 100 miles were cancelled. People with bookings on normal trains had to apply again for reservations, giving reasons for their journeys. Trains were, of course, the main method of travel, and record bookings had been made, some for as far ahead as Easter 1942. Fifteen trains had been expected to leave **Auckland** on Christmas Eve, eight of them for **Wellington**, and the cancellation affected 50 000 seats from Auckland alone. There had been heavy bookings at resorts such as Franz Josef and Fox glaciers, Queenstown, Milford Track, **Rotorua**, Wairakei, Waikaremoana, Wanganui River, the Chateau, the Hermitage and Stewart Island, which were now out of range for most. <sup>18</sup> Some of the time and money usually

devoted to holidays went into shopping; drapers in mid-January reported that women were stocking up on household linen and all kinds of clothing except hats and summer frocks. <sup>19</sup>

War and work encroached on many holidays. The Territorial and National Military Reservists, hastily packed into fortress areas and training camps, made gaps in many homes. All police leave was cancelled on 9 December, and on 17 December hurriedly prepared regulations decreed that in all industries and undertakings concerned with the war effort and maintaining essential supplies, holidays should not begin before Christmas Day and should end on Sunday 4 January. Some had even less time off: the Colonial Ammunition Company agreed to work on, except for Christmas Day; <sup>20</sup> the railway workshops, which normally gave their men annual leave at Christmas, closed only for Christmas Day and Boxing Day; <sup>21</sup> girls on an Army mattress order worked well publicised overtime (nearly 12 hours a day) on Boxing Day and the day after. <sup>22</sup>

Coal was chronically short for many reasons, including unseasonably cold weather, and now a reserve of 80 000 tons was wanted. Normally, mines would have closed between Friday 19 December and Tuesday 6 January. (The extra Monday was to be taken in lieu of King's Birthday worked the previous year). At the government's request, miners in the **Waikato**, the Grey and the Buller agreed to work on Saturday 20th, and on 22 to 24 December, and to resume on 5 January, <sup>23</sup> although actually very few in the **Waikato** came to work on Christmas Eve, <sup>24</sup> while the Denniston mine near Westport kept the normal holidays, <sup>25</sup> as did the Kano and Hikurangi mines in **Northland**. <sup>26</sup>

There was no immediate check to racing and to some this seemed inconsistent. For instance, soon after **Pearl Harbour** a newspaper correspondent deplored that racing broadcasts continued unabated, 'before and after news announcements, every half-hour and hour'; no wonder there was a complacent attitude everywhere; the continual cry from Cabinet ministers for increased production was simply 'a repetitive bleat' in these circumstances. <sup>27</sup> On 15 December the Minister of

Internal Affairs, with full agreement from the New Zealand Racing Conference,<sup>28</sup> announced that while Christmas and New Year meetings would not be affected, there would in future be no racing on working days. Racing and trotting meetings then totalled 320 days a year; on Saturdays, racing 134, trotting 50; public holidays, racing 30, trotting 8; working days, racing 76, trotting 22.<sup>29</sup> There was no call, however, for a complete recreational blackout, for in a long war some recreation would be needed. Meanwhile, though the Commissioner of Transport had rather apologetically included horse-floats in the general petrol cut-off after 13 December, horses, unlike people, were not restricted on trains.<sup>30</sup> In Minhinnick's cartoon, a horse sneered while a guard looking like **Peter Fraser** turned away a family with suitcases: 'Sorry, sir, wartime emergency, no body allowed to travel more than 100 miles except racehorses.'<sup>31</sup> But a trotting official probably spoke for many in saying that it was necessary to consider depression and the lowering of morale; people would 'want somewhere to go'.<sup>32</sup> Four meetings were abandoned for such reasons as military occupation of race courses,<sup>33</sup> while bad weather and lack of petrol cut racing crowds although, for instance, hundreds of cars appeared at Ellerslie,<sup>34</sup> Totalisator returns, compared with the last year's, fell at nine of the eleven gallop meetings ( **Greymouth** and Hawke's Bay were the exceptions), and five of the seven trots (Westport and again **Greymouth** having increases). The combined tally was £935,964, down by £377,538 from the record £1,313,502 of the Christmas before, and by £258,350 from the 1939–40 score.<sup>35</sup>

It was a gloomy holiday. The news was disastrous and the weather so remarkably cold and stormy that it made cancellations and early returns to work easier: a **Wellington** cartoonist suggested that the petrol restriction had saved many people from a very uncomfortable Christmas in fly-away tents.<sup>36</sup> There remained the quiet pleasures of visiting friends by bus, working at odd jobs such as the shelter trench, and going to films. Cinemas offered cheerful diversion and were well filled. Apart from *Burma Convoy* ('heroes on death's highroad, dodging bombs and bullets'), there was very little war about; at **Wellington** for instance there was Bob Hope in *Nothing but the Truth*, Sonja Henie in *Sun Valley*

*Serenade*, with Glen Miller's band; **Deanna Durbin** in *It Started with Eve*; the Marx Brothers in *The Big Store*; a new star, Red Skelton, in *Whistling in the Dark*; Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* and Walt Disney's *The Reluctant Dragon*.<sup>37</sup> By 10 January there was not a serious film showing. The fare then included a ventriloquist's dummy in *Look Who's Laughing*, *Great Guns* with Laurel and Hardy, *In the Navy* (Bud Abbott and Lou Costello), *Quiet Wedding*, and *Ziegfeld Girl*, a 'Pageant of Stars' including Judy Garland totally pre-war in its lavishness, spectacle and sparkle.

Since August 1941 the private petrol ration had been at its lowest since the start of the war but **Japan's** entry made matters worse. The 8 December rush on supplies was quickly followed by the 13 December cut-off and it was not until March 1942 that coupons again became redeemable.<sup>38</sup> From 16 December 1941 commercial rations were cut: for public passenger and goods services, including local body and government cars, by one-third, for private trucks by half. Licences for rental and business cars—except for doctors, nurses, veterinarians, ambulances, fire brigades, police, traffic and vehicle inspectors—were cancelled, though allowances were made for cars directly connected with war businesses. Taxis working one shift got 75 gallons a month, those on double shift 120 gallons.

An immediate and lasting effect was the crowding of public transport, as motorists took to the trams and buses while the number of buses was reduced. Travelling was plagued by uncertainty and waiting, let alone discomfort. The problem was acute at workers' peak hours, and it promoted at least one strike.<sup>39</sup>

Some municipal services, such as refuse collection, were curtailed. **Auckland**, as an urgent temporary measure on 17 December, ceased weekly collections in outer suburbs such as **Remuera** and **Epsom** for three weeks only,<sup>40</sup> but smaller and more spacious towns like **Wanganui** put the service onto a monthly basis.<sup>41</sup>

Commercial concerns sought various solutions. On 17 December in

**Auckland** an advertisement for a leading department store asked customers to carry small parcels. Some laundries and dry cleaners arranged depots to replace deliveries <sup>42</sup> but others, with careful organising and co-operation from customers, continued to run vans. <sup>43</sup> Advertisements appeared stating that certain products were still available on order but agents could no longer call. <sup>44</sup>

Butchers had long been anxious to escape from ‘wasteful and worrying’ house deliveries which cost about £9 a week, and some had already done so: by November 1941 in **Auckland**, 20 out of 150 shops were doing cash-and-carry trade, and in **Wellington** the proportion was thought to be higher. <sup>45</sup> A good deal of meat was delivered by boys on push-bikes and this continued meanwhile, nor was there any suggestion of zoning customers, but vans now came only on certain days, not every day, <sup>46</sup> and there was steady guidance towards the cash-and-carry system. By June 1942, ‘with minimum fuss and complaint’, about 70 per cent of **Auckland**’s meat deliveries had ceased and they were further reduced after August. <sup>47</sup>

The most notable cut in delivery was that of bread; house-to-house delivery, with bakers competing for custom, was common although many people bought it at grocers, dairies and cake shops. In December and early January bakers in **Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Wanganui, Hamilton, Palmerston North** and **Thames** <sup>48</sup> arranged to send their bread to shops only, saving both petrol and manpower, and other towns followed. In his diary G. H. Scholefield on 9 February noted that the distribution of bread through small local stores ‘induces a procession of husbands each time a tramcar stops, and tends to create custom to the shop which would not otherwise get it.’ There were a few grumbles, as at **Christchurch**, <sup>49</sup> although 70 per cent of **Christchurch**’s bread was already sold through shops; <sup>50</sup> a few shopkeepers murmured that a troublesome and profitless trade had been foisted on them, <sup>51</sup> but generally the change was quietly accepted. In country districts deliveries were reduced— as at Geraldine to twice a week, saving 100 gallons a month—and farmers put bread boxes at their gates to save time and



manpower. <sup>52</sup> **Auckland** retained private bread deliveries, of which it had more than most places, until May, <sup>53</sup> running a mixed delivery to both shops and houses, but easing out overlapping runs and reducing varieties of bread. Some large **Auckland** bakeries had been turning out up to 40 sorts and sizes of loaf, but now people had to take what was available. 'Tastes in bread—one might call them fashions—vary greatly,' stated an article in the *New Zealand Herald* on 21 February, 'When the loaf is more or less standardised, public taste will be much simpler.' <sup>54</sup>

Several bakers were still delivering their wares to each shop, but public taste was to be trimmed much further in a few months, when after the loss of the **Netherlands East Indies**, the need to save tyres and manpower brought in bread zoning on the basis of one bakery for any one shop.

Bicycles, of course, were used more. After the petrol cut-off on Saturday 13 December, a **Wellington** dealer's home telephone rang incessantly and by Monday orders had been taken for every machine in his shop. <sup>55</sup> Sidney Holland was photographed cycling under a large umbrella. <sup>56</sup> There were new parking problems which some councils met by devising bicycle stands over the gutters; <sup>57</sup> bicycle stealing increased. <sup>58</sup>

Horses re-appeared to some extent. They had not yet totally vanished from city streets, being still prominent in milk deliveries. In **Wellington**, for instance, the city corporation had 50 light draught-horses in its milk carts, and about a dozen on other work; a few more worked on the wharfs and hauled gravel on beaches; of the Gear Meat Company's house-to-house high-wheeled carts, which had been a feature of **Wellington** life, four were still in operation. <sup>59</sup> Now horses were occasionally hitched to cars <sup>60</sup> and to improvised delivery vans 'of rather unusual design' with car wheels and tyres, <sup>61</sup> but more often to gigs and drays that emerged from sheds and retirement. <sup>62</sup> By 18 December, a **Canterbury** dray and pair were delivering beer and by New Year horse-drawn vehicles were so common in Hastings as to excite little interest, while Taranaki farmers were asked to hire out horses and gigs

to keep their 22 herd testers in action.<sup>63</sup> The Christchurch City Council bought 12 horses, at prices ranging from £25 to £30,<sup>64</sup> to collect refuse; there were additional trips to shorten hauls<sup>65</sup> and streets were top-dressed with grit to prevent slipping.<sup>66</sup> But though more use could be made of existing animals, any 'back to the horse' movement faced severe limitations: it took four years to rear a working horse, as long as it took to build a pre-war battleship.<sup>67</sup>

There were many minor side-effects of the petrol cut. The Hamilton golf club, its motor mower laid aside, bought sheep to graze its grass.<sup>68</sup> There was less golf, more picnics in parks, more camping in near-city reserves.<sup>69</sup> More distant beaches were largely deserted, except where crowded excursion trains, buses or ferries spilled out their loads. A number of Agricultural and Pastoral associations cancelled their annual shows.<sup>70</sup> There were a few minor nervous movements, mainly at **Auckland**. **Auckland's** schools were closed on 16 December, three days early, to save petrol used by buses in the country and to let holiday-going mothers with children leave town earlier. The Mayor in fact suggested that it would be helpful if such mothers would depart promptly, easing railway traffic and, though this was less clearly expressed, achieving partial evacuation.<sup>71</sup>

**Auckland's** Public Hospital promptly cleared 250 beds, ready for emergency casualties, by sending 250 patients to their own homes or to its emergency hospital at the Teachers Training College, and also temporarily emptied the Wilson Home for crippled children at Takapuna, sending 30 of them to their own homes and 30 to an orphanage at Papatoetoe.<sup>72</sup> Wellington Hospital calculated that in a raid there would be 900 civilian casualties, of whom 20 per cent would be killed, 50 per cent hospital cases, and 30 per cent less seriously injured.<sup>73</sup> It decided to wait until casualties actually occurred before sending its most movable patients to emergency hospitals, for which equipment was arranged and buildings were earmarked but not taken over.<sup>74</sup> During January, Wellington Hospital admissions were much reduced, with 440 operations performed in place of the 1189 done in January 1941.<sup>75</sup>



**Christchurch** proposed to make room for emergency casualties by sending home all patients for whom institutional care was not essential.

<sup>76</sup> For a week, beginning on 15 December, **Auckland's** city cinemas closed at 9.30 pm, starting their programmes at 7 or 7.30, while **Auckland** drapers and allied retailers, anticipating government orders which did not come, decided to close at 8 on Friday nights and on Christmas Eve, and at 5.30 on New Year's Eve. <sup>77</sup> Zookeepers at both **Auckland** and **Wellington** announced precautions: in a raid visitors would go to safety areas under trees and in steep places, while attendants would lock dangerous beasts in inner cages and, at the all-clear, patrol the grounds with nets and rifles. <sup>78</sup>

The danger of glass blasted from shop windows was well known from British experience. Complete protection with sandbags or replacing glass with boards, besides being expensive and depressing, would diminish trade. The relative merits of shutters, wire netting, surgical tape, varnish and paper strips had been published, <sup>79</sup> but shutters were unwieldy and expensive, <sup>80</sup> wire netting was scarce, varnish had to be thick, and miles of heavy surgical tape would be needed for the close criss-crossing of large windows. Strips of paper, though quite ineffective, were cheap and plentiful. Starting with a group of **Auckland** retailers in the second week of December, a rash of paper lattices appeared on windows in **Auckland**, **Wellington** and other centres, some ingeniously combined with Christmas or patriotic decorations, <sup>81</sup> and probably largely induced by readiness to follow a fashion and to soothe customers. Mayor Allum denied their usefulness, while Semple declared that they must have some value as every town in England had them. <sup>82</sup> Articles derived from a British ARP book <sup>83</sup> and other British reports <sup>84</sup> declared that paper strips were no good; so did the Southern Military Command in a circular to EPS units, <sup>85</sup> but while **Auckland** shops were scraping off their papers, at **Hamilton** the Mayor was ordering them to remain, on the principle of better some protection than none at all. <sup>86</sup> Most **Auckland** shops had shed their strips by mid-February, but still in April a few were combining them with window displays. <sup>87</sup>

It was established that incendiary bombs were likely to be used, and for over a year, smothering in sand or dowsing with a fine spray of water had been advocated; throwing water on a burning bomb, it was said, would make it explode, scattering fiery fragments. Just before Christmas news came of the simple Russian way with a bomb: dunking it rapidly in a large bucket of water. As senior firemen said, this cut across everything fire fighters had been told previously, but it worked most effectively against German magnesium thermite alloy bombs, though they could be so treated only in the first minute of burning. Extinguishing bombs thus, and also with a spray, a jet, and thrown buckets of water, along with sand smothering, was demonstrated before crowds and before the cameras of newspapers and the film unit by firemen, middle-aged women and schoolgirls; Peter Fraser in his bowler hat dropped bombs into buckets; schoolgirls plied stirrup pumps and hurled buckets of water. <sup>88</sup> 'Courage and plenty of water' was the new creed, with sand in second place. A country-wide conference of fire superintendents recommended departure from British instructions and the recalling of earlier anti-water films. <sup>89</sup>

This about-face did not pass without question. The *New Zealand Herald*, on 12 January, after cabling its correspondent in **London**, quoted a Home Security pamphlet which stated clearly that a burning bomb should not have water thrown upon it like an ordinary fire: in the open it should be smothered in sand; elsewhere a stirrup pump and hose producing both a fine spray and a jet of water would put out both the bomb and its surrounding fire. *Truth* deplored back-yard experiments and upheld English experience, <sup>90</sup> and Sidney **Holland** wanted to send to **London** for experienced men to take charge of air-raid precautions. <sup>91</sup>

British authorities reported that they were revising their instructions, and the *Press* decided that the controversy was in no way damaging to those in New Zealand who had been quick to follow suggestions derived from Russian practice. The only error had been in announcing these decisions without first checking them in London, which would have spared the public the 'doubts of an interval in which

it looked as if rash men in **Wellington** were defying experience in **London**.’<sup>92</sup> The official line was that both water and sand equipment should be in every building.<sup>93</sup> Sand was cheap and plentiful, while stirrup pumps and hoses were still scarce.<sup>94</sup> Sand was still rated effective against bombs on non-inflammable surfaces and could so retard any bomb that water could be fetched from some distance to finish it. There was also the chance, with mains broken or overdrawn, that water might not be available. For this reason as well as for speed, people were urged to keep water always ready in buckets or tubs: ‘leave the bath water in the bath till next time,’ advised an **Auckland** EPS notice on 22 January. Business premises should have 44-gallon drums on each floor with buckets handy.<sup>95</sup> A thin film of oil on top of the water was recommended to reduce evaporation and avoid mosquitoes.<sup>96</sup>

At the start of **Japan**’s war, there were preparations, practical curtailments, adjustments to thinking. But there was no sense of doom, no widespread break in values or ways of living. While many people dug shelters in their gardens, others were searching hardware stores and second-hand shops for lawnmowers.<sup>97</sup> Peacetime pursuits continued: at New Year the 7th annual gathering of the Amuri Cob and Pony Gymkhana drew a large attendance, many in conveyances other than motor cars;<sup>98</sup> at **Ashburton**’s Domain more than 9000 seedlings for display in the early spring—wall flowers, pansies, polyanthus, **Iceland** poppies and daisies—were being pricked out into boxes.<sup>99</sup>

There was immediate increase in the scope and urgency of the Emergency Precautions Service, already well established. In 1942, in its multiplying protective measures, thousands of average civilians prepared against attack, with trenches and shelters, steps to protect schoolchildren, evacuation plans, blacker blackouts, fire watching. These activities, a major effort, are described elsewhere in the continuing saga of the EPS. The Home Guard, battling for itself since 1940, sprang to attention, acquired weapons, uniforms, more men and an active defensive role, recognised by the Army.<sup>100</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Wood, pp. 67, 76; for discussion of the **Singapore** base see McGibbon

<sup>2</sup> Feis, H., *The Road to Pearl Harbor*, pp. 91–3, 268n

<sup>3</sup> Schroeder, Paul W., *The Axis Alliance and Japanese-American Relations, 1941*, pp. 22–3

<sup>4</sup> *Press*, 9 Apr 41, p. 12

<sup>5</sup> Hull, Cordell (1871–1955): US Congressman 1907–21, 1923–31; Senator 1931–7; Sec State 1933–44

<sup>6</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>7</sup> *Auckland Star*, 6 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>8</sup> News of these sinkings, described by Churchill as the most painful and heavy blow in his whole experience, was received in New Zealand with chilled disbelief.

<sup>9</sup> MacArthur, General of the Army Douglas, Hon GCB('43) (1880–1964): C-in-C US Forces Philippines 1941–2; Supreme Cmdr Allied Forces SW Pac Area 1942–5; C-in-C **Far East** and Supreme Cmdr for the Allied Powers in **Japan** 1945–51; C-in-C UN Forces in **Korea** 1950–1

<sup>10</sup> War History Narrative, 'Military Manpower 1940–41', p. 23; *Otago Daily Times*, 12 Dec 41, p. 4; for Emergency Precautions Scheme See p. 480ff

<sup>11</sup> *Dominion*, 22, 23 Dec 41, pp. 4, 6; *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 41, p. 8

<sup>12</sup> Rich mixture and new season's fruits. Un-iced: 21bs, 3s 6d.

Iced: 3lbs, 6s 6d; 4lbs, 8s 6d; 6bs, 12s 6d, or with almond icing 1s extra.' *NZ Herald*, 20 Dec 41, p. 16

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Dec 41, p. 12

<sup>15</sup> *Evening Post*, 24 Dec 41, p. 6; see p. 780ff

<sup>16</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 26 Dec 41, p. 2

<sup>17</sup> Hon D. G. Sullivan, *NZ Herald*, 15 Dec 41, p. 6; see p. 747

<sup>18</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Nov 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 18 Dec 41, p. 8; *Dominion*, 26 Dec 41, p. 7

<sup>19</sup> *Evening Star*, 14 Jan 42, p. 4; *Wanganui Herald*, 6 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>20</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 Dec 41, p. 6; See p. 373

<sup>21</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 Dec 41, p. 8

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Dec 41, pp. 4 (photo), 9; *Dominion*, 30 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>23</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16, 18, 22 Dec 41, pp. 6, 10, 4

<sup>24</sup> *Press*, 26 Dec 41, p. 4

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Dec 41, p. 4, 6 Jan 42, p. 10

<sup>26</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 Dec 41, p. 4

<sup>27</sup> *Press*, 12 Dec 41, p. 10

<sup>28</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 41, p. 8

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Dec 41, p. 6. See also p. 447ff

<sup>30</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19, 26, 30 Dec 41, pp. 6, 4, 4; *Press*, 30 Dec 41, p. 4

<sup>31</sup> *NZ Herald*, 26 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>32</sup> *Press*, 16 Dec 41, p. 8

<sup>33</sup> *Dominion*, 30 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>34</sup> *NZ Herald*, 27 Dec 41, pp. 4 (photo), 6

<sup>35</sup> *Press*, 5 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>36</sup> *Dominion*, 30 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 26 Dec 41, pp. 3, 3

<sup>38</sup> See pp. 747–8

<sup>39</sup> See p. 378

<sup>40</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17, 18 Dec 41, pp. 6, 8, 6 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 22 Dec 41, pp. 20, 2; *Press*, 22 Jan 42, p. 2

<sup>43</sup> *NZ Herald*, 7 Jan 42, p. 1; *Evening Star*, 2 Feb 42, p. 7

<sup>44</sup> *Press*, 14 Jan 42, p. 1

<sup>45</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Jun 42, p. 6; *Dominion*, 17 Aug 40, p. 5; *Press*, 26 Nov 41, p. 8

<sup>46</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 6, 13 Jun 42, pp. 6, 6; *Auckland Star*, 22 Aug 42, p. 6

<sup>48</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Dec 41, p. 10, 5 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>49</sup> *Press*, 9, 14, 19, 23, 24, 26, 30 Jan 42, pp. 4, 8, 4, 8, 5, 8, 8

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>51</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 Jan 42, p. 4; *Press*, 28 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>52</sup> *Press*, 16 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>53</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Dec 41, p. 10, 9 May 42, p. 6

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>55</sup> *Dominion*, 16 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>56</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 41, p. 4

- <sup>57</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Feb 42, p. 4
- <sup>58</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Dec 41, p. 4
- <sup>59</sup> *Evening Post*, 30 Jul 42, p. 6
- <sup>60</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 Dec 41, p. 4
- <sup>61</sup> *Press*, 11 Feb 42, p. 4
- <sup>62</sup> *Auckland Star*, 20 Feb 42, p. 3
- <sup>63</sup> *NZ Herald*, 3 Jan 42, p. 6; *Press*, 3 Jan 42, p. 6
- <sup>64</sup> *NZ Herald*, 3 Feb 42, p. 4
- <sup>65</sup> *Press*, 10 Mar 42, p. 4
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 May 42, p. 6
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 Jul 42, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 30 Jul 42, p. 6
- <sup>68</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 Jan 42, p. 6
- <sup>69</sup> *Press*, 14 Jan 42, p. 4
- <sup>70</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9, 10 Jan 42, pp. 6, 6; *Evening Post*, 8 Jan 42, p. 8; *Straight Furrow*, 16 Feb 42, p. 20
- <sup>71</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Dec 41, p. 8



<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Dominion*, 19 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>74</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>75</sup> *Evening Post*, 27 Feb 42, p. 7

<sup>76</sup> *Press*, 7 Jan 42, p. 3

<sup>77</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15, 17, 19 Dec 41, pp. 8, 6, 6

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Jan 42. p. 2; *Press*, 15 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>79</sup> *NZ Herald*, 5 Dec 40, p. 12

<sup>80</sup> Only a few **Auckland** shops acquired them. *Ibid.*, 19 Dec 41, p. 6, 3, 5 Jan 42, pp. 4, 2; *Auckland Star*, 17 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>81</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Dec 41, p. 6; *Auckland Star*, 17 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>82</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17, 18 Dec 41, pp. 6, 10

<sup>83</sup> *Civil Protection*, by F. J. Samuely and C. J. Hanann; see *Dominion*, 20 Dec 41, p. 12

<sup>84</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Dec 41, p. 11

<sup>85</sup> *Press*, 30 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>86</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Apr 42, p. 8; *Auckland Star*, 17 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>88</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22, 30 Dec 41, pp. 7, 4; *Evening Post*, 6, 16, 19 Jan 42, pp. 6, 6, 6

<sup>89</sup> *Press*, 7, 8 Jan 42, pp. 6, 4

<sup>90</sup> *Truth*, 14 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>91</sup> *Press*, 15 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Jan 42

<sup>93</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>94</sup> A stirrup pump cost about £6, and by 24 December 70 had been distributed to the most hazardous top floors in **Auckland**, where the EPS then arranged for 2000 lighter pumps, costing about £3 2 s 6 d, which could be made more quickly, and offered free delivery of sand gear. *NZ Herald*, 24 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>95</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Feb 42, p. 4

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>97</sup> Imports had been stopped about two years before. Mason and Porter of **Auckland** were coping with the national demand, making among other implements about 17 000 mowers a year, but beset increasingly by shortages of material and staff. *NZ Herald*, 26 Nov, 12 Dec 41, pp. 8, 9

<sup>98</sup> *Press*, 6 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Jan 42, p. 7

<sup>100</sup> On both EPS and Home Guard see chap 12

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 10 – WAR COMES TO THE PACIFIC

## CHAPTER 10

### *War Comes to the Pacific*

was expected to hold. Its defences had been publicised, its jungle reported impenetrable to troops. But in 1942 as January followed December it was clear that the British were retreating, the expected stand was not made, aircraft did not arrive to drive the Zeros from the skies, and day by day the miles lessened between the fighting and the last bastion, **Singapore**.

The Japanese octopus was also striking into **Burma** and southward, seizing islands almost in clusters. Every few days unfamiliar place-names studded the news, then disappeared, as they were raided, invaded, and fell into the oblivion of occupation. In the news of 12 January, Japanese forces had landed at Tarakan on the north-east of **Borneo** and in the northern **Celebes**, and they were claiming Kuala Lumpur. **Rabaul** was seized on 23 January, soon becoming a base for strikes at settlements in **New Guinea** and the **Solomons**. On Saturday 31 January 1942 their spearhead was reported 18 miles from **Singapore's** causeway, and by Monday the British had withdrawn to Singapore Island. British forces had also left **Moulmein** in **Burma**, while the Japanese had landed at **Ambon** ( **Amboina**), and raided Salamaua, Wau and Bulolo in **New Guinea**, and Kupang (Koepang) in Timor. By 4 February, Surabaya in **Java** was being bombed, so was **Port Moresby**, capital of Papua; the Salween river on the border of **Burma** had been crossed.

Regard for the Japanese as fighters was drastically revised. Various voices warned that they must not be judged by their long-drawn-out battle in **China**, and that their military resources, particularly in the air, had been underestimated. The end of Allied reverses had not come, warned John Curtin, <sup>1</sup> **Australia's** Prime Minister, on 31 January: **Japan** was fanatical, very efficient and armed with mountains of supplies and equipment. With this reappraisal came awareness that once again, as in **Norway**, in **France**, in **Greece** and in **Crete**, the Allies were failing through their own inefficiency, notably in the air; now the failure was

on a long finger of **Asia** that pointed towards **Australia** and New Zealand. **Malaya** focused alarm more than did the **Philippines** or **Borneo** or the **Celebes**, more even than **Sumatra** and **Java**. **Singapore** had been an article of faith and with it fell much other faith. It appeared that official optimism in 1941 about the defences of **Malaya**, justifiable only as an attempt to discourage attack, had not deceived **Japan**, while the British had believed their own bluff. As early as 23 December the *Evening Post*, a paper not usually over-critical of established values, declared that ‘telling the public only what the public wish to hear is a common democratic fault for which the public themselves are partly to blame. Wishful thinking has become a sedative; and politicians, even soldiers too, have been tempted to feed the public on this “dope” and to risk ... a rude awakening ... the soothing pre-war assurances about the defences of **Malaya** and **Pearl Harbour** are now totally disbelieved ... the pendulum may now be swinging from unwarranted optimism too far towards pessimism. But the indignation of the public ... is understandable.’

Two weeks later the *Press* set forth the immediate errors that were plaiting the maypole of disaster. ‘No one who sifts the official and unofficial reports of the fighting in **Malaya** can escape the conclusion that the advance preparations were badly made, that land, sea and air strategy was imperfectly co-ordinated, that the military and civil authorities were at loggerheads and that preliminary intelligence work was faulty.’<sup>2</sup> Muffled news further exasperated the *Press*, which on 17 January complained that for almost a week the daily communiqués from **Singapore** had told little or nothing. ‘Dr Goebbels at his worst has seldom been more puerile and dishonest than British officialdom in its versions of what is happening in **Malaya**’. The public knew well enough that things had gone badly wrong; its anxiety was only increased when official news services and commentaries tried to cushion the impact of the truth by wrapping it round with euphemisms, excuses and evasions; these shook faith in official news and damaged public morale. The *Dunedin Evening Star* on 24 January gave a few samples of not-so-old propaganda: ‘An attack on **Singapore** from the mainland would now prove as costly as direct assault from the sea’; ‘Great camps have been

built for British and Indian troops now fully trained for jungle warfare'; 'Bombers and fighter aircraft of the Empire are now using aerodromes and sites covered a few months ago by dense vegetation'.

The inactivity of the American fleet was bewildering. Very properly, the **United States** navy did not reveal the extent of damage at **Pearl Harbour**, did not say that of the eight big ships in 'battleship row' Japanese bombers had sunk six and damaged the other two. <sup>3</sup> On 17 December a report from Colonel Knox, <sup>4</sup> Secretary of the **Navy**, said that the battleship *Arizona* and five other warships had been lost; three of the five were destroyers and one was the training ship *Utah*. Other vessels, including the battleship *Oklahoma*, were damaged; some were already repaired, others would be in dock for several months; about 2900 men had been killed and 890 injured, but harbour facilities and oil-tanks were not damaged. He also said that the entire United States Pacific fleet, consisting of a battleship, aircraft-carriers, light and heavy cruisers, destroyers and submarines was ranging the ocean in search of the Japanese fleet. <sup>5</sup> Alert readers might have wondered why there was only one battleship in the chase, but more wondered why, since the fleet was not seriously damaged, it did not appear in the South China Sea, or at **Singapore**, now bereft of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. <sup>6</sup> Reports that **Washington** and **London** were resolved to defend **Singapore**, hailed hopefully, <sup>7</sup> were succeeded by railings at inaction. Above the title 'Make it snappy, Sam', cartoonist Minhinnick showed his **Lincoln**-like Uncle Sam, blueprint for victory under his arm, racing towards production-shops against Death, with his sickle and hour-glass. <sup>8</sup> Next week Uncle Sam had a huge gun, ' **USA** war power', its barrel sharply depressed towards ' **Pacific** coast local action', while in the distance a rising sun, with a cloud of ships and aircraft, showed 'Jap progress in **Malaya**'; the caption was 'Raise your sights, Sam'. <sup>9</sup>

In mid-January Knox warned against expecting a naval showdown in the near future: 'I do not mean to imply that the **Pacific** Fleet is idle. You will hear from it again and again when and where careful strategic considerations dictate.' The British and American navies had to



maintain their fighting strength in all seas, and he emphasised that the chief enemy was **Germany**; as soon as **Germany** was destroyed, the whole Axis fabric would collapse. <sup>10</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* contrasted his caution with pre- **Pearl Harbour** assurances and noted **New York** press references to Darwin as an American base. But Darwin's value depended on the retention of New Guinea, the **Solomons**, **New Hebrides**, **Fiji** and **Java**. While it was suicidal to send ships into narrow seas without air cover, the United States should be able to send considerable fighter aircraft to the Far East, a theatre quite as important as the **Middle East**. To win the war with reasonable quickness, **America** must hold the Dutch East Indies. 'The great essential is speed. Darwin will not be secured if the **United States** concentrates most of its energies "mopping up" submarines in the Eastern Pacific.'<sup>11</sup>

Repeatedly, the *Herald* and other papers <sup>12</sup> protested against the British and American view that **Germany** was the enemy of importance. **Malaya** was not a side show, to be dealt with at the Allies' leisure after **Hitler's** overthrow; **Australia** and New Zealand were entitled to more than comforting words, they should have practical evidence that the **Pacific** would be protected while there was yet time. <sup>13</sup> Churchill's confidence in the eventual outcome was cold comfort: 'the people of the Dutch East Indies do not ask for eventual redemption from the invader—they ask passionately to be saved from him now.'<sup>14</sup>

In Britain there was a surge of indignation at yet another defeat due to air inferiority and inadequate preparations. Churchill, Minister of Defence, first Lord of the **Treasury** and Leader of the Commons as well as Prime Minister, was inevitably a target: he had chosen the men who had made mistakes, if he had not made them himself. **Australia**, now alarmingly exposed, and with many troops lost in **Malaya**, complained angrily of trust betrayed and war mismanaged.

On 28 January (New Zealand time), admitting that things had gone badly and would go worse, Churchill, opening a three-day debate on the war, demanded a vote of confidence: 'It looks as if we are in for a very bad time, but provided we all stand together and use our utmost strength

it looks also, more than it ever did before, as if we are going to win.’ He explained that, facing **Germany** and **Italy**, **Britain** had never had enough arms to provide effectively for the **Far East**. Apart from **Britain**’s own large needs, all that **Russia** had asked for had been sent, and though there were more than 60 000 men at **Singapore**, the Nile Valley had priority in aircraft, artillery and tanks. These supplies had helped the Russians to turn retreat into attack, and whereas in November Rommel<sup>15</sup> had been threatening **Tobruk** prior to advancing on Egypt, the British offensive had regained **Cyrenaica**, though they had yet to hold it, and Rommel’s army was not destroyed.<sup>16</sup> Churchill took on himself ‘the fullest personal responsibility’ for the disposition of arms and for diplomatic policy. ‘Why should I be called upon to pick out scapegoats and throw the blame on generals, airmen and sailors—to drive away loyal, trusted colleagues, and submit to the clamour of certain sections of the British and Australian press?’ As for **Japan**, it had been British policy at almost all costs to avoid disagreement unless certain that **America** would come in; hence they had stooped to closing the **Burma Road** in 1940. ‘It seemed utterly irrational to suppose that the Japanese, having thrown away the opportunity of attacking us in the autumn of 1940, when we were much weaker and all alone, should at this period plunge into a desperate struggle against the combined forces of the Empire and the **United States**.’ **Japan** now had naval superiority in the **Pacific** and would inflict many heavy and painful losses on all nations with possessions in the **Far East**, but ‘we should not allow ourselves to be rattled by this or that place being captured, because once the ultimate power of the **United Nations** has been brought to bear the opposite process will come into play and move forward remorselessly....’

17

Although Churchill had shouldered responsibility for Malayan errors, especially for the disposal of arms and for diplomacy, both **Auckland** papers directed bitter reproaches across the **Pacific**. The *New Zealand Herald*, its irritation at American slowness increasing, attacked the **United States** in an editorial that probably topped New Zealand press censure of Allied policies. Why, asked the *Herald*, if the eastern defences

had always been inadequate, were the peoples concerned repeatedly assured that all was well, and troops from **India**, **Australia** and **New Zealand** sent to **Britain** and the **Middle East**? Why had the Allies adopted a policy towards **Japan** that made war inevitable, thus exposing half the human race to the savage attack of a well-armed adversary? 'The consequences are now falling, not on **London** or **Washington**, but on their wards and friends in the populous lands of the Orient.' Churchill himself had been wary, seeking to avoid disagreement with **Japan**. 'Mr Churchill does not say so, but the conclusion cannot be escaped that the primary responsibility for provoking war with **Japan** rests upon President Roosevelt.' No doubt American assurances of support had induced both Dutch and British to join in the sanctions that had given **Japan** three choices: to surrender, to suffer economic strangulation, or to fight. 'Mr Churchill makes it plain that the Allies banked on **Japan** flinching. Instead she called their bluff and found them unprepared. They had no right to accept such a palpable risk without adequate cover.' The heaviest responsibility fell on **America**, which had taken the diplomatic initiative and had the means to back it, but Churchill should have satisfied himself that Pacific Commonwealth countries were not being helplessly exposed, and he now revealed that their defence was fourth in his strategic priorities. In these, **Britain** and the **Atlantic** were properly first, and the Soviet second, which staunch and tenacious **China** might well question, while the defence of the Nile Valley was rated more important than that of **Singapore**, **Tobruk** and **Benghazi** and the desert of **Cyrenaica** preferred to **Hong Kong** or the riches of **Malaya**. Without the Libyan offensive, **Malaya** might have been saved; a fair and proper distribution of Allied forces was still wanting. <sup>18</sup>

The *Auckland Star* on the evening of 29 January struck a glancing blow in the same direction. It was 'utterly irrational' to suppose that **Japan** would submit indefinitely to economic sanctions. It was hard to believe that this aspect was not considered; probably **Britain** was depending on the **United States** and **Japan** struck before there was firm and precise agreement. No one had dared to suggest that the British government and its leader were so wrong that both should be replaced,

and as every critic held that it would be a national disaster if Churchill's leadership were lost, it was certain that he would be given an overwhelming vote of confidence in the Commons. Despite present misgivings and a growing feeling that Churchill took too much on himself, 'there can be no doubt that if a vote of the British peoples everywhere could be taken, it, too, would be overwhelming. They would be miserably ungrateful people if it were not.' Churchill had said that though **Japan** would inflict more losses, in the end with hard fighting and unity the Allies would win. Everyone believed this, cold comfort though it was, and none should waste time railing at fate. All should do everything possible, with existing means, to defend New Zealand, while the government must demand more and better weapons. <sup>19</sup>

The Churchill mana did not fail in **Britain**, where he won his vote of confidence 464:1; nor did it fail in New Zealand, where his irreplaceable leadership was valued everywhere. <sup>20</sup> Outside Auckland, papers were less critical, accepting that **Britain's** difficulties were enormous and its priorities understandable; there was approval of the Commons' full ventilation of war matters, in contrast to New Zealand's secret sessions; there was hope that the news from Makassar Strait might be the start of better things. Some, however, firmly stated that Churchill was overburdened and should admit others to share the load. Thus the *Press*, while fully endorsing his priorities given the shortage of munitions, questioned the causes of that shortage; production had vastly increased, but there was evidence that reforms in policy and method could have raised it much higher. Churchill's explanations did not cover the muddles and blunders in this field, or the official statements, complacent and foolish, on **Malaya**, which had misled everybody but the Japanese. 'It is saying far too much to say that he nowhere, in the Cabinet or on his staffs, needs wiser and stronger heads to match his own.' <sup>21</sup>

Newspaper lamentations over foredoomed **Singapore** had much in common. Several recalled the Maginot Line and the fall of **France**. <sup>22</sup> **Japan's** massive gains, in territory and war materials, all in ten weeks,

were held up to view, plus the immediate threat to the oil wells of **Sumatra**, with hope and doubt that American aid would come in time. Quick victory was seen as **Japan's** only chance, therefore the Allies had to hang on everywhere till their real strength came to bear. New Zealand must at once intensify its own defences, though not all papers were quite as definite as the *Dominion* on 14 February: 'It is not now a question of *whether* we will be attacked, but *when*.'

**Singapore** finally yielded on 15 February 1942. Churchill, announcing this in a worldwide broadcast, said that this was another occasion to show that British people could meet reverses with renewed strength, drawing from the heart of misfortune the vital impulses of victory. Darker trouble had been passed before, in the awful summer of 1940 when **Britain** stood alone, and in 1941 when it seemed that **Russia** and its resources would fall. He assured **Australia** and New Zealand that **Britain** would strain every nerve for their safety. The good must be viewed with the bad, side by side; **America** was in the war and **Russia** was not destroyed, but was already driving back the foul invader. Disunity was the only crime that could destroy the Allies. Whoever was guilty of it would be better with a millstone hung on his neck and cast into the sea. He spoke strongly of **Russia**, which in dire straits had kept its unity, kept its leaders, and struck back.

In Australia, which had lost thousands of men in **Singapore**, there was sharp complaint against those who had mismanaged so greatly. In England some Labour critics spoke of Churchill's 'stupifying magic'. 'Fine words don't win battles. Whenever we suffer a reverse we are treated to a superb example of mastery of the English language. The nation is being drugged with high-sounding phrases.'<sup>23</sup>

Fraser, approving Churchill's speech as 'true, realistic and unflinching', had his own eloquence. It would be idle and wrong to suggest that danger was not nearer; there was ample cause for well-grounded concern, but no room for foolish or frantic panic.

We will neither wince nor tremble, we will not fall into undignified

complaining or weeping or grizzling or growling, or indulge in stupid; uninformed, unhelpful carping criticism about those who have had the higher direction of our joint war effort and who, with the forces and means at their disposal, could not possibly overcome the huge handicap of time and material which confronted them. New Zealand will face courageously whatever situation will develop. It will do so with calm assurance and dignity as well as with courage. Our danger, which I do not minimise, will decrease in ratio to the effort we all make to build up resistance to any possible attack and contribute to the programme of victory now being planned in the **Pacific**.<sup>24</sup>

There were other troubles to digest in this mid-February. The battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* broke out of **Brest**, where they had been the target of many expensive and supposedly damaging raids, and sped north, harried but successful, to Norwegian waters, thereby arousing gloomy comparison with the *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales*. Already the Japanese had attacked **Sumatra**, capturing the great oil centre **Palembang** on the 16th; the **Burma** retreat was quickening; Darwin was bombed on the 19th. Gains in **Cyrenaica** had been short-lived: Rommel since 21 January had struck back, and was now uneasily held at **Gazala** 50 miles west of **Tobruk**. The only good news was about the 'sweeping advances' of the Russians towards the old Polish frontier.

In post- **Singapore** comment in New Zealand papers several themes interwove: the great need in the **Pacific** was for aircraft; New Zealand must quicken its own defences and insist that the government demand aircraft, guns, etc; there should not be easy acceptance of soothing assurances from authority. Some papers, such as the *Evening Post* and *Evening Star*, accepted without further outcry the repetition in **Malaya** of exaggerated self-confidence instead of forethought, and echoed Churchill's demand for unity, pointing to **Russia** where Hitler had found no quislings and had been beaten back. Others were more critical, reiterating the need for better work in high places. The *New Zealand Herald* said that drift, muddle and complacency must end; to regard



questioning of the highly placed as almost sacrilege was often an excuse for failing to face facts; intelligent criticism was the very breath of democracy. <sup>25</sup> The *Press* held that Churchill's demand for unquestioning faith asked more than most people would readily or reasonably give. 'Faith in his leadership is unshaken. But that leadership is in the main moral; there is not the same faith in the leadership of those who organise and direct the Commonwealth's war effort.... The British peoples can accept disaster with fortitude; they cannot accept bad leadership with fortitude, and there is no reason why they should learn to.' <sup>26</sup> The *Standard*, which on 8 January had said that the Pacific war was merely part of a greater struggle and Japan merely Hitler's puppet, on 26 February had an article from London saying that on every street corner puzzled men were beginning to consider that Britain, far from winning the war, was fast approaching the danger of losing it through political ineptitude in high places. Churchill's government was cluttered with discredited politicians, privilege, red tape, muddle and inefficiency.

Changes in the British War Cabinet met the edge of such criticism and gave room for hope that things might now go better. During late February and March articles from overseas on the recent disaster continued to appear, telling of selfish citizens, lack of Service coordination, the paralysing effects of routine and the tropical way of life, of blundering and red tape and unreality, of English soldiers three days off the ship struggling in full battledress, in contrast to Australians in shorts, boots and tin hats and to the Japanese, who travelled light and fast, co-ordinated all effort, improvised, infiltrated, and used guerrilla methods. Roughly, this could boil down to criticism of pompous, impractical British officialdom. On 7 March an article in the *Auckland Star* concluded: 'The root of all these troubles lies "at Home". An English officer simply cannot view any crisis but from the windows of Whitehall. An Australian, New Zealand, or Dutch commander, given a free hand early, would have saved Singapore.' <sup>27</sup>

Was there any general reaction or activity after Singapore? There was no immediate mobilisation flurry, because three weeks earlier 27000

men, married but without children, had been called in a Territorial ballot and were already being taken into camps which had been growing rapidly since December 1941; but in the first weeks of March 1942, within a month of **Singapore's** fall, it was announced that 17 500 men, aged 18–28, married and with children, would be called up on 25 March at very short notice for Territorial service. There was no clamour to reclaim the troops from the **Middle East**; <sup>28</sup> J. A. Lee, who had always held that there were too many men overseas, urged that one of the New Zealand Division's four brigades should be brought back <sup>29</sup> but there was no supporting outcry. Newspapers were directed by the censor early in April not to emphasise that Australian forces were returning to their own country. <sup>30</sup> Naturally, it was not known that Roosevelt had agreed early in March to send a division to New Zealand while 2NZEF remained in the **Middle East**. <sup>31</sup> Construction of defence works—camps, aerodromes, coastal fortifications—was strongly accelerated; on 6 March a **Defence Construction Council** was set up, with James Fletcher, <sup>32</sup> a building contractor who had proved his ability in this field, as Commissioner of Defence Construction, to organise and push forward all defence works, deciding the priority of projects, with wide powers to control supplies of materials, plant and labour and to ensure co-operation from everyone. A week later, a 54-hour week for defence construction was established, with provisions for transferring needed men from other districts, and for flat rates of pay. <sup>33</sup>

But for most people not called to camps or construction jobs, life was not broadly changed: commercial, social and public affairs went on as usual. Schools held their swimming and athletic sports, still publishing lists of winners; cricket and bowling and yachting interclub championships were won; stock sales were held; Scout Week took place throughout the country; ladies held garden parties for kindergartens; members of Parliament opened school fund-raising fêtes; the Prime Minister opened new rooms for the Hard of Hearing League; <sup>34</sup> **Wellington's** sixth school swimming pool was opened. <sup>35</sup>

Cinemas were showing much comedy and little war. For instance,



**Auckland** was seeing *Las Vegas Nights*, ‘the happiest musical medley that ever sparkled from the screen’; Gloria Swanson in *Father Takes a Wife*, with supports including the latest pictures from the Singapore front; Spencer Tracey, Ingrid Bergman and Lana Turner in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*; Margaret Lockwood in *Quiet Wedding* (‘all **Auckland** is talking about this delightful comedy’); Wallace Beery in *Barnacle Bill*; Laurel and Hardy in *Great Guns*; Abbott and Costello in *Hold that Ghost*, plus a March of Time newsreel, *Norway in Revolt*; *My Life is Yours*, with Lew Ayres as Dr Kildare, had a special first half showing *Australia Prepares* (‘a good chance for comparison with ours’), U-boats in the **Atlantic**, **Moscow** and **Odessa**, and the AIF facing Japs in **Malaya**. In the large Civic theatre was *Dive Bomber*, in colour with Errol Flynn, ‘the Allies’ answer to the devastation of **Pearl Harbour** ... hell-diving heroes of the air and the girls whose hearts fly with them.’ <sup>36</sup>

Business enterprise was carrying on. At Wellington in the Wainuiomata Valley private enterprise was developing a new housing scheme: 16 houses had already been built and there was talk of space on the flat for 5000 homes. <sup>37</sup> There were also advertisements such as: ‘Can you spare an hour? Time is precious these days what with war work and additional domestic cares. But one owes it to oneself, as well as one’s family and friends to keep up personal appearances ...’ with an hour a week at James Smith’s beauty salon for cleansing, rejuvenating facials and lustre-restoring hair treatment. <sup>38</sup> And again, ‘Morale is a woman’s business. The way you look affects so many people ... a woman’s beauty stands for courage, serenity, a gallant heart. But you’ve less time to spend on beauty care, so learn to make the most of it. Come to Milne and Choyce ....’ <sup>39</sup>

Another advertisement, for National Savings, asked: ‘Would you rather pull your weight in the country’s war effort or pull a rickshaw?’ It showed a farmer-type New Zealander jogging in the shafts before a gross, bemedalled Japanese officer, while two soldiers, with rifles and bayonets, grinned in the background. <sup>40</sup> This drew protest from the Dunedin Manufacturers’ Association as more likely to lower morale than to

strengthen it, 'as it presented a picture no New Zealander would visualise or tolerate'.<sup>41</sup>

Probably the most widespread feeling was that, though things were bad, they were bound to get better because the Allies had both might and right on their side; not the might of surprise and swift blows, but the massive strength of **America**, once it got into its war stride, plus the redoubtable Russians and the tough Chinese. 'We must hang on and do the best we can till the tide turns' might sum it up.<sup>42</sup> The *Wanganui Herald* on 4 March remarked, 'The war mood of a large portion of the public of New Zealand may be said to range between lively apprehension of imminent catastrophe and near apathy, according to the tone of the latest news. Observers have not noted a general line of thought on the war, except that it will probably be won by the Allies "somehow and sometime".'

In talk and in newspapers people debated whether **Japan** would invade New Zealand. Some said that **Australia** and all the islands north of it would have to be taken first, others saw New Zealand as an early target, a base for cutting **United States–Australia** communications. Some said that New Zealand was too remote and, lacking oil, minerals and rice, of no use to the Japanese; others held that even mutton would not deter them.<sup>43</sup> The long pause at **Rabaul**, the thrust through **Burma**, showed that **Japan** was not coming our way, argued some;<sup>44</sup> others said that this was merely wishful thinking.<sup>45</sup>

Diagnosing the errors of **Malaya**—accepted as lack of forceful leadership, staff work and knowledge of the country, lack of vigorous training for actual combat and of skilful, resolute use of the men and material available—produced anxiety to avoid similar errors in New Zealand. There were proposals that Territorial training should be overhauled, that officers should hold rank on their present merit, not on seniority, and preferably should be less than 45 years old; that repelling of invasion should be strenuously rehearsed.<sup>46</sup> There were many references to Major-General Bennett,<sup>47</sup> who had emerged from **Malaya** with a fighting reputation and who urged new ways of war, believing

that every Australian was a natural guerrilla. There were wishes that New Zealand's military leaders would be as outspoken. 'We have plenty of drab radio talks from politicians but when it comes to defence matters we want to hear direct from the men whose job it is', wrote one newspaper correspondent; another: 'We all want to hear from our military leaders. Sunday night radio soporifics are not good enough for martial times.'<sup>48</sup> *Truth*, comparing talks by Bennett and Fraser, repeated that people would rather hear from the heads of the fighting services than from politicians.<sup>49</sup>

There was complaint that the public did not know what was going on, Parliament's secret sessions and the time spent on trifles drew comment.<sup>50</sup> A cartoon by Minhinnick showed Fraser outside a door labelled 'Parliament. Secret session as usual', saying 'Tell you what I'll do—I'll let you look through the keyhole for a few minutes, but I'll have to keep the key in!'<sup>51</sup> At the same time the spreading of rumours, many derived from enemy broadcasts, was reprovved by mayors, editors and others.<sup>52</sup> On 3 March, W. E. Barnard, reprovving rumour-mongers as 'dangerously silly people', said that disturbing hearsay reports flew about because the authorities did not sufficiently take the community into their confidence. Secret sessions were necessary but afterwards more information should be given. In England there were secret sessions but also Churchill openly reviewed the whole field of the war, members could criticise and their criticisms were reported in the press. He thought that New Zealand radio should discredit *Tokyo's* misrepresentations and use a wide range of speakers in whom the public had confidence: Coates, the only ex-soldier in the *War Cabinet*, seldom spoke on the air, and J. A. Lee also had military experience.<sup>53</sup> The *Wanganui Herald*, on 4 March, endorsing this, said that the country sometimes seemed 'a huge whispering gallery'. The *Press* said that Parliament had almost ceased to inform the public, while the official Publicity Department was better called non-existent than incompetent.<sup>54</sup> Minhinnick's cartoon 'Moths flourish in the dark' showed a dismal-faced Home Guardsman Fraser taking tattered trousers, 'Public Confidence', from a box labelled 'Secret Sessions Complex' amid a cloud of moths called 'Rumour', 'Enemy

**Radio' and 'Axis Lies'.<sup>55</sup> Dr D. G. McMillan MP complained that this cartoon was subversive and that for purely personal and political reasons certain newspapers were trying to undermine the government.<sup>56</sup>**

**Government publicity, fearful of informing the enemy, relied much on broadcasts and statements by ministers from material more soothing than informative, prepared by departments. These repeatedly assured that the government was coping with the situation and doing everything possible. They were in generalised terms without many concrete examples, and often had a party-politics flavour: Webb, Minister of Labour, spoke of taking off his hat to various industrial workers who were toiling like Trojans, even while strikes in meat works and stoppages in coal mines were disconcerting the public. No New Zealand ministers worked on their speeches as Churchill worked on his. They relied on their natural style, which did not match the war situation, and the public waited in vain for words that would fill them with strong confidence and purpose. Months earlier the *Press* had deplored that ministers did badly what an announcer could be left to do well, seizing all occasions instead of choosing essential ones, 'and they alone, it seems, do not know how commonplace and wearisome they have made them.'<sup>57</sup>**

**There was a flare-up of political discontent. Sidney Holland again pressed for coalition, backed in this by allies such as the Farmers' Union executive, which also called for the complete abolition of racing in wartime.<sup>58</sup> There were murmurs against the 40-hour week, although regulations at Christmas time had made overtime much cheaper. The NZRSA, which perceived that Fraser had the strongest and coolest head in the field, was making its representations not through public meetings but directly to government for a broadbased war administration. These representations, secretly submitted to RSA branches on 23 March, were the starting-point of negotiations that produced a re-organised and enlarged war administration on 24 June 1942.<sup>59</sup>**

**There was again the odd call for leadership, linked often with**

demands for weapons. What, asked the *Dominion* on 16 February, would each and every one do to help should there be an attack? Some were guarding vital points or watching the coast, some preparations were being made; but the great mass of the public seemed only vaguely conscious of its danger and of individual responsibility. New Zealand needed someone with the passion of Mr Sumners <sup>60</sup> calling on the United States Congress to rouse the nation to its danger: “My God, are we going to let the hope of the ages perish from this earth because of our own unworthiness, and because, like **France**, we insist upon business as usual?” <sup>61</sup> An article in the *Dominion* remarked on the lack of urgency: ‘Time seemingly is thought to be on our side—tons of it. We still find time to argue about hours and wages, time to walk out of a coalmine because somebody might get wet, time for weekend sport much as usual, time for a not-too-quick one after a not-too-heavy day’s work.’ Everywhere was a deadening sense of frustration. ‘We want to be fired with a flaming zeal to be up and doing. We want to be taken more fully into the Government’s confidence on how each of us individually can help in a positive way to confront these Japanese.’ Emphasis was on passive defence, on EPS, which was coming to mean Everyone Play Safe and was eroding the fighting spirit.

The talk everywhere goes like this: ‘Have you dug a trench?’— ‘Do you keep your bath full?’—‘Have you laid in a week’s provisions?’ ... Is that all a country with the traditions of **Gallipoli**, the **Somme**, **Crete**, **Libya** has to talk about at an hour such as this? ... We want, Mr. Prime Minister, to be roused with words and acts that are positive.... The real but dormant spirit of New Zealand is a fighting spirit. We want to give these insolent Japanese a run for their yen that they’ll have cause to remember. That spirit can be stimulated by giving us something active to do and by proclaiming the doctrine of the offensive. Too many people are wagging their heads in resignation. <sup>62</sup>

Awareness that **Home Guard** uniforms, boots, rifles and other equipment were still inadequate sharpened anxiety. What use were men without weapons? Some urged that the government must demand aircraft, tanks

and guns from **Britain** and **America**; some urged that New Zealanders should contrive their own tools of destruction. Thus a man complained that for nearly two years he had been trying to interest the Army in anti-tank landmines that could be made by thousands in any foundry; 'official dry rot is not confined to **Malaya** .... It seems the army slogan is "Civilians, keep out."' <sup>63</sup> A prominent member of the Chamber of Commerce, M. G. C. McCaul, <sup>64</sup> complained in several newspapers about preoccupation with slit trenches and protection for civilians; people must insist on an efficient, adequate Army, complete with tanks and aircraft, or share the blame for wilful blindness and complacency. <sup>65</sup> The Auckland Chamber of Commerce urged the government to strengthen the Home Guard and see that local manufacture of arms and equipment increased. <sup>66</sup>

This feeling crystallised in the 'Awake New Zealand' movement. At Hamilton late in February the **Home Guard** commander, Major T. H. Melrose, <sup>67</sup> launched a campaign to arouse civilians to more active and belligerent defence. He spoke of Cromwell, the obscure farmer who raised an 'iron army', of stubborn Boer commandos, of Yugoslav resisters and Russian guerrillas. He urged a **Home Guard** vastly increased, with red tape thrown away and ingenuity rampant. Its men must have weapons, from sharpened slashers to flame-throwers, bombs, trench mortars and any destructive devices that could be contrived with the materials and machine-tools locally available. <sup>68</sup> A **Hamilton** businessman, P. O. Bonham, <sup>69</sup> promised to give £200 and would raise £1,000 within a month; by 16 March donations totalled £2,250. <sup>70</sup> The readiness of some people to respond to such a movement was suggested by a letter in the **Dominion** from a woman who wanted weapons and assurance that New Zealand would never surrender, recalling Churchill's **Dunkirk** promise to fight on the beaches and the hills. 'There are hundreds of women living alone, carrying on farm work, business, etc., who have gladly dug their own slit trench; some are first class shots, but their only weapon of defence against paratroops is the wood axe.... Give the women weapons, they can fight. The Japanese will never have the chance to take the women and children alive.' <sup>71</sup>



On 11 March came the British government's revelations of Japanese atrocities at **Hong Kong**: of British soldiers bound and bayoneted, of women both European and Asian raped and murdered, of prisoners crowded into insanitary, dysentery-ridden camps. These horrors, reinforced by others from the capture of Nanking in 1937, had a good deal of prominence. The *Auckland Star* in an inflammatory special article urged every man and woman to get some weapon, practise with it, and die fighting: 'to die of a hot, sharp twisting bayonet plunge through the belly, when trussed like a fatted rooster, would not be as good a death as being shot in half by a tommygun.... Put the wind up our women so that they will die fighting like cats rather than painfully and lingeringly of an Eastern disease ....' There should be Molotov cocktails to fling at the invaders and one for the final explosion that would leave no wife or screaming child to suffer. 'Stop thinking you are too fat, too old, too comfortable, too superior! Join the **Home Guard**! Push your husband out the front door and send him running to join it....' All who could should get a rifle and learn to use it. Maybe the Americans would be here to prevent disaster, maybe they would not. 'Remember the barbarities of **Hong Kong** and get ready to fight and to die fighting.' <sup>72</sup>

The *Standard* printed 'a stark exposure of the barbarous atrocities which have been the stock-in-trade of the Japanese army', stressing that the bayoneting and raping at **Hong Kong** could be repeated in New Zealand. 'Fight, work and save as never before. We are in the battle zone and the victory must be ours ... or else.' <sup>73</sup>

All this fanned the 'Awake New Zealand' movement which, blessed by the RSA and the Chamber of Commerce but without political bias, had spread through the **Waikato** and sprung up in distant places. It sought to kindle a spiritual fighting force within people and to make both public and government aware of the urgent need for total war, with every fit man trained to fight, all factories and workshops fully engaged on arms and equipment, and people roused to individual action without waiting for compulsion by the government. <sup>74</sup>

Reports from some small towns gave grass-root detail. At Te Aroha a meeting of 600 people recorded emphatic protest at the long failure of the authorities to arm and equip the **Home Guard**, and subscribed £491, calling on people to act for themselves, to support Major Melrose's movement, and to improvise weapons. Hand grenades from **Hamilton** were shown and 5000 of them were to be the first step, a local firm setting up half its workshop for this purpose. <sup>75</sup> At Te Kuiti, on similar lines, a crowd of 500 subscribed nearly £400. <sup>76</sup> A **Rotorua** meeting on 22 March donated more than £1,000 and was told of the keenness at **Hamilton**: a group of Te Pahu farmers had offered to come to town three days a week to make munitions; other farmers, some with trade skills acquired before going on the land, had offered to work on munitions at night and between milkings; it had been suggested that as butter was now less important some factories should close and calves be left to run with the cows till the next season, freeing farmers and dairy factory workers for training or war work. <sup>77</sup> By 20 March **Levin** had raised £800 and its signalling equipment, and hand-grenade throwers and trench mortars, locally made from scrap, were approved at **Foxton**. <sup>78</sup>

What was probably a fairly typical course of activity occurred at Hastings. On 9 March a 'rally for unity' meeting called for the honouring of Fraser's promise of universal service, with all fit men trained in arms and all women's organisations directed to war activities. A week later the Hastings Chamber of Commerce urged a national government, publicity to combat subversion and defeatist rumours, and support for 'Awake New Zealand'. <sup>79</sup> A Hawke's Bay Weapons Council was organised and it speedily made contact with both the Army and the **Home Guard**, examined the possibilities of a local engineering workshop, and sent to **Hamilton** for drawings and samples of weapons. <sup>80</sup> There was an immediate start on making camouflage nets and suits, staple-drawers from old rasps and Molotov cocktail belts from sugar bags. A member of the War Weapons Council, Mrs J. R. Stevenson, told a meeting of women that the Japanese wanted to frighten people from their homes. They should 'stay put' and fight if necessary—'a broken beer bottle would make an excellent weapon.' <sup>81</sup> In fact, weapon-making remained simple.



**Truth**, six months later, commenting on Hawke's Bay zeal, told of knuckle-dusters and daggers made from old car springs, of 100 staple-drawers, 50 camouflage suits and thousands of camouflage nets for helmets and trenches, many made by Maoris from green flax. <sup>82</sup>

At Auckland on 7 March, Brian Kingston, prominent in the National Service movement <sup>83</sup> that had been suppressed in June 1940, called a meeting at which speakers from **Hamilton** urged all-in effort. **Kingston** himself said that while the government had done well in many ways, such expressions of public feeling might encourage it to require stronger effort towards improving defences. There were resolutions demanding the immediate mobilisation of a citizen army and of industrial resources to equip it, speeded by a moratorium on rents, interest, etc. <sup>84</sup> A few days later at a larger **Auckland** meeting with locally-made weapons displayed on the platform, Mayor Allum <sup>85</sup> called for shoulder-to-shoulder effort, with all feelings of politics, class or creed set aside, saying that the Prime Minister joined him in approval of the people's desire to take part in the defence of their city. Trade unions advocated production councils, **Auckland** engineers had already set up a special committee to bring all facts forward and there was stirring talk of citizens' defence in all aspects. The Mayor, again stressing government approval, thereafter set up a committee to consider local defence matters and to improve war production, inviting communications from all citizens or manufacturers with constructive proposals. <sup>86</sup>

An example of weapon-making may be given. One R. Mackrell of the EPS demolition squad at **Onehunga**, a handy man with tools, was asked to make a mortar of the type widely used by the Home Guard in **Britain**. By the end of February he and his helpers were making about 12 mortars a week out of the 2½-inch piping used in refrigeration plants. The mortar had a spade grip by which it could be dug into the ground, and as it weighed only about 16lb it could be carried by one man, with a second man carrying its bombs, which were being made by the same group. <sup>87</sup> Major Melrose decided that these could be made at **Hamilton** and by mid-April the Mayor of **Hamilton** had presented its **Home Guard**

with eight trench mortars, plus ammunition and an auxiliary trailer from the research members of 'Awake New Zealand'. <sup>88</sup>

There was less activity at **Wellington**, seat of government. However, a **Lower Hutt** meeting of about 150 persons, 'where the loudest voices got the best hearing', criticised many things—the public's ignorance of the running of the war and of the need for complete mobilisation, the faults of ministers, race-day trains and vegetable supplies—and resolved to support the government in a total war effort mobilising every fit man and woman. <sup>89</sup> In the **South Island** there were a few scattered outbreaks: **Oamaru's** Borough Council, speaking of the need for national awakening, for quadrupled munitions and longer hours, called a public meeting. <sup>90</sup> Gore on 24 March launched its 'Awake New Zealand' campaign by subscribing £1,000 at one meeting. <sup>91</sup>

The 'Awake New Zealand' movement was eyed askance by many. Inevitably, its drive for do-it-yourself defence implied criticism of government action or inaction. The sensitive *Standard* complained of irresponsible politically-motivated criticism of the government's defence preparations by **Holland** and others who did not know what was being done: 'Mass meetings and resolutions are not going to help defend this country.' <sup>92</sup> The Labour member for **Invercargill**, W. Denham, <sup>93</sup> wanted the Prime Minister to explain that the criticism, far from being valuable and constructive, was querulous, fretful and might play into the hands of the enemy. <sup>94</sup> *Truth* suggested that the campaign's munitions proposals encroached on areas that could be run only by the government. <sup>95</sup> R. H. Nimmo, no Labour party man, and a pillar of the Chamber of Commerce which in some areas endorsed the 'Awake' campaign, wanted caution before criticism of the war effort. After visiting military camps he believed that the government had done a very good job and Service chiefs were experts, with information that the public would not have. <sup>96</sup> Wisely, Fraser accepted assurances from Hamilton that the movement's belligerence was not directed at the government and he went there himself to strengthen the alignment. On 30 March, after seven hours with delegates from the **Waikato**, Bay of

Plenty, **Rotorua** and the King Country, Fraser declared that he had enjoyed every minute of his day, and that it was a splendid movement, an inspiring example of democracy. <sup>97</sup> The *Standard* meanwhile trimmed its course, explaining on 26 March that while well informed public opinion was of tremendous value in a war, it was most difficult for the government to decide where publicity should end and censorship begin. The 'Awake' agitation showed the result of saying too little; the government could have given more publicity to what had been done but it had preferred to work and not talk. 'The lesson to be learned from the recent campaign is that governments cannot afford to hide their lights under a bushel.' <sup>98</sup>

In mid-April the movement spread to Taranaki, beginning with Inglewood's County Council. <sup>99</sup> By the end of May Bonham, chairman at **Hamilton**, had toured Taranaki, finding keen interest and a great deal being done for the **Home Guard**, 'in fact, more had been done there than in the **Waikato**, and several Taranaki schemes would be submitted to the Hamilton Battalion for adoption.' <sup>100</sup> Early in May, 'Awake' began at **Whangarei**, where £550 was subscribed within a fortnight. <sup>101</sup> At about the same time, advertisements from **Hamilton** proclaimed that New Zealand was unmistakably faced with invasion, that thousands had banded themselves together 'to Awaken this country to a sense of its danger, to the need for the sacrifice by all, and to see that offensive weapons are manufactured to the limit by the full utilisation of all untapped resources', and that growth had been such that it was lately decided to launch a nation-wide campaign asking all organisations and persons actively to support the movement, so that all New Zealanders, with God's powerful help, would stand four-square against the real and terrible danger. <sup>102</sup>

By this time the Prime Minister was becoming a little dubious. His Waikato friends, he said, had started out with excellent ideas and he had hoped that their efforts would be confined to the Waikato where good work was being done in a particular way; he had the highest respect for those behind the movement, of which he would express no opinion,

though he thought it was well intentioned; time could not be wasted squabbling and the best way to win the war was to get whole-heartedly behind the war effort. <sup>103</sup>

Also, by this time the Director of Publicity (J. T. Paul), close behind whom stood the Prime Minister, and Army were giving more information. Articles in the *Auckland Star* from 2 to 16 May told of the arming of the North, and on 17 May Puttick told the nation clearly, if not with the flair of MacArthur or Bennett, that New Zealand's defence had come a long way in a hurry, that there had been need to keep quiet about it at first, but now the Army could afford to be less hush-hush about its achievements.

The 'Awake' stir was not profound. Although some people who envisaged invasion set strenuous words reverberating and fired some others with their vision, only small free-lance ardours of preparation ensued. The sums collected provided many Home Guardsmen with useful gear such as groundsheets and haversacks, but could do little for weapons. There were limits to the explosives that could be manufactured by amateurs with safety to the users, the Army was cautious about accepting them, and regular weapons were gradually coming. The real depth of the movement may be measured by the fact that in April 1942 regulations compulsorily transferred more than 25 000 men from EPS to the **Home Guard** where needed, although in some areas the Guard was already at full strength.

Even in these worst months the news was not all bad, discreetly managed to make the best of it. Frequently a Russian thrust countered the impact of Japanese advance. Thus on 7 January the *New Zealand Herald's* single column 'Push South still Continuing, Malayan Fighting, New Landings made' was quite eclipsed by its large-lettered 'Rapidity of Advance, Within Reach of Kharkov, Progress in Crimea'. On 13 January, with 'Balaclava Captured', the Japanese occupation of Kuala Lumpur looked less ominous; on 16 February when the fall of **Singapore** had central place on every cable page, the *Evening Post* also drew attention to 'Sweeping Advances, Russians nearing old Polish Border'. Again, on 11

**March, 'Awful Atrocities at Hongkong' and 'Australia's Danger is Graver Daily' (with the third Japanese landing in New Guinea) were balanced by the headings, 'Havoc in Ruhr, Intense RAF Raid' and 'Kharkov Surrounded on Three Sides, More Russian Gains'. <sup>104</sup>**

**In war, besides giving information, the task of news media is to maintain morale and hopefulness along with enough alarm and urgency to induce lively effort. Bad news which was obviously fully known to the enemy, like the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, was promptly admitted; where such news was obscure, or might give information to the enemy, its release was often officially delayed, <sup>105</sup> as in the Java Sea battle, and would sometimes then appear beside some more cheering reports. The balanced presentation of good and bad, as instanced above, could preserve morale while presenting sad facts, and by logical extension of this process good news could be inflated by various means such as multiple reports, optimism, and the plain difficulty of aircrew and seamen in knowing how much damage was achieved. In some cases, inflation could almost amount to invention. A notable example was the Battle of Makassar Strait, which provided much-needed relief in the bad last week of January 1942.**

**On 21 January about 16 Japanese transports were escorted from Tarakan (on the north-east coast of Borneo, taken on 11 January) south towards the oil port, Balikpapan. Dutch aircraft sank one in the afternoon of the 23rd, and another the next day. Shortly before dawn on the 24th four American destroyers, sent to make a night attack, found the convoy anchored off Balikpapan, both silhouetted and veiled by the burning oil field. The first torpedo fired by the Americans confused the Japanese commander who took his destroyers out into the strait to search for submarines, leaving the transports unguarded. The Americans sank four transports and a patrol boat that night; three days later the aircraft tender *Sanuki Maru*, the most valuable ship hit off Balikpapan, was severely damaged by bombers. <sup>106</sup>**

**Strategically, the Japanese claim that their advance was not halted**

for even a day was correct, but it was a gallant and skilful effort, the first **United States** naval surface strike in the **Pacific**, and it was very warmly received by a nation hungry for news of action and victory. <sup>107</sup> **America** was not alone in this hunger. In New Zealand, overseas communiqués and foreign correspondents' reports raised a lofty edifice of destruction, buttressed by appreciative editorials.

On 28 January the *New Zealand Herald* proclaimed 'Greatest Sea Victory of the War, Over 50 Ships Sent to the Bottom', some being ocean liners each probably carrying 3000 men. The *Auckland Star* editorial said that the over-confident Japanese, in sending their convoy into the Strait, had made perhaps the biggest blunder of the war. The *Press* was heartened by the first considerable offset to the depressing talk of Japanese success, showing that American ships and aircraft were out in the **Pacific** and capable of vigorous offensive action. Most papers on 30 January quoted the statement by the Batavian correspondent of the *Daily Mail* that the battle was emerging as the greatest sea action since Jutland, against an armada bent on the invasion of **Java**. Makassar Strait was soon dropped from the headlines thereafter but small references maintained the idea of success. Thus on 14 February most papers reported Lord Halifax <sup>108</sup> at **Washington** saying, 'What happened at **Macassar** foreshadows what the Allies will be able to do when their air and naval strength is built up, and that is coming as surely as night follows day.' The *Dominion's* 'Background of the War' column on 2 March spoke of such actions 'draining away the life blood of **Japan's** striking power'.

The theme of naval success was sustained on 2 February by Admiral Halsey's <sup>109</sup> surprise attacks on the Marshall Islands, bombing and shelling Japanese installations, aircraft and shipping, for the loss of 11 aircraft. Initial reports were brief, but they built up the idea of **United States** naval activity and of checks to **Japan**. Thus the *Auckland Star* on 3 February saw 'a gleam in the darkness; up to the battle of Macassar Strait the Japanese did all the harrying in the **Pacific**. They received their first serious check there, and during the week-end they have had



another.’ The *New Zealand Herald* said that naval initiative, far more important than any tally of material loss inflicted, was no longer with the enemy; the American Pacific Fleet had begun to assert itself. In mid-February under headings such as ‘Bases razed’, ‘Devastating raid’, more details were released by **Washington**, naming the islands and listing the destruction of 38 aircraft, four radio stations and 16 ships, including a 17 000 ton converted aircraft-carrier, two large submarines and a modern cruiser.

Post-war reckoning showed that actual damage was slight, but American naval historian S. E. Morison wrote: ‘It would not be fair to judge this raid by the meager material results’; it provided valuable combat experience, the over-optimistic reports of damage helped morale, and the audacity of Halsey in striking at Japanese territory gave his country its first naval hero of the war. <sup>110</sup> In the New Zealand press, too, there were repeated references to the brilliance of the Marshall Islands action. Scholefield’s private diary on 13 February 1942 noted the balance of news. ‘The story from B.B.C. today discloses the success of the American fleet’s cruise across the **Pacific**, and comes just in time to be a counterpoise to the depression about the fate of **Singapore** and the sticky condition of **Libya**. **Washington** released its story of smashing visits to **Pacific** groups just about the time when B.B.C. told us about the dash of the heavy ships from **Brest**.’

On the other hand, Allied sources and New Zealand newspapers fully admitted their worst sea loss at this period when, between 27 February and 1 March, the Allied fleet was almost wiped out in the Java Sea, while the Japanese, with air support, more cohesion and better use of torpedoes, did not lose a fighting ship, though some were damaged and four transports sunk. <sup>111</sup> On Saturday 28 February, evening papers said that a big battle was raging. By Monday reports were confused: one claimed an Allied victory but said that details were lacking; others suggested substantial losses by both sides. In most papers headlines announced multiple landings on **Java** and some, such as **Dunedin’s Evening Star**, published **Tokyo’s** ‘familiar exorbitant claims’ to have

‘virtually annihilated’ the Allied fleet, including five cruisers and six destroyers. Not much more was heard about this battle till 16 March when all papers carried the Admiralty communiqué listing 13 Allied warships sunk—five cruisers, seven destroyers and a sloop—complete with names, guns and tonnages. Editorial comment varied. ‘Battle lost, prestige redeemed’, stated the *Evening Post*.<sup>112</sup> The *Auckland Star* paid tribute to gallant men but found the situation ominous. **Japan’s** naval supremacy in the whole area must now be overwhelming and unless American and British ships were speedily transferred to the **Pacific**, **Japan** would have alarming freedom of movement. **Australia’s** Prime Minister had lately renewed appeals to the **United States** for weapons, and it was hoped that Fraser was doing likewise.<sup>113</sup> The *Press* squarely acknowledged a disaster: the squadron had failed in its desperate attempt to break up the **Java** invasion force and was itself trapped; if **Japan** should immediately invade **Australia** there would be little naval opposition. But this heavy loss should be viewed against the total losses of the Japanese war: American experts believed that half of **Japan’s** total cruiser strength had been sunk or put out of action.<sup>114</sup>

The theme of Japanese naval losses, with special mention of cruisers, had been popular, especially between 14 and 16 February and 21 and 23 February, and it was sustained in later reports.<sup>115</sup> Post-war reckonings were different. **Japan’s** victories up to mid-April were ‘accomplished without the loss of a single major warship; except for 4 destroyers the Japanese fleet remained intact. It was an astonishing achievement.’<sup>116</sup>

On 8 March the Japanese easily landed in **New Guinea**, at Lae and Salamaua. The American carriers *Yorktown* and *Lexington* were in the area, intending an attack on **Rabaul**, but Admiral Brown<sup>117</sup> decided to strike instead at the new landings before they were consolidated. On 10 March, from the Gulf of Papua, 104 aircraft took off, crossed the Owen Stanley Range at a 7500 ft pass, found plenty of shipping off Lae and Salamaua, and ‘the aviators had a field day “remembering Pearl”,’ with only one aircraft lost.<sup>118</sup> As they left, Army aircraft from Townsville



struck again. This double blow provided the most stimulating day yet in Allied air operations rooms and Roosevelt, in a message to Churchill, called it the most cheering thing in the Pacific so far. <sup>119</sup> According to Morison, the usual over-optimistic reports of ships sunk or damaged were discounted at naval headquarters because Army Liberator aircraft from Townsville next day found everything still afloat; 'but a check-up after the war showed that the carrier planes had sunk a large minesweeper, a 6000-ton freighter and a 8600-ton converted light cruiser.' <sup>120</sup>

This knowledge was for much later. On 19 March, hard after the desolating news of the Java Sea, came a United States naval communiqué, without any dates, announcing that American and Australian aircraft had smashed a Japanese invasion fleet, concentrated near Lae and Salamaua, with 12 warships, two of them heavy cruisers, among the 23 sunk or damaged. The naval losses off Java had been offset in a dramatic manner. <sup>121</sup> Editors rejoiced.

There were frequent reports of growing Allied air power, battering at Rabaul, the main southern base, at Gasmata, Lae, Salamaua, and Timor centres, and destroying Japanese aircraft, while the defenders of Darwin, Wyndham and Port Moresby greeted their attackers with fierce salvos. 'It might not be long before the Allies' aerial offensive north of Australia becomes an aerial crusade to drive the enemy from his scattered holdings in the Pacific islands', the *Auckland Star* on 9 April quoted from the *Sydney Morning Herald*; Allied air power was increasing daily, while the enemy's was shrinking; in a month at least 157 Japanese aircraft had been destroyed or seriously damaged between Timor and New Britain. 'Don't be over-depressed by news from outside,' advised the Allied air chief, Lieutenant-General G. Brett, <sup>122</sup> in the news of 11 April. 'In the air we are belting the Jap and belting him hard.' <sup>123</sup>

On 20 April 1942 bold headlines—'Bombs on Japanese Cities', 'Tokyo Admits Air Raid'—hailed Japanese reports of bombs on schools and hospitals in Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya and Kōbe. American silence was rightly taken as evidence that the raiders came from carriers. This was confirmed by Washington on 11 May, with accounts of damage, such as

some fires burning for two days. On 21 May, when the raid commander, Brigadier-General J. H. Doolittle, <sup>124</sup> was decorated for a brilliant success, its effect on targets was retold, though there was still silence about the aircrafts' take-off and landing. In fact, the strike was a riposte for **Pearl Harbour**: 16 long-range Army aircraft left the carrier *Hornet* about 650 miles from **Japan**, made their havoc and consternation without being hit, and flew on west. One crew, landing at Vladivostok, was interned and later escaped to **Persia**; the rest crash-landed or baled out over **China** and were saved by peasants, only eight of the 80 fliers losing their lives; three of them were executed by the Japanese for bombing non-military targets. Savage reprisals were taken against any Chinese thought to have helped them. <sup>125</sup> In post-war British evaluation, 'The effects of the raid were out of all proportion to the damage inflicted. It was no more than a nuisance raid but it was spectacular and daring. It caught the public imagination and gave a tremendous fillip to American morale which had had little encouragement during the four previous months.' In Japan it created alarm for the safety of the homeland and contributed to determination to attack Midway Island and draw the American fleet to a show-down. <sup>126</sup>

All this, of course, was unknown to New Zealand in April 1942, but there was firmly grounded feeling that **America** was coming up to expectations, had shown skill and strength. In the pause while **Japan** concentrated for the invasion of **Port Moresby** early in May, Allied aircraft raided Japanese holdings north of **Australia** and reports of Japanese air and sea losses continued; correspondents began to use vague but comfortable phrases about the Allies having wrested the initiative from **Japan**. The optimistic General Brett, who stated 'Everything is now on the up-and-up', was widely quoted. <sup>127</sup>

The battle of the Coral Sea, 5–9 May 1942, was the first check to **Japan's** southward advance. On 3 May the Japanese had landed unopposed on **Tulagi**, in the central **Solomons**, and two days later seized Deboyne Island off south-east Papua, to gain shore-based air cover for the invasion of **Port Moresby**, timed for 10 May. The Americans were

expecting a major move and Admiral Fletcher <sup>128</sup> heard of the **Tulagi** landing while his two-carrier force was refuelling about 500 miles to the south. The carrier *Yorktown* hurried north, arriving after the Japanese covering force had withdrawn, and at **Tulagi** its aircraft could only cripple a destroyer and sink some small boats while believing that they had done much more substantial damage. <sup>129</sup> Thereafter the main Japanese and American forces in the Coral Sea sought each other for two days, during which a United States tanker and destroyer were sunk. On the morning of 8 May the opposing carriers, more than 200 miles apart, launched their aircraft at each other in the first sea battle fought in the air, the ships themselves not exchanging a shot. Both *Yorktown* and *Lexington* were hit, the latter more severely, but were still serviceable; the main Japanese losses were a light carrier sunk, a heavier carrier damaged and more than 60 of their 100 aircraft destroyed. This left insufficient air power for the attack on **Port Moresby**, which was given up, the Japanese withdrawing northwards. Some hours after the fight, exploding petrol fumes caused the more damaged *Lexington* to be abandoned in flames, though her men were saved. The Americans thus had both the heavier shipping loss and the strategic victory. <sup>130</sup>

Ironically, this effective success was received in New Zealand with more reserve than the papery triumphs of Makassar Strait or Lae. On Friday 8 May evening papers announced 'very excellent news': eight Japanese ships had been sunk near the Solomon Islands for the loss of three aircraft. They also told of the fall to **Japan** of Corregidor, last fortress of the **Philippines**, while most of an Arctic convoy had reached **Russia** and another had returned to **Britain** at the cost of the 10000-ton cruiser HMS *Edinburgh*. <sup>131</sup> The *Post* reminded that Russian success offered the best hope for an early end to the war in **Europe**, and that in the **Pacific** 'we must be patient, we must be prepared to endure. The activity of the **United States** navy on the flank of the southward-bound Japanese, as they move from island to island, and American submarine activity in Asiatic waters, may cheer us but must not hoodwink us concerning dangers ahead.' <sup>132</sup> Next day, reports of the second stage of

the sea battle added a Japanese aircraft-carrier and a heavy cruiser to those sunk, with another carrier believed a total loss and a second cruiser badly damaged. **Tokyo** was claiming to have sunk two American aircraft-carriers and a battleship, and to have crippled an Australian cruiser and a British cruiser of the Warspite-class. It seemed, said the *New Zealand Herald* in a familiar phrase, the greatest naval battle since Jutland. The American navy had again lessened **Japan's** long-range strength, though an offensive from the **Solomons** could still be launched. 'The Japanese, as they showed in the battle of **Macassar Straits**, do not mind suffering heavy initial losses provided they can achieve ultimate success. On the final outcome of the present engagement may depend the immunity of **Australia** and New Zealand from invasion.' <sup>133</sup>

The *Press* remarked on 11 May that neither **Canberra** nor Washington assumed that the battle was a decisive victory, or that the threat to **Australia** and New Zealand and their communications with the **United States** had sensibly diminished. <sup>134</sup> The *Star-Sun*, the *Otago Daily Times* and the *Auckland Star*, also on 11 May, believed that the Japanese had been checked but until it was known what they had intended, and their real losses, it would be prudent to regard the battle as indecisive. On 15 and 16 May, in several papers, an article pointed out that the size of the Japanese force showed the strength of their outward drive. 'The enemy's long arm was not severed, nor, indeed, paralysed, but the clutching hand was badly mauled and forced to withdraw. It may well be that the arm will be strengthened for another blow, but most assuredly the Allied strength in those waters will be reinforced to meet it.' <sup>135</sup>

A week later, the *Auckland Star* remarked on the impression, fairly common in New Zealand, that the threat to the whole south-west **Pacific** was reduced by the Coral Sea battle, <sup>136</sup> but itself maintained a wary note in both news and comment. During May there was speculation on **Japan's** next move. Would the southern drive continue? Would Japan concentrate on **China**? Or press through **India** to meet the Axis?

American intelligence was, correctly, expecting action in the north Pacific but, to encourage Allied attention elsewhere, late in the month Japanese submarines, carrying four midget submarines and a reconnaissance aircraft, entered the Tasman. On the night of 31 May 1942 midgets attacked ships in Sydney harbour, missing important targets but blowing up a depot vessel on which about 20 seamen were asleep. Two two-man submarines, destroyed or scuttled, were recovered from the harbour. Japanese headquarters claimed, inaccurately but with suitable rejoicings, that HMS *War-spite* had been destroyed. <sup>137</sup>

This ‘completely unsuccessful’ raid, which proved that ‘it can happen here’, made large headlines in New Zealand. During the next week there were reports of several cargo ships attacked in the Tasman, two being sunk. Finally, on the night of 8 June 1942, shells fired from submarines damaged a few houses in both Sydney and Newcastle. If these actions had not been eclipsed by much stronger tidings from Midway Island they would doubtless have raised lively alarm, but in their context they merely showed up the likelihood of nuisance raiding and caused blackouts to be sharply intensified. Commenting on this relative calm, the *Auckland Star* said that as most people had gained sufficient experience in the ways of war to judge fairly accurately the significance of enemy actions, they regarded the shelling of Newcastle and Sydney as ‘curious rather than important’. The submarines had achieved little beyond showing their presence and quickening Australian vigilance. The *Star* thought that most New Zealanders were mentally prepared for some kind of attack, if only of the tip-and-run variety, though many others were still trying to convince themselves that Japan had bigger fish to fry elsewhere. <sup>138</sup>

In the first week or so of June, besides submarines in the Tasman, there was powerful news from several battle theatres. The Royal Air Force was making its first ‘thousand bomber’ raids, on Cologne and Essen; in Russia’s black summer of 1942 disaster was striking at Kharkov and the last agony of heroic Sevastopol was beginning; Rommel had broken out from Gazala in the attack that was to take Tobruk on 21

June and reach **Alamein** a few days later; Friday 5 June had small reports of Japanese attacks on Dutch Harbour in the Aleutians and on Midway Island.

Admiral Yamamoto <sup>139</sup> had planned to seize Midway Island, threatening **Hawaii**, and thereby force a show-down with the American fleet before it recovered from **Pearl Harbour**. On 3 June a massive Japanese fleet attacking Midway Island was surprised by a smaller American force. The battle of Midway lasted till 6 June. American losses included the carrier *Yorktown* and many aircraft, but the Japanese, losing four carriers, 250 aircraft and the pick of their naval air pilots, with one heavy cruiser sunk and another damaged, had to retreat. It was, writes the official British historian,

the turning point in the war against **Japan**. The battle of the Coral Sea checked for the first time the Japanese advance. Midway put a stop to it. Though his fleet was still greatly superior to Admiral Nimitz's <sup>140</sup> in battleship strength, without his carriers Admiral Yamamoto no longer dared risk a fleet action in waters outside the range of his land-based aircraft. **Japan's** attempt to expand her already over-stretched perimeter proved an irretrievable mistake. In reaching for the shadow of further conquests she lost the bone of naval supremacy, without which she could not hold the vast area she had already won. <sup>141</sup>

By 8 June newspapers were relishing the communiqué in which Nimitz said that a great victory was in the making and that while **Pearl Harbour** would not be avenged until Japanese seapower was impotent, they could claim to be 'about midway to our objective'. He reported two, possibly three, Japanese carriers destroyed, with all their aircraft, and one or two other carriers damaged, along with three battleships and four cruisers, while one American carrier had been hit and some aircraft lost. Here was the longed-for sound of victory, and Coral Sea caution was brushed aside in exuberant headlines, though several papers in their comment showed slight reserve. The *New Zealand Herald*, the *Evening Post* and the *Evening Star* all perceived that the **United States** was holding to the essential **Nelson** principle of 'the fleet in being', while the Japanese



navy, frittering away its strength in 'buccaneering expeditions', was ceasing to be.

The *Press* on 8 June thought that **Japan's** Midway action was primarily defensive and that its southward drive was continuing, recent Allied bombing of **Tulagi** being evidence that the Japanese had established a base in the Solomon Islands. The *Dominion* rated Midway as an episode in a struggle over a wide area and expected more tentacles. The *Auckland Star* on 8 June said that reports of earlier **Pacific** naval action had been too optimistic. It mentioned the Makassar exaggerations and noted that after the first news of the Coral Sea battle Australian authorities had been at pains to 'play down' the success achieved there. Bearing in mind the difficulties of accurately determining damage, first reports of Midway should be met with some reserve, but it seemed certain that the **United States** navy had won success greater than could have been hoped for at this stage.

After a few days of Midway news details, a **Washington** communiqué revived Coral Sea publicity, making a glorious pair of victories. Previous withholding of Coral Sea information, it was claimed, had assured success at Midway and the loss of the *Lexington* could now be made known. Enemy losses, especially of aircraft-carriers, were tallied with much satisfaction.

Later, there was wide reporting of Brigadier-General Hurley's <sup>142</sup> warning on 17 June 1942 at an RSA meeting against the current wave of optimism as people talked of the Coral Sea, Midway and the **RAF's** great raids. The *Dominion* also cautioned that much recent comment was more optimistic than known facts warranted: the enemy's spearhead at sea had been blunted, especially in carrier losses; the immediate threat to supply lines had been removed and vital time gained, but it was too soon to claim that the initiative was passing from the Japanese; that would happen only when the United Nations began to attack enemy strongholds. <sup>143</sup>

Militarily, it was proper to release details of engagements well after



they happened, so that they could not add usefully to enemy knowledge, but it was also necessary, for long-term public morale, that official sources should reveal losses. It often happened that losses, announced late, would be balanced by more comfortable news.

After the mid-June rejoicings, further Coral Sea and Midway stories and photographs gradually emerged, cheerful in the prevailing gloom. On 30 June, 'analysis of reports' gave the names of the four Japanese carriers sunk, plus two cruisers (though actually only one was sunk, the other badly damaged). In mid-July the **United States** navy released more Midway details: of the 80 Japanese ships engaged, nine, including four aircraft-carriers and two heavy cruisers, had been sunk, and as many other ships damaged, with 275 aircraft destroyed and 4800 men killed, while one **United States** destroyer had been sunk, the carrier *Yorktown* 'put out of action', 92 officers and 215 men killed; American aircraft losses were not disclosed. Late in August, when the **Guadalcanal** action was in a bad way, American papers refreshed memories of the Coral Sea <sup>144</sup> while in September, when **Guadalcanal** was no better, 'US Navy Communiqué No 97' was issued, <sup>145</sup> giving more information on the preliminaries and action at Midway. However, not till 17 September (New Zealand time) was the loss of *Yorktown* made known, **Washington** explaining that it was not announced earlier because there was reason to believe that the Japanese did not know of it. <sup>146</sup>

Thus, although the main outlines of actions were known promptly, the almost inevitable inflation of success and prudent delaying and cushioning of bad news made public awareness of the tides and toll of war neither exact nor immediate. News of an action came out piecemeal, over long periods, and careful, sustained reading was needed to evaluate mixed fact and fancy. The broad facts of who advanced and who retreated were fairly clear, but their cost was hazy. The Coral Sea and Midway battles were no exceptions.

After Midway many New Zealanders, along with Australians and Americans, felt that since things had started to go better they should go

on improving and waited, with varying impatience, for the Allies' offensive in the **Pacific** to begin. To strike while the iron was hot seemed the obvious course; 'more aid for MacArthur' was the cry from **Australia**. If MacArthur had 2000 more aircraft at once, he could probably retake everything between Torres Strait and **Manila**.<sup>147</sup> Meanwhile, since mid-May, the Germans had turned and were gaining alarmingly in **Russia**, and at the end of June, Rommel had begun his drive into Egypt, to be held in July at the **Alamein** line, where at the **Kaponga Box**, **Ruweisat Ridge** and El Mreir, the New Zealand Division had some of its hardest fighting.

It was clear that the war in these places demanded all possible support, though New Zealanders, like Australians, were disturbed that nothing was being done to follow up the Coral Sea–Midway successes. The *New Zealand Herald* on 17 July commented on the uneasy quiet of the **Pacific**, in contrast to current ferocity in **Russia** and in Egypt. Were the **Pacific** allies to await **Japan's** next blow, or try to regain the East Indies? In **Russia's** extremity, attack by **Japan** on Siberia was likely, could be fatal, and could be prevented by a **United Nations** offensive in the **Pacific**.<sup>148</sup> The *Press* also, on 9 July, had forecast attack on Siberia, which would require less shipping than other possible moves by **Japan**, though it 'would not altogether exclude simultaneous attack on **Australia** and New Zealand'.

Australian impatience was heightened after 21 July when the Japanese, who since Midway could not risk another sea attack on **Port Moresby**, landed easily at Buna on the northern coast of Papua and started along the 120-mile track leading them to **Port Moresby**. By 6 August, having seized Kokoda village with its airstrip, they had begun to cross the Owen Stanley Range through very tough jungle. Despite Australian resistance, the miles between the invaders and **Port Moresby** lessened steadily, while bombing raids on Darwin, Townsville and other north Australian targets increased.

In London, Nash said that it was a huge mistake to imagine that **Japan's** drive had finished and that therefore it would be wise to do

nothing at present: 'We must find a way of doing something that will be most harmful to **Japan**.' <sup>149</sup> Fraser, visiting **Australia**, said that a large and determined offensive in the south-west **Pacific** was imperative before the **United Nations** could win, <sup>150</sup> and that in **Australia** as in New Zealand both government and public opinion definitely wanted Allied aggression. <sup>151</sup>

On the other hand, it was realised that to attack the Japanese efficiently under their land-based air umbrellas would require immense shipping and air power, for aircraft-carriers were clearly vulnerable. Presumably America did not yet have this strength and shipping was needed elsewhere. With Rostov falling, the whole Don basin in German hands and the Caucasian oil wells almost within their grasp, clamour for a second front in **Europe** daily sounded more justified. **Russia's** need was clearly desperate, a **Pacific** offensive not the most direct way to relieve it.

Although the enemy was now much closer than when **Singapore** was threatened, there was much more calm in New Zealand. It was due in part to awareness of local mobilisation and preparations, in part to the arrival of large numbers of Americans, <sup>152</sup> to feeling that Coral Sea and Midway had at least taken the edge off the Japanese advance, and simply to being accustomed to the nearer war. This, plus the Russian crisis, lessened impatience for **Pacific** action. To the *New Zealand Herald* on 27 July 1942 the Buna landing showed that in the south-west **Pacific** the initiative was still with the enemy, and it doubted that **Washington** planned an early offensive. A very large convoy of American troops had lately landed in **Britain**. ' **Russia's** need of a diversion is palpably the greatest', and perforce the Allies must remain on the defensive. Again on 4 August this paper said that if a second front was imperative for the relief of **Russia**, the **Pacific** must wait, though it was clear that the Japanese were working like beavers extending their hold in the Solomons Islands. If the Allies did not make a move this year, the Japanese would. The *Auckland Star* on 7 August, considering the disquiet in **Australia** following the Buna landing, advised that the

fighting record of MacArthur should be trusted: 'he will do all that he has the force to do', but while **Japan** had command of the sea he was constantly at a disadvantage. <sup>153</sup> The most disturbing feature was not the local Japanese gains but the improbability that MacArthur's resources would be greatly or quickly increased. In Washington and **London** all eyes were on **Russia** and the **Middle East**; **Pacific** needs must seem much less pressing, and an Allied offensive in the **Pacific** was likely to fade into the future. 'It may be that both in **Australia** and New Zealand we must content ourselves, albeit unwillingly, with the role of "hanging on" to every position we hold, and think ourselves lucky if we lose no more', concentrating, as **Australia's** Prime Minister had put it, on doing the right thing 'with what we have', which did not yet include command of the sea.

Remote from public knowledge, the supreme commanders fought out their global and service priorities for aircraft and ships and men and weapons. The well-established 'beat-Hitler-first' policy which kept the **Pacific** basically on lean rations during the first part of the war did not preclude offensive action within a certain range when opportunity offered, as it obviously did after Midway. As stated by the official American historian of **Pacific** strategy, 'The problem was to settle on an operation that could be undertaken by the limited forces available and within the strategic concept for the **Pacific** but which would produce more enduring results than the earlier raids and strikes.' <sup>154</sup> This was not very far from the views of Curtin and the *Auckland Star*. Clearly the Solomon Islands was the area to strike but preparation was delayed by debate on who should command. MacArthur wanted to head the attack that would recapture **Rabaul** and the Bismarck archipelago; Admiral King, <sup>155</sup> Commander-in-Chief United States Fleet, and the **Navy** men saw the operation as primarily naval and amphibious. <sup>156</sup> Debate on command and related problems delayed the follow-through from Midway; meanwhile the Japanese were digging in on **Guadalcanal**.

At Tulagi in the **Solomons**, quietly taken from Australian control on 3 May 1942, the Japanese, despite occasional Allied bombings, had

established themselves and were building an airfield on nearby **Guadalcanal**, to be the forward base for attacking **New Caledonia**, **Fiji**, and **Samoa**. On 2 August, a communiqué from MacArthur's headquarters said that this construction had become evident about six weeks earlier and that reinforcements had since arrived. The *Press* deplored that the Allies had not driven on after Midway: opportunity had been missed, **Japan** had strengthened its bases and got new ones. The struggle for advanced bases had become the determining factor in the **Pacific**, and at present **Japan** was winning that struggle.<sup>157</sup> A week later, headlines gladly hailed the launching in the **Solomons** of a long-awaited American offensive. It was, said the *Dominion's* commentator on 10 August, the most welcome news of the past few months.

Having decided on the roles of the several services, the Americans had struck at **Guadalcanal** before the Japanese airfield could come into use. Early on 7 August, 11 000 marines made a surprise landing, and by next afternoon had seized both the partially completed airfield and the main camp of the 2000 Japanese, mainly labour troops, who retired rapidly. At Tulagi harbour, used as a seaplane base, opposition was stronger, but it too was taken by the night of 8 August, along with the small neighbouring islands of Gavutu and Tanambogo.

After this most promising start came disastrous setbacks, and 26 weeks' hard fighting to secure what had been occupied in little more than that number of hours. From Rabaul a Japanese force of five heavy cruisers, two light cruisers and a destroyer had already hurried south to intercept the Allies; in a night attack lasting 32 minutes very early on 9 August, through an amazing series of Allied confusions and wrong decisions Admiral Mikawa, naval commander at **Rabaul**, sank off Savo Island the Australian heavy cruiser **Canberra**, three American cruisers, **Vincennes**, **Astoria** and **Quincy**, and a destroyer, taking very little damage himself.<sup>158</sup> Then, fearing attack by American aircraft, the Japanese withdrew. The American transports hurriedly completed unloading their supplies for the Marines and, with the remnants of their covering force, retreated to **Noumea**, leaving them on their own, with

not much firepower, and food for 37 days.

During the next three months, both sides reinforced and supplied their men on **Guadalcanal**, where grim, tight jungle fighting developed, punctuated by major attacks; for the Americans the lowest point in the whole campaign was in mid-October. There were also, besides stray sinkings, four big naval battles. The first of these, on 24 August, between carrier aircraft, was more or less a draw, the Japanese losing a light carrier and damaging but not sinking the carrier *Enterprise*. On the night of 11–12 October, the heavy cruiser ***San Francisco*** beat off a Japanese cruiser force, enabling reinforcements drawn from **New Caledonia** to land on **Guadalcanal** in time to face a night bombardment from battleships and to withstand a major attempt to recapture the airfield, 23–6 October. On 26 October, off the Santa Cruz islands, an indecisive action against a large Japanese force sank the carrier *Hornet* and damaged both the carrier *Enterprise* and the battleship *South Dakota*, while a Japanese heavy cruiser, two destroyers and two carriers were damaged, with serious losses in aircraft and pilots. The Japanese fleet withdrew, leaving a badly crippled American fleet guarding an island on which American troops precariously held a battered, pock-marked airfield. <sup>159</sup> By the first week of November Japanese reinforcements outnumbered the Americans, but a great sea battle between 12–15 November with American aircraft flying from **Guadalcanal's** crucial airfield, proved decisive though expensive. The Americans lost two cruisers, six destroyers and two rear-admirals, and took heavy damage besides; the Japanese lost two battleships, along with several lesser warships and laden transports, and retreated. This was their last major attempt to recapture **Guadalcanal**, but the slow grind against the tenacious Japanese ground troops continued till the remnants were evacuated early in February 1943.

Obviously these events, especially the heavy naval losses of 9 August, could not be told to the world. The loss of HMAS ***Canberra*** was published on 21 August, but news of the three sunken American cruisers was not given till 12 October. <sup>160</sup> The initial success, plus news that the



Americans had also counter-attacked in the Aleutians, gave welcome assurance that a genuine and effective offensive was under way. From Sydney came the man-in-the-street view, 'It's about time'.

'The scope, purpose and the degree of success of these enterprises are unannounced at the time of writing,' said the *Auckland Star* on 10 August, 'but the bare announcement of them lifts the spirit', adding that it was one thing to harass the enemy with destructive raids, as in the Marshall Islands, it was quite another to take a strongly held position and keep it. News continued to be veiled and changeable, but generally cheerful: naval battles 'raged', there were mopping-up operations and bitter land fighting, and aircraft were active. Reports quoted from American and Australian sources provided a variety of headlines, such as 'Allies now Control Third of **Solomons**',<sup>161</sup> 'Long Grim Fight in South-West Pacific Area',<sup>162</sup> 'Resistance Overcome, Japanese taken by Surprise, Enemy Naval Force Driven off'.<sup>163</sup>

On 31 August (alongside news of the Japanese landing at Milne Bay, Papua) papers published, with varying completeness, a 'US **Navy** communique' which stated that American troops on **Tulagi** and **Guadalcanal** were sufficiently well established to warrant the release of details of the action in the **Solomons**. These details were mainly of the successful landing on 7-8 August, with some skilful skating over later events. 'This is a report to rejoice over,' declared the *Auckland Star*. After much speculation on few facts, the course of American operations in the **Solomons** had been made reasonably clear. Although there had been no hint of withdrawal, official reticence and unofficial warnings about over-optimism had created the impression that the attackers were holding on precariously, their fate in the balance. Now, since they were well established in six islands and operating the airport, there seemed firm grounds for confidence that they could maintain their position.<sup>164</sup>

During September interest concentrated on the Japanese advance in Papua, the German drive on **Stalingrad**, the recalcitrance of Waikato miners.<sup>165</sup> The gap between public confidence, grown from reports of a secure front on **Guadalcanal**, and the actual uncertainty was measured



by the public's growing impatience with fire watching, and government's seemingly unreasonable insistence on its continuance, even its extension. Ministers gave direct warnings. Sullivan, on 13 September, said that it was madness of the very craziest kind for people to talk as though the danger for New Zealand had passed; the Japanese would make a great effort to recover what they had lost in recent defeats and if they should win New Zealanders might have to fight for their country.<sup>166</sup> Such warnings, long linked to appeals for more devotion to the war effort, fell on ears dulled by custom.

Within three weeks the tone of news and comment had grown distinctly less cheerful. The *New Zealand Herald* said on 17 September that the heavy Japanese offensive under way should chasten those who a few weeks earlier were too ready to assume that the tide had turned. Next day it pointed out that the struggle in the **Solomons**, though important for **Australia** and New Zealand, was not regarded in **London**, **Washington** or **Moscow** as determining the war. Allied eyes were on **Stalingrad**. Again, on 21 September, this paper wrote, 'The Allied High Command may or may not underestimate **Japan**, but certainly they ... are attempting to defeat Germany first. Comparatively light forces are being devoted to holding **Japan**.' The *Auckland Star* on the same day said that so far news had been scant and speculation plentiful. American comment, in which a few weeks ago there had been keen anticipation of further islands being recaptured, now emphasised the strength of the enemy and the strain on the Marines to retain what they held, one commentator saying that unless the Marines were reinforced the Japanese might seize the vital airfield. The *Star*, while rejecting such extreme pessimism, foresaw stalemate, with the Japanese unable to recapture the southern islands and the Americans unable to advance. American emphasis on reinforcements obviously alarmed New Zealand. Coates on 28 August had spoken of New Zealand troops going to other theatres if needed, and on 8 September Major-General Barrowclough,<sup>167</sup> inspecting a 'new military formation of which he has just taken over the command', said 'The war cannot be won by sitting here in New Zealand so we have to ... be able to go away at very short notice.'<sup>168</sup> Newspapers

began to speak of New Zealanders going to the **Solomons**, urging that their training and equipment should be suitable. <sup>169</sup>

The news on 22 September had stated that the see-saw **Solomons** battle had so far proved indecisive because neither side had an overwhelming superiority. During October the see-saw continued: sometimes the landing of Japanese troops was reported, sometimes the Marines were reinforced, and a vital battle was always impending. Meanwhile the news concentrated on **Stalingrad**, then in its second month of siege, and on the Australian advance in Papua where the Japanese, having got within striking distance of **Port Moresby**, were mysteriously retreating. In fact, their reinforcements had been diverted to the **Solomons**, but this was not known at the time. Then, in the last week of October, came the longed-for but anxiety-fraught news that the **Eighth Army** had broken out from **Alamein** with the New Zealand Division in the lead. The *Auckland Star* remarked that while the thoughts of many New Zealanders were in Egypt, the **Solomons** campaign was at a critical stage: the earlier high hopes for a large-scale offensive had faded and even the current foothold was uncertain. The difficulties of landing reinforcements were shown by the sinking of the American aircraft-carrier *Wasp* on 15 September 1942, news of which had just been released; the *Star* again suggested that New Zealanders might soon be in the **Pacific** fight. <sup>170</sup> A few days later, the *Star* pointed out that New Zealanders were conditioned by their news sources to take a detached view of some direct and immediate interests. Nine times a day they could hear reports from the **BBC** in which the **Pacific** was far away, with Stalingrad, the **Middle East** and British ministers in the foreground; many American commentators stood mentally with their backs to the **Pacific**. To these observers the significance of the **Solomons** battle was that it had held the Japanese off Siberia or **India**. <sup>171</sup> On 8 November Allied armies under Eisenhower <sup>172</sup> landed in **Morocco**. In July this would have been welcomed by the *Star* as the second front to relieve **Russia**; now it saw that the very great strength of the forces sent to the **Mediterranean** meant that there were less for the **Pacific**. <sup>173</sup>

In mid-October the American public had been perturbed to learn that, on the night of 8–9 August, as well as the Australian *Canberra*, loss of which had been acknowledged on 21 August, three United States cruisers had been sunk. The delay was criticised by some American papers,<sup>174</sup> notably the *New York Times*, whose correspondent further disclosed that these ships had been surprised ‘like sitting ducks, and unable to get off more than a few ineffective salvos’, and that American naval losses during August and September had been far heavier than *Japan’s*.<sup>175</sup> In a wave of leadership criticism, Ghormley<sup>176</sup> was replaced late in October by the more battle-worthy Halsey, while Australian commentators joined those of *America* in uneasiness about the withholding of disagreeable information. ‘No true and balanced picture of the *Solomons* scene can be obtained if minor successes are promptly stressed while serious losses are not acknowledged for weeks or months afterwards.’<sup>177</sup>

At almost the same time as the *Alamein* break-through, the Japanese had made a three-day attack on the airfield of *Guadalcanal*, without success, and this was quickly followed by the indecisive naval action off Santa Cruz.<sup>178</sup> These actions were reported fairly quietly: the loss of an unnamed American carrier was acknowledged, while it was stated that the Japanese had taken a heavy beating.<sup>179</sup> On 2 November Sullivan warned machinery and munition workers that New Zealand’s danger was never greater.<sup>180</sup>

But suddenly, in mid-November, the long winter of failure seemed everywhere to be ending. The tattered remnants of the *Africa Corps* were in retreat, pursued by the leap-frogging *Eighth Army*, while British and American troops were pressing east towards *Tunis*. Stalingrad was still holding; in Papua the Australians were closing in on the enemy’s coastal bases at Buna and Gona, and on 17–18 November success widened when headlines proclaimed a smashing naval victory in the *Solomons*. *Japan’s* largest attempt to regain *Guadalcanal* had been driven off on the night of 12–13 November with, claimed early communiques, the loss of 23 assorted ships, including a battleship and laden transports, in the

greatest naval battle of the war, while the **United States** had lost only eight vessels. Although Colonel Knox warned that the Japanese would return, and though the *Press* pointed out that the battleship sunk was one of the oldest anywhere while **Japan's** main battlefleet was still scarcely damaged,<sup>181</sup> there was widespread feeling that a nagging threat had at last been removed.

There was both public impatience to be done with EPS works and, among its authorities, reluctance to see its structure and powers diminished. 'The Japs are as dead as Julius Caesar', declared a member of **Auckland's** Hospital Board, amazed at a proposed move to spend £800 on more shelters for patients, but chairman A. J. Moody did not believe in 'this business of ringing bells and throwing your hat up too soon.' The Board decided to proceed with the shelters, subject to the approval of the Minister of Health.<sup>182</sup> When a Mt Eden borough councillor on 24 November advocated suspension of all EPS activities and restrictions in order to divert energy to more constructive efforts, it was decided to defer decision till the next meeting.<sup>183</sup>

It had been clear for a long time that command of the sea decided which side could receive reinforcements. **America** now had this advantage, narrowly, but the Japanese did not give up easily: there were two minor naval battles, countless patrols and ground actions before 1 February 1943 when they began leaving **Guadalcanal** at night. A week later **America** could claim total victory.

Meanwhile New Zealand's Third Division had gone forth to garrison **New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Tonga** and **Fiji**. At home there was thankfulness for its present safety and expectation that it would move on to fighting islands. Anxiety and pride remained concentrated on **Tunisia**.

---

<sup>1</sup> Curtin, Rt Hon John, PC (1885–1945): PM Aust from 1941, Min Defence Co-ordination 1941–2; chmn Advisory War Council 1941ff, Min Defence 1942

<sup>2</sup> *Press*, 5 Jan 42

<sup>3</sup> Only *Arizona*, which blew up, and *Oklahoma*, which capsized, were total losses. *Maryland*, the luckiest, was back in active service in February; the others, raised and repaired, returned during late 1942 and 1943. Morison, S. E., *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, volume III, *The Rising Sun in the Pacific*, 1931–April 1942, p. 143

<sup>4</sup> Knox, Colonel William Franklin (1874–1944): Republican candidate Pres US 1936; Sec *Navy* from 1940

<sup>5</sup> *Press*, 17 Dec 41, p. 7

<sup>6</sup> See p. 316

<sup>7</sup> eg, *Otago Daily Times*, 30 Dec 41; *NZ Herald*, 6 Jan 42

<sup>8</sup> *NZ Herald*, 8 Jan 42, p. 8; *Evening Star*, 12 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>9</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Jan 42, p. 9; *Evening Star*, 19 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>10</sup> *NZ Herald*, 14 Jan 42, p. 7

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

<sup>12</sup> eg, *Otago Daily Times*, 23 Dec 41; *Auckland Star*, 14 Jan 42; *Press*, 3 Feb 42

<sup>13</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Jan 42

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 24 Jan 42

**15** Rommel, Field Marshal Erwin (1891–1944): joined German Army 1910, served Western Front, **Italy** in WWI; cmdr **Hitler's** mobile headquarters 1938–40, 7th Panzer Div 1940; C-in-C Panzer Group (later Army) **Africa** 1941–3, Army Group B, Northern Italy 1943, NW **France, Belgium** and the **Netherlands** 1944; implicated in attempt on **Hitler's** life on 20 July 1944 and forced to commit suicide on 14 October 1944

**16** Rommel had already begun his counter-attack, and was to recapture **Benghazi** two days later.

**17** *NZ Herald*, 29 Jan 42, p. 8. There are minor variations between the text of the edited versions of Churchill's speeches (Eade) and the cabled versions printed in contemporary newspapers.

**18** *Ibid.*, editorial. Prosecution for this editorial was seriously considered, but no action was taken. A. H. Johnstone advised that it was subversive as likely to interfere with the success of HM forces or those of his Allies, and as likely to cause undue public alarm; but the subject matter was controversial and 'when criticism is offered in good faith on a matter so vital as the conduct of the war it is possible to err on the side of legalism.' Johnstone to Attorney-General, 2 Mar 42, C & P file 3/5, quoted in War History Narrative, 'Censorship of the Press', chap VI, p. 7

**19** *Auckland Star*, 29 Jan 42

**20** Some Gisborne citizens, holding that New Zealand should dissociate itself from Australia's anger (see below), sent him a message of unbounded admiration and confidence. *Evening Star*, 29 Jan 42, p. 2

**21** *Press*, 29 Jan 42

**22** *NZ Herald*, 13 Feb 42; *Evening Star*, 14 Feb 42, p. 7; *Auckland Star*, 16 Feb 42

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Star*, 17 Feb 42, p. 5. Churchill's admirer, Harold Nicolson, wrote of his speech: 'He is grim and not gay. Unfortunately he appeals for national unity and not criticism, in a manner which recalls Neville Chamberlain. Moreover, although he is not rhetorical, he cannot speak in perfectly simple terms and cannot avoid the cadences of a phrase. I do not think that his speech will have done good.' Nicolson, p. 209

<sup>24</sup> *Press*, 17 Feb 42, p. 4

<sup>25</sup> *NZ Herald*, 20 Feb 42

<sup>26</sup> *Press*, 17 Feb 42

<sup>27</sup> *Auckland Star*, 7 Mar 42, p. 5

<sup>28</sup> See p. 711ff

<sup>29</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11 Mar 42, p. 5

<sup>30</sup> Wood, p. 225

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*; *Documents*, vol III, p. 235

<sup>32</sup> Fletcher, Sir James, Kt('46) (1886–1974): b **Scotland**, to NZ 1908; founder with brother Fletcher Holdings Construction Co; Cmsnr Defence Construction, Controller Shipping 1942–4

<sup>33</sup> Maximum pay for carpenters, at 3 s 3 d an hour, was £8 15 s 6 d, and for labourers, at 2 s 9 d an hour, £7 8 s 6 d, with a minimum weekly wage in bad weather of £5 5 s

<sup>34</sup> *Dominion*, 26 Feb 42



<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>36</sup> *NZ Herald*, 14 Feb 42, p. 14

<sup>37</sup> *Dominion*, 26 Feb 42, p. 2

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Feb 42, p. 3

<sup>39</sup> *Auckland Star*, 26 Feb 42

<sup>40</sup> *Dominion*, 29 Jan 42, p. 7; *Evening Post*, 5 Feb 42, p. 12

<sup>41</sup> *Evening Post*, 14 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>42</sup> *Evening Star*, 7 Feb 42, p. 7; *Dominion*, 14 Feb 42; *Evening Post*, 7 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>43</sup> eg, *Dominion*, 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17 Feb 42, pp. 6, 8, 8, 8, 6, 6; *Auckland Star*, 11 Feb 42, p. 6; *Star-Sun*, 11 Feb 42, p. 4

<sup>44</sup> *NZ Herald*, 14 Apr, 4 May 42

<sup>45</sup> *Dominion*, 7 Mar 42, 11 Apr 42, p. 8; *Press*, 14 May 42

<sup>46</sup> *Auckland Star*, 7, 24, 25, 26 Mar 42, pp. 6, 4, 6, 6; *Truth*, 29 Apr 42, p. 11

<sup>47</sup> Bennett, Lieutenant-General Henry Gordon, CB, CMG, DSO, VD (1887–1962): b Aust; cmdr 2nd Div Aust Military Forces 1926–31, 8th Div AIF 1940–2, 3rd Aust Corps 1942–4; GOC Aust Imp Force Malaya 1941–2

<sup>48</sup> *Dominion*, 7, 8 Apr 42, pp. 3, 6

<sup>49</sup> *Truth*, 11 Mar 42, p. 13

<sup>50</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Feb 42; *Auckland Star*, 17 Feb 42; *Press*, 17 Feb 42

<sup>51</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Mar 42; *Evening Star*, 20 Mar 42

<sup>52</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Feb 42, p. 5 (warning from Tojo on useless war); *Dominion*, 21, 24, 25 Feb, 2, 5 Mar, 4 Apr 42, pp. 8, 4, 7, 6, 6, 6; *Evening Star*, 27 Feb, 19 Mar 42; *Auckland Star*, 21 Feb, 7 Mar 42, pp. 6, 6; *NZ Herald*, 24 Feb, 3 Mar 42, pp. 4, 6

<sup>53</sup> *Dominion*, 4 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>54</sup> *Press*, 4 Mar 42

<sup>55</sup> *NZ Herald*, 4 Mar 42; *Evening Star*, 11 Mar 42

<sup>56</sup> *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 112

<sup>57</sup> *Press*, 4 Nov 41

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>59</sup> *Wood*, pp. 231–5, 237–8

<sup>60</sup> Sumners, Hatton W. (1875–1962): US Congressman 1913–47

<sup>61</sup> *Dominion*, 16 Feb 42, also 18, 21, 26 Feb 42, pp. 6, 8, 7 (letters); *Auckland Star*, 17 Feb, 7 Mar 42

<sup>62</sup> *Dominion*, 7 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>63</sup> *Auckland Star*, 2 Feb, 13 Mar 42, pp. 4, 4

<sup>64</sup> McCaul, Michael Graham Cox (1883–1975): INZEF; Pres Wgtn Chamber Commerce 1935–6; Pres Assoc Chambers Commerce 1936–7; member Town Planning Institute NZ 1937–41; trustee NZ Employers' Federation 1937–53; hon Trade Commissioner for South Africa in NZ 1951

<sup>65</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11 Feb 42, p. 6; *Dominion*, 12 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>66</sup> *Auckland Star*, 12 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>67</sup> Melrose, Major Thomas Harrison (d 1952 *aet* 66): cmdr Home Guard Hamilton WWII

<sup>68</sup> Awake New Zealand' articles in *Waikato Times*, 20, 23, 24, 26 Feb 42; reprinted as a pamphlet, *Sound the Tocsin*; *NZ Herald*, 3 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>69</sup> Bonham, P. O. (d 1961 *aet* 56): b Aust, to NZ early 1920s; prominent in farming circles in the *Waikato* for more than 30 years

<sup>70</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 Mar 42, p. 5; *Evening Star*, 16 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>71</sup> *Dominion*, 21 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>72</sup> *Auckland Star*, 12 Mar 42, p. 6; another article on the women's page stressed the message that there were no nice Japanese.

<sup>73</sup> *Standard*, 19, 26 Mar 42, pp. 6, 1

<sup>74</sup> *Press*, 17 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>75</sup> *Auckland Star*, 19 Mar 42, p. 5; *Wanganui Herald*, 20 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>76</sup> *Auckland Star*, 19 Mar 42, p. 5

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>78</sup> *Dominion*, 20 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>79</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>80</sup> *Dominion*, 21 Mar 42, p. 10

<sup>81</sup> *Evening Post*, 27 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>82</sup> *Truth*, 28 Oct 42, p. 16

<sup>83</sup> See p. 98

<sup>84</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>85</sup> Allum, Sir John, Kt('50), CBE('46) (1889–1972): b **London**; Auck City Council from 1920; Mayor Auckland 1941–53; 30 years Pres Auckland Free Kindergarten Assn

<sup>86</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18, 21 Mar 42, pp. 5, 8; *In Print*, 25 Mar 42

<sup>87</sup> *NZ Herald*, 25 Feb, 12 Mar 42, pp. 9, 9

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Feb, 13 Apr 42, pp. 8, 6

<sup>89</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>90</sup> *Press*, 13 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>92</sup> *Standard*, 19 Mar 42, p. 6, also 19, 26 Feb 42, pp. 6, 11

<sup>93</sup> Denham, William Mortimer Clarence (1887–1969): b Aust, to NZ 1907; connected with Labour movt from 1916; Pres Invercargill branch Lab party; MP (Lab) [Invercargill](#) 1935–46; Invercargill Borough Council from 1921

<sup>94</sup> *Press*, 18 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>95</sup> *Truth*, 18 Mar 42, p. 13

<sup>96</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>98</sup> *Standard*, 26 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>99</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Apr 42, p. 6

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 May 42, p. 5

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 16 May 42, pp. 6, 8

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 May 42, p. 2

<sup>103</sup> *Hawera Star*, 21 May 42

<sup>104</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11 Mar 42, p. 7

**105 See p. 361**

**106 Morison, vol III, p. 290. That destruction was not greater was probably due to many torpedoes being faulty, as they proved to be elsewhere at that time, and to others not running true in the shallow water, plus the high speed of the destroyers, the close range and the confusion of night attack.**

**107 *Ibid.*; Kirby, S. Woodburn, *The War Against Japan*, vol I, p. 297**

**108 Wood, Edward Frederick Lindley, 1st Earl of [Halifax](#) ('44), 3rd Viscount Halifax (1881–1959): British statesman; Viceroy India 1926–31; Sec State Foreign Aff 1938–40; Ambassador Washington 1941–6**

**109 Halsey, Fleet Admiral William Frederick, USN (1882–1959): cmdr Allied Naval Forces South Pacific 1942–4, US 3rd Fleet, [Pacific](#) 1944–5**

**110 Morison, vol III, pp. 264–5; Kirby, vol II, p. 224**

**111 Morison, vol III, pp. 357–8**

**112 *Evening Post*, 16 Mar 42**

**113 *Auckland Star*, 16 Mar 42**

**114 *Press*, 16 Mar 42**

**115 *Dominion*, 2 Mar 42, p. 5; *Evening Star*, 21 Mar 42, p. 7; *Evening Post*, 23 May 42, p. 5**

**116 Kirby, vol II, p. 226**

**117** Brown, Vice-Admiral Wilson, USN (1882–1957): cmdr Scouting Force Pacific Fleet 1941; aide to Pres Roosevelt 1943

**118** Morison, vol III, pp. 388–9

**119** Gillison, Douglas, *The Royal Australian Air Force 1939–42*, p. 456

**120** Morison, vol III, p. 389

**121** *Dominion*, 20 Mar 42, p. 5

**122** Brett, Lieutenant-General George H. (1886–1963): USAF from 1915; Dep Supreme Cmdr SW Pacific Jan–Mar 1942; cmdr all US troops in **Australia** Mar 1942; C-in-C Allied Air Forces in **Australia** 1942

**123** *Auckland Star*, 11 Apr 42, p. 7

**124** Doolittle, Lieutenant-General James Harold, Hon KCB('45) (1896–): cmdr US 12th Air Force North Africa 1942–3, 15th Air Force Mediterranean 1943–4, 8th **Air Force Far East** 1944–5

**125** Morton, L., *The United States Army in World War II, Strategy and Command: The First Two Years*, pp. 269–73

**126** Kirby, vol II, p. 225

**127** *NZ Herald*, 22 Apr 42, p. 7; *Evening Star*, 23 Apr 42, p. 7

**128** Fletcher, Admiral Frank Jack, USN (1885–1973): cmdr Task Forces at battles of Coral Sea, Midway; cmdr North Pacific Forces, US Fleet 1943–5



<sup>129</sup> A **Washington** communiqué in mid-June claimed that these aircraft caught the Japanese forces by surprise and all but annihilated them. A few ships managed to get to sea but most were severely crippled and some were beached to prevent sinking. This engagement sank or destroyed 12 Japanese vessels and 6 Japanese aircraft. *NZ Herald*, 15 Jun 42, p. 3. At the same time pilots reported by a press correspondent at **Honolulu** said that they certainly sank two heavy cruisers, three light cruisers and two destroyers, while transports and numerous small craft were among possible sinkings. *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Morton, pp. 274–8; Kirby, vol II, p. 228

<sup>131</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 May 42, p. 5

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4

<sup>133</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9 May 42

<sup>134</sup> *Press*, 11 May 42

<sup>135</sup> *Star–Sun*, 15 May 42, p. 3, ‘specially written for the NZ Press Association’; also *Evening Post*, 15 May 42, p. 6, *Auckland Star*, 15 May 42, p. 5

<sup>136</sup> *Auckland Star*, 21 May 42; *Press*, 16 May 42, p. 6

<sup>137</sup> Morison, vol IV, pp. 66–8; details in Gill, G. H., *Royal Australian Navy 1942–1945*, pp. 61–74

<sup>138</sup> *Auckland Star*, 9 Jun 42

<sup>139</sup> Yamamoto, Admiral Isoroku (1884–1943): Japanese naval officer; C-in-C Combined Fleet 1941–3; devised plans for **Pearl Harbour** attack; killed in action over **Solomons**

- 140** Nimitz, Fleet Admiral Chester W., Hon GCB('45), USN (1885–1966): C-in-C US **Pacific Fleet** and **Pacific Ocean Area** 1941–5; Chief Naval Ops US 1945–7; Special Asst Sec Navy 1947–9
- 141** Kirby, vol II, p. 233
- 142** Hurley, Major-General Patrick Jay (1883–1963): US Min NZ 1942; personal rep Roosevelt in Egypt, **Middle East**, **Russia**, **India**, **China**, 1943–4; Amb China 1944–5
- 143** *Dominion*, 17 Jun 42
- 144** *Evening Post*, 27 Aug 42
- 145** *Auckland Star*, 10–12 Sep 42
- 146** In the post-war account *Yorktown*, abandoned after being hit by bombs and torpedoes, remained afloat for two days. Finally, while the destroyer *Hammann* was trying to take her in tow, a Japanese submarine put a torpedo into the destroyer so that she sank within four minutes, and another torpedo finished *Yorktown*. Three other destroyers hunted the submarine in vain. Morison, vol IV, p. 156
- 147** *Auckland Star*, 11 Jun 42, p. 5
- 148** Again, on 31 July, the *Herald* foreboded attack on Siberia. According to some Washington sources this was **Japan's** real intention, southern activities being merely feints to conceal it. *Auckland Star*, 4 Aug 42
- 149** *Ibid.*, 28 Jul 42, p. 5
- 150** *Ibid.*, 25 Jul 42, p. 5

<sup>151</sup> *NZ Herald*, 4 Aug 42, p. 2. The *Press* and other papers pined for the counter-offensive 'which can provide the only real defence against extension of Japanese conquest in the **South-west Pacific**'. *Press*, 25 Jul 42

<sup>152</sup> See chap 14

<sup>153</sup> The significance of Coral Sea and Midway, clear to postwar sight, was not then so obvious.

<sup>154</sup> Morton, p. 289

<sup>155</sup> King, Fleet Admiral Ernest Joseph, Hon GCB('46) (1878–1956): C-in-C Atlantic Fleet 1941, US Fleet & Chief Naval Ops 1942–5

<sup>156</sup> Morton, pp. 296–300

<sup>157</sup> *Press*, 3 Aug 42

<sup>158</sup> 'One side was all but annihilated and the other escaped virtually unscathed'. Morison, vol V, p. 61

<sup>159</sup> Morton, p. 345

<sup>160</sup> Morison, vol V, p. 61n; *Auckland Star*, 21 Aug. 14 Oct 42, pp. 5, 3

<sup>161</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 Aug 42, p. 5

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Aug 42, p. 5

<sup>163</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19 Aug 42, p. 3

<sup>164</sup> *Auckland Star*, 31 Aug 42

<sup>165</sup> See p. 407

<sup>166</sup> *Dominion*, 14 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>167</sup> Barrowclough, Major-General Rt Hon Sir Harold, PC, KCMG('54), CB, DSO and bar, MC, ED, MC(Greek), Legion of Merit(US), Croix de Guerre(Fr) (1894–1972): 1NZEF 1915–19; cmdr 7 NZ Inf Bde UK 1940, 6 NZ Inf Bde Middle East 1940–2; GOC 3 NZ Div and 2NZEF in *Pacific* 1942–4; Chief Justice NZ 1953–66

<sup>168</sup> *Auckland Star*, 8 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, 21 Sep 42; *NZ Herald*, 22 Sep 42. The 'new military formation' was the 3rd Division which, after topping off its training with a 5-day bush exercise in the Kaimai ranges late in October, went off in several sections between early November and January 1943 to garrison *New Caledonia*.

<sup>170</sup> *Auckland Star*, 28 Oct 42

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 Oct 42

<sup>172</sup> Eisenhower, General Dwight David (1890–1969): asst military adviser to *Philippines* 1935–40; cmdg gen European Theatre 1942; C-in-C Allied Forces Nth Africa 1942–3; Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Forces Western Europe 1943–5; COS US Army 1945–8; Supreme Allied Commander Europe 1950–2; President USA 1953–61

<sup>173</sup> *Auckland Star*, 14 Nov 42

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Oct 42, p. 3

**175** *Press*, 26, 29 Oct 42, pp. 5, 5

**176** Ghormley, Vice-Admiral Robert Lee, USN (1883–1958): cmdr Sth Pacific Force & Sth Pacific Area 1942, Hawaiian Sea Frontier & commandant 14th Naval District 1943–4, US Naval Forces in Germany 1944–5; chmn General Bd Navy Dept Washington 1946

**177** *Sydney Morning Herald*, quoted by *Press*, 3 Nov 42, p. 5

**178** See p. 366

**179** *Press*, 3 Nov 42, p. 5

**180** *Auckland Star*, 2 Nov 42, p. 4

**181** *Press*, 18 Nov 42

**182** *Auckland Star*, 24 Nov 42, p. 5

**183** *Ibid.*, 25 Nov 42. p. 4

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

# CHAPTER 11 – THE CHALLENGE IS ACCEPTED



## CHAPTER 11

### *The Challenge is Accepted*

**IN the sharpened demands of the new war, employers felt that the nonsense of the 40-hour week must at last be thrown out, along with undue devotion to workers' rights and conditions. Workers, while aware of heightened danger and need, felt that the old enemies, the bosses, were using the crisis to whittle away strong points won by years of union struggle.**

**The first skirmish occurred at the Dobson coal mine, **Greymouth**, in the week of **Pearl Harbour**. Towards the end of 1941 minor stoppages in Westland mines had increased in number, and on 5 December Webb, the Minister of Mines, had said that there must be no go-slow policy, and no stopwork meetings, without permission of management. On the afternoon of Friday 12 December, the Dobson union president asked for a stopwork meeting at 3 pm, a normal hour for such events, to discuss domestic union matters—there was no dispute with management. When this was refused, he called the men out of the mine at 2 o'clock, whereon the mine manager dismissed him and three other union officials for obstructing work. <sup>1</sup> The miners decided not to work until the dismissals were withdrawn, and the backshift did not work on Friday night. During the weekend, after several deputations had failed to change the manager's mind, the Minister ordered that the four men should be reinstated, work resumed, and the miners prosecuted. Summonses were issued for 22 December, but as it was plainly unsuitable, in the Christmas coal crisis, to impose a day's idleness in court, the hearing was postponed. On 6 February, the prosecution explained that the charges were laid as a warning that stoppages would not be tolerated in the mines. The magistrate, G. G. Chisholm, <sup>2</sup> found that a breach of the regulations was proved, the men having left work without permission, but they had felt that their business justified a meeting, for which they had never previously been refused leave. Management was not free from blame: there was no reason why the trouble should have arisen, nor should it have been allowed to go as far**

as it did. More than a hundred miners were convicted and ordered to come up for sentence if called within twelve months. <sup>3</sup>

Government had maintained that hours exceeding 40 per week must be paid for at award rates of overtime, except where the Industrial Emergency Council, having been shown that a war-needed industry could not carry such payments, adjusted rates and lengthened hours through labour legislation suspension orders, of which a number had been made. Many existing awards, framed to induce full employment rather than bursts of overtime, provided time-and-a-half rates for the first three hours (or, in some awards, four hours) of overtime in any one week and thereafter double rates, while work on holidays won triple rates. But, with labour scarce and growing scarcer, the government realised that but for these heavy payments, more overtime could be worked. A regulation on 17 December 1941 extended the hours at time-and-a-half, where these had been three in a week, to three in any one day or 12 in any one week. In awards which had previously had four hours' weekly overtime at time-and-a-half rates, this was extended to four hours in any day or 16 in a week. Time worked on any holiday would earn double the ordinary rate. The waterfront and the dairying, gold dredging and shearing industries, which were already working more than 44 hours, were excluded. <sup>4</sup>

To lessen, and where necessary to avoid, the break of routine holidays in the midst of the December crisis, another regulation <sup>5</sup> provided that no holidays would start till Christmas Day, that all work would resume not later than Monday 5 January and that employers would decide whether any statutory or special holidays, including annual leave, should be kept as such, postponed for up to six months or worked at the full ordinary rate plus holiday pay. To assist in the distribution of goods, in shops where overtime previously was restricted to 60 hours a year, another order (1941/238) allowed up to 120 hours worked otherwise than on the sale of goods.

The overtime and holiday suspension orders pleased employers; they were, said the secretary of an employers' association, 'a short step in

easing award conditions. What we really want now is a general extension of the ordinary hours of work from 40 to 44 or 48 hours, in all industries at ordinary rates of pay for the duration.’<sup>6</sup> Applied blanket-fashion over all but a few industries, however, the regulations produced anomalies. Thus on Christmas and Boxing Days, cool store men at **Auckland** refused to handle, at double-time rates, the same produce that wharfies were loading at triple rates; they would, said their spokesman, have worked at ordinary, let alone double, pay, but they objected to the discrimination.<sup>7</sup> Further, in some industries, fixed prices already allowed for certain double and triple time days, and workers were quick to perceive that they were losing extra pay directly to the employers.<sup>8</sup> Freezing workers at Longburn refused to work on New Year’s Day unless the employers paid a day’s wages into the War Expenses Account, which they refused to do;<sup>9</sup> at Makarewa, the men protested against the Minister’s interference with awards and declared that the order did not increase production but every holiday worked made a gift of £9,000 to the freezing companies from the workers’ wages.<sup>10</sup> Those at **Kaiapoi** also protested, adding that they would not have done so if the money saved went to **Treasury** for the war effort or if the order applied to all workers.<sup>11</sup> The **Auckland Harbour Board Employees Union** called it an unjust penalty on the workers, who had a right to know where the cancelled pay was going.<sup>12</sup> Several other **Auckland** unions, for example, drivers, boilermakers and glassworkers,<sup>13</sup> and the **Auckland Trades Council**<sup>14</sup> protested against abrogation of their awards and declared their intention not to work on Anniversary Day, 29 January, except at full award rates. Webb replied that they would be deregistered if they took this stand; there would be no let-up and no compromise; there were proper channels for grievances but work must go on. He also said that men causing trouble would be removed from their industries for the duration, notwithstanding any resolutions passed by local federations dominated by political opponents of the government.<sup>15</sup> However, on 28 January, on the advice of the **Industrial Emergency Council**, Webb also said that anomalies had been foreseen and would be considered sympathetically; the **Auckland unions**, after an hour-long address by him, reversed their

decision about working on Anniversary Day. <sup>16</sup> By 2 February it was stated <sup>17</sup> that though the order would not be withdrawn, it would be administered with due regard to varying conditions, and that the government was unlikely to issue any more blanket orders. Before the end of the month, the Auckland Employers Association urged that the government should make up its mind, speak clearly and insist on obedience, for unions were whittling away the order: drivers, electrical workers, linesmen, radio workers, switch-board and sub-station operators, tramway employees and boilermakers were applying for exemption. <sup>18</sup> Workers in the Wellington City Council's milk department, for instance, had already been exempted retrospectively. <sup>19</sup> In March it was decreed that all men on defence works and all firms supplying essential goods or goods for military purposes, including cement, rubber, woollen goods, leather, sugar, service biscuits, tinned fruit and pickles, should work over the Easter holidays at the rates given by their various awards. <sup>20</sup> At the Federation of Labour's Easter conference it was said that the holiday and overtime suspension order had created widespread confusion, and the president, A. McLagan, <sup>21</sup> attributed this to hasty and badly worded orders made in the rush of **Japan's** entry, the Crown Law Office not having been properly instructed by the **Labour Department**; if aggrieved unions had contacted the Federation's national executive, explanations and exemptions could have been made more quickly. <sup>22</sup> By late 1942 the order was not generally applicable, about 60 awards having been exempted from it. <sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, on 14 January the government tackled the chaos that was growing as labour sought out the best-paid jobs. Industries concerned with the war effort or services necessary to the community were declared essential; workers could not leave such jobs without consent of the District Manpower Officer and, except in dismissals for serious misconduct, both workers and employers must give seven days' notice of wishing to terminate employment. To control the inflow of labour, the Minister of Labour could specify less essential industries, in which employers had to have Manpower's consent before engaging any worker. Further, the Minister could require any specified class of

workers, such as those with certain skills or in certain age groups, to register, and these persons could be directed into any job or training. Among the industries first declared essential were those of defence construction, munitions, coal mining, dairy factories, footwear, woollen, knitting and rubber mills, gas and electricity supplies, railways, hospitals, freezing works, flax and linen-flax mills and the timber industry. The list was extended from time to time to include firms engaged even partially on military orders, such as J. J. Melhuish and Co., pickle-makers,<sup>24</sup> and other industries necessary to the public.<sup>25</sup>

As the *Auckland Star* remarked, this was a single giant stride towards the regimentation of people's lives. The manufacturers joined the unions in complaining that they had not been consulted in the framing of these regulations, which probably, said the *Press*, explained the suspicious and resentful reaction they produced; the purpose was thoroughly justified, but faults and oversights in drafting made the impact more jarring than was necessary.<sup>26</sup>

To the workers, these arrangements seemed heavily weighted in the employers' favour. The Makarewa freezing workers called for the immediate conscription of wealth, claiming that workers, now fully conscripted, were facing sacrifices and hardship while the dividends of manufacturing and processing concerns had risen to new records.<sup>27</sup> The workers' fundamental right to sell their labour to the highest bidder had been swept aside, and it was feared that industries now paying above award rates to secure labour would contrive to reduce pay to award rates. And again there were anomalies: in certain clothing factories which, because they were making uniforms, were declared essential, some of the girls were sewing civilian suits, frocks and underclothing, yet they were anchored to these jobs whereas those doing similar work in factories without war contracts were free to move. The regulations, declared **John Roberts**,<sup>28</sup> secretary of the Clothing Workers Union, were reminiscent of the Middle Ages when farm labour was tied to the job.<sup>29</sup> The Auckland Trades Council declared that it would take no part in carrying out these coercive regulations, more likely to produce disunity than co-operation.

It advocated the use of production committees and local works councils similar to those in the **United States**, with labour and management equally represented under a government chairman. <sup>30</sup>

In short, these regulations, plus December's holidays and overtime orders and the powers taken by the Attorney-General in September 1940 to exclude from industry and unions persons likely to cause dissent, pressed against rights regarded as basic by organised labour. The men felt that the government had given them over to the bosses in the name of the war; if they could neither strike nor leave the job, every grievance could be ignored.

With this background of resentment, there began immediately the first of three strikes in the meatworks of **Auckland**. The petrol restrictions of December 1941 had caused the transport company serving the Westfield area, where transport was already over-loaded, to lay off four of the twelve petrol buses used at peak hours, while those men who previously had gone to work in groups by car now lengthened the bus queues. Freezing workers started very early in the morning, many in gangs where the lateness of one man upset the rest, and they finished at varying hours in the afternoon. Some men who knocked off at about 4.30 pm claimed they were not getting home till 7. Representations had been made since 17 December to the local traffic licensing authority, which had recommended to headquarters at **Wellington** that unless the train service could be altered to fit Westfield needs, something would have to be done, including the granting of petrol to private cars for group transport of men living beyond the ordinary service routes.

But nothing had been done by noon on Thursday 15 January 1942, when more than 100 mutton slaughtermen at the Westfield works ceased killing and said that they would not start again till transport was improved. The bus company's petrol was at once restored, making some improvement, and work was resumed on 16 January, but there was loud outcry from some quarters. This stoppage, declared the **New Zealand Herald** of 16 January, was an immediate test of the essential industry



regulations brought in barely two days earlier. Would they be enforced or would the government weakly follow its past practice of overlooking industrial offences committed by workers? 'It must enforce industrial discipline as strictly as military discipline—or abdicate.' The *Herald* deplored that the government had begun with appeasement, meekly increasing petrol for buses and talking of petrol for workers' cars. **Holland** telegraphed Fraser that the **Auckland** province was seething with indignation. When farmers and townspeople had met with extreme inconvenience and financial loss from lack of petrol, to give in to illegal strikers was to put a premium on lawlessness and a penalty on patriotism. Fraser should hasten to **Auckland** and tell the lawbreakers once and for all that the government and not the freezing workers was going to run New Zealand. <sup>31</sup>

Webb, as Minister of Labour, announced that legal proceedings would be taken against those in the hold-up, that if their union supported them it would be de-registered, and that unless the men resumed normal work they would be excluded from the industry for the duration. <sup>32</sup> Letters in the *Herald* explained that slaughter work was arduous and unpleasant; others pointed out that a soldier's job was arduous, unpleasant and long, a soldier never got home to dinner, and killing Germans was much more dangerous than killing lambs. Transport was still inadequate, and the Westfield men said that if it could not be improved they would have to cease work daily at an earlier hour; this, they said, was not a threat or an ultimatum, and would not be rushed into. <sup>33</sup>

On 16 January Scholefield, journalist and historian, recorded his bewildered reactions to militant unionism in wartime crises:

With the best will in the world towards my own class, the workers, I find it hard to understand how any body of men who know anything of the history of the working class movement can use the war to behave as many of them are doing. To-day there is another strike at the Westfield freezing works, on account, it is said, of the overcrowding of buses in which the men are taken to and from work. They surely cannot be

ignorant of the overcrowding of trams and buses in which working girls in the towns and people of all classes are now travelling every day of their life. If there is a better explanation of their conduct they should urgently state their case before the public, otherwise labour will not have a friend left outside the trades unionists when the war is over. Immediately following this strike, slaughtermen in the **Auckland** city abattoirs struck for higher wages for abattoir assistants and labourers.

That the malady is not universal is evident from the output of coal in 1941.... The public should be fully informed of what labour is doing and what hours are being worked. <sup>34</sup>

At the same time, another stoppage was not reported in the papers or recorded in the **Labour Department's** MS Register of Strikes, but appeared later in the annual report of the Department of Labour. Boners of the Westfield Freezing Company ceased work on 16 January alleging that carcasses were not thawed sufficiently. Court proceedings against 14 men were begun but withdrawn 'as the employer had apparently not made it clear to the workers that they were expected to continue with the work.' <sup>35</sup>

Also on 16 January, butchers at the **Auckland** city abattoirs ceased work, alleging that, because the City Council refused to pay abattoir labourers above the award rate of 2 s 7 d an hour, they could not get sufficient men to avoid excessive overtime and strain on the labourers whose cleaning work necessarily continued some hours after slaughtering ceased. For the first three days of the next week the butchers did not kill after 2.30 pm, but on Thursday, when asked again by management, promised normal work. Immediately, seven labourers gave one hour's notice, as they were entitled to do, meat killing for local use not being an essential industry. Management, saying that the situation was farcical, closed the abattoirs at 11 am, and they remained closed on Friday. Over the weekend, the National Service Department ordered the men to return to work and they did so. The abattoir section of the union was de-registered and the work declared essential. <sup>36</sup>



Webb at Westfield on 27 January spoke strongly of New Zealand's danger, of slavery under Japanese tyrants and children learning a foreign language at school. Extolling Russia's fight, he said that the half-baked Communists who were denouncing the government were 'just wreckers and ratbags' who would not last 24 hours in **Russia** and whose real work for the Labour movement could be written on a tram ticket. No stupid action would be allowed to jeopardise the Labour government, which had done so much for the workers. For the transport problem, a main complaint, Webb promised remedy; other speakers however berated the government for listening to the national executive of the Federation of Labour, not to the rank and file, for having two Hotel Workers Union members on the Industrial Emergency Council but none from the freezing industry, and for abrogating industrial awards by reducing holiday pay, seen as a gift to employers. On this last point, when asked what happened to the wages lost, and whether employers were required to hand the money over to the government, Webb was reported as saying, 'It may go to help pay old age pensions and other social benefits we have given to the people'. After loud cries of dissent had subsided he said that he was against any employer making money out of the war but the question was not so simple of solution as some people seemed to think.<sup>37</sup> It was hardly an agile reply, and the *Evening Post* helpfully sought to improve it by explaining that ending penal overtime rates checked inflation.

On 27 January, Amendment No 1 to the Strike and Lockout Emergency Regulations 1939 provided that any person who had offended or should hereafter offend could be imprisoned for up to three months or fined up to £50 or, if a body corporate, up to £200. Next day, with the stated purpose of upholding the law and the regulations, 43 men from the **Auckland** abattoirs were prosecuted for partial discontinuance work. The magistrate, J. H. Luxford, said that certain peacetime rights had to be thrown overboard, including the right to sell one's labour to the highest bidder, for in the present labour shortage adherence to this principle became exploitation. Having regard to the sudden change into a state of emergency, he would not fine or imprison; the defendants were

ordered to come up for sentence if called within 12 months; they would not be called if they worked in a proper spirit and manner, but any more breaches would mean prison. <sup>38</sup>

Next day, 29 January, 63 mutton slaughtermen from Westfield met the same charge and the same penalty, as did a further 53 a few days later. Luxford said, however, that with men working long hours and living over a wide area, transport was of utmost importance in running an essential industry. 'The sudden imposition of blanket petrol restrictions without making proper provision for the essential workers seems to me to show that some restrictions are being brought in without full appreciation of the situation'; but the men had spoilt an unanswerable case by taking direct action. <sup>39</sup>

The men might have said that only direct action had brought their unanswerable case to light. Even as they were in court, a committee was looking into the complex problem of Westfield transport, which Sir Ernest Davis, the former Mayor of **Auckland**, said was an absolute scandal, utterly unfair to the workers. Westfield was an industrial area, without nearby houses, and its industries were expanding much faster than was transport. At the Westfield Freezing Works alone there were 1850 men, fifty per cent more than in the previous year, and a further increase to 2400 was expected. <sup>40</sup>

In March, W. T. Anderton, <sup>41</sup> a slightly leftist Labour member of Parliament, criticising lack of co-operation and co-ordination between certain departments and ministers, said that such a lack between the departments of Transport and of Labour had caused the first Westfield strike, which would never have happened if the Transport Department had acted before, rather than after, the strike. <sup>42</sup> It was decided to make the railway timetable more useful, two transport companies offered to lend extra buses for the rush hours, and a permanent committee would arrange details and watch for future problems. <sup>43</sup>

That problems persisted was evidenced by a later court case. On 5 March a wearied Westfield cannery worker, when denied entrance to

three successive buses, struck the driver and used indecent language. She was fined 10 s on each count and 13 s 4 d costs, though the magistrate, J. Morling, bore in mind that she 'was working for her livelihood and had lost her head.'<sup>44</sup>

During February and early March, the **Labour Department's MS Register of Strikes** recorded several minor stoppages at **Auckland meatworks**. On 5 February, 15 men ceased work for one and three-quarter hours over inadequate means of sending out boned meat, and better methods were adopted; on 20 February, the lunch interval of 162 men was prolonged three-quarters of an hour over 'several matters in dispute', on which no concession was made; on 6 and 12 March, 100 men stopped for one and one-and-a-half hours, discussing grievances over the manning of the mutton killing floor; on 13 March, 13 labourers in the pig killing area made similar objections for three hours, to all of which no concessions were made. At Hellaby's, on 28 February, 47 slaughtermen ceased work for four hours because they were not supplied with knives to which they were entitled but which were hard to obtain, and on 9 March, 18 boners struck for five hours over too cold meat.

But in mid-March Westfield discontent produced a more formidable strike. At Hellaby's, which worked mainly for the retail trade, there had been since 1933 a small union covering workers engaged in preserving meat.<sup>45</sup> The much larger **Auckland Freezing Workers Union**,<sup>46</sup> to which 350 of Hellaby's male staff belonged, regarded it as a bosses' union, had tried to have it de-registered, and was currently suing the firm for arrears of wages due under the freezing workers award.<sup>47</sup> In February, the canning department at Hellaby's was extended and women were hired to work on service contracts. These women were told by management that they must join a union and the appropriate one was Hellaby's. Hearing of this, officials of the larger union asked the company for a lunch-time meeting with the women to suggest that they should instead join the **Auckland Freezing Workers Union**. The company, not wanting the women to be disturbed by contact with a troublesome union, refused. Thereupon 329 of Hellaby's members of the **Auckland**

Union held a meeting and, claiming that the company was interfering with the rights of workers to run union affairs and decide which union they would join, ceased work on the afternoon of Thursday 12 March. <sup>48</sup>

The strike spread to 2320 men. On Monday afternoon 16 March, 1595 members of the Auckland Freezing Workers Union employed at the Westfield Freezing Company ceased work in support of Hellaby's men; they were joined on the 17th by 307 men at the Southdown works of the Auckland Farmers Freezing Company, 73 men from this Company's cool store at Kings Wharf, and on the 18th by 16 bacon-workers at Hellaby's. <sup>49</sup>

In the generally expressed view, this was selfish action on a trivial matter when the war situation called for national effort, unity and sacrifice. Webb said immediately that it was unpardonable and treasonable, there would be legal action against those responsible and they might also be expelled from the industry. Indignation rose rapidly. The Mayor of **Dunedin** said it made one hang one's head in shame. <sup>50</sup> The *Press* spoke of wantonness and said that Webb should put his hat on and take his gloves off. <sup>51</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* said that the merits of the original dispute had become irrelevant to the main issue, which was a challenge to the government and all authority, a stab in the back of the country which was entitled in the present crisis to the services of all citizens without conditions or thought of self. 'It is for the Government to step in to show by firm decisive action that this form of national sabotage must end. It has the power. Let it be used.' <sup>52</sup> The *Evening Post* said that the government could prevent the strikers from obtaining other work and expel trouble-makers from the industry and would have the united support of the country in doing so. <sup>53</sup> Hawke's Bay farmers declared that 'the offenders should be drafted automatically into the military forces for suitable duties, where they would be subject to military discipline and pay.' <sup>54</sup> The *Dominion* wanted to know what 'proceedings' Webb proposed against the strikers: 'Are they, or their ring leaders, to be fined a pound or two, and then invited or drafted into other work? If not—if at long last there is to be an end to meaningless

finger-wagging and humiliating “appeals” to aggressive and irresponsible agitators—why does Mr Webb ... not say plainly what is in store for the men he accuses of treason, and follow the word by the deed?’ <sup>55</sup>

The Prime Minister on 17 March called for volunteers, both men and women, to cope with the thousands of animals already at the works or en route, and to continue canning for overseas orders. This was a step far from automatic for a leader risen from Labour ranks where ‘scab’ was a very dirty word. Several hundred men came forward, to be organised and led by the freezing companies’ office staffs augmented from other works. Some were farmers, <sup>56</sup> but many came from the city, their hands showing that they were not usually manual workers; the majority were middle-aged, ‘and a number were undoubtedly emerging from retirement’. <sup>57</sup>

Most of Hellaby’s cannery girls, the occasion if not the cause of all the tumult, were still working, <sup>58</sup> but Westfield had a much larger cannery, working on overseas orders, and 150 volunteer women were engaged there on 18 March. <sup>59</sup> Although youth and modernity were attested by a number arriving in slacks, the majority were middle-aged, obviously housewives in comfortable circumstances, most from Remuera, St Heliers, Epsom and Parnell, reported the *Auckland Star*. Many were well known in the city, having served on patriotic



WESTFIELD AFTERMATH

WESTFIELD AFTERMATH

bodies and the committees of such organisations as the Victoria League and the Plunket Society; one such declared she would 'stick it' no matter what she had to do. <sup>60</sup> More than 20 of the regular girls and about 30 men who disagreed with the strike showed the newcomers what to do. <sup>61</sup>

On the afternoon of 18 March the strike was declared over: the men would resume work while the Federation of Labour would bring the issue at Hellaby's before a tribunal. Next day work went smoothly at the cool stores and the Southdown works, where there was stock available, but at Hellaby's and at Westfield men were told that as stock supplies were interrupted and volunteers were on the job, they could not all be taken on at once, and it was made clear that some, including union officials, would never be taken on. Claiming that this was victimisation, some 1700 men remained on strike.

On Friday 20 March, more than 80 Westfield men who had already received suspended sentences for the earlier disturbance and who had also taken part in the stop-work meeting of 6 March, were sent to prison for a month, while six who had merely taken part in the meeting were fined £2 and costs. <sup>62</sup> Their counsel, W. R. Tuck, anxious to put their case fairly while avoiding statements likely to be provocative or to cause bitterness, explained that in the present issue two unionist principles were involved: firstly, the workers' right to choose and develop their own union organisation free from the employers' influence; secondly, if any members were penalised for union activity their fellow-workers considered themselves equally concerned and equally liable. They were not merely supporting comrades; 'The union was the union of all the workers in all the works and the principle involved was one of equal importance to all the workers. That, sir, is the explanation of the action taken.' <sup>63</sup> Luxford, imposing sentence, told the men that in defying the law, the government and public opinion, they were running against an impenetrable barrier, nor should they flatter themselves that there was safety in numbers, that a real penalty could not be enforced. He also stated, as a fundamental principle, which should be understood by every



**citizen, that the government must see that workers in essential industries got a 'fair go'; an employer would not be allowed to exploit the Strike and Lockout Emergency Regulations of 1939; the controller of an essential industry was now a trustee for the whole community, and must subordinate all other considerations.** <sup>64</sup>

**Fraser, informed of this sentence in the House, said, 'I do not want to see men punished; but I would sooner punish any number of men than betray the country, at the present moment'. Referring also to watersiders who had stopped loading a ship that morning in weather merely damp, he said that this sort of thing was stabbing the country in the back and he could endure no more of it. He called on every decent-thinking person to support the government in whatever action it took; 'If the Government cannot take strong enough action by the ordinary process of the Civil law, then other methods may have to be contemplated'. Also, if as Prime Minister he could not get better support from the industrial workers, it was his clear duty to step down altogether. He would not endeavour to form a government behind the backs or opposed to the wishes of those with whom he had been associated; he would step down and 'let those who can carry on, do so.'**

<sup>65</sup>

**This was not to be Fraser's last threat of resignation, but it was the first, and it had considerable impact. The *Press*, however, looked into the whole statement coolly. 'Admiration and sympathy for the Prime Minister, and relief that some member of the Government is at last being honest about a situation that has most New Zealanders badly worried, must not obscure the fact that what he said leaves the situation much as it was.' The force of his threat of 'other methods' was weakened by his further threat to resign. 'To tell the industrial workers at one moment that he may use force to bring discipline into industry and at another that he will resign if he does not get their support is to be dangerously inconsistent. The industrial workers may well feel that the outcome of another strike may be nothing worse than Mr Fraser's resignation and the formation of another Labour Government.' Mr**



Fraser, concluded the *Press*, 'is the coolest and wisest man in New Zealand political life and the best informed about the war situation. If he could speak and act according to his convictions the few dissenting voices would be drowned by the approval of a nation which in frustration and bewilderment has waited long enough for a leader.' <sup>66</sup>

On Monday 23 March there were 'unprecedented scenes' in the concert chamber of **Auckland's** Town Hall: the day-long mass trial of more than 300 Hellaby strikers. Appearing for most of them Tuck, although somewhat apologetic, submitted that an intransigent employer had peremptorily and unnecessarily rebuffed the workers. He pleaded again the vital union principle that workers' unions should be free of employers' influence and brought out that management at both Hellaby's and Westfield intended to exclude some men permanently. Luxford remarked that, without adjudication by the Manpower authorities, the last would offend against essential industry regulations, and was surprised that machinery for quick settlement of disputes did not exist or had not been pressed into action. He found that the employers had kept within the law while the workers had gone outside it, and said that while listening to counsel a paraphrase of a passage from Holy Writ went through his mind: 'What does it matter if we lose every principle for which trade unionism has fought if we lose the war while doing so?' New Zealand, with all its legislation for social justice, in the hour of direct threat was distracted by a serious dispute 'which has caused the Prime Minister to make the unprecedented, I might say terrible, intimation that, if the civil law does not function, another law will. Are we to be the first unit of the British Commonwealth to say that our civil law is unable to function?' <sup>67</sup>

The Crown prosecutor, late in proceedings, had announced that he had just received instructions from the Crown: the men realised the gravity of their action, they would not repeat it, and a severe penalty was not called for. Behind these instructions one may sense the conversations of ministers who foresaw the awkwardness of having more than 300 essential workers in prison, but the magistrate had no such

**misgivings: he declared that his duty was clear and it would be performed fearlessly. Charges against 116 men had been withdrawn or adjourned, about 30 who had returned to work were fined £2, and 213 were sentenced to a month in prison.**

**It was then 4 o'clock, and the men were told to wait. In the hall, stuffy with its blackout devices and the big crowd, there were cries for air and water. Some men with pencils and paper hastily supplied by the union secretary wrote letters to their families, which were sent off, even by taxi. At about 6 o'clock a police officer announced that as it was not possible to accommodate them all in prison that night they should go to their homes, pledged to present themselves to work out their sentences when called on. In groups of seven they signed this pledge and were despatched homeward in all available conveyances, again including taxis. Thus in something like a burlesque the unprecedented scenes ended, at about 7 o'clock. <sup>68</sup> Meanwhile 1700 men were still on strike.**

**Hearty good humour in both prisoners and police marked the next act, two days later, when those sentenced assembled at the central police station, and police vans, plus a couple of postal vans, carried them off to prison in batches of 10, each cheered by those remaining, the process taking several hours. <sup>69</sup>**

**That same day, 25 March, the strike was ended, with the employers agreeing to take on all the men without discrimination within a fortnight as stock came forward and volunteers diminished. Meanwhile the Federation of Labour pointed out, and the employers confirmed, the impossibility of full production minus many skilled men. With the strike thus settled, the men were ready, said Tuck, to return to work and faithfully discharge their duties to the industry. The Department of Justice considered use of the Royal Prerogative, but on Luxford's advice it was decided to re-consider the sentences by way of rehearing. The men, including the 80 imprisoned earlier, were released, to come up for sentence if called within a year. <sup>70</sup>**

**'They marched the strikers into gaol and marched them out again.**

So ends an incident that savours not a little of comic opera', <sup>71</sup> wrote R. M. Algie, <sup>72</sup> and many agreed with him. Less prominent, and less comic from the unionist viewpoint, was the striking out or dismissal of more than 100 appeals for **Auckland** freezing workers against Territorial service. <sup>73</sup> But while many heads were shaken over government softness to militant unions, the workers took another view. A few union resolutions appeared, <sup>74</sup> charging the government with harshness to the freezing workers, and the conference of the Federation of Labour criticised the government's handling of the dispute. One speaker, F. G. Young MLC, <sup>75</sup> said that the **Auckland** Trades Council believed that had the government been firmer at the start there would have been no need for volunteer labour or court action. If the government put the boot into workers, it should also put the boot into employers when they deserved it; the employers, placed in a strong position, had abused their strength. 'It is felt in **Auckland** that the Government is loath to tackle the big employers', and had let the workers down. <sup>76</sup> The workers, however, with government support, prevailed in one area: very quietly, at the end of June, Hellaby's union, the last of the company unions, applied for deregistration and was gazetted out of existence. <sup>77</sup>

Something of the hostility shown towards those who worked during the strike was revealed at a Manpower appeal in May. The Westfield manager said that lockers were broken into, clothes damaged or destroyed, and meat was thrown at these men, while others jeered. This was dangerous as men with sharp knives in their hands could cut themselves, and there was risk of hot tempers leading to serious incidents. Some men thus persecuted had sought to leave the works, but the trouble was now much diminished. <sup>78</sup>

The perplexity of an alert observer amid these conflicts was set forth by the editor of the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly*:

I do not hold a brief for any of the parties concerned, Government, employers or strikers. I know too little of the inside story, of what had gone on behind the scenes. Can it be a tussle between Labour bosses and

the Government? Is it a skirmish for power, or for true principles of democracy.... 'Depriving our boys overseas of food' and such-like statements did not cut ice as far as I was concerned, for ... I found simultaneously with the accusations against the strikers, statements about the problem of surplus meat.... We want a united nation, want it more than anything else, not class struggle. In order to create this unity we want clear facts for cool, unbiassed and reasoned judgment. We want both sides of the story. Much better reasons could be found to explain why strikes could and should not be tolerated in these days than the reasons given.

The writer pondered on overseas pressures: 'We need supplies. We need to be included in the general defence programme. In order to be included we have to do our bit and do it well. This Government must see that things are run to time-table, that ships are not delayed. We are only a small pawn in a great game.' People who wrote to the papers saying that the 40-hour week must go did not know what they were talking about, continued this vigorous lady. To many workers the 40-hour week was becoming nominal, and many were on piece-work. 'Girls in factories could enlighten the public on this subject. They claim that the "song of the shirt" is coming into its own again. Piece-work, of course, speeds up production, but it is a wrong system and saps the vitality of all workers'; generations had fought against it. For such reasons workers became suspicious, began to doubt whether the war was worth fighting. 'It is all very complicated and very confusing.'<sup>79</sup>

Twice more in March the government took legal action against strikers. On 20 March, at the height of the Westfield affair, there was very minor newspaper interest in a strike trial at **Hamilton**. On 3 March, 38 carpenters working on a cool store at Horotiu, objecting to a man they disliked being made foreman, left in a body. They were paid off, their employment terminated,<sup>80</sup> and were away nearly two weeks. Their counsel, T. Henry,<sup>81</sup> said that they had not realised they were breaking the regulations, they had returned to the job and, with the cause of the dispute removed, were working harmoniously. They were convicted and

ordered to come up for sentence if called within a year. <sup>82</sup>

Another strike threat which had a background conflict with the Minister of Labour was finally cancelled. Early in February a committee was appointed to examine a dispute at Borthwick's Belfast establishment, concerning the re-employment of one man and payment of chain workers. The workers' representatives were John Henry, Thomas Martin and R. A. Brookes. <sup>83</sup> On 25, 26 and 27 February 1942, 76 butchers had prolonged stop-work meetings on these topics, and on 5 March another meeting refused to promise the Minister of Labour that there would be no further stoppages. <sup>84</sup> That same day Webb reduced the dispute committee to two representatives from each side and changed the workers' representatives to A. McLagan and F. P. Walsh, both powerful union men close to the government. Rapid Supreme Court action produced a writ of prohibition against this new tribunal, preventing it from sitting, but a meeting of Walsh and McLagan with the employers' representatives reached agreement. <sup>85</sup> Immediately Webb instructed that the 76 butchers should be prosecuted for illegal strikes during the meetings of 25, 26 and 27 February. <sup>86</sup> The charges were to be heard on 25 March, but on the 24th, just after the Westfield trial comedy, it was known that the Crown would withdraw the charges, <sup>87</sup> and they were withdrawn without comment the next day.

In the first quarter of 1942 there were 37 industrial disputes, losing 28 068 working days. This was far more than in the same period of 1941 (8851 days lost) when the war situation had been much less ominous. Only in two cases (at the **Auckland** cool stores and at Longburn on New Year's Day) were strikes in direct response to the emergency regulations of December and January. The reasons listed in the **Labour Department's** MS Register of Strikes were as various as usual. <sup>88</sup>

There was broad acceptance of less pay, more work and loss of freedom to move from job to job. Grumbles were silenced in people's minds, in talk and in public places, by awareness that such sacrifices were little against what the boys overseas were giving and taking.

**Essential work restrictions, which so closely resembled conscription, met less overt resistance than did the regulations reducing holiday overtime rates. There was also awareness that the enemies were at the gate: the Japanese were uncomfortably close, while [Russia](#) desperately needed all help of any sort in the common struggle; the Communist party, normally an automatic supporter of industrial strife, now opposed it, constantly advocating works councils and efficiency committees instead.**

**On the other hand, the resistance to the cheapening of overtime, the protest, albeit modest, at the immobilising of essential labour,<sup>89</sup> and such incidents as Webb's reception at Westfield<sup>90</sup> indicate a ground swell of resentment that the government had seemingly sold the Labour pass, given the advantage to the employers. This strengthened both rigid union loyalty and union resolution to assert its strength against the encroachments of war-backed bosses, workers being fully aware of the heightened value of their labour. Strikes are rarely planned; they happen, often from tangential pressures, in a maelstrom of conflicting reactions, personalities, interests and loyalties, in which 'striking it out' often seems the only course. It was almost predictable that the impact of restrictive labour regulations in December–January 1941–2<sup>91</sup> would be marked by some industrial clash. The meatworks, traditionally a fighting edge of unionism, were a likely place for it, especially as the job itself, always unpleasant, was made worse by pressure of work and expanding work-forces, and, particularly at Westfield, irritated by bad transport.**

**Of the 28 068 days lost from 1 January to 31 March 1942, the 20 strikes at freezing works accounted for 25 366 days. In the mines, nine disputes cost 1502 days; ships and the waterfront lost 929 days, largely in one half-day strike by 1789 [Wellington](#) watersiders, and 271 lost days were shared by sawmillers and builders.**

**Between April and June industrial disputes were few: the meatworkers added a mere 46 lost work-days, and five mine disputes cost 1718 work days, together making 1764 lost during that quarter, and 29**



832 in all during the half-year. Through the next three months, apart from the massive 20 826 days lost in the coal mines, mainly during September in the **Waikato**, only 60 working days were lost over the whole industrial field, making the sum for nine months 50 718 work-days. In the last quarter, seven scattered minor strikes added 718 days, making the year's total 51 436 work-days lost. <sup>92</sup>

After the meatworks explosion early in 1942 there was industrial quiet for several months, while the Japanese pushed into **New Guinea** and the Solomon Islands, and Manpower authorities tried to meet the needs of essential industry and services by directing men and women into jobs. But in the coal mines another area of turbulence was arising, produced by many factors, not least of which was chronic ill-will between men and management.

Coal supplies were short. There were some 140 mines widespread about New Zealand, some producing thousands of tons annually, some only a few score; fewer than 40 were sizeable. Most were privately operated, some on freehold land, some on land leased from the Crown. On a State coal reserve near **Greymouth** some 150 to 170 men worked about 19 small co-operative mines, with government blessing and technical advice, in all producing less than 90 000 tons annually. There were, by 1942, six State mines; three of them, the James, Liverpool and Strongman in the Grey valley, had from their starts been developed by the State, which had also taken over several mines when these became unprofitable for their owners to operate: Mangapehi and Tatu in the **North Island** during 1940 and, in July 1941, Blackball in the Grey area. Two other **South Island** mines, Dobson and Wallsend, were taken over in February 1943. <sup>93</sup> By the end of the war 11 underground and 8 opencast mines were operated by the State. <sup>94</sup>

For stabilisation purposes, coal production was subsidised. In May 1940, to meet increased wages and other costs, the government granted mine owners a subsidy of 1 s 6 d a ton, and two years later further subsidies were awarded, ranging from 6 d to 2 s 7 d a ton, according to



situation and costs of production. <sup>95</sup>

Imports of bituminous, gas-producing coal from **Australia** were reduced from 111 537 tons in 1939 to 37 352 in 1943 and nil in 1944 and 1945. Locomotives, which preferred bituminous coals, needed more of the brown and lignite types. Railway traffic had increased: apart from moving troops and their supplies, railways were carrying passengers and goods that formerly went by road, and were making extra hauls so that ships need call at fewer ports. Locomotives consumed 484 423 tons in 1939, 492 456 in 1940, 528 552 in 1941, 537 732 in 1942, 611 841 in 1943, 634 007 in 1944 and 576 926 in 1945. <sup>96</sup>

Expanding industries used more coal, and there were particular difficulties over gas-making, as many retorts were designed for bituminous coal and could not use the lower grades that were abundant locally. Pre-war, railways were using about 500 000 tons of coal, coastal shipping 100 000, gas-works about 250 000, factories 700 000 and households 850 000 tons. <sup>97</sup> In the 1939–40 year, 885 022 tons of coal were used in factory industries: gas making took 27 per cent of this total, with dairy products, meat freezing, lime and cement making, the three main industries, taking 41 per cent. Wartime increases may be tabulated from *Yearbook* figures, allowing for some gaps where classifications change: <sup>98</sup>

Year	Total industrial use	Gas-making		Dairy, meat, cement	
		tons	per cent	tons	per cent
1939–40	885 022	242 383	27	365 910	41
1940–41	974 235	257 745	26	374 033	38
1941–42	1 093 280	263 520	24	388 986 + 109 043 * = 46%	
1942–43	1 083 640	272 087	25	391 511 + 74 258 * = 43%	
1943–	1 095 597	286 562	26	377 013 + 74 579 * =	

44				41%
1944–	299 780			
45				
1945–	1 166 922	309 782		
46				
1946–	1 110 612	314 702	28	405 963 + 61 045 =
47				42%

Two steam electricity generating stations, one at Evans Bay, Wellington, one at Kings Wharf, **Auckland**, were working hard to meet extra demands for electricity. Military camps were using large quantities of coal. In houses and in schools open fires were still the most usual form of heating and coal stoves were not uncommon, while shortage of wood cutters had made firewood scarce. The prudent householder tried to buy in advance of need, thus spreading demand: for example, deliveries of domestic coal from **Wellington** and Christchurch depots rose from 6486 tons in January–April 1939 to 12 581 tons during those months in 1940. <sup>99</sup>

During the winter of 1942, domestic coal was acutely short, particularly in the **Auckland** area, with some householders burning every available fruitbox and bit of timber and boiling the wash-copper with old magazines and newspapers. <sup>100</sup> Anyone faced with a cold grate, or even the threat of it, was ready to criticise recalcitrant miners, immune from military service, who withheld their labour on trivial pretexts, depriving citizens of a basic comfort besides damaging the war effort, industry and all those dependent on rail transport.

Although mining was more or less a reserved occupation, there were not enough miners. They increased during the war by only a few hundred, with few additions underground. In 1942, 3659 underground men produced a peak 717 tons per man, whereas 3542 had produced 648 tons per man in 1939; in 1945, when opencast mining had substantially increased, there were 3932 men underground and a total of 5592 employed in mines, whereas the total for 1939 was 4762 and 4997 in 1942. By May 1940, 167 had left as volunteers <sup>101</sup> and though thereafter underground workers were appealed for, the Mining Controller <sup>102</sup>

remarked early in 1941 that military service was the principal reason for the shortage of miners, and 'the idea that men would rush mining jobs to escape military service was proved to be a bogey.'<sup>103</sup> Others left for more congenial jobs<sup>104</sup> before mining was declared an essential industry in January 1942. At the end of March 1942 Webb spoke of withdrawing 300 miners from the Army but, though **War Cabinet's** approval was announced in mid-June,<sup>105</sup> soldiers were not actually released till more than a month later.<sup>106</sup> Meanwhile the manager of Brunner Collieries told an appeal board, 'Twenty men want to go, and two of them are trying to loaf their way into the Army.'<sup>107</sup> Mines were not favoured as funk-holes.

Coal miners had a sustained reputation for strikes. Of 1939's 66 industrial disputes, costing 53 801 working days, there were 29 strikes and 21 439 days lost in the mines; shipping and cargo-working followed closely, with 20 864 days lost during 9 strikes. In 1940, when all strikes were reduced to 56, with only 28 097 days lost, coal miners led the field with 13 strikes costing 11 375 days.<sup>108</sup> In 1941, out of 89 strikes totalling 26 237 days (that is, 1860 fewer than in 1940) miners lost 11 569 days in 43 strikes. In 1942, out of 65 strikes costing 51 189 days, miners in 24 strikes contributed 24 450 lost days, second only to freezing workers, who in their 24 strikes lost 25 227 days.<sup>109</sup>

Behind these figures lay the work itself, dark, dirty, dangerous, breeding a separateness within the general community, and intensely cohesive unionism, fed by awareness that every advance in wages and conditions had been won by union pressure. This awareness reached out in time and distance, from dingy **Durham** and the bitter valleys of Wales, and from New Zealand's own Depression when 1500 men were driven from the industry, although miners themselves had been willing to share the job with their mates, working day and week about at no extra cost to the employers.<sup>110</sup>

The attitude of British miners grew from long experience of class warfare, 'conducted in most areas in geographical isolation from less strenuous industries and blander ways of life.... Against the crudest

exploitation known in British industry the miners had erected unions of legendary solidarity.’ <sup>111</sup> Many New Zealand miners or their fathers had begun work in British pits, they brought traditional attitudes with them and they continued to live in isolated grim little towns whose sole reason for existence was the mine. The feeling that they had enemies far closer than **Hitler** or Tojo <sup>112</sup> was widespread. The preamble of the rules and constitution of the United Mine Workers of New Zealand read:

We hold that there is a class struggle in society and that the struggle is caused by the capitalist class owning the means of production to which the working class must have access in order to live. The working class produces all value. The greater the share the capitalist class appropriates, the less remains for the working class; therefore, the interests of these two classes are in constant conflict.

There can be no peace so long as want and hunger are found among millions of working people whilst the minority who constitute the employing class have all the good things of life. Between these two classes the struggle must continue until capitalism is abolished and is replaced by a system of social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Long experience has proved the futility of those political and industrial methods which aim only at mending and rendering tolerable, and thereby perpetuating, capitalism, instead of ending it.... <sup>113</sup>

Since the start of the war, miners had been under fire. Editorials and reports on stoppages not infrequently referred to past as well as to current errors, strengthening the troublesome image; notably an article in the *New Zealand Herald*, 18 June 1941, repeated in other papers, summarised nearly 50 stoppages since the war’s start, concluding, ‘Such facts speak for themselves and indicate how wide is the opportunity for greater production by eliminating frivolous and irresponsible stoppages of work.’ ‘Mine Idle’ was a frequent heading, though the actual news might be of flooding <sup>114</sup> or safety measures <sup>115</sup> or of full bins and delays in shipping. <sup>116</sup> Often, the reports were of strikes over the suspension or

dismissal of one or two men; <sup>117</sup> over transport; <sup>118</sup> over pay claims for heat, <sup>119</sup> or for distance of the coalface from the mine mouth; <sup>120</sup> for machine-cut coal; <sup>121</sup> over cavils (the miners' three-monthly ballots for working places) and mistakes in them <sup>122</sup> or because miners would not walk a quarter-mile in rain from the bath-house to the mine <sup>123</sup> or because the clothes of a few rope boys were wet because the bath-house was too cold to dry them. <sup>124</sup>

Idle Coal Mines, More Time Lost' deplored the *New Zealand Herald* and other papers on 6 December 1941, listing reasons why more than 600 men in five Grey district mines had lost a Friday's work: at the Liverpool and Blackball mines the bins were full; the Wallsend miners, after a normal stop-work meeting, left for the funeral of a drowned trucker; at the Dobson, some men who had 'gone slow' for the past month were refused lamps (ie, suspended) and all the men returned home in sympathy; at the Paparoa, a pair of miners complained about the condition of a working place, the men discussed the dispute and they all went home.

Such multiple idleness was unusual; more often it involved only one or two mines at a time, and quite often work stopped for only one day. For instance, the State Mines Union had a resolution on its books that if there were no transport home for the wet-time men (who worked a 6-hour shift finishing about 2 pm), the mine would not work the following day. On 26 May 1941, when the Railways did not provide the usual train, 38 wet-time men from the Liverpool mine waited in heavy rain for the general mine train at 4.35 pm in a small unheated room and empty railway carriages. Next day, the Strongman, James and Liverpool miners, 500 of them, did not work, the Union stating that direct action was the method most likely to get grievances rectified as other means did not bring satisfaction. <sup>125</sup>

That statement touches the crux: strikes brought the miners into disrepute, but they got results, from a railway train to a pay adjustment. Mere complaints frequently brought nothing at all, and negotiations

with work proceeding could take a long time, for why should management hasten towards any concession while production continued? This is the point usually invisible to the public and tediously clear to the workers. As an instance: on 28 April 1941, while the New Zealand Division was ending its rearguard action in Greece, 198 men at the MacDonald mine, Huntly, demanding 6 d a ton more for machine-cut coal, ceased work. They had given 14 days' notice of this intention but there had been no discussions between their representatives and the owners.<sup>126</sup> The strike lasted six days, producing a crop of indignant editorials against the miners, the government, and Webb. 'For this intolerable position the Government is directly to blame.... This is no time to discuss the merits of the present case. The men may have some justification for their claims.... The one primary consideration, however, is that production should proceed without interruption.'<sup>127</sup> At length the men went back to work and the dispute to a committee which awarded them 4¼ d a ton more in bords and 2 d a ton in headings.<sup>128</sup>

Annual reports from the State mines listing the possible working days which were not worked give a more solid account of mining interruptions than the newspaper reports achieve, though the latter had more influence on public opinion. As a sample, in the year ending 31 March 1943, the Liverpool mine worked 235 days while possible working days, including 13 back Saturdays, numbered 274. There were 11 days of holiday: Good Friday, Easter Monday, Labour Day and eight days at Christmas. Four days were lost in three disputes, over horse-drivers, late trains and 'preference of men going on coal'. Shortage of transport lost five days, a slip on the roperoad, one day; slips on the railway, 11 days; wind damage, one day; heavy rain, four days; power failure, one day and the funeral of a man killed in the mine, one day.<sup>129</sup> The Strongman mine, in the year ending 31 March 1944, worked 256 days out of the possible 278, which included 16 'back' Saturdays. Apart from two days off at Easter and eight at Christmas, there were two days lost over wages, one for the bath-house being cold, four in four disputes regarding miners, truckers, a shotfirer and stoppage of lamps. One day was given over to a funeral and four days were lost in protest at the recall to camp

of men who had worked in the mines while on military furlough. <sup>130</sup>

Miners' negotiations were many-tiered. First, the secretary of the local union, with a member of the committee from the mine where the dispute occurred, would interview management, and if this failed ask for a local disputes committee to be convened. This would have three representatives of each side; neither the manager nor a union representative of the particular mine would be included, although they could give evidence. If this committee could not reach a settlement, the next step was the appointment of an independent chairman, which was more difficult than it sounds. Each side could nominate one, but it was hard to find a man with practical knowledge of mines not biased to one side or the other, and from experience miners were doubtful that a chairman acceptable to the other side would grasp their arguments and the intricate conditions of mine working. <sup>131</sup> If a chairman could not be found, the dispute would go to a national disputes committee, with three representatives of the coal owners and three of the national miners organisation, and if they could not agree on an independent chairman, the government would appoint one. Finally, there was the Coal Mines Council set up by emergency regulations in mid-1940 to maintain steady output, with wide powers over plant, methods, transport, housing, terms of employment and disputes arising from all these things. In practice the Council became a tribunal entirely devoted to trying to secure the rapid settlement of disputes, travelling from coalfield to coalfield and giving decisions on local disagreements. <sup>132</sup> Its current members were T. O. Bishop, formerly a mining inspector and now secretary of the Coal Mine Owners Association, C. J. Strongman, <sup>133</sup> superintendent of the State mines, and A. V. Prendiville, of the Nightcaps Union, who had lately replaced McLagan as national secretary. In all these channels, unless a settlement was really wanted by both sides, a dispute could wander for a long time.

Mining arrangements were obscure to the general public; almost inevitably strikes appeared selfish and frivolous, holding the country to ransom over trifles. Union solidarity seemed automatic and perverse, for



dismissals which the miners contested had publicity while nothing was heard of those which they accepted. <sup>134</sup> When, as often happened, the cause of a minor stoppage was a new issue not dealt with in the award or agreements, it was outside the range of the disputes committee. <sup>135</sup> It was not generally known that physical conditions varied greatly from mine to mine and from place to place within each mine (hence the importance of cavils), or that agreements which attempted to meet such variations were necessarily complicated, bristling with opportunities for men and management to get at odds in interpretation. Often it was not readily apparent that complaints were long standing or recurrent.

Perhaps the height of the seeming unreason was reached when, as **Java** fell in March 1942, 149 men at the Millerton mine, Westport, had a three-day strike claiming wet-time payments for two horse-drivers when it rained during their weekly half-hour drive from the mine mouth to the settlement and back, the drivers having already been allowed 1 s 3d a week to buy oilskins. It was stated, not conspicuously, that the claim had been made previously to a local disputes committee without being settled, and had got no further. <sup>136</sup> The statement by the union that 17 pairs of miners at Millerton were producing a record 500 tons of coal a day, 90 per cent of it cut in the open under a 50 foot roof, producing cheap coal for the company while in danger of death or maiming, <sup>137</sup> seemed strangely inconsistent with such a fuss over a wetting. The committee hearing the dispute decided that the drivers should be paid wet-time money for the days when they got wet. <sup>138</sup>

It was easy to forget that, despite increased precautions, mining was still a relatively dangerous job; small notices appeared from time to time, saying, for instance, that Jack Stephens, 42, with wife and daughter, was killed at Denniston by a fall of coal when he was removing a prop, the handle of a pick piercing his chest; <sup>139</sup> that Robert Glen, 39, married, died in a few hours of injuries to chest and spine from a fall of stone at the Dobson mine; <sup>140</sup> that George Wilson, aged 58, died in hospital of injuries received that morning in the Wairaki mine. <sup>141</sup> Between 1940 and 1945, the number of men employed in mines ranged

roughly between 5000 and 5600. In 1940, eight were killed and 23 seriously injured; in 1941, four were killed, 20 seriously injured; in 1944, 12 were killed, 36 seriously injured,<sup>142</sup> and each year there were more than 2000 lesser injuries. Awareness of such risks heightened grievance and brought blood-eloquence into miner-boss relations.

Miners' pay varied; some were on contract, some on wages, some were paid differing tonnage rates, while there were sundry allowances and deductions. It was widely thought that they were well paid; H. G. Dickie,<sup>143</sup> National MP, said in October 1942: 'I would rather lose money in a mine than work in it. I admit that coal-mining is an unpleasant, wet, dirty job; but the men earn jolly good wages.'<sup>144</sup> The research of Dr A. E. C. Hare<sup>145</sup> qualified this belief: he found that while between 1914 and 1939 coal miners' wages rose 68 per cent, the general average increase for other industries was 77 per cent, miners falling from fourth to tenth on the pay-rate list, with an average weekly wage of £8 15 s 2 d in 1939. This rose to £10 9s 10 d in 1942, and £11 11 s 2 d in 1944, but this increase, by about a third between 1939 and 1944, was no more than that received by a number of factory workers.<sup>146</sup> In April 1945 Prendiville, president of the United Mine Workers Federation, said that except for the two wartime five per cent cost of living bonuses, coal hewers were then working for the same rates that applied in 1931, 'before the coal owners smashed the agreements.' These rates were 3 s 6¼ d a ton in **Waikato** mines, 3 s 2¾ d on the **West Coast**.<sup>147</sup> The Coal Mine Owners Association, in reply, pointed out that during the war miners' average daily earnings were 30 s 6 d in 1939, 39 s 4 d in 1942 and 45 s 10 d in 1944; at the Renown mine they were 31 s 6 d in 1939, 38 s 11 d in 1942, 48 s in 1944. At Denniston average earnings were 40 s 5½ d, 42 s 2½ d and 43 s 9½ d in the respective years; at the Strongman State mine 32 s in 1940, 40 s 2 d in 1942 and 42 s 2 d in 1944.<sup>148</sup>

The *New Zealand Herald* on 10 September 1942 summarised a 'typical' wages sheet for a pair of **Waikato** miners; many, it was stated, showed higher totals, particularly where extra shifts were worked, and

others considerably lower. These two men in a fortnight hewed 113 tons 17 hundredweight of coal at 3 s 6¼ d a ton and 113 tons 18 hundredweight at 3 s 10½ d a ton, making a total of £42 2 s 3 d, the different tonnage rates being due to differences in the width and height of the face, or other working conditions. Several extras, 13 s 9 d for stone, £1 4 s 2 d for doing their own trucking, 12 s 6 d for breaking away a new face, £1 5 s 6 d for setting timber, with 10 per cent added according to their agreement, brought the total up to £50 10 s. From this was deducted £4 9 s 7 d for explosives, 6 s for check weighing the company's figures, 5 s 3 d for tools, 2 s for the doctor, 1s for the ambulance, reducing it to £45 6 s 2 d, or about £11 6 s 6 d a week for each man.<sup>149</sup> These details indicate the complexity of mining pay calculations. The *Herald* stated that the minimum wage for **Waikato** coalhewers was 2 6s 8 d a day and if through no fault of their own they could not average this over a fortnight the difference was made up by management. In the report of the Pukemiro inquiry<sup>150</sup> the minimum daily rate was given as 2 5s 4 d; the report is more authoritative than the *Herald* article.

Other examples of pay figures come from annual reports of State mines. In 1942–3, at the Strongman, 52 men and 11 boys worked on the surface, while underground 79 deputies, shiftmen and truckers, and 52 coalhewers, produced 94 170 tons of coal. Each coalhewer's average daily output was 7½ tons, and his daily earnings £2 9 s 9 d gross, or £2 4 s 7 d after paying for explosive, while a total of £71 1 s 11 d was paid out over the year to make up the minimum wage. At the Liverpool mine, where 67 men and 13 boys on the surface and 236 workers underground produced 165 837 tons, the 86 coalhewers each averaged 9 tons 1 hundredweight a day, earning £2 12 s 1 d gross, or £2 8 s 6 d net, with £3 10 s 3 d paid out to make up minimum wage deficiencies. At Blackball, taken over in difficulties in July 1941, 34 527 tons were produced by 23 men and 4 boys working on the surface, 33 truckers and 27 coalhewers who each cut 7 tons 11 hundredweight a day, for £2 8 s 7 d gross or £2 4 s 7 d net, with no deficiency payments required. From Tatu, near Ohura, came 29 619 tons, produced by 88 workers, 24 of

them coalhewers each averaging 6 tons 4 hundredweight daily for £2 2 s 6 d net, with no minimum wage payments. <sup>151</sup>

Newspaper letters give a few other glimpses. To a suggestion that miners were unaware of the war and that some might well spend a week in camp or be taken on aerial patrols or minesweepers in rough weather, <sup>152</sup> 'A miner's wife' replied that the fighting lads at least had fresh air and could see the sky, but a miner had no sky or fresh air nor could he wash his hands to eat his lunch. 'The miners are doing their own job and minding their own business. They are not telling others to do better. They have enough to do to knock out a wage. I was charged 6 s 4 d in town for a bag of coal. <sup>153</sup> My husband gets 3 s 6 d a ton to cut the coal. Out of that he has to pay for light, tools, powder, boots, clothes and tax.' <sup>154</sup> Another letter spoke of boots lasting eight weeks, trousers and shirts six, of sore eyes, scratched faces, arms and legs, of muscles aching from pick work in cramped quarters, 'some of the "places" being only 2 ft high', and then **Home Guard** on Sundays. <sup>155</sup> A miner, stung by a farmer saying to an appeal board that miners were down the mine for only five and a half hours a day, finishing at 3 pm, with no work on Saturdays, wrote that all the 55 men in his mine left the pit top by 8 each morning and emerged between 3.15 and 3.30 pm. 'I work at least six and three-quarter hours daily—I am allowed one hour travelling time on top of this—so my day's work is nearly as long as the man who works outside in the sunshine, and I can safely say this goes for the majority of mine employees.' Many did not work on Saturday, but many others did so. <sup>156</sup>

There were frequent complaints about absenteeism, some from the miners' champion, P. C. Webb, <sup>157</sup> as well as from management. Poor attendances on the alternate 'back' Saturdays which, because of the coal shortage, miners were asked and agreed to work from April to September each year of the war, had special and often critical mention, <sup>158</sup> but not till May 1943 were pay rates for Saturday work raised to time-and-a-half—when men worked more than 11 shifts in a fortnight; <sup>159</sup> a year later all Saturday work was at time-and-a-half. <sup>160</sup> Miners also,

at government request, worked on such holidays as May Day, King's Birthday and Labour Day, and back Saturdays in some Decembers. <sup>161</sup> The Northern Miners Union claimed in July 1942 that there was 'no great unjustifiable absenteeism', union tallies showing a rate of 4 per cent. <sup>162</sup> This was not very different from the 5.2 per cent of unjustifiable absences recorded at Huntly during a fortnight in May 1943 by the Mines Department. <sup>163</sup> Again, in May 1944, Webb stated that during the past 48 weeks, at 25 principal collieries, on the coalface voluntary absenteeism amounted to 4.9 per cent of man-shifts, with justified absences taking another 9.3 per cent. Comparative British figures were 6.1 and 9.6 per cent respectively. Among New Zealand mine workers not on the coalface, voluntary absenteeism was 3.5 per cent, and justified absences 6.8 per cent, with comparative British figures 4.9 and 7.5 per cent. <sup>164</sup> Dr Hare in 1943 wrote that the rate of absenteeism among miners 'is much lower than public discussion might suggest'. Official records recently instituted at the main mines showed that 10.8 per cent of the total shifts which could have been worked during the four winter months May–August 1943 were lost through absence, but sickness, accidents, etc, accounted for 7.6 per cent, leaving only 3.2 per cent of unexplained absenteeism. <sup>165</sup>

In human terms it was not strange that, despite the war, some miners dodged work on very slender pretexts or none at all to, say, stay in bed, garden, go whitebaiting or go to the pub, <sup>166</sup> now that fear of losing the job was removed. For all the talk of sending lazy or difficult miners into the Army, miners held power and they knew it. The miner's working day was supposed to be of eight hours, from when he entered the mine until he left it, including the time taken to walk to his working place. Several Huntly managers in 1940 told a Manpower committee that the men were in fact observing a 7-hour day, and had whittled down their actual working time, exclusive of meal and travelling times, to about 5 or 5½ hours daily; output was falling while miners averaged 34 s 1 d a day and truckers 21 s 1 d; owners were powerless to enforce full working hours and absenteeism was a problem. <sup>167</sup> Tom Hall, secretary of the Northern Miners Union, spoke of miners receiving 26 s 1 d a day,

not 34 s, claimed that they were working harder than others in the community and explained that men knocked off early to get cleaned up at inadequate bath houses before the train left, while young men walked out more quickly than the older ones. But he also said, 'I was whipped to do things seven years ago which I am not whipped to do today.' <sup>168</sup>

George Lawson, secretary of the Pukemiro union, pointed out that to earn 34 s a day in an average pick place at the average tonnage rate of 3 s 6¼ d per ton, the miner must dig 10 tons or more, as the extras allowed for setting timber, etc, did not meet the cost of his explosives. He wanted a full inquiry into the industry from producer to consumer, with attention to middleman costs. 'Let the public remember, when next they pay £3 and upwards for a ton of coal, that the miner who risks his life daily for the princely sum of 34 s and often much less, receives 3 s 6¼ d for digging that ton of coal.' He appealed to readers not to take everything they saw printed about coal miners as absolutely authentic. <sup>169</sup>

Little public attention was given to the miserable housing of most miners, nor was this generally associated with their grudging attitudes. The Depression years had checked all house building at mining settlements, and at the privately-owned mines there had been no worthwhile move to close the gap between what existed and what was needed. Few miners could afford to build decent houses, and mine owners had a very limited sense of responsibility in this area. When Webb on 7 July 1942 said in the House that some hovels at Burnett's Face were a disgrace to New Zealand, the Westport Coal Company replied that these were the property of the miners themselves, and though their external appearance might be unpretentious, 'the furnishings internally are exceedingly good and would compare more than favourably with most workmen's homes in New Zealand.' At Denniston, however, the company, at capital cost of £20,000, had built 39 houses for its employees, 10 of three rooms, 18 of four rooms, seven of five rooms, the rest of six to eight rooms; five small houses were then vacant. <sup>170</sup> Denniston, clinging to its bare rock, was probably the most desolate



mining township but, though the locale of others might be less harsh, they were all generally meagre and dreary. Those in the **Waikato** were no exceptions; in April 1941 Webb and the **Waikato** owners, aiming at increased production, had discussed the acute housing shortage in the **Huntly** area, where single men could not get board and a number were living in tents and roughly made baches near the mines. <sup>171</sup>

With coal a national necessity, mine owners felt that it was government's responsibility to build workers' houses at private mines, <sup>172</sup> and they were not alone in this view. The *Press*, for instance, stated: 'It may as reasonably be argued that the State should provide miners' houses as that the companies should. Miners' earnings put them in as good a position as other workers to build or buy their own homes. Those who prefer to rent houses have as strong a claim as other workers to be assisted through the State's housing programme.' <sup>173</sup> The government, while accepting the need to build modestly at its own mines, was very guarded about doing this where it would assist mine owners. In July–August 1942, the government began building 40 houses in the Grey district, half at Dunollie for State miners and half near the Dobson and Wallsend mines, both taken over some six months later, <sup>174</sup> while announcing that houses would soon be provided in the **Waikato**, subject to negotiations with the mine owners. <sup>175</sup>

The State had by 1942 spent £100,000 on housing for its Liverpool, James and Strongman mines and, since 1940, £12,000 at Tatu. At the Mangapehi mines near **Te Kuiti**, also taken over in 1940, £70,000 had been spent on houses and a hostel; the new settlement, named Benneydale, with its hospital, town water supply, sewerage system and co-operative store was called a model mining village. <sup>176</sup>

In April 1942, a Glen Massey miner wrote that the excellent housing described in a recent broadcast applied only to State mines and was entirely lacking on the private fields of **Huntly**. Here many employees, unable to get family housing, had to keep two homes going. 'Surely it is time the State took over all these mines so that the northern miners may also reap the benefit of its humanitarian principles.' <sup>177</sup>



On 24 July 1942, at a conference of **Waikato** owners' and miners' representatives, Webb warned that miners who would not work would be replaced by men from the Army, and also declared that **Waikato** production was lagging because the owners had not hastened with housing as they had promised. They would get on with this at once or he would have no hesitation in asking the government to take over all the mines and rush up the required housing. The owners had asked for 300 more workers and the Army was ready to release 300 men with mining experience, but without housing they could not be taken on. Unionists told of men living in washhouses, garages and hovels, or in hotels at £4 a week. Most of the owners fully admitted that housing was inadequate, but pleaded their difficulties: the extreme demand for coal had arisen only since the war with **Japan**, and it would ease when the war was ended; building materials were short, and the plans first proposed by the owners had been rejected as non-permanent. Glen Afton's management, denying inactivity, said that it had bought two houses, built four, prefabricated, and proposed 20 more, but the cheapest builder could do only one at a time. To the miners, Webb again inveighed against absenteeism, saying that any who did not work fairly would go into the Army, whence 1000 former miners could replace them. <sup>178</sup> A few days later, the government undertook to protect owners against capital loss on providing houses, and to assist miners to buy the houses. Owners promised fullest co-operation, miners approved and the conference proceeded to arrange a production council and pit committees. <sup>179</sup> Minhinnick, on 27 July, cartooned Webb jumping on the conference table (and his hat) while both owners and miners cowered before him.

Meanwhile, Webb could claim that while the last year's 2 639 507 tons of coal was a record, output for the first six months of 1942, despite heavy floods on the **West Coast**, <sup>180</sup> was 1 312 099 tons, being 33 000 tons or five per cent more than in those months of 1941, and with 127 fewer men in the mines. The Waikato had contributed substantially to the increase and, apart from minor troubles at Pukemiro, there had been no hold-ups for months past. <sup>181</sup> In the six months to the end of

June there had been 16 coal disputes, involving 2771 workers and losing 3220 days, <sup>182</sup> but during July and August there were only three one-day stoppages, involving in all 764 miners. <sup>183</sup> On 27 August, Webb announced that in the past few weeks railway coal stocks had increased by 1400 tons weekly, so that an additional 1200 tons a week from **Waikato** could be released for household use, and 800 tons in the **South Island**. <sup>184</sup>

This was the relatively tranquil background against which the **Huntly** strike of September 1942, with all its political repercussions, broke forth in the **Waikato**. By agreement, if miners working on tonnage rates could not, through no fault of their own, average 25 s 4 d a shift over a fortnight, management would make up the difference for the shifts worked. At the Pukemiro mine management, claiming that 10 men had been going slow, refused their deficiency payment, and 190 miners, claiming that the minimum wage principle was at stake, struck on Thursday, 3 September.

Webb said immediately that the strike was totally unjustifiable, the miners were breaking their agreement, the rules of their federation, and the law; the law would be upheld. The executive of the Northern Miners Union recommended strongly that the Pukemiro men should resume work, referring the matter to a disputes committee, and pit-head meetings at the several mines on Friday morning endorsed this. <sup>185</sup> The Pukemiro men refused, unless the money at issue, totalling about £16, was paid while the dispute was being considered; they claimed that their agreement's insistence that work should go on in 'all respects as before' during negotiations included payment. <sup>186</sup> Meanwhile on Tuesday, 8 September, after stop-work meetings, the men at the Glen Afton, Renown, MacDonald, Alison and Rotowaro mines, saying that previously they had not had all the facts, decided almost unanimously to strike in sympathy; when the Wilton mine joined them next day about 1300 miners, normally producing nearly 3000 tons a day, were idle.

On 9 September, the *Auckland Star's* strike news included a small paragraph headed 'Government Should Take Over': the Mayor of

**Ngaruawahia** had raised a new aspect, saying that in his opinion 'there would never be peace on the coalfields until the Government took over the mines. From other sources it seems that this opinion is generally held among the men, and there may be in the action taken a suggestion that the Government's hand is being forced in this regard.' <sup>187</sup>

Management claimed to have figures showing that men on the disputed coalface, a few weeks earlier, were able to make up to 35 s a day, but in the last pay fortnight the earnings had dropped to between 12 and 22 shillings a day, which, taken with knowledge of the coalface, showed that they were breaking the spirit of the agreement; their earnings were short of the minimum wage through their own fault, and therefore did not have to be made up. <sup>188</sup>

The men contended that no miner liked being on the minimum wage which, with deductions, gave him less than £10 a fortnight to take home; that only those actually working a face knew how much coal could be cut and filled there, and that conditions had changed. Previously, the face had been narrow, and workers there had received an additional yardage rate; now that it had been widened, this did not apply; more blasting (a charge on the miners) was required and there was more stone in the coal. Further, previously the men had done their own trucking for which each pair of miners was paid 26 s 7d a shift. <sup>189</sup> Webb explained that lately men emerging from the Army had taken over the trucking, releasing miners for full-time work on the face, and production should have increased, but it had dropped. The Coal Mines Council had discussed the matter when visiting the **Waikato** the week before the strike, but the miners had not prepared their case and though the union secretary had promised to forward details he had not done so. <sup>190</sup>

It seems regrettable that the **Coal Mines Council** had not pursued these inquiries, but presumably they did not seem urgent. Fraser was away in **America**, due to return on 17 September. Webb deplored that despite all the improvements that Labour had achieved for miners a few irresponsible wreckers were spoiling the fine effort of the majority; their

challenge would be accepted and all the powers of the State used to maintain production. <sup>191</sup> On 8 September, the government had decided to prosecute the Pukemiro miners and on the 10th it was announced that they would be called to court on the 17th. Semple, warning of drastic cuts in **North Island** rail services, was amazed at the miners' sudden defection and 100 per cent behind his colleague in accepting their challenge. <sup>192</sup> The press approved these condemnations: Webb and Semple, said the *Evening Star*, had been practical miners and 'if there had been any justification for the action of the men they as Labour stalwarts would have seen it.' <sup>193</sup> Editors hungered for strong action, declaring that the public was less interested in the cause of the stoppage than in its effects, <sup>194</sup> and that the miners' defiance, their feeling that they could be a law unto themselves, came from Webb's former bluster and weakness. Almost alone, the *Auckland Star's* reports set forth, without advocacy, the miners' view: they pooh-poohed the go-slow suggestion, and saw instead an actual breach of the agreement and an attack on the minimum wage which must be fought to a finish, not only for miners but for the whole industrial side of which they were the champions. 'To them the industrial struggle is a much older struggle than the war', though their recent response to a production drive showed that they were willing to respond to war appeals; in the **Waikato**, where conditions were good, some had been producing 15 tons a day, and the average had been about nine tons. <sup>195</sup> At the same time, the *Star's* editorials condemned the strike as heartily as did any other paper: 'It is appalling that on so flimsy a pretext the whole production of the lower **Waikato** mines should be stopped.' <sup>196</sup>

Webb, Minister of Labour and of Mines, and heavily criticised for his handling of other disputes, did not go to the **Waikato**. Instead, there came Angus McLagan, for 15 years secretary of the United Mine Workers of New Zealand, president of the Federation of Labour since 1937 and, since 1 July, Minister of Industrial Manpower. He had started work, aged 14, in a British pit, but had been nearly 30 years in the mines and unions of New Zealand, mainly on the West Coast. <sup>197</sup> Two months previously he had reluctantly accepted a place in the Upper House, the

necessary constitutional step to the War Cabinet, as a Labour leader of proved and puritan worth. Though honest, able and hard-working, with a widely informed grasp of issues, McLagan was not an easy or tactful manipulator, ready at the right moment to take or seem to take others into his confidence. This was the first major dispute in which he was not acting as the miners' man. He was uneasy and uncommunicative, 'frankly hostile' to the press,<sup>198</sup> and he made no immediate approach to the men at large.

After he had met the Northern Miners Union executive, it was decided to hold a secret ballot on whether to resume work while a disputes committee settled the minimum wage issue or to continue the stoppage till the amount involved was paid. The *Auckland Star's* reporter commented that in this union as in other bodies there were inactive members, and particularly at pit-head meetings good talkers were liable to sway proceedings without enough debate by those holding contrary views, who were awed by what seemed majority opinion.<sup>199</sup> Three-fifths of the votes cast were needed for a clear decision and McLagan, saying that this was the most important decision ever before them, urged all miners to vote at the 13 polling places open on Friday 11 September; but he did not call or address any public meetings before the ballot. With McLagan was J. Devlin, who had just been re-elected president of the United Mine Workers, heavily defeating Lawson of Pukemiro.<sup>200</sup>

That a Minister of the Crown should take a vote for or against the continuance of an illegal strike was remarkable in itself. The result was highly embarrassing: 619 for continuing the strike and 484 for going back to work.<sup>201</sup> A 60 per cent majority was needed



TO BE OR NOT TO BE

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

to continue the strike, and though this was only 56 per cent it was not the decisive vote the authorities wanted. The margin was so narrow that it was not disclosed. Instead, late on Saturday, a notice was posted at [Huntly](#), and given over the air, that the proposal for continuance of the stoppage had failed to secure the required majority; union members were advised to resume work on the Monday when a report would be given at the mines. This attempt to muffle the vote was worse than a failure: after pit-head meetings on the Monday the miners went home again; withholding the keenly awaited figures led to much guesswork, suspicion and intrigue. <sup>202</sup>

On Monday 14 September, when it became clear that the ballot had failed to end the strike, the situation grew more rancorous. In the late afternoon and evening, summonses were delivered to the Pukemiro men for trial on the 17th. <sup>203</sup> [North Island](#) railway services were cut, with timetables thinned and goods classified, while distances for ordinary passengers, who since July could travel only 100 miles without a permit, were reduced to 50 miles. Gas works, dairy





MOON-STRUCK  
MOON-STRUCK

factories, meat works, bakeries and other industries anxiously watched their dwindling coal, making all possible economies. Editors and politicians grew more irate.

Cartoonists, contrasting miners with soldiers and prisoners-of-war, ridiculed Webb and McLagan.<sup>204</sup> Editors repeatedly censured miners, ministers and the government, and called anew for strong action. For example: ‘Not all the merits of the dispute are on the side of the employers, but whether the action of the employers in paying reduced wages was right or wrong, it is clear that the action of the miners is absolutely wrong.... The Government cuts a sorry figure ... the men are trading on the known weakness of the Government which has given way to them in practically every serious industrial argument that has arisen.... If the State has the right to order a man into the Army, it has the right to order a man into a mine and make him work.’<sup>205</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* wanted non-union workers: no large labour force would be required, there would be no insuperable difficulties in showing the miners that they were not, as they comfortably believed, indispensable. ‘The Government could and should prove to the miners ... that the country can get on— can get coal—without them. The lesson would be sharp and salutary, saving trouble in the future and averting the industrial and transport crisis’; morale and war effort would be boosted if the government turned from wheedling and threatening to acting and



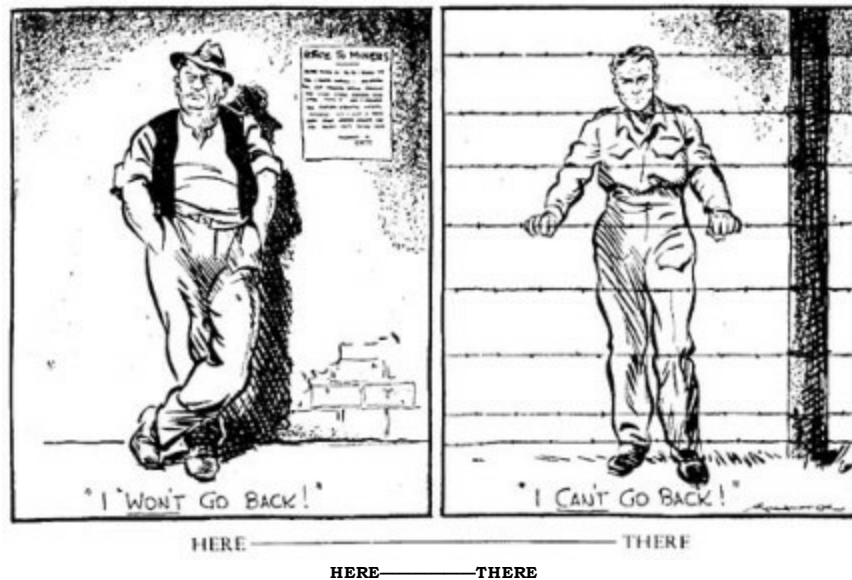
producing. <sup>206</sup>

**The great question today is whether a democracy is prepared to use a firm hand against those who sabotage its war industry.... If the only way to bring them [miners] to their senses is to call for volunteer labour, that step must be taken, for subject to certain safeguards, such labour can work the mine. <sup>207</sup>**

**In post-strike debate, [Holland](#) claimed that the leaders should have been 'arrested and incarcerated' and the men given 48 hours to return to the mine or go into camp where he believed the soldiers would have taken good care of them. <sup>208</sup> It is also probable that such toughness would have brought forth the battle-cry 'Victimisation', with support from other miners and even other industries, apart from such practical difficulties as finding the leaders or coping with recalcitrant miners over or under military age. The strikers were not worried lest men from the Army take over. 'You might get a few to work but you won't get a thousand ex-miners to turn down their mates' was their feeling, and some of those on strike were themselves lately released from the Army. <sup>209</sup> If experienced volunteers could not be obtained, inexperienced men would be a danger to themselves and everyone else. Routines, slowly evolved and enforced by mining inspectors and deputies, would have become hazards, and the dangers for 'scabs' underground would have been obvious to anyone whose situation in life made him a possible volunteer.**

**On 15 September, Sullivan, Acting Prime Minister, likened refusal to produce coal to the Japanese sinking New Zealand supply ships, adding that the public reaction was as if the sinking had been done by a 'New Zealand bomber with a fifth column crew'; lack of coal was paralysing the fighting effort; strong steps would be taken; people would endure any deprivation involved rather than submit to the internal or external aggressor. <sup>210</sup> Semple spoke of the strikers, led by a few wreckers, declaring civil war on the community and playing into the hands of the Japanese. <sup>211</sup> [Holland](#), deputy-chairman of the [War Cabinet](#), committed**

himself: 'This is a time for the strongest action. I want to assure the public that the law will be observed and that those who break it will be dealt with fearlessly and firmly. There can be no thought of any arrangement that interferes with the



processes of the law.... The question of who is to rule this country must be settled once and for all.' <sup>212</sup>

Meanwhile, on Monday night 14 September, McLagan had left for **Wellington**, along with Hall, secretary of the Northern Miners Union. At Huntly, affairs stagnated and criticism grew about the handling of the strike. There was wide recognition that work must resume, there was the usual necessity to 'save face', and there was union in-fighting, with strong conflict between executives and younger 'irresponsibles'. Antagonisms were heightened when a meeting, arranged by the strike committee of the MacDonald mine at a theatre for the afternoon of Tuesday 15th, was banned by the police in the interests of public safety. The arrival that day of 30 additional police did not sweeten the mood of **Huntly**, seething with talk and divided opinions, but with no hint of violence. <sup>213</sup> 'Well-informed observers' stated that had this theatre meeting been held much confusion might have been dispelled, and it would have been no surprise had the men decided to abrogate the ballot and other decisions and vote for an immediate return to work. <sup>214</sup>

On 16 September, G. Smith,<sup>215</sup> the Mayor of **Huntly**, and A. F. Moncur MP,<sup>216</sup> who had lately toured the mines on a production drive, tried to negotiate with the owners and to arrange a mass meeting, but as the police would allow only these two as speakers, the union executive would not have it.<sup>217</sup> The Federation of Labour (of which McLagan was president) declared that however justifiable a stoppage might be normally, to slow up the war effort was against trade union policy and its effect was comparable to the Japanese bombing the railways. The United Mine Workers (of which McLagan was secretary) also urged ending a strike disastrous for miners and the whole Labour movement. The Auckland Trades Council 'while fully realising the justice of the miners' case' entreated them to resume in the interests of the struggle against the Axis,<sup>218</sup> and the communist-minded *In Print* declared itself, despite the mine owners' 'provocative and truculent' action, against the strike method at the present time.<sup>219</sup> Only the **Auckland** watersiders proffered support, sending £249 as strike relief.<sup>220</sup>

Any support for the strike was unlikely to appear in print, for J. T. Paul,<sup>221</sup> Director of Censorship and Publicity, had instructed newspaper editors that there must be 'no publication of reports of meetings, resolutions or statements in support of the unlawful strike, or any statement supporting or condemning the strikers without reference to the Director of Publicity.'<sup>222</sup>

On 17 September Fraser returned from **America**, and at **Huntly** the trial of the Pukemiro men began. All of them, even those absent or on compensation for injury, pleaded guilty to taking part in an illegal strike, while denying full responsibility for it,<sup>223</sup> though the prosecution agreed to exclude 14 boys of 17 years or less who would have been swayed by others. The magistrate, W. H. Freeman, after twice adjourning the Court to facilitate negotiations before penalties should harden attitudes still further, on 18 September sentenced 182 men to a month in prison. There was, however, no move to carry them off, and Fraser later claimed full responsibility for this delay.<sup>224</sup> Meanwhile, the strike persisted.

On Saturday the 19th McLagan and Hall, back in **Huntly** after seeing Fraser, proposed to address next day four meetings there and at the mine settlements, refusing still to have a general meeting, demand for which was growing stronger: four delegates—half the Northern Miners executive—walked out of an executive meeting on this decision. <sup>225</sup>

When the first meeting was due to start at **Huntly** on Sunday morning, there were only about 30 men in the hall, though about 350 were in the street outside. McLagan coming out of the footpath towards a group of 60 began to speak: 'Men of the Northern Miners Union—', but they turned from him, walking out of hearing, while a few voices asked who had called the meeting. McLagan approached another large group, trying to persuade them to come into the hall, but again there was pointed, silent dispersal. Eventually he there addressed a small and restless group of about 40. The afternoon meetings at Glen Afton, Renown and Glen Massey were abandoned, as was a mass meeting arranged for Monday at **Huntly**. McLagan, with almost 30 years of union work behind him, was bluntly rejected by the militants, who had grown in strength during the two weeks of rumour and intrigue. There were widespread jibes about the spectacle of a Minister of the Crown forced to pursue a parley in the streets.

About 600 finally met at **Huntly** on 21 September. Reporters were not present, but it was 'learned unofficially' that while McLagan was speaking early in the meeting 'the suggestion arose' that the men should return to work forthwith on condition that the government took over the mines. This was approved 440:130, there was an adjournment for McLagan to telephone **Wellington**, and a hard line proposal to continue striking for the minimum wage was rejected. This meeting was not fully representative, particularly of the original strikers, who wanted the minimum wage issue settled first, and the government did not officially reply. McLagan battled with the Pukemiro men again next morning, and later that day a union notice posted at **Huntly** said that the mass meeting favoured return to work under State control, that the government had decided to take control, and that members should

resume work next day. <sup>226</sup> This anticipated by a night Webb's announcement on 23 September of State control for the duration of the war, with the owners retaining possession. Still the strike was not ended, but there were now two issues before the miners, the original dispute and State control. The second distracted adherents from the first, <sup>227</sup> and finally after more meetings another ballot on Friday 25 September voted conclusively, 715:428, to resume work with the original dispute going before a committee. Work started on Monday 28th, and next day it was announced that the sentences on the Pukemiro men were suspended, provided they worked diligently and took no part in strikes for the duration.

There were precedents under non-Labour governments for such remissions, and Fraser claimed that the law had been upheld, a major industrial disaster averted and coal production resumed, while the rights of the coal owners would be fully protected. Coates tried to quieten alarm raised by the dread words 'socialisation' and 'nationalisation', saying, 'I personally believe that there is a distinct difference between socialisation and the form of control it is proposed to adopt.' <sup>228</sup> But a chorus of disapproval arose from the press, Chambers of Commerce, manufacturers' associations and other bodies of conservative thought.

**Holland** and his followers claimed that the State control proposal came from **Waikato**, that the mine owners <sup>229</sup> had been deprived of their rights at the dictation of striking miners. Fraser explained that Coates had previously <sup>230</sup> held discreet exploratory discussions with the mine owners at **Auckland** and the matter was under consideration by the government when it was spoken of at the meeting at **Huntly**, 'an occurrence that I regret very much.' <sup>231</sup> *The New Zealand Herald*, in its first comment on the proposal, understood 'from a reliable report' that nationalisation had been under consideration by the government for some days. <sup>232</sup> Webb, on the 23rd, said that regulations for State control had been drafted (without reference to the owners) a week before the **Huntly** meeting on the 21st, and held in readiness for enactment in the last resort if the strike lasted long. <sup>233</sup> It is likely that he was

improvising in his zeal to deny both that the miners instigated the move and that the government was eagerly awaiting opportunities to nationalise. Coates said that in his two preliminary discussions the owners were quite friendly and helpful but they opposed the few headings offered, 'for no regulations had then been set out', claiming that they had done no wrong and not seeing why they should be picked out for special treatment. <sup>234</sup>

In any case, the idea of the State running the mines was broadly current. The State could spend more than private enterprise could both on mine developments that were commercially unprofitable but vital in obtaining coal and on amenities such as housing. Since mid-1940 it had already taken over three mines that were in difficulties. The minutes of the United Mine Workers council on 11 April 1941 briefly record that a remit for nationalisation, moved by Hall of the Northern Mines, was carried. In Britain the nationalisation of coal resources, enacted in 1938, became effective on 1 July 1942. Webb's statement on 24 July that unless mine owners co-operated over housing he would recommend State take-over for the duration should be remembered, as should the opinion of the Mayor of Ngaruawahia, <sup>235</sup> given on 9 September, that there would not be peace on the coalfield till the government took over. The *New Zealand Herald* report, on 22 September, said that the widening of the dispute to the broad and controversial issue of State control 'is said to be the expression of many latent beliefs held by the miners. There has been practically no previous mention of the subject at the many informal gatherings during the 18 days of the stoppage, but it is recognised that, in the minds of many miners, the questions of mine management and State control are inextricably linked.' Alongside this, a letter from **Tauranga**, presumably written several days earlier, mentioned that the miners had 'made it evident that they want the nationalisation of all coal mines.' <sup>236</sup>

Meanwhile, the strike front had shifted to the War Administration. <sup>237</sup> On the evening of 21 September a meeting of Cabinet and War Administration members decided, as the only way out of the impasse, to



make the **Waikato** mines a controlled industry and it was anticipated that the miners' sentences would be suspended. Holland objected and withdrew; the other Nationalists present (Coates,



Sir Apirana Ngata.

**Sir Apirana Ngata**



J. G. Coates.

**J. G. Coates**



Peter Fraser with New Zealand servicemen in England.



**Peter Fraser with New Zealand servicemen in England**



A school air raid shelter at Devonport, Auckland.

**A school air raid shelter at Devonport, Auckland**

An air raid shelter under construction, Auckland, April 1942.



**An air raid shelter under construction, Auckland, April 1942**



Four St John ambulance nurses at the opening of the Centennial Memorial meeting house, Tawakeheimoa, at Te Awahou.

**Four St John ambulance nurses at the opening of the Centennial Memorial meeting house,  
Tawakeheimoa, at Te Awahou**

EPS personnel practice first-aid.



**EPS personnel practice first-aid**



Maori section of the Women's National Service Corps on parade.

**Maori section of the Women's National Service Corps on parade**

Women's National Service Corps digging trenches.



**Women's National Service Corps digging trenches**



Home Guardsmen.

**Home Guardsmen**

Men of the Elmwood Home Guard prepared for work on defences,  
December 1941.



**Men of the Elmwood Home Guard prepared for work on defences, December 1941**



Crib (snack) time in a wet mine, Stockton, 1944.

**Crib (snack) time in a wet mine, Stockton, 1944**

Denniston, 1945.



**Denniston, 1945**



United States troops at Paekakariki, 1942.

**United States troops at Paekakariki, 1942**

United States marines lined up with their mess gear, Paekakariki, 1943.



**United States marines lined up with their mess gear, Paekakariki, 1943**



Polish refugees, 1945.

**Polish refugees, 1945**





Free apples for school children

Hamilton, Polson and Broadfoot) did not dissent in this unanimous decision, but next day Polson and Broadfoot, with Bodkin <sup>238</sup> who had not been present, joined **Holland** in protest against the triumph of lawlessness and a policy leading to complete economic chaos. The National party caucus on 29 September withdrew its members from the **War Cabinet** and War Administration, saying that there should be a general election as soon as the war situation allowed, which **Holland** said should be in about three months. <sup>239</sup>

Approval for the National party actions was not wholesale, even in normally conservative areas. The press was divided. The three metropolitan *Stars*, while consistently condemning the strike and the way it was handled, disapproved of **Holland's** group forsaking their posts and the attempt at unity, and did not favour an early election. The *Star-Sun* was not moved by **Holland's** scruples at the government's compromise: 'What did he think they would do? They have compromised in every serious labour trouble that has occurred since the war started and it is certain that they will compromise to the end of the chapter, because it is their nature to do so', <sup>240</sup> and it thought that **Holland** showed poor appreciation of the government's dilemma and the dangers facing the country when the magistrate 'slammed the door' on conciliation by imposing gaol sentences. <sup>241</sup> The *Auckland Star*, after saying that the government had got itself out of a bad situation by

establishing a bad precedent, risked a prophecy:

In the long run the country will be better off with a real and active Opposition ... than with an Administration based on a political truce which in Mr Holland's view has become fictitious. But if the Dominion now enjoys a period of industrial peace, and if, in particular, the new control of the **Waikato** coal mines works smoothly, Mr Holland and his colleagues may before long wonder whose interests have been served by their resignations. <sup>242</sup>

In a cartoon by J. C. H., **Holland** trundled along Politics Lane a bundle out of which stuck three pairs of feet, while a miner advised, 'Don't let walking out of the **War Cabinet** worry you Syd—you're not an essential industry'. <sup>243</sup>

A few provincial papers also were dubious. The *Napier Daily Telegraph* of 30 September, while sympathising with **Holland**, thought that he might have been wiser to have protested but continued his Administration work; the *Timaru Herald* said 'This is a hasty and regrettable decision'. <sup>244</sup> The *Otago Daily Times* of 1 October viewed the resignations with 'mingled approval and regret'. The *Dominion* saw them as a 'logical and proper course', setting an example greatly needed where 'so grave an abandonment of both policy and principle called for drastic protest.' <sup>245</sup>

The *Press* was particularly concerned at **Holland** being let down. Two days before the trial **Holland**, deputy chairman of the War Cabinet, had given an assurance that lawbreakers would be dealt with fearlessly and firmly, with no such interference; 'by going back on that statement, the Government has brought itself into contempt and has shaken public confidence in the impartiality of the administration of justice.' Nor did it think that the War Administration was worth saving. <sup>246</sup> But neither the *Press* nor the *Otago Daily Times* wanted a hasty election.

The *New Zealand Herald* and the *Evening Post* went all the way with **Holland**. The *Post* held that withdrawal by the Nationalists was



inevitable, otherwise they would have become parties to an abject surrender; the country must shortly face the turmoil of an election. <sup>247</sup> The *Herald* declared: 'The Government... showed itself unable and therefore unfit to govern. It suffered one of its Ministers to be ignored and itself to be defied and mocked ... Mr Holland could not do otherwise than dissociate himself from such pusillanimous proceedings.... **Huntly** follows on Westfield. None can believe that the sequence will end at **Huntly**.' The situation demanded an all-in national cabinet or an early election. <sup>248</sup>

Within the parliamentary National party, there was some division. <sup>249</sup> Coates and Hamilton, resigning from the party, accepted Fraser's invitation to rejoin **War Cabinet** as individuals, issuing on 5 October a dignified statement tuned to the realities of the situation and the prime necessity of getting coal. In a no-confidence debate moved by **Holland** in mid-October, two others, H. S. S. Kyle <sup>250</sup> of Riccarton and J. N. Massey <sup>251</sup> of Franklin, stood with them, saying that the government had taken the only practical course. Coates said that it was easier to talk of punishing ringleaders than to discover accurately who they were, and that those who talked of shooting them should point out who would do the shooting. 'We do not want Hitlerism in this country.' <sup>252</sup> Several other non-Labour members regretted that the magistrate had imposed gaol sentences. 'I do not agree with gaoling strikers,' said H. G. Dickie, National, of Patea, 'They should be given a stiff fine and the strike treated as a continuing offence.' <sup>253</sup> Andrew S. Sutherland <sup>254</sup> (National, Hauraki) and C. A. Wilkinson <sup>255</sup> (Independent, **Egmont**) had similar views <sup>256</sup> and Hamilton said that the magistrate's decision had caused a good deal of the difficulty, whereas a fine would have been practicable no matter how many were involved. <sup>257</sup> **Holland** himself, though early in the debate he had declared that the miners' leaders should have been incarcerated and the rest given 48 hours to get back to the mine or into camp, <sup>258</sup> later adopted this view. In reply to a newspaper correspondent's direct question whether he would have gaoled the strikers for a month, **Holland** wrote: 'If I had been in the Prime Minister's position, I would not have allowed a law to remain on the

Statute Book that could not be enforced. To throw hundreds of men into prison merely makes martyrs of them, but if the men had been fined that was punishment that would have had the required results and the ends of justice would have been adequately served.’ <sup>259</sup>

Meanwhile the news from the **Solomons** was poor, with the Americans holding, but only holding, **Guadalcanal**’s airfield and other places seized early in August. “The next six months will be the period of greatest danger in the south-west **Pacific**,’ pronounced the *Press* on 28 September. By mid-October, when **Holland** and Doidge in the House were urging an election, the long-expected counter-attack was developing and, as the *Auckland Star* said, ‘There is only one fight that the Dominion can afford now.’ <sup>260</sup> What had made the strike specially reprehensible also made an election untimely.

The National Disputes Committee, <sup>261</sup> which examined Pukemiro’s problems on 3 to 4 October found, as so often in trade union disputes, that the cause lay well behind the point of outbreak. It was shown that in the first fortnight of August, five pairs of men working in the places concerned had averaged 14, 11, 9.8, 12.6 and 17.2 tons per shift, besides doing their own trucking, at 26 s 7 d a day to each pair. When the trucking was cancelled in the last fortnight of August, an average of only 7.2 tons per shift was cut and filled. At first the miners’ advocate, G. Lawson, maintained that the reduction was the result of change in the nature of the coal, but later ‘admitted frankly’ that the miners had not produced all they could because they thought that even by working hard they could not earn satisfactory wages; when the trucking arrangement was ended, they deliberately reduced their daily output. Management therefore was justified in refusing to make up their earnings. However, the committee judged that only two of the eight places seen were good, at two it would be difficult for even a skilled miner to earn the minimum wage and the others were borderline cases. In the mine manager’s opinion, fair production from this section would be 15 tons per pair a shift, which would average the minimum wage of 25 s 4 d a day, whereas the general mine average was more than 40 s.

Ever since this section had first been opened, its tonnage rate had caused dissatisfaction, being based on that of earlier workings 12 feet high, while currently height was restricted to 9 feet. But for the trucking arrangement, which had raised the miners' earnings substantially, trouble would have come to a head earlier. Instead of approaching the question

by proper and well established methods, the Pukemiro union attempted to use the minimum wage provision to force it to a conclusion; hence the whole of the recent trouble. There was no justification at any time for the union's action, but there remains still to be settled the important matter of the tonnage rates for the Taupiri section of the mine and the parties should without delay proceed to deal with it by proper methods.

262

These methods duly raised the tonnage rates in that section by 9 *d* a ton, removing or at least lessening the original grievance. <sup>263</sup>

Except at **Auckland**, the main dailies were content to publish the committee's finding that the strike was not justified; they did not give its report in full, notably omitting its recommendations on the tonnage rate. <sup>264</sup> The *Auckland Star*, however, after drawing attention to long-standing dissatisfaction with the tonnage rate, continued: 'As so often in the past ... once men resort to "direct action" ... the original grievance is submerged. In this case the question, so far as it was commonly understood, was whether or not the men had been "going slow." Now, after so much else has happened, the committee has detected and defined the original grievance—the apparent cause of the "go-slow"—and has strongly urged that it be investigated and settled by proper methods and without delay'. The *Star* also commented on the secrecy that had confused the dispute:

It has been left to the committee ... to reveal that although the mine manager rightly refused to pay the minimum wage to the ten men who were going slow he continued to make up the earnings of other miners when necessary. There was therefore no question of an 'attack on the

principle of the minimum wage.’ Both these important matters should have been elucidated, publicly, at an early stage, but mine owners and union alike refused to take advantage of the opportunity to make their cases public. The reason often given for secrecy in such areas is that publicity ‘will not help’; but it would be very hard to say whose interests were served by the secrecy with which the recent dispute was surrounded—certainly not the interests of the public. <sup>265</sup>

On 10 October, emergency regulation 1942/293 established a Board to control the five mines concerned in all aspects—such as methods of working, plant, equipment, workers’ housing, hiring and firing—for the duration of the war, while the owners were to receive each year an amount equal to the profits averaged over the last three years. The Board was dominated by the Minister, who chaired it, with a casting vote, and appointed all the members, four from the owners, two from the miners and one other. Webb found the field immediately transformed by goodwill and zeal for production, which within a month rose by more than a thousand tons a week. Pit committees were interviewing absentees, there was co-operative trucking, machines were splitting coal pillars, a practice the Union had previously prohibited, and alternate Saturdays were worked. <sup>266</sup>

Three hundred miners would be released from the Army as soon as there were houses for them; 20 houses were to be built at Mangapehi, 20 at Tatu and 40 in the **Huntly** area. Of the last, 20 at Glen Afton were to be finished by about the end of November, when another 20 were to be started at Rotowaro. They were ‘being built by the companies under an arrangement with the State which had given priorities with men and materials’, and James Fletcher, Commissioner of Defence Construction, had given his powerful attention to the matter. <sup>267</sup>

The housing spurt was short. The 1943 report of the Mines Department recalled that since 1935, under Labour, £270,000 had built 370 miners’ homes, £245,000 at State or State controlled mines. Since the war’s start, 186 houses costing £117,788 had been built at State mines, and in addition 55 at the **Waikato** collieries since October 1942.

The report added that there was statutory obligation (Section 151, Coal Mines Act 1925) on colliery owners to provide satisfactory housing, and in view of the government's financial assistance there was now no excuse for failure to build homes where necessary 'as speedily as possible under existing conditions'.<sup>268</sup> This was not very speedy; there were great and growing demands for all kinds of construction, for defence, industry, farm housing and, increasingly after 1943, homes for returning servicemen, while materials were acutely short. Later mines reports told of scarce builders and materials preventing the provision of miners' homes and thereby the employment of more miners, though camps for single men were established at the Renown and Wilton mines in the Waikato, using army huts plus cooking and other facilities. In 1946, houses were still hoped for, and hostels were being considered.<sup>269</sup> Nor were the defects of existing houses rapidly set right. In October 1943, the Raglan County Council, stirred to investigate by the Health Department, had never seen such filthy, insanitary conditions as those at Glen Afton and other mining towns in the district, and decided that mine owners, the Mines Department and local ratepayers in each town should confer to improve household drainage.<sup>270</sup>

At first, production in the **Waikato** mines improved. It was estimated that the strike had lost well over 50 000 tons of coal. In January 1943 Webb, announcing that during 1942 the northern district mines had yielded 929 063 tons compared with 921 747 tons the previous year, claimed that strike losses had been made up.<sup>271</sup> In the **Waikato** mines, during the first eight months of State control, output exceeded that of a similar previous period by 42 125 tons or 8.37 per cent,<sup>272</sup> reached its peak in 1943, the first full year of control, and thereafter waned. One mine, Wilton Collieries (1934) Ltd, was fully sold to the government in October 1944. The other four, Pukemiro, Glen Afton, Taupiri and Renown, which had together produced 688 172 tons in 1941 and 689 853 in 1942, yielded 741 856 tons in 1943, 693 346 in 1944, 631 645 in 1945 and 593 767 in 1946.<sup>273</sup> Meanwhile, payments guaranteed to the owners, assessment of which proved difficult, in all cost the War Expenses Account £241,895 by March 1945. Government, however,

claimed that appeals to the managing board, representing both owners and workers, prevented any prolonged stoppages at these mines, apart from four days in sympathy with railway strikers in January 1945. <sup>274</sup>

Elsewhere, when development became uneconomic for owners, government bought out several mines, to sustain production either by conventional methods or by opencasting. Wallsend and Dobson were thus taken over in February 1943, Stockton in June 1944, Mossbank and Wilton in October 1944, Ohai and Wairaki in January 1945. The press generally disapproved of such nationalisation at the taxpayers' expense, but remits passed at council meetings of the United Mine Workers repeatedly advocated that all mines should be nationalised. <sup>275</sup> The basic principle that coal reserves, a national asset, would be more soundly developed by the State than by profit-minded interests, finally led to the Coal Act of 1948, vesting in the Crown all private rights to coal and compensating owners with lump sums.

Total coal production continued to rise: the record 2 639 507 tons of 1941 became 2 680 041 in 1942, 2 787 868 in 1943, 2 805 970 in 1944, 2 833 576 in 1945 and 2 793 870 in 1946. From underground mines output diminished: 1943's 2 725 831 tons dropped to 2 609 516 tons in 1944, 2 380 896 in 1945 and 2 265 170 in 1946. <sup>276</sup> The decrease was more than balanced by the government's new opencast mines, where production per man was about three times more than by underground methods, and where quite small deposits could be economically exhausted. Even though for several years earth-moving machinery was scarce, opencasting was practicable where the overlay was not too thick and in 1945, when some large machines specially designed for such work were imported, production rose steeply. Opencast coal in 1940 had totalled 50 763 tons, produced by 36 men; 55 774 tons in 1942 and 62 037 tons in 1943. In 1944, it rose to 196 454 tons, using 242 men. In 1945, 51 such mines, large and small, operated by 332 men, yielded 452 680 tons, more than one seventh of total production. <sup>277</sup>

But demand continued to exceed supply. There were recurring gas



shortages, basically due to gas equipment being designed for imported bituminous coal, but sharpened by shipping delays in the bar harbours of the **West Coast**. On the railways restrictions fluctuated but were always present, with long queues at booking offices. Supplies of domestic coal continued uncertain, with customers often limited to one or two bags at a time, while from the start of October 1943 bags were reduced in weight. In the recurring winter crises, and in several Decembers, miners worked on 'back' Saturdays and also on some public holidays. <sup>278</sup>

Miners themselves were still scarce; some hundreds were released from the Army, but others were ageing. There continued to be disputes. In 1942, in 24 disputes, miners lost 24 450 work-days out of the year's industrial total of 65 strikes costing 51 189 work-days. During 1943, in 33 disputes, miners lost 8901 work-days in the year's total of 69 strikes and 14 687 work-days lost. In 1944, there were 66 coalmine strikes involving 18 470 work-days in the total 149 disputes and 52 602 work-days. In 1945, 75 mine strikes cost 25 253 work-days out of the 66 629 lost in 154 disputes. <sup>279</sup> Most of them lasted only a day or less—as when after a normal stopwork meeting no more work was done that day <sup>280</sup>—and a few of the longer ones did not involve a quarrel with management but were for such causes as sympathy in several mines when the appeal against mobilisation of a soldier who had worked in a mine while on furlough in 1943 was dismissed. <sup>281</sup> Others resulted from sympathy with railway workers, or because there was no doctor in the district. <sup>282</sup>

New Zealand's strikes during the first four years of the war, in relation to those in other countries, were tabulated by the Labour Department in 1947 thus: <sup>283</sup>

**DAYS LOST PER 1000 PERSONS IN MINING,  
INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORT**

Year	NZ	Australia	Canada	Great Britain	USA
1938	164	1351	95	136	457
1939	237	445	167	132	957
1940	118	1482	188	88	330
1941	108	897	294	97	1096



1942	214	335	296	138	170
1943	63	865	677	162	478

(The totals are, in descending order, **Australia** 5375, **USA** 3488, **Canada** 1717, New Zealand 904, Great Britain 753.)

Two examples, taken at random from reports on State mines for the year ending March 1945, give sharper, if narrower, focus on miners' withholding of labour. The Strongman mine, employing 241 men and 9 boys worked 244 days with a gross output of 107 114 tons, being 12 days fewer and 1413 tons more than in 1944. Possible working days, including Good Friday, Easter Sunday (1944) and 18 'back' Saturdays, numbered 278. Those not worked were: Easter Monday and Anzac Day; two days for a breakdown; one day in dispute re truckers' turn on coal; three days over power failure; two days because the bath house was cold; two days for funerals of employees; <sup>284</sup> two days' dispute over waiting time; 10 days for Christmas holidays; two days as additional Christmas holidays taken by men; four days in dispute re pay; two days because of fire in mine; one day in dispute re transfer of a carpenter, and Good Friday 1945. At Mangapehi, 119 men and two boys, who produced 60 860 tons gross, worked 240 days 2 hours ( $\frac{1}{4}$  day) out of a possible 265 days, taking off: two extra days with their Christmas holidays, two days for no apparent reason; three days, fire in mine; nine days, union meetings; one civil day; three and a quarter days, miscellaneous breakdowns; four and a half days, disputes etc. <sup>285</sup>

Webb, the Minister of Mines, while regularly pointing to increased output, complained of disloyalty to the government and frivolous stoppages and stop-work meetings. <sup>286</sup> The coalmine owners pointed out that but for the new opencast mines the shortage would have been very grave indeed, adding that it was not generally known that much of the increase was of inferior quality coal which would not be saleable in normal times. 'From our own knowledge of what has been happening over the past six years we are convinced that the principal reason why output of so many of the old-established collieries had been so disappointing is to be found in the mishandling of the industrial

situation which has led to and permitted short-time work, innumerable petty stoppages and marked absenteeism throughout the industry.' Concessions forced in existing awards and substantial rises in miners' earnings—from 5 s to 10 s a day for miners, 10 s a day for truckers—were further objections. <sup>287</sup>

As well as shortage due to additional demands and reduced imports, there could be technical reasons for fluctuations in a mine's output, such as development work, size and accessibility of the seams, or whether or not pillars were taken out, but both public and press, when chilly or in travel difficulties, blamed the miners. Thus the *Auckland Star* on 26 February 1945, commenting on the desperate shortage of railway coal, with severe restrictions in both passenger and freight services, recalled that from the outset Webb had been billed as a practical man who knew the industry inside out and, in particular, how to deal with coal miners. 'The experience of nine years suggests rather that the coal miners know how to deal with Mr Webb. They observe his hat-raising performances with derisive amusement and they are unmoved by his rare and apologetic rebukes. They produce coal when they want to do so, and when they don't want to do so, they don't.'

Complicated and obscure factors often lie behind strike figures, confounding conclusions, but a few broad lines show through the war years. In 1939, there were 66 disputes, costing 53 801 work days; in 1940, 56 disputes cost 28 097 days and in 1941, 89 disputes took 26 237 days. In 1942, when danger was nearer to New Zealand, 51 189 work-days were lost in 65 strikes. It seems likely that the impact of labour regimentation prompted a rash of strikes. In 1943, when victory was assured but distant, there was the lowest tally: 14 687 days lost, in 69 strikes. Perhaps full awareness of the war sank in after the worst of the event; also, workers had become used to Manpower regulations, finding them less feudal than they had feared; Stabilisation was in its most promising phase and there was abundant overtime; there was, further, the strong possibility that a strike-exasperated public might install the National party in that year's election. All these factors could have

contributed to the industrial steadiness of 1943. In 1944, and still more in 1945, war urgency was fading, leaving room for sectional interests. Lower paid workers were increasingly restive as despite the apparent steadiness of the price index, living costs rose and belief in stabilisation was eroded, while overtime was reduced or seemed likely soon to be reduced; the National party had been safely exiled for another term. In these years over a wider range of industries and firms, strikes increased; 52 602 work days were lost during 148 strikes in 1944, and 66 629 in the 154 of 1945. (In 1946, another election year, only 30 393 days were to be lost in 96 strikes.)<sup>288</sup> The watersiders, who since 1941 had been quiet under large overtime payments and the quick settlement procedures of the Waterfront Commission,<sup>289</sup> again came into prominence with stoppages, but many normally more docile workers, such as bus-drivers, railway, gas, dairy factory workers, timber-workers and engineers added their quota of working days lost.

Waterside workers, traditionally a highly militant section of the work force, did not have major strikes during the war. Because their industry was so crucial, the government stepped in early and appointed the Waterfront Control Commission to speed up work, lessen friction and settle disputes quickly.

The start of the war found watersiders restive. Their award had expired in June 1938; both sides manoeuvred, delaying negotiations for various purposes. Their Union distrusted the Court of Arbitration from which it had in the past obtained less satisfaction than it had through agreements with the employers, the shipowners, but meanwhile the basic pay rate was falling behind those of other work groups.<sup>290</sup> After the war's start, fewer ships came and work, paid by the hour, was done more slowly. Against this background, in the first months, there were stoppages and go-slow tactics which outraged public opinion and drew widespread criticism. The Overseas Shipowners Allotment Committee wrote of the waterfront in New Zealand being notorious for inefficiency and expense.<sup>291</sup> James Roberts, secretary of the Union, in March 1940 amid a chorus of dissent told a meeting: 'This is the only country in the

world where the winches do not work continuously during the war.... In Great Britain today ships are worked continuously and the same thing applies to the United States and to Australia. I am not saying that I agree with it. I do not want to have to work two shifts.’<sup>292</sup> He and others on the Union’s national executive opposed industrial action lest it embarrass the Labour government. Said one: ‘The Labour Party ... is not perfect. But with all its faults we are immeasurably better off than we would be under the rule of Adam Hamilton. Had the old government been in power we would have been working on the wharves by this time under a licensing system.’<sup>293</sup>

After some months’ research and amid growing unrest, the government in April 1940 set up the Waterfront Control Commission with wide powers to ensure expedition in the loading, unloading and storage of cargo.<sup>294</sup> It had three members, on £1,250 a year,<sup>295</sup> then a handsome salary. The chairman was Captain R. E. Price,<sup>296</sup> who had served in the navy during the previous war and as ship’s master on the New Zealand coast until 1926: he had since worked as inspector of scaffolding for the Department of Labour and as a Conciliation Commissioner in the industrial arbitration system.<sup>297</sup> James Roberts, secretary not only of the Waterside Workers Union but also of the Alliance of Labour throughout its life from 1919–36, braved charges of deserting to serve the bosses, because he believed that he could and should help to reconcile waterfront interests and the needs of war. The third member was initially H. A. McLeod,<sup>298</sup> managing director of a stevedoring company, but he resigned from the Commission early in May 1941, and was replaced in January 1942 by Captain T. H. Bowling,<sup>299</sup> late Marine Superintendent of the Union Steamship Company at Wellington.<sup>300</sup> Price and Roberts had worked alone until December 1941 when the waterfront employers began actions challenging the legality of the Commission’s orders and decisions made without the third member. As the Solicitor-General advised that these proceedings would undoubtedly succeed, Price and Roberts filed consent to judgment that the orders and decisions in question should be quashed. The shipping companies and the Union required some to be reheard and the rest were

re-enacted by the full Commission in a blanket order. <sup>301</sup>

To ensure speedy handling of cargo, the Commission was given power to control all wharves and equipment; to employ all waterside workers, directing or varying existing methods of engaging labour, and taking over control of offices and staff. It could introduce any new method of employing labour or handling cargo, prescribe conditions upon which any person was employed, and exclude or suspend from the wharves any persons, including watersiders, whose presence was prejudicial to the quick despatch of shipping. From the shipowners it was to recover all moneys expended on wages or other purposes connected with loading, unloading or storing cargo, and it could impose levies on them for its administrative expenses and for special purposes.

As a first step towards improving workers' co-operation and morale, the Commission in June 1940 raised their pay by 2 *d* an hour to 2 *s* 10 *d*, the rise being that awarded to other trades under a standard wage pronouncement by the Court of Arbitration in September 1937; watersiders had been excluded from it on account of their average hours being fewer than 40 per week. From October 1940 the general 5 per cent cost of living bonus, reckoned at 2 *d* an hour, was added and from May 1942 another at the same rate raised the basic pay of watersiders to 3 *s* 2 *d* an hour. <sup>302</sup> Later, in March 1945 the Court of Arbitration pronounced that the standard wage rates fixed in September 1937 should increase by 3½ *d* an hour, and this, with a *pro rata* increase for overtime, was built into watersiders' pay from 9 July 1945. <sup>303</sup>

In June 1940 the Commission hoped to extend the 'bureau system' for engaging labour, already established at **Auckland**, Wellington, **Lyttelton**, **Wanganui**, **New Plymouth** and **Napier**, to other ports of any size. This system replaced the old 'auction block' method, whereby employers directly selected men as they crowded around the labour stool in a scramble for place and favour, with its possibilities of bribery, victimisation and discrimination. <sup>304</sup> Each bureau was run by a board on which both union and employers were represented. Men were graded

according to the kind of work they said that they would do and all received a share in the work available over four-weekly periods. Grade B men through age or infirmity did light work only, and many were on Scheme 13 work <sup>305</sup> or Social Security benefits when light waterfront jobs were scarce. Grade A men performed the heavier and more demanding tasks. At Auckland, **Wellington** and Lyttelton Grade A men, provided that they kept listed rules, were guaranteed wages, or in any case payment, of at least £3 a week (raised in June 1940 from £2 10 s a week). In practice, when few ships came, Grade A men were given all the work, reducing the need for supplementary payments. At Wellington between 1937–8 and 1944–5 only £345 7 s 3 d was paid out in this way. <sup>306</sup> At the start of the Commission's rule many watersiders hoped that the guaranteed wage would be extended to less busy ports but this would have meant considerable outlay to men doing nothing in weeks between ships, and extension did not happen during the war, causing a good deal of disappointment. Not till February 1947, under the re-organised Waterfront Industry Commission, were weekly minimum payments established. <sup>307</sup> Meanwhile, in 1940 existing bureaus, along with pay offices, were taken over by the Commission.

Payment for wharf work, chequered and complicated by its very nature, its complications multiplied by concessions whittled out in agreements or calcified by custom, was a problem spawning endless disputes within the industry and much criticism outside it. For 20 years the idea of co-operative stevedoring had been discussed along the waterfront and by 1939 many were looking to it as the magic panacea. <sup>308</sup> The Commission devised a new system to replace the hourly payments whereby maximum return came from minimum effort and slowest pace. The idea of piece-work was anathema to the Union and full co-operative stevedoring proved too difficult to organise. Roberts said bluntly: 'First and foremost, we did not have the gear and experience to operate.' <sup>309</sup> The president of the Union, J. Flood, <sup>310</sup> explained in April 1941 that previously they had thought that it would not be difficult to supplant the stevedoring contractors but 'it was found that practically all the ship-owners were interested in stevedoring firms themselves, and



were virtually the contractors, and naturally they had no desire to go out of business.’ <sup>311</sup>

The Commission steered a middle course and evolved its own cooperative contracting system which it hoped would create incentive and job interest. The Commission made contracts with the shipping companies, setting out rates, minimum payments, etc, and received money from the companies. The Commission paid the men at hourly rates for the cargo worked and any profits made on contract price by speedier work was distributed to them. There were variations in payment methods: at **Wellington**, profits were distributed on a ship basis but at other ports they were pooled over three-month periods. <sup>312</sup> Up to 31 March 1945 a total of £667,272 was distributed; this averaged 8.79 *d* per ‘winch’ hour, that is time when cargo was actually being moved. <sup>313</sup> Co-operative contracting began at **Wellington** on 3 June 1940 on overseas vessels and by March 1941 had been extended to most ports and to local ships of more than 350 tons.

The Commission claimed that results justified the new system. In 1941 it estimated an average saving of three days by overseas ships due to this factor, while admitting that there was ample room for improvement as appreciation of the new way grew. <sup>314</sup> In 1945 it claimed that over the war years speedier work under co-operative contracting had made an average saving of five days per vessel; continuous work had contributed a further seven days and reduction in ports of call six days. <sup>315</sup> Employers held that these two latter factors, rather than co-operative contracting, had hastened the turn-round of ships. <sup>316</sup>

As Roberts himself stated, the new system meant complete reversal of the watersider’s traditional position—the longer the job takes, the more the pay—and deep—rooted attitudes did not change quickly. <sup>317</sup> The Commission in 1945 pointed out that work was slowed by several factors; night shifts under artificial lighting required greater caution; there was congestion because deliveries to and from the wharves did not keep pace with round-the-clock work on ships; cargoes, in relation to



their bulk, were heavier than they had been pre-war; watersiders were older and more tired. <sup>318</sup> The results were 'as a whole, quite gratifying' but 'Co-operative contracting, as the name implies, requires the full co-operation of every member of the union.... Workers must realise that to obtain a share in the management of industry they must first show that they are capable of accepting the responsibility that goes with it.' <sup>319</sup>

In most small ports responsibility was accepted more readily than it was in the main ones. This was reflected in profits distributed which, over the five war years, averaged 6 *d* per 'winch' hour at **Auckland**, 8.27 *d* at **Wellington**, 1 s 1.39 *d* at **Lyttelton**, 2 s 1.83 *d* at **Port Chalmers**, 1 s 1.81 *d* at **Napier**, 1 s 6.85 *d* at **Nelson**. <sup>320</sup> Hare, taking **Nelson** as a favourable example, described administration where the secretary of the Union was also the Commission's agent.

He is responsible for the engagement, dismissal and organisation of the labour force of the port, consisting normally of about 75 workers, though in the busy season this may increase considerably. When a ship is to be unloaded, the shipping company informs the union secretary of the work to be carried out, and the company's wharf representative acts in co-operation with the union secretary to see that the work is performed to the company's satisfaction. Beyond this, however, the company has no power of supervision or control of the discipline of the labour force. The men are engaged, organised and the work directed by the branch secretary, in consultation with the President of the union and the committee members. On the testimony of the manager of the chief shipping company concerned, the work is carried out very rapidly and efficiently.... many sources of friction between the employer and worker are eliminated since questions of discipline can only arise between a worker and his own union officials. <sup>321</sup>

There were proposals for complete co-operative stevedoring by the Union at **Auckland** and **Bluff**, but in face of inherent difficulties, steadfast opposition by the shipowners and official feeling that the necessary thought and energy was not available in war time, they came to

Lack of enthusiasm resulted mainly from the scheme being a watered-down version of earlier hopes and from its pay additions being too remote for incentive purposes. Co-operative contracting amounted to working cargo at an hourly rate plus a despatch bonus varying with rates of work. Unionists had nothing to do with the contract-making, and some felt that the bonus was akin to piece-work. They could not follow the intricate computations and though the facts and figures were open to inspection even Union executives were hazy about rates of contract; in general, everyone let the Commission clerical staff wrestle with the system, accepting any profits that emerged. The scheme, while benefiting watersiders, gave them no part in its organisation; control belonged to the Commission and the wide sense of involvement which the Commission had hoped for did not develop. <sup>323</sup>

Further, the Commission, aiming to rouse enthusiasm for the system, over-sold it.

Captain Price in particular made definite promises pointing the way to a waterside Utopia in easy stages. He promised the watersiders in **Auckland**, for instance, that three months after the inauguration of co-operative contracting there would not be a foreman on the wharf and the men would be running their own jobs. At the end of the stated period no advance had been made. The men therefore lost confidence in the Commission. When confronted by the men with his own words he would retract what he had said by saying he had expressed his own personal views and perhaps the Commission did not agree with him entirely. Mr Roberts was also guilty of creating the same expectant attitude although more by inference as he never said anything definite that could be quoted back at him later. <sup>324</sup>

Expectations were also raised and disappointed further down the line of authority. At Wellington there were complaints that the Controller and superintendents gave interpretations which they were not entitled to give and which later were not endorsed by Commission rulings. The

superintendents told the men that they would, or should, get certain rates per hour, but when the jobs were finished they did not receive the rates expected; disputes followed, with decisions going against them. <sup>325</sup>

By 1945 the Commission, aware that contracts based on 'winch' time did not provide incentive for workers to reduce delays and petty disputes over dirt-money etc, looked towards substituting 'all-in' or 'overall' contracts. The rate would include all delays, removal and replacement of hatches, re-stowing and shifting cargo, special cargo, dirt money, minimum periods, etc. There was also talk of more worker responsibility, <sup>326</sup> But the war and the Commission both ended without these changes being effected.

The Commission appointed controllers at the main ports, with wharf superintendents under them, delegating wide powers. Controllers were necessarily men of much experience on the waterfront, as master mariners, stevedores or waterside leaders; the task of each was to maintain order in his port through direct and indirect use of his power, maintaining authority without appearing autocratic, adjusting matters between opposed interests through persuasion and co-operation. <sup>327</sup>

Their work was difficult. They had first of all to contend with the employers; but they soon found, when the Commission was established, without sweeping changes and large benefits to the watersiders, that the men and their union officials were not cooperative. <sup>328</sup> The clashes grew in number and magnitude and in **Auckland**, especially in May 1943, occasions for disagreement seemed deliberately contrived. Men loitered at their work, held up jobs, abused wet weather clauses and 'spelled' unduly, ignoring the protests of foremen until a controller or wharf superintendent appeared. These officers tried to cover all the ships but they could not prevent delays. The commonest form of slowing down work was limiting the number of bags, bales, baulks of timber, etc., in the sling until told by the Superintendent the number to be worked. <sup>329</sup>

The Commission could penalise recalcitrant workers but rarely used its powers—especially that of exclusion from the wharf—being reluctant to

antagonise the main body. By mid-1943, the Union officials in both **Auckland** and **Wellington** were attacking the Controllers for their 'dictatorial' methods, while Controllers complained of growing hostility from the Union which prevented good results and good relationships. Despite such friction, the Controllers achieved much in organisation and at the smaller ports unionists and Commission officials worked well together. <sup>330</sup>

Wharf superintendents, in continual close contact with the men, had to be acceptable to them. When two were needed, one was a Union man, the other by training and background inclined to the employers' viewpoint. <sup>331</sup> Where only one superintendent (or in smaller ports, Commission's representative) was appointed he was from the Union.

In practice the appointment of Union officials to permanent, paid positions did not achieve the desired industrial harmony. The majority group in a Union, deprived thus of its leaders, was soon swamped by new men with new policy who rose to fill the executive. The original executive members lost prestige when they were no longer the direct representatives of the men. They were regarded, particularly at **Auckland**, with some suspicion which became active when they did not always uphold a Union case but judged matters on merit; they were then accused of 'selling out' the Union for a good soft job. <sup>332</sup>

The Auckland Branch in February 1944 called for reconstruction of the Commission, saying that while eight out of 14 senior officers were former members of the Union there was no provision for electing a Union nominee. <sup>333</sup>

Work hours lengthened. Until March 1941, waterfront hours Monday to Friday were 8 am to 10 pm (or till midnight to finish a ship), less two meal-hour breaks; Saturday mornings, 8 am to noon, were ordinary hours, but at time-and-a-quarter rate; 1 pm to 5 pm was overtime. Thus the total time which could be worked in a week was 44 ordinary hours and 24 overtime hours. <sup>334</sup> From the end of March 1941 the winches began to work around the clock on overseas ships: extended hours <sup>335</sup>

were replaced by a shift system. By tradition, night work was deeply opposed by watersiders who 'had fought for a quarter of a century for the 10 o'clock knock-off and mid-night when a vessel was finishing.'<sup>336</sup> Even in 1916 they had insisted that work after 10 pm should be optional.<sup>337</sup> Besides the fatigue of very long hours, the social dislocation of shifts and increased danger under artificial lights, a regular shift system would require a larger union work force, and this, given the uneven flow of cargo work, would mean periods when there was not enough work for all.

Outside the normal eight hours, 8 am to 5 pm at 3 s 2 d, pay rates were high. Overtime from 6 pm to 10 pm was 4 s 7 d an hour. Monday to Friday night shifts, from 11 pm to 7 am, received 6 s an hour plus a free hot meal, and Saturday afternoon drew the same rate. On Saturday after 6 pm and on Sunday the rate was 7 s 4 d, so that a man putting in 12 hours at the weekend could earn £4 8 s. The employers had proposed 6 s for the weekly night shift, the Union having asked for 7 s, and they agreed to the weekend rate (7 s and hour plus 4 d cost of living bonus).

<sup>338</sup> Overseas shipowners' objections were lightened because the increased cost was sanctioned and paid for by the British Ministry of War Transport. After further negotiations New Zealand shipowners, when obliged by the needs of overseas vessels to work their ships in shifts, recovered the additional cost from the War Expenses Account.<sup>339</sup> From June 1942, under pressure to keep up with overseas trans-shipments and coastal cargoes, local vessels of more than 350 tons were worked continuously.<sup>340</sup>

The Commission's chairman, Captain Price, explaining that as cargo working was not a continuous process a regular shift system as in a factory was not possible, said that it was both a modified and irregular form of shift work, which is continually being started and broken up, varying in length with each ship. The Commission, by making a day shift extend into overtime hours and the night shift work at a high hourly rate, enables men at the main ports to secure a financial return that suffices to tide over unpaid periods of waiting for a job.<sup>341</sup>

Cargo was concentrated at main ports at the request of the British Ministry of War Transport in conjunction with the British headquarters of the shipping companies. The Ministry supplied two small freezer vessels to move refrigerated cargo and accepted the cost of railing and coasting cargo to the main ports. This reduced the average number of ports of call per vessel from the 6.13 of pre-war days to 2.16 in the year ending 31 March 1944; the following year saw a slight increase, 2.50 ports. Over the war years, the Commission estimated an average saving, by centralisation, of six days in each turn-around time. <sup>342</sup>

From small ports, where the centralisation policy meant few ships and scant pay, some unionists were moved to other ports at rush times. <sup>343</sup> There were difficulties in meeting the demand for labour, especially at **Wellington**, and men were not sent to **Auckland**, where civil servants and others were used on night shifts and non-union labour was registered for shift work, but transfers from such places as **Oamaru** and **Timaru** to **Lyttelton**, **Dunedin** and **Port Chalmers**, from **Wanganui** to **New Plymouth**, worked smoothly. <sup>344</sup> The costs, £27,272, involved in nearly 5000 transfers between June 1941 and March 1945 were borne by the War Expenses Account. <sup>345</sup>

Besides pay for hours actually worked, there was an established system of minimum payments, whereby men were paid for a shift or part thereof if the work to which they were ordered could not be done for a reasonable cause, such as breakdown of machinery, or if it were finished sooner than expected. There was plenty of scope for delaying or stretching out work so that overtime or a night shift would be called for and would then finish early.

The basic gospel, the *Order of the Waterfront Control Commission June 6th 1940*, Section 14, set forth a number of situations in which men received three or four hours' pay whether they worked that time or less or not at all. The place of such minimum payments in watersiders' aspirations may be gauged from the comment of J. Flood, as acting-secretary of the Union, in April 1941:

**It will be remembered that at previous conferences when a four-hour minimum was advocated by the General Secretary (Mr J. Roberts) and other delegates for the men who commenced work at 8 a.m. or at any time during the day, and for the men who were ordered back at 6 p.m., this provision was looked upon as something that might be achieved in the dim and distant future; yet it is an established fact today, and I believe that it gives greater security to the waterside workers than any other condition we have obtained for a number of years past.**

**When this Organisation was resuscitated in 1915, we had a two-hour minimum on the waterfronts, and if we were ordered back in the afternoon or at night there was no minimum. Today if a waterside worker starts work, he is entitled to approximately 12s, a sum greater than he received for a full day's work at the time of the 1913 strike....**

**... the cost of living is higher, and living standards have been raised, but I am firmly of opinion that we have made more advancement than any other Organisation in this country insofar as wages and conditions of employment are concerned, and I believe that the honest-thinking waterside worker will agree that the waterfront is a fairly good place to earn a living for himself and his dependants. <sup>346</sup>**

**There was also the practice of 'spelling' <sup>347</sup> whereby part of a gang rested for varying periods while the others worked. This was not new; it had legitimate beginnings in freezer work where there was a long-term benefit in men taking turns to get relief from the cold. There was also advantage in some cramped hold areas, such as near the square of the hatch, where long carries were not needed and where, if all the men in a gang tried to work at once they would get in each other's way, while it was claimed that with men resting in rotation a faster pace overall was achieved. It must also be remembered that many watersiders were getting on in years; <sup>348</sup> they could not maintain the pace of the younger men and worked better with short rests. But though there was sometimes reason or excuse for 'spelling', the practice, already over-used before the war, was badly stretched and abused in the war years,**



becoming a rooted custom where there was no occasion for it. It was deplored by the Commission and there were many attempts to combat it, but improvements usually faded after a time. <sup>349</sup>

One way and another, it was not rare for passers-by to see much slackness or apparent slackness on the wharves, while the nation was exhorted to maximum effort. Feeling was sharpened because it was known that troops overseas in ports such as **Benghazi** and **Tripoli** worked at high speed unloading ships, often with the risk of air attack hanging over them, for 7 s 6 d a day. Watersiders' earnings were regularly published in the press, with the peaks highlighted. Thus the *Evening Post* on 18 December 1941 reported that for three weeks in November A-class (or grade) men at **Wellington** had averaged £10 14 s and B-class men £6 18 s 6 d a week. Again at Wellington in the 14 weeks before 6 October 1942 A-class watersiders averaged £11 7 s 8 d, the highest weekly average being £14 10 s, the lowest £8 10 s; while for B-class the corresponding figures were £7 11 s 6 d, £11 19 s and £4 12 s. <sup>350</sup>

At Auckland (where a large proportion of work was for Americans, at an extra shilling an hour), in the year ending 31 March 1944, among 1810 unionists 504 earned varying amounts under £400, 200 gained between £400 and £500, 318 between £500 and £600, 306 between £600 and £700, 310 between £700 and £800, 139 between £800 and £900; 13 exceeded £900. At Wellington (1868 unionists), 569 earned up to £400, 346 between £400 and £500, 468 between £500 and £600, 434 between £600 and £700, 49 between £700 and £800 and two gained just over £800 each, the top figure. <sup>351</sup> A report publicising the top earnings at **Auckland**, where one man received £940, said that the amount of overtime could be gauged from the fact that 40 hours at ordinary rates would give about £6 a week, or £8 if work was for Americans. <sup>352</sup> Earnings were notably highest at these two ports. At Lyttelton (633 unionists) the three top men averaged just over £700 each, 150 between £600 and £700, 199 between £500 and £600, 103 between £400 and £500. At smaller ports numbers and earnings tapered down steadily. <sup>353</sup>

A return of average total earnings (ordinary and overtime, and profit

distribution) of the unionists with the highest earnings in the year ending 31 March 1944 showed that 100 men at **Auckland** averaged £861 each, for which during 50 weeks they worked on average 1148 hours at ordinary time and 1704 hours at overtime rates, including 45 Sundays and holidays, their average total weekly hours being 57. At Wellington, 100 men in 51 weeks averaged £707 12 s, working 1350 ordinary hours and 1360 overtime hours, including 35 Sundays and holidays, their weekly average being 53 hours in all. At Lyttelton, 50 men averaged £663 6 s, working 1287 ordinary hours and 1200 hours overtime, including 22 Sundays and holidays, with a weekly average of 48 hours. At New Plymouth, 50 men in 48 weeks averaged £487 5 s, working 793 ordinary and 833 overtime hours, including 21 Sundays, their weekly average being 34 hours. At Bluff the 50 highest paid men averaged £465 4 s 6 d for which they worked 835 ordinary and 875 overtime hours, including 24 Sundays and holidays, averaging 43 hours a week. <sup>354</sup>

These wages refer to unionists only. The waterside workers had a closed union, roughly 6000 strong, and they were not keen to open their ranks. Its young, fit men were liable for military service; appeals for them were likely to be made by the Commission, and to succeed, in proportion to the general shortage of their work-fellows. The Commission's policy was to appeal only for steady and regular workers and only for postponement for about three months, the Union branch concerned meanwhile opening its ranks to suitable and efficient applicants. By the end of the postponement period, if the Union had not found such men, it would ask for the appeals to be adjourned *sine die*; if new men were then within the Union, or if the Union had failed or refused to admit them, the appeals should be dismissed. <sup>355</sup>

There were difficulties. The Commission wanted its officers to approve applicants for Union membership, the Union combatted this intrusion on its rights. The Commission wished to appeal for each man on merit, the Union wanted appeals *en bloc*, claiming that there was industrial discrimination in the selection of men for appeal. By September 1942 it was agreed that these decisions should be made by a

selection committee of two Union representatives and two Commission officials, and also that new admissions were to be for the duration of the war only. <sup>356</sup> Although there were many applicants, admissions were limited. The Manpower Office rejected about half of them as being already in essential industry, the selection committees rejected many others, usually on Union opinion, and of those finally submitted for enrolment the Union itself rejected many as 'unsuitable'. An advertisement inserted by the Controller in the **Auckland** papers in October 1942 produced 1500 applicants, only 320 of whom were sanctioned by the **Manpower Office** and 93 finally accepted into the Union. At Wellington, in the year ended July 1943, 224 were admitted from 810 applicants. <sup>357</sup> Briefly, appeals of watersiders were refused consideration because sufficient new men were not admitted, but with such new members there would be no grounds for appeal as the men called up could be replaced. The Union strove to keep its ranks closed, hoping that its standards of suitability would be accepted by appeal boards. <sup>358</sup>

Like a bridge between a labour supply limited by adamant unionism and the irregular demands of urgent work on wartime waterfronts were the 'seagulls', non-union men traditionally employed on the wharves when there was more work than unionists could handle. By mid-1942 when cargo work increased sharply, the Services had taken many regular seagulls or Manpower authorities had directed them into essential industry. In February 1942 the government decided that men already working in essential jobs could work on the wharves during crisis weekends. On 3 April (Good Friday) from several hundred civil servants who had registered for such work in **Wellington** about 100 were called to action and found that patriotism paid. They received the same pay as watersiders, then seven shillings an hour, <sup>359</sup> making, as many worked for 12 hours, £4 4 s for a day's work. <sup>360</sup> This figure received a good deal of publicity, ranged against the fact that other civil servants in the Home Guard were doing Army duty at 7 s a day.

Sidney Holland promptly telegraphed the Prime Minister about the

intense dissatisfaction felt by thousands at such inequality. Rather than have such 'absurd costs' added to the national debt, he sought permission to organise an emergency group at each port to help load cargo for **Britain** at rush times, without pay. Fraser replied that he would be very pleased to discuss the proposal with **Holland**, the Waterfront Control Commission and the Minister of Labour. 'Please submit details as soon as possible.' <sup>361</sup> **Holland** replied: '... there are no conditions attaching to my offer. I am prepared to organise groups of volunteers to do this work as a war effort and am prepared to be the first volunteer myself. I should like to have the use of the radio service to launch the scheme.' <sup>362</sup> The president of the Union, J. Flood, telegraphed **Holland** that 7 s an hour was paid on holidays by agreement with the shipowners. He added: 'Challenge you to work on the waterfront with myself for soldier's pay for the duration of the war, all other sources of income to both parties to be given to the State as our war effort.' <sup>363</sup> No volunteer companies appeared on the wharves under **Holland's** blue banner, but at **Auckland** civil servants soon followed **Wellington** in forming a pool for wharf labour when needed. <sup>364</sup>

Civil servants were not the only volunteers. The New Zealand Federation of Local Bodies' Employees, Builders, Contractors and General Labourers Industrial Association of Workers and its Wellington Union <sup>365</sup> negotiated with the Commission and the Wellington Waterside Union to the effect that the Local Bodies' Employees Union members were asked by their Union to register as auxiliary waterside workers. By arrangement with the National Service Department they would be released from other work when waterfront need arose and would have preference when the Waterside Union was admitting members in the ordinary way, 'other considerations being equal.' <sup>366</sup> The Commission undertook to pay auxiliary workers for a minimum of eight hours on days when they were temporarily released from their normal 8 am to 5 pm employment, adding that in most cases the time worked would be much greater. For men required during overtime hours, night shifts and weekends, payment would be the same as for waterside unionists. Would-be auxiliary workers at ports other than **Wellington** should make

arrangements with local waterside union branches and with Commission representatives. <sup>367</sup> Initially, 35 **Wellington** men volunteered, on coupons printed in the newspapers, and were listed with the times at which they were available—most at weekends or for night shifts, but a few ‘at all times’. On 17 November 1942, letters signed by **Wellington’s** Waterfront Controller went to each man thanking him for his offer and saying that his services would be used when need arose. <sup>368</sup>

Particularly at **Auckland** and **Wellington**, ‘seagulls’ did not merely register and wait to be asked: they watched the ships, used telephones, and went to the wharves in droves, many trying to pick the lucrative overtime and shift jobs. The rush was strongest at Auckland, the main American base, with its extra shilling an hour for work on United States Army and **Navy** vessels. <sup>369</sup> Quite frequently, stated the Commission, more than 2000 non-unionists were employed each day, placing a great strain on its central pay office, <sup>370</sup> and the Port Controller on 7 November 1942 told a military service appeal board that in the current week his pay sheets showed that more than 4000 men had been employed. <sup>371</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* in April 1943 reported that civil servants were a majority among the spare-time workers, who included bank clerks, chemists, drapers, City Council employees, truck drivers, barmen, salesmen, clerks, seamen, a golf professional, a lawyer (who acted as tally clerk), shopkeepers, butchers and men on leave from the Services. Baths at the tepid pool were well patronised by men who spruced up after a night on the wharf, changed into good clothes and went off to their normal work. Regular non-unionists were bitter about the ‘40-hour weekers’ who competed for jobs. There was concern over the waste of manpower in non-unionists waiting about the wharves when not urgently needed. Hiring hours were between 8 and 10 am and 4 and 5 pm; frequently 200 or more men were turned away but pay rates made it worth while to wait around for crumbs from the unionists’ table, as only three or four shifts a week provided a living wage. ‘Most spare time workers’, continued the *Herald* report, ‘are family men. Few of them are making a great deal of money, but what they have earned on the wharves is giving them a good start. Many new banking accounts have

been opened and mortgages on homes have been reduced.’ <sup>372</sup>

The prompt settlement of disputes was a major purpose of the Commission regime and procedures were modified by the pressure of events. Under the establishing Order of 6 June 1940 the existing Local and National Disputes Committees continued, with the Commission supplanting the Court of Arbitration as the final authority. More work was done by local committees, the National Committee often being in effect a channel taking disputes to the Commission. <sup>373</sup> Local committees had three representatives of the workers and three of the employers; the decision of the majority was to prevail and if no decision was reached questions went to the National Disputes Committee.

Local committees dealt with anything which dissatisfied the men and threatened to hold up work; they were supposed to settle questions of fact and matters of local importance, sending on to the National Committee only those which concerned general or national practice and policy. In practice, many trivial disputes were sent on only to be referred back to the local committees. <sup>374</sup> In the interest of speed the role of Port Controllers was extended. Initially, in cases of extra dirty work or exceptional circumstances not covered by the Order, the matter was to be decided by an employer and a representative of the union, and if they did not agree, be referred to the local **Disputes Committee**; if this did not produce a decision, the Controller was empowered to settle the dispute. <sup>375</sup> This all proved too slow; the powers of the Controller were strengthened to make a decision quickly and later his authority in dirt disputes was extended to a wider field. <sup>376</sup>

The Commission knew that a multiplicity of disputes was characteristic of the industry. <sup>377</sup> Ships of various shapes and their cargoes provided much variety in loading and unloading problems. Some cargoes, such as plaster, sulphur, phosphates, and dusty coal, irritated throats and noses; some, such as basic slag, guano, wet hides, were unpleasant; others, such as corrosive acids, oxides, kerosene, naptha, explosives, were dangerous; frozen products in refrigerated holds made



for hard and chilling work; it was difficult to make up safe slings of heavy, bulky and unwieldy components. Set rules for payment might not apply when cargoes deteriorated more than the average for that type; conditions in the holds might vary, causing claims for stoop money. The Order of June 1940 covered the working of the majority of cargoes but it recognised that exceptional circumstances would occur and cases continually arose requiring new interpretation. Most disputes concerned claims for extra money based on interpretations of rules in circumstances which inevitably varied. Vigilance and experience perceived opportunities for payments in changed directions, in the use of non-union labour when unionists were available, in demarcation issues such as whether only watersiders could drive tractors on wharves, in lighting and safety matters, in the transport of watersiders, in wet or boisterous weather.<sup>378</sup> There were disputes over the meals provided for overtime workers.<sup>379</sup> In 1944 a 6-day hold-up, the longest of the war years, costing 96 000 man-hours, occurred in **Auckland** over the safety of a gangway which did not reach down to the wharf.<sup>380</sup>

Throughout the war the Commission claimed that the machinery it provided settled disputes quickly, preventing the spread of trouble and stoppage of work. In the four years prior to Commission control, 233 656 man-hours had been lost, against an estimated total of 29 147 977 man-hours worked, an average loss over the four years of 0.80 per cent. For the five years March 1940–5, 212 080 manhours were lost against the estimated total of 51 819 632 man-hours worked, an average yearly loss of 0.41 per cent, with two disputes in 1944 contributing 150 000 of the man-hours lost. In 1945–6, 11 779 129 man-hours were worked and 109 880, or 0.93 per cent, lost.<sup>381</sup>

The Commission complained that it received too many disputes which should have been settled by Local and National Committees. To the end of 1945 it had heard 448 disputes; employers had made 23 of these claims, workers 425; 64 were referred back or decisions were reserved; employers succeeded in 206 cases; workers withdrew 37 claims and 141 decisions were in their favour.<sup>382</sup> The Commission also claimed



in February 1944 that its machinery had been used successfully in more than 1000 disputes. <sup>383</sup> Besides this substantial reckoning there were many minor disputes which were not counted, being settled between wharf superintendents and employees before they reached full official channels. <sup>384</sup>

As the war moved to its end the Commission, regarding the short list of strikes and stoppages, was sure that, for the waterfront, having one central authority was a great improvement on the diffuse and long-drawn-out handling of disputes in earlier times. Employers and the Union both agreed that a central authority was needed, but both were dissatisfied with the existing Commission, which in any case had been set up for the war period only.

Employers complained about the Commission's excessive aggrandisement of powers, administrative, contractual and judicial. <sup>385</sup> In February 1944 the Union's new president <sup>386</sup> complained of many 'provocative acts' by the Commission and said that a public inquiry into its activities was long overdue. <sup>387</sup> The Union wanted direct representatives under its control on the Commission, feeling that union men appointed to paid jobs soon became mere agents of the government. In November 1945 the Union debated and passed a motion 'that the Waterfront Control Commission be reconstituted on the basis of a National Commission and Local Commissions of three Union representatives and three employers' representatives with an independent chairman appointed by agreement of the parties and the Government.' <sup>388</sup>

Newspapers had little doubt that the watersiders were up to no good, that they were lazy and overpaid. The government was too weak to correct them, and the Commission, its creation, working in privacy, <sup>389</sup> was merely a device for acceding to their demands. Thus the *Auckland Star* on 23 January 1942:

Mr Webb knows what is mainly wrong on the waterfront. What is mainly wrong is:—(1) That the atmosphere and the pace of work there are

infected and dominated by a minority of loafers and malcontents; and (2) that the Government and its Minister of Labour haven't had the guts to remove them.

The *Otago Daily Times* on 13 September 1945 expressed the same theme:

The reports that have received circulation ... have created the impression that a selfish regard for their own concern has been the motive that has most generally influenced the waterside workers. A costly Waterfront Commission has been set up which seems to regard it as its main business to support the workers in whatever demands they make. It has yet to be discovered that this Commission performs any service to the public of a character that justifies its existence.

Many stock charges and defences were repeated in Parliament on 27 July 1943.<sup>390</sup> The independent student of industrial relations, wrote Dr Hare in 1943, must be perturbed by the attitude of the press towards industrial unrest. In particular the press had for years campaigned against waterside workers. He cited recent headlines, chosen at random, which with their articles presented the whole body of them in the worst light. Publicity was constantly given to watersiders' work, hours, conditions and wages, all to show them as inefficient, overpaid or otherwise delinquent. If there were justification for these public attacks, there was none for the form of them, week after week, over years; if there were abuses on the waterfront, there should be an official enquiry into them, in the House or out of it.<sup>391</sup>

Such counsel fell on deaf ears. Meanwhile, as the war ended the waterfront situation was changing. The boom years, in which mainly through work outside the daily eight-hour, five-day week, watersiders had experienced good times, were over. Watersiders were wearied with the long hours. By December 1943 they demanded that the day shift should end at 9 pm and that 5 pm should be the finishing time at weekends and holidays, and that meal hours should not be worked unless necessary to finish a ship. The Commission agreed to these hours on 3

From July 1945, after further pressure from the men, at the four main ports night shifts, Sundays and holidays were worked only on overseas vessels carrying food or military supplies, on feeder vessels and ships discharging coal. As from 8 September 1945 all night shift work was cancelled. From the same time at the four main ports there was no work on Sundays, holidays or Saturday afternoons (except where a ship could finish by 5 pm on Saturday) and from 26 November this applied to smaller ports, except for ships carrying coal and timber, for which need was acute. <sup>393</sup>

Despite the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  d an hour rise in the basic rate, from 1 April 1945, waterfront earnings were reduced while hours worked remained much the same. For the year ending 31 March 1946 the average hours per week for main and secondary ports were  $41\frac{3}{4}$  ( $28\frac{1}{4}$  ordinary time,  $13\frac{1}{2}$  overtime) as against  $41\frac{1}{4}$  ( $22\frac{3}{4}$  ordinary time,  $18\frac{1}{2}$  overtime) for the previous year. At Auckland in the year ending 31 March 1945, out of 1862 unionists 588 earned more than £600, but in the following year with 1916 unionists, only 123 did so. At Wellington, more than £600 was earned in 1945 by 161 men and in 1946 by 279, but there the number of unionists had dropped from 1822 to 1729. <sup>394</sup> The outside hours harvest was over and, with the cost of living in its post-war rise, the battle of wage rates was on.

In July 1946 the Waterfront Control Commission of the war period was replaced by the Waterfront Industry Commission which in the next five years was to face conflict producing lengthening stoppages on the wharves, resignations and removals of its own members, and several forms of constitution. Strikes in 1949 and 1950 led, on 19 February 1951, into 151 days of the bitterest industrial confrontation since 1913. The war years on the waterfront may be seen as part of the background leading towards the 1951 strike, but that is another story.

---

<sup>1</sup> This was done to draw matters to a head. I didn't expect the

men to work when the executive officers were dismissed,' said the manager, J. Quinn, in court. According to the men, while union officials next day stated their case he ignored them, reading a newspaper. *Star-Sun*, 6, 7 Feb 42, pp. 6, 8

<sup>2</sup> Chisholm, George Galloway (1882–1962): former solicitor, Supreme Court, 17 years registrar, clerk, to Magistrate's Court & Official Assignee Napier; SM from 1938

<sup>3</sup> *Star-Sun*, 6, 7 Feb 42, pp. 6, 8; *Evening Post*, 7 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>4</sup> Overtime and Holidays Labour Legislation Suspension Order 1941/241

<sup>5</sup> Holidays Labour Legislation Modification Order 1941/240, and See p. 320

<sup>6</sup> *Auckland Star*, 22 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>7</sup> *NZ Herald*, 26, 27 Dec 41, pp. 4, 6

<sup>8</sup> *Evening Post*, 23 Jan 42, p. 7

<sup>9</sup> Labour Dept's MS Register of Strikes

<sup>10</sup> *NZ Herald*, 6 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>11</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>12</sup> *Auckland Star*, 17 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Jan 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 27, 28 Jan 42, pp. 4, 6

<sup>14</sup> *Auckland Star*, 22, 27, 28 Jan 42, pp. 6, 6, 6; *NZ Herald*, 23 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>15</sup> *Auckland Star*, 27 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>17</sup> By F. G. Young, a trade union leader, after discussions with the Industrial Emergency Council. *Auckland Star*, 2 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>18</sup> *Evening Post*, 24 Feb 42, p. 7

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Feb 42, p. 4

<sup>20</sup> *Press*, 21 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>21</sup> McLagan, Hon Angus (1891–1956): b **Scotland**, to NZ 1911; MLC 1942–6; MP (Lab) Riccarton from 1946; Sec Miners Fed 1927, 1935–46; member FoL from formation 1937–46, Economic Stabilisation Cmte, War Council 1940–5; Min Nat Service & Industrial Manpower 1942–6; Leader Legislative Council 1944–6; Min Employment, Labour, Mines, Immigration 1946–9

<sup>22</sup> *Standard*, 9 Apr 42, p. 6

<sup>23</sup> Hare, *Labour in New Zealand 1942*, p. 25

<sup>24</sup> *Press*, 13 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>25</sup> See p. 664

<sup>26</sup> *Press*, 27 Jan 42

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>28</sup> Roberts, John (d 1962 *aet* 76): to NZ 1908; Sec Canty Clothing Workers Union, then Nat Union to 1959; Pres Canty Trades Council of FoL 1939–50

<sup>29</sup> *Press*, 24 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>30</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 Jan 42, p. 8; *Auckland Star*, 27 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>31</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>34</sup> Scholefield Diary, Dec 41 to Dec 42

<sup>35</sup> *A to J*1942, H-11, p. 8. On 9 March 18 boners at Hellaby's, making the same complaint, ceased work for five hours. In this case, 'Workers' demands wholly conceded. Employers agreed that in future men would be called back on Sunday evening to take the meat from the freezer to enable it to be sufficiently thawed for the men to work on Monday morning.' Labour Department's MS Register of Strikes

<sup>36</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17, 29 Jan 42, pp. 6, 8. In an appeal three months later for a labourer called to the Army it was explained that the output of the abattoirs had increased by 1 867 704lb during the last year, and Army demands were still growing; currently labourers were 29 where 35 were needed. *Ibid.*, 1 May 42, p. 6

<sup>37</sup> *Evening Post*, 28 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>38</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Jan 42, p. 8

- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Jan, 4 Feb 42, pp. 6, 8
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Jan 42, p. 6; *Auckland Star*, 29 Jan 42, p. 8
- <sup>41</sup> Anderton, Hon William Theophilus (1889–1966): b [UK](#); MP (Lab) Eden 1935–46, Auck Central 1946–61; Min Int Aff 1957–61
- <sup>42</sup> *Press*, 23 Mar 42, p. 6; *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 147
- <sup>43</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23, 29, 30 Jan 42, pp. 3, 8, 6
- <sup>44</sup> *NZ Herald*, 21 Apr 42, p. 6
- <sup>45</sup> Its full title was R. & W. Hellaby Limited, Westfield, Meat-preserving Workers, Slaughter-house Assistants, and Freezing Chamber Hands' Industrial Union of Workers.
- <sup>46</sup> Its full name was Auckland Abattoir Assistants and United Freezing Works Employees' Industrial Union of Workers.
- <sup>47</sup> Hare, *Labour in New Zealand 1942*, p. 31
- <sup>48</sup> *Auckland Star*, 13 Mar 42, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 14, 25, 27 Mar 42, pp. 6, 4, 4
- <sup>49</sup> These figures are from the report of the Department of Labour, *A to J 1942*, H-11, p. 8, and the [Labour Department's MS Register of Strikes](#). They differ from those in the papers, eg, *Auckland Star*, 17 Mar 42, p. 6, which give 1540 men from Westfield, 450 from the Southdown works and 140 from Kings Wharf.
- <sup>50</sup> *Press*, 14 Mar 42, p. 6



<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *NZ Herald*, 17 Mar 42

<sup>53</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Mar 42

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>55</sup> *Dominion*, 18 Mar 42

<sup>56</sup> For example, on the evening of 17 March, 14 farmers arrived from **Whakatane** and Te Puke, expecting to be strongly reinforced next day. *NZ Herald*, 18 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Mar 42, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 19 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>59</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19 Mar 42, p. 8; *Auckland Star*, 17 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>60</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 Mar 42, p. 8. The next week, Minhinnick in 'Westfield Aftermath' showed a cook holding a leg of mutton and an irate lady on the telephone: 'What's more, don't you try to tell me it's wether mutton, butcher—it's off a scrubby old ewe. Perhaps you don't know that I have had hundreds of sheep though my hands in my time....' *NZ Herald*, 23 Mar 42, *Evening Star*, 26 Mar 42

<sup>61</sup> *Auckland Star*, 18 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>62</sup> *A to J1942*, H-11, p. 8

<sup>63</sup> *Auckland Star*, 21 Mar 42, p. 5

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *NZPD*, vol 261, pp. 177–8. ‘That is the best and strongest thing that has been said for a very long time,’ commented S. G. **Holland** upon the instant.

<sup>66</sup> *Press*, 23 Mar 42

<sup>67</sup> *Evening Post*, 24 Mar 42, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 24 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>68</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 Mar 42, pp. 4, 6; *Evening Post*, 24 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>69</sup> *Auckland Star*, 25 Mar 42, p. 8

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>72</sup> **Algie**, Rt Hon Sir Ronald Macmillan, Kt('64) (1884–1978): Prof Law Auckland 1919–37; MP (Nat) **Remuera** 1943–66; Min Education 1949–57, Speaker HoR 1961–6

<sup>73</sup> *Auckland Star*, 24 Mar 42, p. 3

<sup>74</sup> eg, abattoir section of Palmerston North Freezing Workers Union, in *Wanganui Herald*, 23 Mar 42, p. 2, and Woburn branch ASRS in *Press*, 27 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>75</sup> **Young**, Hon Frederick George (d 1962 *aet* 73): Sec Auck Hotel Workers Fed from 1930, Nat Sec 1932; Pres Auck Trades Council 1940s; MLC 1941–50; former member Alliance Lab, Pres Auck LRC, Auck rep on Nat Council FoL, Pres breakaway Trade Union Congress 1950 before return to FoL; member Tourist Hotel Corp 1959, Dir from 1960

**<sup>76</sup> Press, 10 Apr 42, p. 6**

**<sup>77</sup> Evening Post, 30 Jun 42, p. 4**

**<sup>78</sup> NZ Herald, 16 May 42, p. 8**

**<sup>79</sup> NZ Woman's Weekly, 2 Apr 42, p. 1**

**<sup>80</sup> Labour Department's MS Register of Strikes**

**<sup>81</sup> Henry, Sir Trevor, Kt('70): practised Auck, Vice-Pres Auck District Law Soc 1955; Judge Supreme Court 1955; Judge Fiji Court Appeal 1973**

**<sup>82</sup> Auckland Star, 18, 20 Mar 42, pp. 6, 2**

**<sup>83</sup> NZ Gazette, 5 Feb 42, p. 457**

**<sup>84</sup> Star-Sun, 11 Mar 42, p. 3; A to J1942, H-11, p. 7**

**<sup>85</sup> Press, 10 Mar 42, p. 4**

**<sup>86</sup> Star-Sun, 11 Mar 42, p. 3**

**<sup>87</sup> Evening Post, 25 Mar 42, p. 6**

**<sup>88</sup> eg, dispute over suspension of some men for knocking off early, one day, by 300 coal miners at Ohau on 21 January; dispute over refusal of 3 men to join union, ½ hour, by 123 freezing workers at Waingawa on 21 January; protests over payment of chain workers, ¾ day, by 54 Kaiapoi freezing workers on 24 February; dispute over re-instatement and payment of a trucker, one day, by Huntly miners on 24 February.**

**89** It must be remembered that both official censorship and the competition of news in shrunken papers would reduce the visibility of grumbling.

**90** See pp. 379– 80

**91** See p. 373

**92** Figures in these last two paragraphs are taken from the *Monthly Abstract of Statistics* for 1942. In the tables for 1943 the quarterly totals of days lost in 1942 are slightly revised, except for January to March, thus: 29 864 to the end of June, 50 345 to the end of September, and 51 189 to the end of the year, ie, 247 less than the figure first given. In the *Yearbook*, 51 189 is adopted. There is no indication of the industries wherein these reductions were made. As Dr Hare complained in *Labour in New Zealand 1943*, p. 35, ‘such revisions make accurate statements impossible’.

**93** A to J1943, C-2, pp. 2, 5; statement by Webb, *Auckland Star*, 24 Sep 42, p. 6

**94** Baker, p. 412

**95** *Yearbook* 1947–49, p. 353

**96** A to J1945, D-2, p. 7

**97** Baker, p. 409

**98** *Yearbook* 1942, p. 402, 1943, p. 316, 1944, p. 270, 1945, p. 288, 1946, p. 352, 1947–49, p. 369; War History Narrative, ‘Mines Department’, p. 10

**99** Mining Controller to Min Supply, 3 Jun 40, file 14/17, WHN,

**'Mines Department', p. 12**

**<sup>100</sup> *NZ Herald*, 20 Apr 42, p. 4; *Press*, 22 Jul 42, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 27 Aug, 4 Sep 42, pp. 4, 2**

**<sup>101</sup> Under-Sec Mines to Min, 22 May 40, M.PC 61, WHN, 'Mines Department', p. 25**

**<sup>102</sup> Set up by the Mining Emergency Regulations 1939 to ensure adequate supplies of labour and equipment for the industry and to control distribution of mines' products. *A to J* 1941, C-2, p. 11**

**<sup>103</sup> Mining Controller to Dir Nat Service, 14 Feb 41, WHN, 'Mines Department', p. 25**

**<sup>104</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Nov 41, p. 6**

**<sup>105</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Jun 42, p. 4**

**<sup>106</sup> *Press*, 17 Jul (editorial), 15 Aug 42, p. 4**

**<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Jul 42, p. 4**

**<sup>108</sup> As mentioned earlier, official strike figures are sometimes revised between first and later appearances; for instance, it may be decided not to count a short or partial stoppage; opinions may change about, say, prolonged stop-work meetings, perhaps on domestic concerns and involving no quarrel with management. In the *Monthly Abstract of Statistics*, which gives 3-monthly strike figures for separate trades, a year's total is often changed, when it re-appears in comparison with the following year's total. The *Yearbooks* sometimes have the original or revised figures of the *Monthly Abstract*, sometimes they show distinct further revision, which is adopted here. The *Yearbook's* industrial groupings are not identical with those of the *Monthly Abstract***

but the leading trades can be followed.

<sup>109</sup> *Yearbook* 1941, p. 769, 1942, p. 723, 1943, p. 598, 1944, p. 555, 1945, pp. 580, 582–3

<sup>110</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Jun 39, p. 8; statement by Angus McLagan, who continued, ‘Mr Davis [C. C. Davis, president of the Coal Mine Owners Association] locked out the men at the Dobson mine for five months because they wanted to share work. After being starved into submission, half of them were dismissed to look for non-existent jobs or eat grass, for all Mr Davis seemed to care. Most other coal owners did the same thing in 1931 and 1932, honourable exceptions being the State Collieries and the Stockton Company. It was not by accident that the first dismissals were of men active in union affairs, regardless of ability, service, or family responsibilities. Mass dismissals continued up to 1938.’

<sup>111</sup> Calder, p. 433

<sup>112</sup> Tojo, General Hideki (1884–1948): Jap War Min 1940–4; PM 1941–4; executed as war criminal 1948

<sup>113</sup> Rules and regulations of the United Mine Workers of New Zealand, reprinted 1 Dec 43, p. 1

<sup>114</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Apr 42, p. 4; *Press*, 14, 16 Jul 42, pp. 4, 4

<sup>115</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Apr 40, p. 6, 11 Jun 41, p. 6, 18, 22 Apr 42, pp. 6, 4; *Press*, 13, 15 Aug, 25 Sep, 18 Oct 41, pp. 8, 8, 6, 8, 20 Mar 42, p. 6, 27 Nov 43, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 27 Aug 42, p. 6

<sup>116</sup> *Press*, 2 Oct 41, p. 4, 21 Feb, 20 Mar 42, pp. 6, 6; *NZ Herald*, 4 Apr 42, p. 6

<sup>117</sup> *Press*, 2–6 Jul 40, all p. 6, 9 May, 21 Oct 41, pp. 10, 6, 21

Jan, 16 Jul 42, pp. 6, 4

<sup>118</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Feb, 3 Apr, 27, 28 May 41, pp. 6, 8, 6, 8, 21 Apr, 17 Jun 42, pp. 4, 2; *Press*, 14 Feb 41, p. 6

<sup>119</sup> *NZ Herald*, 25 Feb 41, p. 6; *Press*, 25 Sep 41, p. 6

<sup>120</sup> *Press*, 19 Jun 41, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 2 Jul 41, p. 6

<sup>121</sup> *Auckland Star*, 28 Apr 41, p. 8. Machine cutting of coal, not widely practised, was more dangerous in New Zealand's gaseous coal than was hand cutting, but the yield per time unit was greater and so the payment therefor was less.

<sup>122</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16, 24 Apr, 24 Oct 41, pp. 6, 8, 6, 17 Apr 42, p. 4

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Jun 41, p. 6; *Press*, 22 Oct 41, p. 8

<sup>124</sup> *NZ Herald*, 2 Jul 41, p. 6

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 27, 28 May 41, pp. 6, 8

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 Apr, 2 May 41, pp. 6, 6

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 Apr 41; also *Auckland Star*, 28 Apr, 5 May 41, *Otago Daily Times*, 30 Apr 41

<sup>128</sup> *A to J1942*, H-11, p. 7. 'Bords' are working passages, cut at right angles, in a grid pattern, leaving pillars of coal often about a chain square to support the area. Headings are access ways.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 1943, C-2A, p. 1



<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 1944, C-2A, p. 3

<sup>131</sup> *Auckland Star*, 10, 14 Sep 42, pp. 6, 4

<sup>132</sup> Hare, A. E. C., *Report on Industrial Relations in New Zealand* (hereinafter *Industrial Relations*), p. 233

<sup>133</sup> Strongman, Charles James, OBE('53) (1885-1967): Inspector Coal Mines 1923-6, 1928-36; local mngr Millerton Mines 1926-8; Superint State Coal Mines 1936-50; Coal Research Board DSIR; **Coal Mines Council** 1940-8

<sup>134</sup> In mid-1940 a **West Coast** union, while disputing the dismissal of a trucker, stated that it had taken no action about six men recently dismissed on reasonable grounds from the State mines. *Press*, 6 Jul 40, p. 10

<sup>135</sup> Woods, N. S., *Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration in New Zealand*, p. 167

<sup>136</sup> *Dominion*, 4 Mar 42, p. 5. The amount paid in 1941 for oilskins was £2 18 s a man.

<sup>137</sup> *Press*, 6 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>138</sup> *A to J*1942, H-11, p. 7

<sup>139</sup> *Evening Post*, 13 Jan 42, p. 4

<sup>140</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Jun 42, p. 4

<sup>141</sup> *Evening Star*, 15 Sep 42, p. 2

**142** *A to J*1941, C-2, p. 12, 1942, C-2, p. 6, 1945, C-2, p. 8

**143** Dickie, Harold Galt (1874–1954): farmer; MP (Nat) Patea 1925–45; MLC 1950

**144** *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 716

**145** Hare, Dr Anthony Edward Christian: Research Fellow Social Relations in Industry, VUC 1942–7

**146** Hare, *Industrial Relations*, pp. 112, 118

**147** *Evening Post*, 24 Apr 45, p. 4

**148** *Ibid.*, 27 Apr 45, p. 9

**149** On this taxes were due at 2 s 6 d in the £, being 1 s for Social Security and 1 s 6 d for National Security, ie, £1 8 s 4 d weekly, making the net pay £9 18 s 2 d. *Yearbook* 1947–49, p. 428; *Baker*, p. 261

**150** See p. 422

**151** *A to J*1943, C-2A, pp. 1–2, 3, 4, 7–8

**152** *NZ Herald*, 4 Jun 42, p. 2

**153** Before October 1943, a bag of coal weighed 186lb. Thereafter, in response to the Auckland Drivers Union, it was reduced to 140lb, 16 bags to a ton. *Press*, 2 Oct 43, p. 4

**154** *NZ Herald*, 6 Jun 42, p. 6

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Jun 42, p. 6

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 31 Aug 42, p. 2

<sup>157</sup> eg, *Press*, 22 Oct 41, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 25 Jul 42, p. 8

<sup>158</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Apr, 27 May, 8 Jun, 22 Aug 42, pp. 4, 4, 3, 8

<sup>159</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 May 43, p. 4

<sup>160</sup> Minutes of United Mine Workers National Council meetings, 30 Nov 43, p. 125, 10 May 44, p. 134

<sup>161</sup> eg, *Auckland Star*, 5, 7 Jun, 22 Oct 42, pp.6, 2, 4; *Press*, 26 Nov 42, p. 4, 22 Oct 43, p. 4

<sup>162</sup> *NZ Herald*, 25 Jul 42, p. 8

<sup>163</sup> WHN, 'Mines Department', p. 27

<sup>164</sup> *Evening Post*, 30 May 44, p. 6

<sup>165</sup> Hare, *Labour in New Zealand 1943*, p. 30

<sup>166</sup> In the *Press* of 8 Oct 42, p. 6, a man wrote that after 30 years on the **West Coast**, 14 alongside the coal miners at Runanga, and much thought about their almost periodical stoppages of work, he was firmly convinced that their chief reason was the inexorable demand of man's nature for daylight and sunshine. 'In winter months the miners leave home in the dark, work all day in the bowels of the earth, and return home in darkness. The craving for sunlight must be terrible.' Such craving could also account for much absenteeism.

<sup>167</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 Nov 40, p. 13

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Nov 40, p. 13

<sup>170</sup> *Evening Post*, 8, 13 Jul 42, pp. 4, 7

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Apr 41, p. 12

<sup>172</sup> Controller of Employment to Mining Controller, 28 Nov 41, file 14/9, WHN, 'Mines Department', p. 25

<sup>173</sup> *Press*, 31 Jul 42

<sup>174</sup> See p. 392 for State mines in 1942–3

<sup>175</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10 Jul, p. 2; *Press*, 5 Aug 42, p. 2

<sup>176</sup> Statement by Webb in *Auckland Star*, 24 Sep 42, p. 6; *Press*, 22 Nov 43, p. 6. See also p. 810

<sup>177</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9 Apr 42, p. 4

<sup>178</sup> *Auckland Star*, 24 Jul 42, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 25 Jul 42, p. 8

<sup>179</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Jul 42, p. 4

<sup>180</sup> Some mines were out of production for more than two weeks from 7 April; some in the Ten Mile area had to be re-opened in new places and restoration would take months. Under-Sec Mines in *ibid.*, 15 Apr 42, p. 4

**181** *Ibid.*, 29 Apr, 16 Sep 42, pp. 4, 2; *Auckland Star*, 24 Jul 42, p. 6

**182** *Monthly Abstract of Statistics*, Jul 1942

**183** **Labour Department's MS Register of Strikes**; two were in State mines on the West Coast, one at Pukemiro

**184** *NZ Herald*, 28 Aug 42, p. 2

**185** The voting was 792:209 according to the *Auckland Star*, 9 Sep 42, p. 4; the *NZ Herald*, 15 Sep 42, p. 2, reporting Webb, gave 779:209, and **Holland** likewise, *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 632

**186** *Auckland Star*, 30 Sep 42, p. 2

**187** *Ibid.*, 9 Sep 42, p. 4

**188** *Ibid.*, 16 Sep 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 10 Sep 42, p. 2

**189** *Auckland Star*, 11 Sep, 5 Oct 42, pp. 4, 4 (report of the disputes committee)

**190** *Press*, 9 Sep 42, p. 2 (telephone interview); *NZ Herald*, 15 Sep 42, p. 2

**191** *Auckland Star*, 9 Sep 42, p. 4

**192** *Ibid.*, 10 Sep 42, p. 6

**193** *Evening Star*, 10 Sep 42

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Sep 42; *Evening Post*, 10 Sep 42

<sup>195</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11, 16 Sep 42, pp. 4, 4

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Sep 42

<sup>197</sup> *NZ Herald*, 1 Jul 42, p. 2

<sup>198</sup> *Auckland Star*, 1 Oct 42, p. 4

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Sep 42, p 4

<sup>200</sup> *Press*, 9 Sep 42, p. 2; *NZ Herald*, 14 Sep 42, p. 2

<sup>201</sup> Figures given by **Holland**, *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 632, on 14 Oct 42

<sup>202</sup> For instance, an informant 'whose credibility could not be checked' said that out of 1340 miners, 949 cast votes, 480 for continuing the strike and 469 for returning to work. *Auckland Star*, 15 Sep 42, p. 4. 'It has since been learned and checked from several sources, none of them official' that the figures were 643 for continuation, and 484 for return to work. *Ibid.*, 21 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>204</sup> **Minhinnick** in *NZ Herald*, 11, 15, 16, 22, 25, 30 Sep 42; **J. C. H.** in *Auckland Star*, 9 Sep 42; **W. H. Bennett** in *NZ Herald*, 18 Sep 42

<sup>205</sup> *Star-Sun*, 15 Sep 42

**206** *NZ Herald*, 21 Sep 42

**207** *Ibid.*, 22 Sep 42

**208** *NZPD*, vol 261, pp. 634–5

**209** *Auckland Star*, 14 Sep 42, p. 4

**210** *NZ Herald*, 16 Sep 42, p. 3

**211** *Evening Post*, 15 Sep 42, p. 3

**212** *Dominion*, 16 Sep 42, p. 4

**213** *NZ Herald*, 16 Sep 42, p. 3

**214** *Ibid.*; *Press*, 16 Sep 42, p. 4; the *Auckland Star* report of 16 Sep was less optimistic but thought 'It might, however, have cleared the air to some extent'.

**215** Smith, George (d 1963 *aet* 88): b **UK**, to NZ 1905; Mayor Huntly 12½ years

**216** Moncur, Alexander Francis: b Aust 1888, to NZ 1906; chmn Auck RSA 1919–21; MP (Lab) **Rotorua** 1935–43; Mayor Auck 1947–53

**217** *Press*, 17 Sep 42, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 1 Oct 42, p. 4. Reporters of the *Auckland Star* were told that banning the meeting had become a major issue; had the meeting been held the men would have been back at work soon after.

**218** *In Print*, 23 Sep 42; the meeting was on 17 September



<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Sep 42

<sup>220</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Sep 42, p. 2; *Auckland Star*, 1 Oct 42, p. 4

<sup>221</sup> Paul, Hon John Thomas, CBE('58) (1874–1964): b Aust, to NZ 1899; founder, Pres (1917–20) NZ Labour party; ed Otago Labour paper 1905–6; *Otago Witness* 1924–32; printing, then literary staff *Otago Daily Times* 1932–9; Director Publicity 1939–45; MLC 1907–19, 1946–50; JP 1906

<sup>222</sup> *Auckland Star*, 16 Oct 42, p. 2. This instruction had at least one unexpected result. Semple, addressing a **Tauranga** meeting, 'was tremendous' on the **Huntly** strikers, according to Doidge, National MP for **Tauranga**, but the local paper's long report had no word of Semple's attack, and the editor, when taxed, claimed that he was prohibited from mentioning the strike. *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 685

<sup>223</sup> *Auckland Star*, 1 Oct 42, p. 4

<sup>224</sup> *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 643

<sup>225</sup> *Auckland Star*, 21 Sep 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 21 Sep 42, p. 2

<sup>226</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 Sep 42, p. 2

<sup>227</sup> There was, however, no reference to State control on the ballot forms. *Ibid.*, 26 Sep 42, p. 6, and statement by H. G. R. Mason, *Dominion*, 3 Oct 42, p. 8

<sup>228</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 Sep 42, p. 2

<sup>229</sup> Including hard-working dairy farmers, for the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company owned Glen Afton and leased the MacDonald mine from the Crown. *Auckland Star*, 22 Sep 42, p.

**230** Typescript notes, obviously Fraser's, outlining moves after his return from the **USA** on Thursday 17 September, have: 'Mr Coates on Saturday evening and Sunday in discussion with mine owners'.

**231** *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 642

**232** *NZ Herald*, 22 Sep 42

**233** *Ibid.*, 24 Sep 42, p. 2

**234** *NZPD*, vol 261, pp. 682-3

**235** See p. 408

**236** *NZ Herald*, 22 Sep 42, p. 2

**237** See Wood, pp. 235-7. On p. 232 he explains the War Administration: on 29 May 1942 direct talks between the party leaders began, and on 24 June the caucuses of both parties agreed on yet another addition to the structure of New Zealand's wartime government. The war effort was to be the responsibility of a War Administration of seven Government members (Fraser, Jones, Sullivan, Semple, Paikea, McLagan, Nordmeyer) and six Opposition ( **Holland**, Coates, Hamilton, Polson, Bodkin, Broadfoot). The War Cabinet (which **Holland** joined and of which he became deputy chairman) was to act as the 'executive' of the War Administration in matters not dealt with by the full body. Full details were given in *Evening Post*, 1 Jul 42

**238** Bodkin, Hon Sir William, KCVO('54) (1883-1964): barrister & solicitor 1909, MP (United) Otago Central 1928ff; Min Civil Defence, War Admin; Min Internal Aff from 1949

**239** *NZ Herald*, 5 Oct 42, p. 2

**240** *Star-Sun*, 23 Sep 42

**241** *Ibid.*, 30 Sep 42

**242** *Auckland Star*, 30 Sep 42

**243** *Ibid.*, 1 Oct 42

**244** *Timaru Herald*, 1 Oct 42

**245** *Dominion*, 1 Oct 42

**246** *Press*, 25 Sep, 1 Oct 42

**247** *Evening Post*, 30 Sep 42

**248** *NZ Herald*, 1 Oct 42

**249** See Wood, p. 237

**250** Kyle, Herbert Seton Stewart (1873–1955): MP (Nat) Riccarton 1925–43

**251** Massey, John Norman (1885–1964): son W. F. Massey; MP (Nat) Franklin 1928–35, 1938–57

**252** *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 681

**253** *Ibid.*, p. 716

**254 Sutherland, Andrew Sinclair (d 1961 aet 74): MP (Nat) Hauraki 1942–54; Senior Govt Whip 1949–54; Pres Ngaruawahia RSA**

**255 Wilkinson, Charles Anderson, CBE('51) (1868–1956): MP (Ref) Egmont 1912–19, (Indep) 1928–43; Mayor Eltham 6½ years**

**256 NZPD, vol 261, pp. 707, 709**

**257 Ibid., p. 712**

**258 Ibid., p. 634**

**259 Press, 22 Dec 42, p. 6**

**260 Auckland Star, 16 Oct 42. The cable headline was 'Big Battle Raging in the Solomons'**

**261 J. Devlin, A. Prendiville and F. Crook of the United Mine Workers, and C. C. Davis, T. O. Bishop and F. Carson of the Coal Mine Owners Association, under chairman J. Dowgray, a senior working-class figure who had represented the miners in a commission on a disaster at Huntly in 1914 and was chairman of the Coal Mines Council 1945–7**

**262 Report of the committee, Auckland Star, 5 Oct 42, p. 4; NZ Herald, 6 Oct 42, p. 2**

**263 Hare, Labour in New Zealand 1943, p. 39**

**264 eg, Dominion, Evening Post, Press, Star-Sun, Otago Daily Times**

**265 Auckland Star, 6 Oct 42**

<sup>266</sup> *Auckland Star*, 12, 29, 30 Oct, 7 Nov 42, pp. 4, 6, 4, 6; *NZ Herald*, 2 Nov 42 (cartoon)

<sup>267</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Oct 42, p. 2; *Auckland Star*, 30 Oct 42, p. 4

<sup>268</sup> *A to J1943*, C-2, p. 5

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 1944, C-2, p. 6, 1946, C-2, p. 21

<sup>270</sup> *Press*, 18 Oct 43, p. 4

<sup>271</sup> *Auckland Star*, 8 Jan 43, p. 4

<sup>272</sup> *A to J1943*, C-2, p. 2

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*, 1947, C-2, p. 12; *Baker*, p. 412

<sup>274</sup> *A to J1946*, C-2, p. 13; WHN, 'Mines Department', pp. 46-8

<sup>275</sup> Minutes of United Mineworkers 1932-49, 30 Nov 43, 30 Apr, 10 May, 29 Oct 44, 20 Apr, 2 Nov 45

<sup>276</sup> One underground mine, the James, ceased from exhaustion in July 1943; several others, notably Stockton on the **West Coast** and mines at Ohai and Wairaki, became mainly opencast.

<sup>277</sup> *A to J1946*, C-2, pp. 4, 6

<sup>278</sup> See p. 403

<sup>279</sup> *Yearbook*1944, p. 555, 1945, p. 583, 1946, p. 675, 1947-49, pp. 720, 722

**280** *A to J*1946, H-11, p. 10

**281** *Ibid.*, 1944, H-11, p. 1

**282** *Ibid.*, 1945, H-11, p. 6

**283** *Ibid.*, 1947, H-11, p. 24

**284** These were not from accidents in the mine.

**285** *A to J*1945, C-2A, pp. 2-3, 8-9

**286** eg, *Evening Post*, 6 Mar 45, p. 4

**287** *Dominion*, 20 Apr 45, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 20 Apr 45, p. 8

**288** *Yearbook* 1947-49, p. 720

**289** See p. 430

**290** *A to J*1941, H-45, p. 2; NZWW (New Zealand Waterside Workers) Union secretary's annual report, 2 Dec 41, p. 2, Roberts Papers, B43/21—'never during the history of the waterside workers has the Court of Arbitration conceded one single condition....'

**291** War History Narrative, 'The Waterfront Control Commission' (hereinafter 'The Waterfront'), p. 20; *Baker*, p. 395

**292** Report of meeting, 15 Mar 40, of National Executive NZWW Union, attended by rank and file members from *Auckland* and *Wellington*, Roberts Papers, B58/2, p. 13

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8

<sup>294</sup> **Waterfront Control Commission (WCC) Emergency Regulations, 1940/59**

<sup>295</sup> *NZ Herald*, 28 Jun 40, p. 6

<sup>296</sup> **Price, Captain Richard Everett, OBE('46) (1891–1960): b UK, to NZ 1904; 25 years in sail and steam from deck boy to master; 1NZE 1916–17, Lt RNR 1917–19; Labour Dept Inspector of Scaffolding, of Weights & Measures and Factories Awards; Conciliation Cmssnr Auck 1936; chmn Fish Export Advisory Cmte 1937, Navy Pay & Conditions Cmssn 1939, WCC 1940–6**

<sup>297</sup> *NZ Herald*, 28 Jun 40, p. 6; *Press*, 12 Mar 40, p. 8; Hare, *Industrial Relations*, p. 234

<sup>298</sup> **McLeod, Hugh Andrew (b 1896): sea experience in British, American, Nova Scotian sailing ships for 8 years, officer Union Steam Ship Co NZ 1903–6, then 10 years ashore with same company; head stevedore, Shaw, Savill Auck 1916; joined firm of stevedoring contractors 1921, later Dir; WCC 1940**

<sup>299</sup> **Bowling, Captain Thomas Henry (d 1964 *aet* 80): b at sea in Shaw, Savill clipper *Akaroa*; served time in sail and steam; joined Union Steam Ship Co 1912, 1st cmnd 1925; Asst Wharf Superint Dunedin 1927; Wharf Superint Lyttelton 1929, Wgrn 1934; seconded Wgtn Co-operative Labour and Employment Assn (later Waterfront Industry Cmssn) 1939–40, WCC 1942–6**

<sup>300</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Jan 42, p. 8; WCC 'Report on Organisation and Activities as at 31 March 1944', p. 1, Roberts Papers, B260

<sup>301</sup> *Evening Post*, 1 Apr 42, p. 6; WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 249–50



**302** The cost of living 4 *d* was not included in overtime reckonings, so that the normal overtime rate, time-and-a-half, was 4 *s* 7 *d*, and Saturday mornings, at time-and-a-quarter, 3 *s* 10½ *d* an hour.

**303** WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 166, 172

**304** *Ibid.*, pp. 25–6

**305** See p. 41

**306** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 59

**307** *Ibid.*, p. 60

**308** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 3

**309** NZWW Union Secretary's report, 2 Dec 41, p. 14, Roberts Papers, B43/21

**310** Flood, John: d 1968 *aet* 90; for many years Sec and later Pres Lyttelton Watersiders Union; Sec, then Pres, NZWW Union, exec member Lab Party, FoL, LRC

**311** Report to special conference, Apr 41, p. 4, Roberts Papers, B44

**312** [Baker](#), pp. 396–7; WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 114

**313** *A to J*1945, H–45, pp. 5, 66

**314** *Ibid.*, 1941, H–45, p. 4

**315** *Ibid.*, 1945, H-45, p. 74

**316** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 144

**317** NZWW Union Secretary's report, 2 Dec 41, p. 7, Roberts Papers, B43/21

**318** See p. 440, fn 348

**319** A to J1945, H-45, pp. 4-5

**320** *Ibid.*, pp. 65-6

**321** Hare, *Industrial Relations*, p. 238

**322** WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 133-4, 137-8

**323** *Ibid.*, pp. 114-5

**324** *Ibid.*, p. 262n

**325** *Ibid.*, p. 34

**326** A to J1945, H-45, p. 16

**327** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 33

**328** 'It was difficult enough to fight the employers, but we found at the same time some opposition to the Commission from the waterside workers.... The Commission was told ... on several occasions that the waterside workers had openly expressed their hostility to it and that they did not want the co-operating contract system; in fact, the Auckland Branch carried a

resolution asking the Commission to withdraw it.' Roberts in NZWW Union Secretary's annual report, 2 Dec 41, p. 8, Roberts Papers, B43/21

<sup>329</sup> WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 38-9

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 41

<sup>331</sup> As work increased, four superintendents were appointed at both **Auckland** and **Wellington**.

<sup>332</sup> WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 30-1

<sup>333</sup> *NZ Herald*, 19 Feb 44, p. 6

<sup>334</sup> *A to J*1949, H-45, p. 8

<sup>335</sup> '... hours were extended to 11 p.m. and to 2 a.m. when a vessel was finishing.' NZWW Union Secretary's report, 2 Dec 41, p. 13, Roberts Papers, B43/21

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>337</sup> WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 105-6

<sup>338</sup> WCC 'Activities of the Waterfront Commission for year ended 31 March 1943', p. 6, Hare Papers, Watersiders folder. This explains that waterside pay in **Australia**, the United States and **Britain** was generally higher than in New Zealand. **Australia's** basic rate was 3 s 8½ d an hour, 9 s 3¼ d on Sundays and special holidays. In the **United States** the basic rate was \$1.00 an hour for a 6-hour day, and thereafter overtime at \$1.50, with high rates for special cargoes.

<sup>339</sup> WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 106

**340** *A to J*1945, H-45, p. 3

**341** *Evening Post*, 8 Apr 43, p. 3

**342** *A to J*1945, H-45, pp. 3, 74; See p. 433

**343** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 91

**344** *Ibid.*, pp. 94-100

**345** *A to J*1945, H-45, pp. 6, 88

**346** Report to special conference, Apr 41, p. 3, Roberts Papers, B44

**347** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 190; it was well described by the *NZ Herald*, 22 May 43, p. 8

**348** The Commission in 1945 estimated that the average age was something over 50 years. *A to J* 1945, H-45, p. 6. A Union deputation to the PM on 18 December 1943 stated that of 1800 Union members at **Wellington** only 80 were less than 40 years old and that in the 6000 watersiders employed before the war only 400 Grade I men remained. WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 189

**349** *A to J*1945, H-45, p. 6; WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 190-7

**350** *Star-Sun*, 31 Oct 42, p. 4

**351** *A to J*1945, H-45, p. 73

**352** *Press*, 24 May 44, p. 6

- 353** A to J1945, H-45, p. 73
- 354** *Ibid.*, p. 74
- 355** WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 178-9, 181
- 356** *Ibid.*, p. 183
- 357** *Ibid.*, p. 186; *NZ Herald*, 3 Jun 43, p. 2
- 358** WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 187-8
- 359** The rate rose to 7 s 4 d later when the cost of living bonus was added.
- 360** *Evening Post*, 4 Apr 42, p. 8
- 361** *Ibid.*, 6 Apr 42, p. 6
- 362** *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Apr 42, p. 2
- 363** *Evening Post*, 6 Apr 42, p. 6
- 364** *NZ Herald*, 13 Jun 42, p. 6
- 365** These two bodies shared an active secretary, P. M. Butler.
- 366** Report of meeting with NZWW Union and Wellington Builders and General Labourers, 12 Jun 42, Labourers Union Papers, 8.41.1, Carton 12
- 367** J. Roberts to P. M. Butler, 17 Jul 42, *ibid.*

**368** *Ibid.*

**369** See p. 637

**370** A to J1945, H-45, p. 6

**371** *Auckland Star*, 7 Nov 42, p. 6

**372** *NZ Herald*, 27 Apr 43, p. 2

**373** WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 76

**374** *Ibid.*, p. 83

**375** *Ibid.*, p. 74

**376** *Ibid.*, pp. 74, 77

**377** WCC 'Report on Organisation and Activities as at 31 March 1944', p. 5

**378** WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 81-3

**379** *Dominion*, 16 Mar 44, p. 4

**380** A to J1945, H-45, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 12-19 Feb 44

**381** A to J1945, H-45, pp. 6, 75, where the main disputes are briefly listed, 1946, H-45, p. 61

**382** *Ibid.*, 1946, H-45, p. 62

<sup>383</sup> *Dominion*, 18 Feb 44, p. 4; *Press*, 18 Feb 44, p. 4. *NZ Herald*, 18 Feb 44, p. 2, gave the number as 'well over 1500 disputes'.

<sup>384</sup> WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 84n

<sup>385</sup> *Evening Post*, 4 Jul 45, p. 5 (in a court case taken as a test); WHN, 'The Waterfront', p. 266

<sup>386</sup> In mid-February 1944 the moderate veteran J. Flood of **Lyttelton** was narrowly replaced by the more militant H. Barnes of **Auckland**.

<sup>387</sup> *NZ Herald*, 12 Feb 44, p. 8

<sup>388</sup> Report of biennial conference of NZWW Union, 27 Nov 45, pp. 12–19, Roberts Papers B42

<sup>389</sup> An official report was published in 1941 and another in 1945; for the years between, publication of reports was prohibited by the Director of Publicity, at the request of the **Navy Office**, lest they give information to the enemy.

<sup>390</sup> *NZPD*, vol 263, pp. 337–54

<sup>391</sup> Hare, *Labour in New Zealand 1943*, pp. 47–8

<sup>392</sup> A to J1945, H-45, p. 3; *Evening Post*, 9 Dec 43, p. 6; *Dominion*, 4 Jan 44, p. 4; WHN, 'The Waterfront', pp. 107–8

<sup>393</sup> A to J1946, H-45, p. 3, 1947, H-45, p. 70

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*, 1945, H-45, pp. 72–3, 1946, H-45, pp. 5–6, 57–8



## \* Electricity supply

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 12 – DEFENCE BY THE PEOPLE

## CHAPTER 12

### *Defence by the People*

ON 20 May 1940, amid the rising agitation, the government announced that the Territorials and the National Military Reserve would be trained more intensively. The latter would supplement Territorial fortress troops in defence of ports, while the Territorials themselves, 16 000 just before the war but depleted by enlistment into the Expeditionary Force, would be increased, though the numbers intended were not stated. The rate of training quickened, beginning with officers and NCOs who attended district schools of instruction while living at home, <sup>1</sup> and tented camps were rapidly prepared or extended, notably at **Waiouru** but also at **Ngaruawahia** and at several racecourses, where Territorials would train for three months in warmer weather. On 3 October, Jones, Minister of Defence, gave figures: by the end of March 1941 the Territorials, numbering 25 985, would have had three months' training in camp, so with 9572 men in additional units and 8491 in the National Military Reserve, there would be a 'splendid Defence Force' of just over 44 000; <sup>2</sup> on 3 April 1941 he claimed that this objective was nearing achievement. <sup>3</sup>

This was orderly expansion and, in view of the equipment required, all that could be managed while sending substantial reinforcements overseas. <sup>4</sup> During 1940–1, fighting was in North Africa, **Greece**, **Crete** and **Syria**; **Britain**, not New Zealand, was threatened with invasion. But in the mood of mid-1940 the home defence programme then sketched by the government seemed insufficient and too slow. The general imprecise clamour for conscription included home defence, while the practical do-it-yourself traditions of many New Zealanders suggested immediate and active steps.

In England a few days after the invasion of the Low Countries on 10 May, a **Home Guard** was called for and sprang up literally overnight, with a quarter million volunteers in 24 hours, little previous planning, much zeal and a good deal of chaos at the start. Obviously there was no

comparable urgency in New Zealand, but with **France** falling so fast, with invasion lowering at **Britain**, and Churchill saying that we would fight on, if necessary from the Dominions beyond the sea, attack suddenly seemed not impossible. Also it was soon clear that German victories had increased **Japan**'s inclination towards the Axis; **Japan** was finding reasons for moving south, pressing against those valuable and vulnerable ex-colonies, French Indo- **China** and the **Netherlands East Indies**, and talking of her proper destiny in South-East Asia and the South Seas.

Pressure grew for a citizen army to defend hearth and home, for a rural militia to guard the coast. Writers to newspapers, singly and in batches, wanted to prepare for an emergency. <sup>5</sup> Ex-Territorials and returned soldiers, farmers whose production responsibilities held them to the land, deer-stalkers and rifle clubs <sup>6</sup> urged home defence much on the lines that were eventually taken: fit men of 18–55 years not eligible for overseas or Territorial service, unpaid, trained in weekends and evenings by returned men, armed and organised by the government, ready to repel any invasion, but probably deterring any such attempt by their very preparedness.

Some even proposed forces almost independent of the government. In Canterbury during May, a colonel offered to raise 1000 men as a special military reserve and to counter Fifth Column work <sup>7</sup> and in June the Canterbury Territorial Association devised a scheme for training Class III men (those with no soldiering experience) without calling on the permanent staff. <sup>8</sup> At least one local organisation, the New Plymouth National Service Corps, was formed 'with the approval of the Government' to raise a body of fit men available for any emergency or to further the war effort, with activities ranging from military drill and route marching to fund raising and gardening for soldiers' wives, until it should be absorbed into any wider government scheme. <sup>9</sup> Earlier, in March 1940, a local home defence impulse at Tirau and Matamata, mainly among RSA members who began enrolments and training, had met assurances that the government would provide adequately against

any possible enemy action; Tirau's desire to assist was greatly appreciated but the acceptance of all such offers would involve training, arming and equipping the greater portion of men between 17 and 60, some 500 000 in all, which was neither necessary nor practical; they would render most service by joining the Territorials or the **National Military Reserve**.<sup>10</sup>

Prominent in agitation was the Auckland Farmers' Union. Although assured in June by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence<sup>11</sup> that there were adequate plans for any possible hostility and that the government would increase its forces, if necessary, within the framework of the armed services, this body led the Dominion Farmers' Union Conference to send a deputation to the Prime Minister on 17 July, offering the services of the Union to the Defence Department. Local Farmers' Union branches, they proposed, would appoint officers and NCOs of experience, and consider methods of defending stretches of coast, guarding bridges, roads and so on. They recognised that it must be under military control, not be an independent Farmers' Union force, which would not be favoured by the public.<sup>12</sup> It was, commented the *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail* of 19 July, a splendid gesture by patriotic citizens with no suggestion of usurping the powers or duties of military authority.

Clearly, all this energy had to be directed into government-run channels. Already, one grass-roots defence movement had been accepted. On 4 July, when an Opposition member complained that hundreds of mounted men offering themselves for local defence had been refused, D. G. McMillan replied that they could not pick their own jobs; no government could run a war with 'Portuguese armies', letting every Tom, Dick and Harry form himself into a group and decide what he would do.<sup>13</sup> But on 16 July the government, recognising the fervour to be up and doing, called for nine independent regional mounted rifle squadrons to assist the Territorials in hilly country, especially as snipers and mounted scouts. The training required was 40 days a year, which could be done mainly at weekends, and they need not attend camps like

**Territorials. At the end of August Army officers, on tour to select leaders and make arrangements, reported over-many volunteers in some districts. <sup>14</sup>**

**On 18 July the Prime Minister told the Farmers' Union deputation that the matter was in hand, that a committee was meeting that very evening to discuss how such abilities and zeal could be used. <sup>15</sup> This committee, headed by **National Service Department** chiefs, decided that to satisfy the widespread desire to serve the country and to avoid setting up independent overlapping groups, there should be a voluntary, government-run, locally organised, non-military force, reasonably trained and fit, to do anything from coast-watching while at their daily work to assisting the police or serving with the Army in emergency. Organisation and scope of training were also outlined. These proposals went to **War Cabinet** on 23 July. <sup>16</sup> Major-General Duigan, <sup>17</sup> Chief of the General Staff, had explained to the committee on 18 July that the Army was fully occupied. Besides the Expeditionary Force it was training the Territorial Force, which at war establishment would number 29 000; also the nine new squadrons of mounted rifles and 5000 men in the National Reserve, guarding ports. <sup>18</sup> Army headquarters on 31 July made it clear to the **National Service Department** that it expected only very limited assistance from the proposed body, and could do very little for it.**

**No uniforms, arms or ammunition would be issued unless or until any unit was taken over by the Army, and meanwhile, though the Army might train a few instructors and lend a few Territorial NCOs, the use of arms and range practice was opposed. 'While the Army may and probably will be able to make considerable use of the organisation in an emergency, it is felt that any suggestion that it is wholly or principally a military organisation should be studiously avoided.... The Army has its hands full and further burdens are undesirable at the present time'. <sup>19</sup>**

**On 28 July the Minister of Defence broadcast that a new home defence force would be produced soon. It was outlined to the RSA, which was asked to nominate suitable men as district and area leaders. <sup>20</sup> **War Cabinet** finally approved the **Home Guard** on 2 August 1940, and on 17**



August the Emergency Reserve Corps Regulations were gazetted, linking three organisations under the National Service Department, with Semple its Minister. The Women's War Service Auxiliary was to carry on;<sup>21</sup> local authorities were required to prepare emergency precautions schemes to cope with natural disasters or with war, tasks which many had already done, or at least started, under earlier direction from the Department of Internal Affairs; the Home Guard was a new creation.

The Home Guard was to be a semi-military body, with a Dominion commander, three Military District commanders, and 16 area officers appointed by the government from those nominated by the RSA. Local authorities would organise details and foster growth through committees—existing EPS committees, it was thought, could be utilised, linking the two organisations; leaders below area commanders would be chosen by these committees. Individual units would be based on communities rather than geographical boundaries, with schools and public halls as the usual meeting places. The **Home Guard** would be voluntary, unpaid, open to all males over 16 not already in the armed forces, and it would work in the evenings and at weekends. It would give physical and military training based on Army manuals, and would provide pickets, patrols and sentries as needed. It would be trained to co-operate with the armed forces and in emergency could by proclamation be incorporated into these forces. Ultimately rifles and ammunition would be issued for training, and there would be uniforms, but at present there were only armbands and no rifles. Robert Semple, the Minister, and his lieutenant, David Wilson,<sup>22</sup> with the newly appointed Dominion commander, Major-General Robert Young,<sup>23</sup> would tour the country to meet local authorities and explain details.<sup>24</sup>

Generally newspapers approved, often with a better-late-than-never note; they also expressed wariness of overlapping by **Home Guard** and Emergency Precautions Services, and hoped that arms and military supervision would appear quickly—'a weekly course of physical culture is not an essential contribution to national defence', remarked the *Southland Times* on 19 August. There was widespread feeling that the

energetic Semple had much to explain. Semple spoke of giving 300 000 men excluded from other military duty a useful part in defence, especially those in rural areas, over 46 years of age, who were wanting an immediate outlet for their feelings and energy— ‘frothing to do some hard useful work without thought of payment’—wanting only the satisfaction of making themselves ready to defend their country, of practising with their mates. They could train in their own communities, meeting once a week, with about 30 men making a unit, four units a company, and four companies a group. ‘Getting fit’ was the keynote of the idea, said Semple, and in fact physical exercises were the only activities that could be started at once without equipment and with minimum organisation. But succeeding stages were also indicated, leading through semaphore, signalling, rifle drill, patrol and picket work and camping out at night, to company drill, entrenchments, field exercises and the blocking and clearing of roads. ‘Ultimately’ there would be rifles and ammunition; the government would issue armbands, and units ‘might provide themselves with clothes or suits of one type for special occasions.’ He also mentioned the checking of rumours and taking the oath of allegiance. <sup>25</sup>

Objectives were set before local authorities rather more succinctly. The Mayor of **Timaru**, candidly aiming to clear up misapprehension, published much of a circular he had received from the Director of National Service which set forth the **Home Guard**’s purposes as: (1) to have the available manpower organised to deal with any national emergency such as earthquake, flood, invasion, air raid or attack, in conjunction with the EPS organisations; (2) to have a reasonably trained and fully organised body of men immediately available and ready to support the armed forces; (3) to provide an outlet for the latent energy and urge to do something physical and tangible in the war effort; (4) to exercise effective government control, and to avoid the growth of sporadic and irresponsible organisations; (5) to exercise an effective and wholesome restraint upon the starting or spreading of rumours or canards. <sup>26</sup>

By the time Semple and Wilson had made their tour and the enrolment forms were ready in late September, the mood of excitement was beginning to ebb. The crisis in **Britain** was steady, with invasion seeming less imminent. **London**, having withstood the massive daylight raids of August to mid-September, was solidly enduring its nightly bombings, and reports of **RAF** raids on **Germany** territory matched in exaggeration those of **Luftwaffe** losses. Although **Japan** on 27 September had signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and **Italy**, newspapers treated this quietly and there was no immediate widespread apprehension.

Pressure for the **Home Guard** had come largely from country areas, and generally early recruiting there was more enthusiastic than in the towns. <sup>27</sup> Farmers were aware of their open lonely coasts, and they did not have the comfortable sight, familiar in cities, of soldiers in uniform; the urge to defend their own acres was strong, and they felt that they themselves must come forward before they could expect men on wages to do so. Some, sensitive about the sneer that farms were 'funk-holes', welcomed the chance to be active in defence as well as in production. Enthusiasm depended a good deal on local leadership and varied widely; for instance, a Taranaki officer marvelled why Patea with a population of 1500 could parade 320 men, while **Hawera**, population 5 000, could muster only 180. <sup>28</sup>

Cities were slower. By mid-October Wellington leaders were complaining of apathy, and their complaints continued for several months. <sup>29</sup> At Auckland, despite vigorous advertising <sup>30</sup> the Mayor spoke of poor response and inexplicable apathy when only 1400 had enrolled by 12 December. 'Response by **Dunedin** men has been disappointing in the extreme' reported the *Otago Daily Times* on 24 January; some keen units had been formed, but there were only 1200 enlistments from a population of 80 000. When, on a wet March night at a **Hamilton** suburb only 40 men, many already enrolled, turned up to form a unit, the Mayor spoke disgustedly of 'a bomb or two' being needed to waken people in the town to their obligations. <sup>31</sup>

Lack of accident insurance was an objection made frequently, and, although scornfully dismissed by Semple,<sup>32</sup> this was amended by a new enrolment form early in November.<sup>33</sup> Another source of doubt was the rumour that the **Home Guard** might be used for strike-breaking. The suggestion came from the Communist party, and Semple complained of a subversive document distributed all over the country by persons sneaking about like thieves in the night<sup>34</sup> but it had more effect than most communist utterances.<sup>35</sup> For instance, the **Christchurch** enlistment sub-committee discussed workers having such fears and criticised the government for not making clear the objects of the **Home Guard**, thus weakening confidence; so did the Manawatu Trades Council, and the Mayor of **Palmerston North** remarked that the regulations spoke of its military use in an emergency but left the government to decide what was an emergency.<sup>36</sup>

Certainly the opening clauses of the Regulations were wide: 'For the purpose of assisting in preparation and operation of plans for securing the public safety, the defence of New Zealand and the prosecution of any war in which His Majesty may be engaged, and of plans for maintaining supplies and services essential to the life of the community....' The final clause also, which provided for calling up the **Home Guard**, or any section of it, as part of the Army, when considered necessary by the Governor-General against enemy action or the threat of it, could be viewed askance by the doubtful. Further, a formidable new Regulation (1940/259) on 30 September had given the Attorney-General power, in the interests of public safety, the war effort, or maintaining essential industries, to have anyone dismissed from employment or a union, not only for acts done but also for acts anticipated. With this in the immediate background, the possibility of Massey-like<sup>37</sup> handling of strikes could well seem far from remote.

Semple, as a Minister, did not speak openly of possible attack by **Japan**, though this was a theme favoured by less public advocates of enlistment such as trade union speakers, not reported in the papers, and factory workers were puzzled by the apparent conflict between these

speeches <sup>38</sup> and Semple's utterances such as: 'we can meet the external danger only if we are organised; and we can look after the internal traitor too, if we are organised' <sup>39</sup> or 'I do not want to create a panic ... I say definitely that this country is in danger. ... It would not do if everyone was permitted to yell out what had happened. That might lead to panic. We cannot tell the people all that we know as it might be used against us. Every country has its Fifth Column and we have it here in New Zealand also.' <sup>40</sup> Indeed, Semple's fervour against the Fifth Column, and his tendency to see all pacifists and Communists as active agents of it, contributed both to alarm and to reluctance. Thus the **Oamaru** branch of the Labour party protested against his 'outrageous utterances', saying that while the term 'Fifth Column' remained vague, such incitements to summary violent actions were too like those a Fascist leader might give his storm troopers, and introduced trends quite foreign to democratic justice. <sup>41</sup> That the Farmers' Union praised Semple's efforts in the **Home Guard**, while pointing out that its formation was first proposed by itself, <sup>42</sup> did not increase working class faith in either Semple or the **Home Guard**. Some, particularly older men, found it hard to forget that Semple and other leaders now urging everyone to defend the country had opposed the last war, in gaol. <sup>43</sup>

Many forces combatted apathy. Trade union organisers and employers tackled the workers; <sup>44</sup> in the **Public Service** every controlling officer was asked to act as a recruiting agent; <sup>45</sup> there were Home Guard parades and route marches through suburbs; local government officials spoke for it on every possible occasion. The government refrained as much as possible from talk of attack by **Japan**, <sup>46</sup> yet even Fraser in October 1940 spoke of the tide of war rolling up near New Zealand's own shores, <sup>47</sup> and Major-General Young on 27 November said that whereas in the last war New Zealand did not have to worry about defence, now a power in the East had said that the British were going to lose the war and was backing the enemy. <sup>48</sup> In February 1941 **War Cabinet** member Gordon Coates spoke of **Japan**, armed to the teeth with the latest weapons, coming into the fray. <sup>49</sup> Plainly, if unofficially, the idea was about that **Japan** was the enemy likely to invade the beaches.

*Truth* attributed apathy to lack of information or training. Appeals about the urgency of the war situation were not enough, men wanted to know that they would learn something useful in modern mechanised warfare, not merely spend evenings at physical jerks and army drill, plus an occasional route march. It spoke of the British being trained to move without being seen, in street fighting, road-block making, of smoke-bombs made from cow-dung and anti-tank bombs from bottles, and called for publicity on what the **Home Guard** was actually doing. <sup>50</sup>

This of course bore on the first difficulty. What could the Home Guard do, starting from scratch, with no immediate help from the Army? Despite a general instruction for co-operation, the Army declared itself unable to lend rifles, etc, or to provide instruction until about the end of March 1941. <sup>51</sup> Early parades were often a nightmare to those responsible. With no equipment and few qualified instructors it was hard to keep the rank and file from standing about feeling bored and futile. <sup>52</sup> Each unit had to work out its own salvation, using emergent leadership, acquiring instructors from the Territorials and the National Reserve, often with NCOs learning at mid-week classes what they taught their men in the weekend. Those who had rifles brought them to meetings for teaching purposes; some zealous units acquired poles of rifle weight for arms drill, while stoutly denying 'broomstick army' rumours. <sup>53</sup>

In December 1940 the Physical Welfare Branch of Internal Affairs began training **Home Guard** leaders in non-military, recreation-type exercises, <sup>54</sup> but even this took time to spread. For instance, at the end of February the commander of the **Wellington** area remarked that arrangements were nearly complete for physical training on modern lines. However, by the end of April in three large districts ( **Auckland**, central **North Island** and **Wellington**) there were only 400 trained instructors. <sup>55</sup>

In November the tasks in which the **Home Guard** would assist the Army had been listed <sup>56</sup> and on 2 December Semple announced them. It would watch stretches of coast not covered by fortress troops or by



independent squadrons, and prepare sketch maps of coastal areas not included in the Army mapping plan; <sup>57</sup> oppose enemy landings until the Army arrived; construct movable obstacles to delay the enemy; under Army direction, assist with demolition work and with permanent obstacles; provide guards for internment camps and for any vital points handed over by the Army (which on 14 February decided that docks, oil tanks, radio and cable stations should forthwith be in **Home Guard** care and in emergency, railway tunnels and bridges). <sup>58</sup> In January and February 1941 the Army made its first real contribution to **Home Guard** training, admitting unit commanders to week-long courses in Army schools on such topics as rifle drill, section leading, map-work, reconnaissance reports, camouflage and siting of trenches. <sup>59</sup>

By December 1940 newspapers were peppered with modest but persistent reports of **Home Guard** units, in centres both large and small, though there were still complaints of apathy. The Dominion total rose from 16 667 men on 20 November to 37 701 on 7 December <sup>60</sup> to 65 927 on 31 January, 86 508 on 28 February and 98 656 on 31 March. <sup>61</sup>

HOME GUARD ENROLMENTS

	20 Nov 1940	7 Dec 1940	31 Jan 1941	28 Feb 1941	31 Mar 1941
<b>Auckland</b>	800	3 500	7 500	8 625	9 384
<b>Morrinsville</b>	1 400	2 139	3 082	3 968	4 457
<b>Rotorua</b>	650	1 249	3 093	4 458	5 085
<b>Whangarei</b>	1 147	2 350	3 750	4 603	5 505
<b>Hamilton</b>	642	2 113	5 039	6 501	7 827
<b>Wellington</b>	1 004	1 662	2 585	3 468	3 841
<b>20 Nov 1940</b>	<b>7 Dec 1940</b>	<b>31 Jan 1941</b>	<b>28 Feb 1941</b>	<b>31 Mar 1941</b>	
<b>Wanganui</b>	407	1 050	2 351	3 114	4 010
<b>Palmerston North</b>	550	1 689	3 330	5 354	6 287
<b>Napier</b>	1 434	2 321	3 652	4 936	5 654
<b>Gisborne</b>	313	877	1 914	2 580	3 042
<b>Masterton</b>	155	306	1 029	2 100	2 539
<b>New Plymouth</b>	580	1 660	2 100	2 543	2 619



<b>Hawera</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>1 715</b>	<b>2 244</b>	<b>2 425</b>	<b>2 568</b>
<b>Stratford</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>1 087</b>	<b>1 666</b>	<b>1 729</b>
<b>Nelson</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>1 453</b>	<b>2 028</b>	<b>2 220</b>
<b>Greymouth</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>1 247</b>	<b>1 798</b>	<b>1 852</b>
<b>Westport</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>566</b>
<b>Blenheim</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>1 000</b>	<b>1 163</b>	<b>1 250</b>
<b>Christchurch</b>	<b>1 500</b>	<b>2 700</b>	<b>3 539</b>	<b>4 517</b>	<b>5 508</b>
<b>Timaru</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1 500</b>	<b>2 400</b>	<b>3 022</b>	<b>3 263</b>
<b>Ashburton</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>1 400</b>	<b>1 469</b>	<b>1 638</b>
<b>Rangiora</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>1 075</b>	<b>1 618</b>	<b>1 832</b>
<b>Dunedin</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>1 200</b>	<b>2 000</b>	<b>3 459</b>	<b>4 147</b>
<b>Oamaru</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1 150</b>	<b>1 750</b>	<b>2 021</b>	<b>2 185</b>
<b>Alexandra</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>1 166</b>	<b>1 426</b>	<b>1 873</b>	<b>1 992</b>
<b>Invercargill</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>2 200</b>	<b>3 325</b>	<b>4 112</b>	<b>4 325</b>
<b>Gore</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>1 084</b>	<b>2 167</b>	<b>2 547</b>	<b>3 331</b>
	<b>16 667</b>	<b>37 701</b>	<b>65 927</b>	<b>86 508</b>	<b>98 656</b>

A proposal in February 1941 by the Stratford Borough Council that it should be compulsory to join the **Home Guard** drew only modest support,<sup>63</sup> though it was also advanced by the **Auckland Farmers' Union** and the NZRSA.<sup>64</sup> Semple declared that there was no need for conscription<sup>65</sup> but the Minister of National Service could direct anyone to join the **Home Guard** and by an amendment in March such direction automatically made such a person a member.<sup>66</sup> It became usual for armed forces appeal boards, in granting exemptions or postponements of service, to direct these men to join the **Home Guard**, if not the Territorials.

Of course enrolment numbers were no indication of attendance at parades, and on a dirty night less than half the proper number might turn up.<sup>67</sup> This was one of the weaknesses discussed in some newspaper letters;<sup>68</sup> straggling attendances and too few parades meant that some units after training for several months had learnt little but the fringes of elementary parade drill; without uniforms and weapons they could not feel genuine. If the **Home Guard** really was a useful cog in the defence machine the Army would take some interest in it. There was need for guidance, by visiting officers or by an official syllabus, in successive

steps of training. **Home Guard** committees were not representative of active guardsmen.

Other critics said that too much time was given to squad drill, not enough to practical improvisation. There should be on-the-beach training, with each unit practising on the area it would defend. Many units had men whom quarrying, road contracting, and other jobs had made expert with explosives, who could teach the use of gelignite, fuses and detonators as needed in road-blocks work; others skilled in fencing could devise barbed wire obstacles. Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* and Tom Wintringham's *New Ways of War* would be more useful than infantry manuals. 'The circumstances which would demand the service of the **Home Guard** would also demand improvising all along the line.... those shaping the **Home Guard** seem to be relying on squad drill and rifle exercises. Could futility go further?' <sup>69</sup> But squad drill also had its defenders, who held that it was the basis of discipline, without which a body of men might become a rabble. <sup>70</sup> Actually there was much improvisation and use of civilian skills, varying from place to place according to the people concerned; some districts were noticeably keener and more ingenious than others.

Engineering sections practised knots and lashings and trestle-bridge building, earthworks and obstacles, map and compass reading. Signals sections devised lamps, using camera tripods and reflectors from car and motor-cycle headlights, even treacle tins, and their hill-top blinkings roused a number of spy-scares; in May, **Napier** and Mohaka units exchanged messages over 31 miles, which was reckoned a long hop. <sup>71</sup> There was a lack of large-scale maps showing details relevant to military purposes, for the Lands and Survey Department's mile/ inch series was just beginning. But county engineers, surveyors and draughtsmen mapped some areas very creditably. <sup>72</sup> The lack of training manuals was met by some Hawke's Bay Territorial officers who in April 1941, with the approval of **Home Guard** headquarters, produced *The New Zealand Home Guard Manual*, which outlined training from squad drill to tank hunting, and included instructions for the use of automatic weapons

that the Guard was yet very far from possessing. <sup>73</sup>

Civilians skilled with explosives showed how to use gelignite and detonators for blowing trees across roads and for making other obstacles. They made grenades from jam tins filled with metal scraps and a central core of gelignite, or from lengths of iron piping segmented by filing and turning on a lathe and filled with explosive. They made booby traps of many sorts, often igniting fuses with .22 cartridges, the bullets being removed and the caps being struck by assorted springs such as from rat traps. 'Molotov cocktails', bottles filled with equal parts of tar, kerosene and petrol, with a wick soaked in kerosene at the neck, were thrown at rocks, etc, representing tanks, and were very popular. <sup>74</sup> The Waverley unit that practised throwing with smooth stones the weight of Mills bombs from a nearby river was praised by a headquarters officer. <sup>75</sup> Waipukurau men adapted shotgun cartridges to fire heavy lead slugs with accuracy over a limited range and demonstrated on the carcasses of sheep. <sup>76</sup>

Training in tactics could be attempted with little equipment if there was plenty of zest and imagination. Though some town areas were very lively in field training, <sup>77</sup> country areas obviously could come at it more readily. The comparable street fighting was not attempted: it would hold up traffic, alarm people, and no one was experienced in it. So, for instance, Taranaki units at a weekend had a route march plus field work combining instruction with actual procedure and covering more in 'one full day than in six evening parades'; manoeuvred, with lupin-covered hats, in sandhills; worked through blackberry patches and swamp to attack occupied positions. <sup>78</sup> The Sheffield company ambushed a tank with Molotov cocktails, were out-flanked by an armoured column, and after lunch with other units rounded up the 'parachutists' of Glentunnel in hill country, 'a "soldiers battle" in which the rank and file displayed particular enthusiasm and initiative.' <sup>79</sup>

A sense of reality emerges from some of the reports, as for example the problem posed to 60 company and platoon commanders and NCOs of

**a Taranaki battalion attending a two-day course at Pihama:**

**An invasion barge carrying a tank and 18 infantrymen—a laggard from a larger enemy force attempting a landing on the black sands at Opunake—comes churning into the cove at Papakaka, where the Puneheu Stream once entered the sea.**

**A quarter of an hour before it touches the shingle it is sighted, and a platoon of the **Home Guard** armed with rifles and gelignite, is ordered to prevent the landing or annihilate the invading unit as it leaves the water.**

**On Saturday these men were given rifle instruction and a talk by the county engineer on field sketching and reports, followed by practical work on a piece of coast. Sunday included a lecture on field craft, on taking cover from fire and on selecting positions for firing and for advance; another lecture on obstacles, road blocks and wiring, again by the engineer; it wound up with the landing problems set forth above.<sup>80</sup> On this occasion a women's committee was thanked for providing tea; one hopes that other women were thanked for milking the cows.**

**Various devices were used to give almost unarmed men a sense of battle. Sometimes an aeroplane would 'bomb' their trucks, or fly over ground on which they were taking cover. In an attack on golf-links near **Christchurch**, watched by Major-General Young, paper packets of flour were thrown as grenades and machine-gun sounds were contrived from tin rattles 'in which the turning of a ratchet made an effective noise.'<sup>81</sup>**

**Rifles, though promised often, were slow to appear apart from those owned by an élite minority. In January 1941 some elderly rifles were issued for training purposes, though not certified fit for firing.<sup>82</sup> A few weeks later the Prime Minister appealed for the loan of .303 rifles, promising to make good all deterioration or loss, but the response was slight: more than two weeks later only 30 had been handed in throughout the **Auckland** police district from Wellsford to **Huntly**, only two from **Auckland** city.<sup>83</sup> At the end of April an impressment order was**

gazetted, requiring all rifles or parts thereof to be handed in immediately, but this did not produce a flood, and shortage of rifles remained a sore point till well into 1942.

The more that guardsmen took to the hills, dug trenches or worked with wire, the more they wanted uniforms and boots. With the Depression not far behind, many had few serviceable old clothes, and costs of clothing and footwear were rising. They were promised the old style uniforms of the Territorials when these could be replaced with battledress, but the Territorials were constantly being increased, and all through 1941 the promises moved on. Meanwhile a few units acquired makeshift uniforms: those of the **Otorohanga** area decided as early as November 1940 to have grey shirts and trousers and glengarry caps;<sup>84</sup> those of **Lower Hutt** acquired 400 khaki boiler suits, at 15 s each;<sup>85</sup> One Tree Hill men appeared in drill blouses and trousers with glengarry caps, cost £1.<sup>86</sup>

The importance of maintaining communications in a war emergency produced, during 1941, several special **Home Guard** groups. In the Post and Telegraph Department, linesmen, technicians, exchange operators, telegraphists and other experts covered the whole country in a many-branched organisation totalling nearly 2000 at full strength. In the Railways about 600 men were set to maintain lines, signals, telephones and electricity for electric engines, and at the last to deny resources to the enemy. Both these groups did some ordinary **Home Guard** training, especially in the use of weapons, and their officers attended Army schools.<sup>87</sup> Within the carrying industry, a **Home Guard** motor transport organisation, spread over the country in 32 companies, was prepared to carry supplies, ammunition and petrol for the Army in a crisis. Each full company comprised 79 three-ton lorries, 4 cars, 8 motor-cycles and 155 men.<sup>88</sup> Petrol was stored all over the country, sealed in the spare tanks of retailers, tanks which because of petrol restrictions were not in trade use. From 11 February 1941 each of 1821 petrol stations had its guards, totalling 5548 in March 1943. They were usually older and less fit men, with the owner or manager in charge, under instructions from the Oil

Fuel Controller. <sup>89</sup> Thus there were during 1941, outside the would-be fighting men, more than 7000 Guardsmen who had special tasks, linked with their normal work. Another such group was the Traffic Control Corps. Early in 1941, mindful of the tragic errors in **France**, the EPS organised emergency traffic police who would keep country roads clear if needed for military traffic, and control any civilian evacuation. The Transport Department's 61 traffic inspectors were the nucleus of this group, which numbered 2000 when **Japan** entered the war. It was then transferred to the Home Guard, and by March 1943 its members would total nearly 4500. Its head was the Oil Fuel Controller, also in charge of the petrol guards, and these two groups were further linked at roadside level. <sup>90</sup>

Expenses of transport, hire of halls and so on were at first necessarily and reluctantly borne by local bodies, assisted by sums raised through street appeals, entertainments and raffles. In mid-March 1941 the government, pressed by these bodies, announced that it would pay administration costs down to and including area commands, plus a capitation grant of 2s a man up to 31 December and thereafter 1 s a quarter for each man attending 80 per cent of parades. <sup>91</sup> It was, of course, not enough, but it was felt by many that local fundraising efforts were part of the total community activity.

Despite enthusiasm and makeshift, as months passed dissatisfaction grew. Hill-scrambling was all very well in summer, but unit commanders wondered how to cope with winter evening parades without losing interest and men. Government apathy and lack of Army interest, it was said, were killing the **Home Guard**. Newspaper letters <sup>92</sup> continued to call for equipment and positive direction, for a co-ordinated Dominion-wide training programme, instead of units doing various things, largely reflecting the views of their immediate officers, some seeing the **Home Guard** as a guerrilla force of freelance nuisances to the invader, others regarding it as an emergency reserve for the regular forces and therefore needing elementary orthodox training. Closer co-operation with the Army and maintenance by the government was urged by the *Southland*



*Times* on 29 April and by the NZRSA on 30 May, while several local bodies and **Home Guard** committees made similar suggestions. <sup>93</sup> In mid-June a deputation of mayors from all the cities and big towns, asking Nash, as Acting Prime Minister, for a clear statement, said that if the Guard were indeed a front line of defence, as it had so often been told, it should be under military control. <sup>94</sup> Nash replied that Sir Guy Williams, <sup>95</sup> a home defence expert from **Britain** touring the country as military adviser to the government, would soon report; a comprehensive plan and more equipment would emerge shortly, and meanwhile 50 000 pairs of **Home Guard** boots were to be ordered. <sup>96</sup> From Auckland pressure came strongly. The *New Zealand Herald* on 1 July said that New Zealand was in the Gilbertian situation of having two separate land defence forces with War Cabinet as the only formal link between them and pointed out several administrative anomalies. **Auckland** city's **Home Guard** committee pressed for information on government intentions concerning training and equipment: there had been many promises but so far they had only armbands, and expenditure on the **Home Guard** in **Auckland** from its inception to the end of May totalled £686. <sup>97</sup> This was backed by a *Herald* editorial and letters next day, which Semple angrily described as 'based on political prejudice and hate rather than on logical reasoning, tolerance and patience'. <sup>98</sup> On 23 July Goosman repeated these criticisms in the House. <sup>99</sup>

Already during April and May **War Cabinet**, the National Service Department and Army had been considering what to do with the unwieldy **Home Guard**, now nominally more than 100 000 strong and of widely ranging ages and fitness. At the end of July, assisted by Williams's reports, <sup>100</sup> the **Home Guard** was transferred to Army control, with changes as slight as possible to existing machinery: the four District Commanders became District Directors with the rank of Colonel, the Area Commanders became Group Directors, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and a few clerical assistants were appointed to each of the 28 Group headquarters. But elsewhere it was considered important to preserve the voluntary spirit, and at battalion level permanent administrative and training staff would not be needed until there was



equipment to handle and keep account of. The capitation grant was increased from 4 s to 15 s a year, though local fund-raising was still encouraged; those taking special courses of instruction would receive Territorial pay.

It was now established <sup>101</sup> that the **Home Guard's** task was to provide static defence of localities, of vulnerable and key points such as beaches, bridges, defiles and centres of communication, and to give timely warning of enemy movement. Its value lay not with individual action but in proper co-ordination with the superior military forces. The Home Guardsman was defined as a part-time infantry soldier, armed with rifle, machine-gun and bombs, who having no government transport or supply must fight and feed near his own home, his chief asset being close knowledge of the neighbourhood. His task would be to impose loss and delay, defending localities with temporary road blocks, covered with small arms fire, with a reserve inside the locality ready to counter-attack; to acquire and deliver news of the enemy; to continue to harass an occupying force, under cover of darkness. <sup>102</sup> A high standard of weapon training was to be aimed at, with physical training for reasonable fitness, foot and arms drill enough for pride of bearing and reasonably precise movement; knowledge of the district (assisted by sand tables and models), proficiency in observation, patrolling, message sending; general development of night sense, doing operational tasks in darkness and getting away from drill hall training as much as possible.

<sup>103</sup>

The force would have no fixed number, but be in two divisions. Division I, approximately 50 000, fit for combat duty, would be trained and equipped as quickly as possible; Division II, reasonably fit, would be a reserve for Division I, and have as much training as possible with the equipment available; the less fit would be politely invited to transfer to the EPS. <sup>104</sup>

Little of this, however, reached the schools and local halls where a few men continued to turn up regularly and the majority much less regularly. Changes to the existing machinery were so slight that on 1

October Broadfoot was asking in the House why, since the announcement on 31 July that the **Home Guard** was to be taken over by the Army and put into two Divisions, Home Guardsmen had received no explanation of the arrangement, and when would the reorganisation of the Guard as a separate entity within the Army be complete? Fraser replied that preparatory work was under way, reorganisation, being wrapped up with the whole defence plan, proceeding as fast as circumstances would permit. <sup>105</sup>

On 28 October an article in the *New Zealand Herald* said that compulsory parades seemed the only means towards efficiency; attendances were often so poor that there was widespread discouragement and despondency. These Cinderellas of the defence forces had trained almost blindfold, uncertain of their part in an emergency, 'sparsely equipped and uniformed with promises', so that 'it was a common statement among officers that every time an official promise was made another half-dozen men failed to parade with their units'. The three-month-old announcement of transfer to Army control had roused hopes but progress in removing the long-standing complaints was slow, and parade attendances were the fundamental difficulty. Special courses had been held at district Army schools, improving officers and NCOs, but they often had to resume elementary training because so many members had missed so much; for instance, one platoon commander had one of his 36 men at one parade and none at the next. Also, the idea of the **Home Guard** as a guerrilla force had been replaced by the idea of static defence, close to homes. This seemed a condition more suitable to closely settled **Britain** than to New Zealand, with its widely separated towns, and was a further cause of uneasiness. <sup>106</sup>

Within two days Army Order 261/1941 was issued to the press, and summaries appeared. <sup>107</sup> 'Not a moment too soon' hailed the *New Zealand Herald*'s editorial, claiming that the **Home Guard** now had a definite place. But next day that paper printed a letter signed 'Guardman' saying that this order had been read to all of them at least

four weeks ago, but ‘from that day to this the **Home Guard** might have been in another world for all the interest taken in it by the army authorities’. So much had been said and promised, so little done, small wonder that attendances were poor. ‘Please do not take this as an indictment against the army authorities. The Home Guard was created in a wild burst of patriotic fervour by a political drummer boy, who having achieved a roll strength of 100 000, magnanimously hands this army over to the defence authorities with a sigh of relief at having wormed himself out of the very embarrassing position of having an army without an objective’. <sup>108</sup> Minus the almost Semple-like invective, this criticism was more or less echoed a few weeks later by Lieutenant-Colonel W. Bell, Group Director at Invercargill, who said that the **Home Guard** had started with a flourish of trumpets and large enrolments, but the numbers at parades had since fallen and he could not blame the older men for losing enthusiasm when so many younger ones were doing nothing; there should be conscription. <sup>109</sup>

At the start of November, papers reported both activity and dissatisfaction from **Home Guard** units. Thus Timaru’s battalion was zealously contriving to obtain sandbags needed for trench and field fortifications; <sup>110</sup> the **Onehunga** battalion held a mock battle near **Mangere** airfield, with flour bag bombs from an aircraft; <sup>111</sup> the Kaikohe platoon’s smouldering dissatisfaction over lack of organisation and equipment broke out in a decision to attend no more parades till the authorities placed the **Home Guard** on a satisfactory footing. <sup>112</sup> Then, about the middle of the month, reports of the arrival of rifles and other equipment, including Lewis and Thomson machine-guns, began to appear. <sup>113</sup>

However, it was not until the following month that the policy was really spelled out. Fraser on 11 December 1941 stated: The task of the **Home Guard** is defensive and I cannot overstate its importance. In the initial stages of an emergency it is intended that forward static positions will be held by Territorial and National Reserve units, with the **Home Guard** available to reinforce them if necessary, but as the gravity of the

situation increases the **Home Guard** will take over this duty from the Territorials and the National Reserve who will then be withdrawn from their positions in readiness to meet the main thrust of the enemy. This plan is intended to provide the widest distribution of forces to meet an initial attack and at the same time to permit the concentration of the more highly trained and mobile units to deal with enemy concentrations wherever they may be found. <sup>114</sup>

In mid-December thousands of Territorials and National Military Reserve men were hurried into camps and fortress areas, their uniforms and equipment further delaying promised issues to the Home Guard. The unpaid, part-time defenders of hearth and home were not conspicuously called to duty. But on 31 December **War Cabinet**, by authorising the payment of mobilised Home Guardsmen, provided machinery for using them as required on regular defence work, a milestone on the road to recognition by the Army that for many had value far above 7 s a day. Further, at the beginning of February, Army district officers were directed to use **Home Guard** volunteers where necessary to supplement Territorial forces. Without pay, they could do beach patrols, etc, on shifts of 24 hours or less, at weekends, which would not interfere with their normal work. They could also serve paid shifts of 24 hours or more, again mainly at weekends, coast watching, guarding vital points, relieving Territorial troops going on leave, or helping them with defence works. They could also be mobilised for a week or longer on such tasks, or to occupy positions if other home troops were not available. <sup>115</sup>

Although the Public Works Department and contractors with machinery were used as much as possible on defence construction, at the start much urgent spade work, wiring, etc, was needed on beaches and places chosen for defence. In the early months of 1942 the **Home Guard** did a good deal of defence navvying, with the result that works were completed quickly and regular troops could concentrate on their training, while the **Home Guard** itself benefited from close association with serving units. Procedure differed from place to place, with little attendant publicity. At the end of January, groups of Canterbury Home

Guardsmen in turn began going into camp for a week, and were photographed shouldering shovels, winding barbed wire and preparing brushwork for revetments. <sup>116</sup> Similar work was mentioned at **Dunedin**, where a Home Guardsman devised a concertina style of wiring that produced a very tangled coil; <sup>117</sup> the Defence Minister referred to weekend patrols by Home Guardsmen attached to **Wellington** fortress troops; <sup>118</sup> at **Auckland** on 27 March the Mayor called for **Home Guard** volunteers needed for both fulltime and part-time duty; inland units worked on road blocks and dragged huge logs into position ready for dropping across roads. <sup>119</sup> In short, the **Home Guard** helped to make possible landing beaches prickly with barbed wire and gun posts and to make strategic roads quickly defensible.

An article in the *Listener* in January, 'Hawke's Bay has an Army', described things not exclusive to Hawke's Bay, The Home Guard had been the starved younger child of the military forces, working without almost everything that it officially needed. It had survived being a hopeless idea, survived the stage of wooden rifles, survived being funny, being derided by a nation which still 'did not fully realise that this is a shooting war.' Few Home Guardsmen had uniforms and most of the lucky ones would not wear them until all were so provided, but some could make themselves invisible in homemade camouflage. Not all had rifles or shotguns but they had a fine collection of extemporised weapons, ranging from knives to homemade bombs. Some units had reconditioned machine-guns souvenired from the last war and partly remodelled by the Army armourers, and most had enough Tommy-guns to learn the use of them. They had their home-made bombs <sup>120</sup> and were experimenting with mortars to throw them. They had Molotov cocktails to hurl at tanks, trip wires and rat traps would ignite the charges of booby traps. A signalling system, with improvised gear, covered the province. Some units could bridge streams in less than half an hour, using oil drums soldered watertight, with boards and timber for bracing. In small units, ingenuity had achieved much that would be impossible for a big organisation. <sup>121</sup>

Army connections were strengthened by increased intake to Army schools of instruction, where Home Guardsmen took courses lasting for a week to a month, and would thereafter instruct their units on regular Army lines. By 31 March 1942, a total of 2118 officers and 2431 other ranks had been through such courses. <sup>122</sup>

There was not a great rush of recruits to the **Home Guard**. <sup>123</sup> When, on 22 January 1942, enrolment in the EPS became compulsory for men 18 to 65 years inclusive not in the forces or in the **Home Guard**, the majority, possibly through misunderstanding, chose the less demanding EPS. This was probably no immediate disadvantage, for until more weapons appeared thronging recruits would have multiplied frustration. Existing numbers were thinned by successive ballots, taking the younger and stronger men, who often found that their **Home Guard** training hastened Army promotion. On the other hand, in February, when some of the National Reserve began to droop after being in camp for about six weeks, the more vigorous were transferred to the Territorials, while the less fit went to the **Home Guard** along with those of service age and fitness whom Manpower committees, for public interest or because of hardship, sent back to their civilian jobs. <sup>124</sup> A survey of age groups in March 1942 showed that 48 per cent of the **Home Guard** were less than 35 years old, 35 per cent were of 36 to 50 and 17 per cent were more than 50 years old. <sup>125</sup>

Early 1942 saw a sharp increase in those earning capitation grants, that is, attending at least 75 per cent of parades. In the September quarter of 1941 they totalled 50 531, and were down to 48 343 in December, the busy farming season. They rose to 63 344 in March 1942, when the nominal roll was 110 000, and to 70 772 in the June quarter. <sup>126</sup> Differing figures were given for March in the report of 22 June 1942 signed by the Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant-General Puttick, <sup>127</sup> which stated that the roll strength of the Guard at the end of March was 96 000, of whom 62 890 had earned capitation grants in the past three months. The conflict of these March figures is less surprising when the many sub-divisions in the **Home Guard** are remembered, along with the



variety of its record-keeping methods; nor is the difference, 454, in the effective number very significant.

In April 1942 it was decided that **Home Guard** numbers must be increased by compulsion. All civilian men between 35 and 50 years had to enrol despite already being in the EPS. There were certain exceptions: police, firemen, seamen, key members of EPS, doctors, chemists, Maoris, magistrates, judges, ministers of religion, also those disabled, blind, in hospital or in prison. Manpower officers then eliminated those whose commitment to essential work would make them poor Guardsmen, and the rest were interviewed by local selection committees, representing **Home Guard**, EPS, and Manpower, who transferred suitable men from EPS to the **Home Guard**. Division I, those over 18 years, physically fit, and in fighting units, plus youths 16 to 18 years, would have 24 hours training a month; Division II, those with non-operational roles such as petrol guard and traffic control, would train for eight hours a month. Absence from parades without leave could lead to prosecution in civil courts, with fines of up to £25, or three months in prison.<sup>128</sup> These steps produced 29 555 recruits.<sup>129</sup>

Boots were now coming more quickly, 46 550 pairs by mid-February, 77 228 by the end of May,<sup>130</sup> though still not enough to go round: thus, at **Foxton** in February, 65 pairs were received for more than 100 men, and in November a Pongaroa man lamented that his company had received 12 pairs in all.<sup>131</sup>

Uniforms at last appeared, the Prime Minister stating early in March 1942 that 11 260 had been issued,<sup>132</sup> and this number had risen to 43 782 by the end of May.<sup>133</sup> Some were ex-Territorial service uniforms cleaned and repaired, some were battle-dress style, new, but of woollen cloth not worsted.<sup>134</sup>

By mid-February the **Home Guard** had received 12 106 Army rifles, plus 66 heavy and 34 light machine-guns, 800 Thompson sub-machine-guns and 2.5 million rounds of small arms ammunition,<sup>135</sup> though only a limited amount of this could be used for practice shooting. By May, 24



500 American .300 rifles had arrived and there was a re-shuffle. In the areas furthest from mobilised troops, such as Southland, Nelson, Coromandel and Hawke's Bay, all .303 rifles were withdrawn and redistributed to Home Guard units more likely to be operating alongside the Territorials, the more remote districts then receiving the American rifles. Thus with the 16 000 either self-owned or impressed, plus those from American and the Army, the Home Guard mustered 52 648 rifles by the end of May. <sup>136</sup>

After Singapore there was, especially in northern districts, some anxiety to avoid a similar situation of military inadequacy and over-optimism. Some worried about the Army, and, though Army shortcomings were less visible to the public than were those of the Home Guard, military silence led, wrote General Puttick, 'to the obvious deficiencies in the equipment of the Home Guard being accepted by the public as an indication of the state of the Army as a whole', which was far from being the case. <sup>137</sup> In February and March, a few public bodies voiced concern: the Rotorua, Mt Eden and Takapuna borough councils and the Auckland Chamber of Commerce urged that the Home Guard should be strengthened, having first choice of the men compulsorily enrolling for EPS, that it should be fully militarised, and its equipment improved by local manufacturing. <sup>138</sup>

These ideas reached fullest and most forceful expression in the 'Awake New Zealand' campaign emanating from Major T. H. Melrose, commander of Hamilton's Home Guard. <sup>139</sup> This movement sought to kindle a widespread awareness of danger and the fighting spirit to meet it. It urged self-help and self-defence, without waiting for official steps, impatiently regarded as red tape. It thought that there was too much emphasis on EPS measures, it called for compulsory Home Guard membership and for Home Guard weapons, weapons for every man, to be improvised and produced by resourceful, handy men in every foundry and workshop. <sup>140</sup> The movement spread rapidly, its ideas also infecting other organisations: for instance, the Auckland Farmers' Union offered its services to the government to assist with the organisation of the

**Home Guard**, the cultivation of an offensive spirit and the collection of scrap metal for local manufacture into grenades. <sup>141</sup>

In many centres, money was given for **Home Guard** weapons and equipment and handymen were called on to devise and produce weapons. Already there were home-made grenades; <sup>142</sup> other devices were now produced, notably trench mortars, originating in an Otahuhu workshop. <sup>143</sup> The Army, however, was wary of most such improvisations, preferring local production of approved weapons <sup>144</sup> such as mortars made in the Hutt railway workshop. The Army's coolness to some proposals was probably judicious; as, for instance, land-mines claimed to be simple and safe in construction, deadly in action and capable of being made by the thousand and laid out in a few hours on beaches and in vital areas. <sup>145</sup>

However, if the 'Awake' campaigners could not get very far with weapons, they usefully provided other equipment such as camping gear, ground sheets, steel helmets and haversacks. <sup>146</sup> At Whangarei, for instance, the campaign began on 1 May and closed four months later, having raised £705, of which £452 was spent on **Home Guard** equipment, including 400 ground sheets. <sup>147</sup>

New urgency now beset Home Guardsmen as they defended and counter-attacked beaches and hills, rehearsed the blocking of roads and gorges, laid dummy mines and built emergency bridges. At Easter 1942 for instance many battalions, as at **Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington** and the Hutt, spent days preparing and defending posts and road blocks, inventing and destroying paratroops and beach invaders. <sup>148</sup> In both town and country, during weekends and some evenings, men practised handling their weapons, practised moving under cover, moving by night, on manoeuvres of defence and attack; they learnt their districts thoroughly by going over them again and again; some prepared maps that showed roads, trees, buildings, creeks, swamps and firm ground. As before, enthusiasm and effectiveness varied from unit to unit, depending on local leadership. Those who combined determination and energy with military imagination and skill in handling people achieved much, both

in extracting the maximum from authority and in building up efficiency, co-operation and *esprit de corps*. There were many pitfalls for **Home Guard** commanders, from reluctance in paper work to the adoption of an imagined 'military' authority. <sup>149</sup>

Despite shortage of petrol and pressure of work, keenness was conspicuous among farmers, perhaps from the sense of threat to their own homes and acres, heightened by neighbourly regard and district pride: a **Home Guard** drop-out was more conspicuous in the country than in the comparative anonymity of towns. Transport included horses and bicycles, while money for petrol for shared cars and other minor expenses was still raised by such community efforts as dances and euchre-evenings. <sup>150</sup> Rural companies often mustered 30 strong out of a roll of 40, over a radius of 10 miles; each had its own area to defend, and knew it closely. They concentrated on guerrilla tactics, using 'British commando methods plus a few that are home-made— and pretty tough.' <sup>151</sup>

There were some special commando units, the so-called guide platoons. In December, Army command considered that rugged terrains, often within striking distance of cities, and the rugged men available—farmers, musterers, deer cullers, bushmen and timber workers—favoured secret commando groups which in an invasion would retire to hide-outs in bush and hills, emerging to harass the enemy rear. After March, when weapons became available, more than 100 such units each of about 17 men were developed. They were specially devoted to night work and commando methods (to account for their long spells in bush and bivouac training it was given out that they were training to guide troops through unknown and difficult country, and to be scouts and snipers). Their carefully constructed lairs, equipped with radio, explosives, ammunition and hard rations for a month, were left quite alone, while the men, to mislead the curious, worked from dummy headquarters and caches. <sup>152</sup>

Other Army-nurtured specialists, 344 in number, were in the Bomb Disposal Group, formed in April 1942. They had training at **Trentham** and received much information about enemy bombs. The only live

bombs available were those dropped on several occasions by the **RNZAF**, but they had more work (in conjunction with the **Navy**) dealing with enemy and British mines which drifted on to the west coasts of both islands, the Coromandel Peninsula and the Bay of Islands. One such mine was bravely handled: it came ashore at **New Plymouth** near the railway shed and hospital, in a fairly heavy sea and could not be destroyed on the spot. Two men of the local bomb section attached a rope to it, swam with the rope to a launch and towed the mine to an empty beach. <sup>153</sup>

Such groups knew they had specific tasks, as had the less adventurous technical communications sections, and the guardians of petrol stocks and of vital points. The ordinary infantryman's belief in his own usefulness was less certain. For some, both in the community and in the **Home Guard**, there was a strong sense of unreality, of playing at soldiers, scepticism that this semi-amateur effort would be effective in the face of trained, well-equipped, hard-driving attackers. Others, including the old soldiers, knew that a sense of unreality could persist into the midst of action. Nevertheless, it was better to prepare to do what one could than to wait inactive; the fighting attitude of mind was more robust, less fearful, than one of empty-handed default. Fathers as they farewelled sons going overseas knew that if the young men could not stop the Japanese, the old ones would not let the home places, the women and the children go without a fight.

In March, when the issue of guns and gear had but lately got under way amid organisational hitches, when the news was very bad and the 'Awake' movement was seething out from the **Waikato**, Sidney Holland after touring this area spoke of the **Home Guard's** 'very considerable discontent and apprehension' that they were not being properly treated or used to the best advantage, and asked for a full committee of inquiry. The Prime Minister, agreeing to this, said that **Home Guard** affairs had the anxious attention of War Cabinet, which had instructed the Army that its training and issue of equipment should be as speedy as circumstances would permit; difficulties were being overcome, and much

creditable uneasiness came from not knowing fully what was being done.

154

The *Auckland Star* commented that recognition at this late date of the need for inquiry into the training, organisation and employment of the **Home Guard** would be an unpleasant shock to many. The press had repeatedly drawn attention to the Cinderella of the forces and how 'the patriotic enthusiasm which infused its ranks upon its formation was allowed to ooze away through a sieve of broken promises' of equipment, military clothing and adequately trained command, criticism which was rebuked as giving information to the enemy. The *Star* doubted that the inquiry would now achieve much. The equipping of the **Home Guard** had progressed so quickly in the last few weeks that enthusiasm had rekindled, and 'if the committee is in the mood for it, it will have no difficulty in providing a report well camouflaged in whitewash'. Perhaps the most important avenue for inquiry at the moment would be the fitness of many of the leaders for their jobs: there were so many tales of one company receiving splendid training while its next door neighbour had done only 'parade ground stuff'. <sup>155</sup>

The military affairs committee of the War Council, W. Perry of the RSA, Major-General Andrew Russell <sup>156</sup> and two members of Parliament, L. G. Lowry <sup>157</sup> and E. T. Tirikatene, <sup>158</sup> inquired diligently into **Home Guard** complaints and circumstances. Their suggestions, plus the comments of Lieutenant-General Puttick and the Army Department were tabled in the House on 14 October 1942. <sup>159</sup> By this time many grievances had been eased. Since May, compulsory recruitment had filled in the ranks, and the majority were no longer empty-handed or in civilian garb. Battalions in the areas immediately essential for defence had been given priority: here the majority had rifles, and others formed sections with machine-guns, tommy-guns and mortars. The Home Guard's total strength in October 1942 was 109 226; 75 000 uniforms had been issued, and 83 127 pairs of boots, with more coming. Ammunition was still short, especially for the American rifles of which 40 000 now had been imported. <sup>160</sup> **Home Guard** units had to construct

their own rifle ranges on approved sites, as heavy demands from the Services fully occupied the government work force. Proposals that the Guard should be permitted to make its own wireless sets and improvise weapons were not approved. Variety in wireless sets might imperil security it was said, and Army headquarters had to approve all specifications in advance. Several hundred sets had been ordered and the Army would give training in signals work. Puttick commented that many improvised weapons were inefficient and dangerous to the users; skilled men and explosives would be better used in regular production of approved types. Payment for attendance at parades was not favoured, and there was only a small increase for out-of-pocket expenses. <sup>161</sup>

Though no marked change resulted from the inquiry at this stage, it is probable that its existence had already helped to give Home Guard requirements some priority amid the heavy competition of 1942. But while the condition of the **Home Guard** was improving, its *raison d'être* was fading. On the day that the Parliamentary report was published, the headlines told of six Japanese warships sunk in the **Solomons** in the latest naval clash. There were thousands of Americans in New Zealand, and the 3rd Division was leaving to seek the enemy overseas. The accent was shifting from organisation for defence to organisation for production; men from the home defence forces were being released to industry in thousands; and although there were many recent recruits in the **Home Guard**, many of its veterans felt that they had learned all it could teach them. There were complaints from farmers that 24 hours' training per month was misdirected effort; <sup>162</sup> in October miners were exempted, <sup>163</sup> and in November wharf workers. <sup>164</sup> At the beginning of December, at the same time that lighting restrictions were eased and fire watching ceased, training was reduced to eight hours a month for the busy season. Ironically, at about the same time, the first prosecutions for non-attendance came through the courts. <sup>165</sup>

Training was restored to 16 hours a month in March. The Guard's organisation was now at its best, uniforms plentiful, equipment mounting. In all, but excluding 4430 dubiously fit, it numbered 119 153.



<sup>166</sup> Its belief in itself had grown with official recognition, and long association of members in common endeavour had bred feelings of community and enterprise. A conspicuous example was presented in the Hutt where, partly by voluntary work over the period of reduced training, the local battalion had built 20 huts, each about 50 feet by 20 feet, for eating and sleeping accommodation in the rear of its battle station, so that when longer training resumed there could be comfortable weekends on duty. A mounted troop had also built a large hut, plus horse lines and a chaff house. It was anticipated that the huts would have a 'useful post-war purpose', and the battalion had also, through specialists in its ranks, built several bridges on farms. <sup>167</sup>

Not all groups were so devoted, but there were mixed feelings after 28 June 1943, when the Prime Minister announced a new phase in defence. The Territorial force was to be cut to its bones— to coast and anti-aircraft defence, care and maintenance of material, and training cadres. The Home Guard was to go into reserve, with quarterly muster parades. Minhinnick's cartoon showed housewife Fraser, peg in mouth, with a steaming copper labelled 'Home Defence



SHRUNK IN THE WASH  
SHRUNK IN THE WASH

Wash-up' in the background, hanging up very shrunken Home Guard trousers and Territorial jackets. <sup>168</sup> Though there was some regret that what had been built up with so much effort was now unneeded and



dismissed, and the sense of belonging together ended, many men now felt with pleasure that all their Sundays were again their own; those doubtful of effectiveness were relieved that pretence was over, and the vast difference that a year had made in the war was clear reason for the energy given to the Guard being re-directed. The 'Dig for Victory' campaign was under way, and Home Guardsmen could now contribute more with spades than with rifles. Many now turned to their own neglected gardens, others in groups tackled allotment gardens on public land. Finally on 13 December 1943, it was announced that there would be no further parades at all for the **Home Guard**; uniforms and all other items would be returned to unit commands, but the hard-won boots were to be retained.

Companion to the **Home Guard** and in some respects its rival was the Emergency Precautions Scheme (EPS) for coping with civilian needs in air raids or invasion. Its roots had been growing slowly for several years.<sup>169</sup> The Hawke's Bay earthquake of 1931 had shown the need for local organisation to be ready for acute local disaster, and during the mid-Thirties fear of air attack with bombs and poison gas was so widespread that even New Zealand did not seem quite immune, though only minor attacks were ever contemplated. In August 1935 an Emergency Precautions Committee of the New Zealand Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence was formed, representing the departments of Internal Affairs, Police and Defence. By July 1936 it thought that its three main problems were earthquakes, air raids and gas defence, that the Army should train a selected core of civilians in gas decontamination and that the St John Ambulance and **Red Cross** should be asked to help with casualties; but it had done very little when in 1937 the starveling Committee of Imperial Defence became the starveling Organisation for National Security,<sup>170</sup> with Emergency Precautions again a sub-committee. In June 1937 it widened its membership with representatives of the Air, Census and Statistics and Labour departments; modest anti-gas preparations began, with Army instructors and 1000 cheap respirators; general work and control, with £1,000 a year voted to it, was through Internal Affairs, which would prepare a handbook to guide local

authorities. <sup>171</sup>

In 1938 anti-gas plans grew a little firmer: training was to start in the four main centres, gradually extending to towns of 9000 to 10 000, with about 20 men to a class—six police, six municipal staff, four firemen and four first-aid experts—and 1500 civilian gas masks were to be stored at the three main Army depots. <sup>172</sup>

In 1939, when the emergency precautions booklet was at last distributed to local authorities by Internal Affairs, enemy action was included among the hazards. <sup>173</sup> Municipal departments formed the framework, plus some government departments such as Police, Post and Telegraph, and some extra sections. Each area would have a controller and committee of supply, to provide, commandeer and distribute food, clothes, bedding. The controller and committee of works and public utilities would deal with water, electricity and gas supplies, sewer repairs, street clearing and demolition, the general labour needs of other sections, and anti-gas training by instructors from the Army classes. <sup>174</sup> There would also be controllers and committees of transport, fire-fighting, communications, law and order, public health and medical services, harbour areas, accommodation and evacuation, finance and records, and publicity and information. A central committee of these controllers with the mayor as chairman would be responsible for general policy, finance and dealings with outside bodies including government. Taumarunui's scheme was established in outline at one public meeting; <sup>175</sup> 31 local authorities combined to prepare the scheme for **Auckland's** metropolitan area. <sup>176</sup>

In the general alarm of May–June 1940, many towns pressed on with their arrangements. Parry <sup>177</sup> told the House on 21 June that local authorities were forming or had formed adequate organisations to cope with any local emergencies that might arise, and he gave **Auckland** honourable mention for the co-operation of its numerous authorities. <sup>178</sup> The *Auckland Star* remarked that their elaborate plans were so safely guarded that ordinary citizens did not know what to do or whom to obey

in a calamity. <sup>179</sup> Actually, a booklet was distributed early in July to 80 000 **Auckland** homes outlining the EPS organisation and telling the householder what to do about fires, sanitation, first-aid and so on; air-raid shelters and evacuation schemes were declared unnecessary. <sup>180</sup> **Whangarei** also announced that its scheme would be printed, <sup>181</sup> but such publications were not usual at this stage, when EPS planners were unwilling to be publicly precise about details they could not foresee. But of 309 local authorities, 120 had drawn up schemes, at least in outline, when in August 1940 the Emergency Reserve Corps Regulations made these compulsory and Internal Affairs handed the matter over to the National Service Department. <sup>182</sup>

An enlistment drive then started. Men outside the range of military call-up, and women also, were urged to join: here there would be opportunities matching every ability to assist the war effort. There was great uncertainty about what to do and how to do it, and much depended on the energy and tact of central civic figures. Meanwhile, manpower needs multiplied, outstripping enlistments, and there were repeated complaints of tardiness, apathy and the need for fit men as well as veterans. The rival claims of the **Home Guard** also lessened recruitment.

In January 1941, with awareness of German raiders high after shipping losses and the shelling of Nauru Island in December, the **National Service Department** called an EPS conference from 18 major towns. It accepted that the likely form of attack would be a hit-and-run bombardment from the sea, or a carrier-borne air raid, <sup>183</sup> and this shaped all preparations during the next 10 months. It decided on more rehearsals, and discussed such problems as warning signals, air-raid shelters, anti-gas measures, protection of hospital patients and school children, reduction and control of lighting, evacuation, auxiliary fire brigades, emergency communications and water supplies, protection of vital points and relations with the Home Guard. <sup>184</sup> At the start, for most non-technical volunteers the two most obvious activities were fire-fighting and first-aid; there was also elementary drill so that groups would move in orderly fashion both on the job and on parade. But one

thing led rapidly to another, committees developed families of sub-committees and inter-committee relations, and there were more jobs than people. Talk of compulsion, however, did not get very far. <sup>185</sup>

The chief links between the numerous repair services and the public were the wardens, familiar figures in all accounts of **Britain's** Air Raid Precautions (ARP). They were selected by the central body from the volunteers, as reliable active men who would know their areas thoroughly and be competent to report damage accurately, so that the appropriate service could be quickly sent. Central control systems were set up for receiving such reports from district wardens and arranging for repair. Should telephones be disrupted, messages would be sent by car, motor-cycle, bicycle or on foot, with due precautions against the intrusion of unauthorised persons. <sup>186</sup> Boy Scouts were often 'runners' but many young women also proved agile. Towns were divided and mapped in blocks or districts, each with its chief warden and deputy warden and a clearly marked warden's post, often at a school. These blocks were sub-divided into sections (about 20 in **Auckland**), each under a team warden or subwarden. All wardens would have powers similar to those of special constables. While remote inland towns would need merely a skeleton service that could be expanded quickly, in vulnerable places like **Auckland** or **Wellington** the aim was to have one warden to about 50 people. <sup>187</sup>

Wardens needed, above all, detailed knowledge of their areas: of the people, with their special abilities or infirmities, and possessions which might be valuable to the organisation; <sup>188</sup> the streets and short cuts; the water mains and fire hydrants and telephones. They would see that injured people were taken to the nearest first-aid post, give information needed by the fire-fighting or works sections, and ensure that damaged shops were protected from looting and that unexploded bombs were cordoned off.

The Works Section, concentrated in several depots, would be sent, through headquarters, to do rescue and demolition work, to clear streets, repair electricity, gas and water supplies and maintain sanitation.

Municipal departments were the core of the various branches of the Works Section, but these were thickened with skilled volunteers such as plumbers and electricians in the waterworks and electrical branches.

The medical services, with hospital board direction plus help and advice from doctors, selected first-aid posts and advanced dressing stations in densely populated areas, the latter often in schools, industrial buildings or public halls, to which the injured would be brought from outlying first-aid posts. **Wellington** for instance had 21 advanced dressing stations,<sup>189</sup> and **Dunedin**, from **Port Chalmers** to **Mosgiel**, had eight, surrounded by 36 smaller first-aid posts.<sup>190</sup> Where possible, a doctor or trained nurse would be at these stations, otherwise both they and the first-aid posts were run by the **Red Cross** and the St John Ambulance Brigade, which for months past had been training volunteers. All these places were largely equipped by neighbouring households which arranged to lend, for practice and for emergency, beds and other furniture, bedding, towels, buckets, torches, bowls, hot-water bottles and various utensils. Medical supplies provided by hospital boards, and dressings and bandages prepared by EPS medical workers, were stored in locked cupboards at



the posts.<sup>191</sup> Thus at an **Auckland** rehearsal, the **Birkenhead** primary school was converted into an advanced dressing station, with 20 beds and an improvised theatre, the class-rooms being used as wards to receive victims from the first-aid posts of Bayswater and Northcote.<sup>192</sup> Generally, a good deal of practised improvisation was needed to adapt for

medical purposes rooms ordinarily used for teaching or for meetings but sometimes permanent readiness was possible. Thus, again at **Auckland**, two old railway carriages in the Railway yards were converted into first-aid posts, one placed near the locomotive sheds, one near the passenger platforms, half of each being used as a waiting room, while the other half was fitted up with stretchers and first-aid needs. <sup>193</sup>

There was, in all these arrangements, great variation in zeal and efficiency. By chance or through personalities preparedness could catch on in a district, and be fed by its own growth, or it could wither in a climate of 'leave-it-to-others' or 'it-can't-happen-here.' For example, by February 1941, at the Waverley Town Hall the women of Waverley and Waitotara had organised an emergency hospital of 26 beds which could be in running order within a few hours. There was a full staff of ex-nurses, VADs and domestics, plus a Home Guard motor unit of 12 ambulance-lorries, with trained **Red Cross** drivers. The ladies, assisted by **Home Guard** handymen with sanitation and hot water improvements, had practically completed their arrangements before asking the blessing of the Patea Hospital Board. <sup>194</sup>

Without publicity, the Health Department and hospital boards all over the country inspected buildings and earmarked many as possible emergency hospitals. On 17 December 1941, Nordmeyer, Minister of Health, explained that in extreme emergency 21 000 additional beds could be provided. Reserves of equipment and supplies were accumulated and stored. Medical teams were allocated, some mobile; former nurses were listed, along with the 3000 voluntary aids, who after gaining **Red Cross** and St John certificates had done 60 hours' hospital training. The 42 hospital boards were arranged in 10 groups, each under the senior officer of its largest member, so that there would be ready assistance between them. <sup>195</sup>

For some duties, notably fire fighting and police work, there was special selection and training. In the main centres, several hundred active men of suitable background volunteered or were drafted from the general EPS body or the **Home Guard** for police training, to control



traffic and prevent pillage or panic. <sup>196</sup> **Christchurch** traffic control men, smart in peaked caps and white raincoats, appeared on public duty early in December. <sup>197</sup> Ten days later, **Auckland's** EPS urgently appealed for 650 men needed for police and traffic work between **Helensville** and **Howick**. <sup>198</sup> In July 1942, the **Wellington** Superintendent of Police stated that the Auckland Law and Order unit had 830 men, while his had 550. Of these, 30 in the identification section were specially trained for work with the dead; the rest, in emergency, would clear pedestrians and traffic from damaged areas, and put cordons around unexploded bombs or places where valuable property was exposed or where fire brigades or ambulances were working. <sup>199</sup>

As fire would be the main danger almost all EPS workers were taught how to deal with incendiary bombs and small fires, while selected men were trained and equipped to cope with large fires, all under the control of the regular experts. <sup>200</sup> In each town the fire controller was the local brigade superintendent, and he appointed to each warden's district fire wardens and fire patrols. These worked in their own cars, in pairs, wearing armbands and equipped with wooden shovels, rakes, dry sand, bucket-pumps and hoses, choppers and lanterns. They went to lectures at the central fire station, were shown how to use their equipment, and visited each house in their area giving advice and in particular telling people to make sure that there was no rubbish between the ceiling and roof. <sup>201</sup>

During March 1941 the government established the Emergency Fire Service as a special branch of the Emergency Reserve Corps. Its Dominion Controller was the Inspector of Fire Brigades, and the four District Controllers, the brigade superintendents of the main cities, were in charge of training and organisation. Its members were as permanent as possible, men with families or fit single men reserved from overseas service, and it was an alternative to Territorial service. They had uniforms, boots and steel helmets, Territorial pay and accident insurance, and after 56 hours of training (four one-hour drills weekly, plus a two-hour Saturday parade) had an hour's drill each week and six



two-hour parades a year, with fines for absence. <sup>202</sup> They were equipped with trailer pumps, delivering 400 gallons of water a minute, towed by cars. These pumps, copies of the British ARP model, were, except for the motors, made in New Zealand; they would, it was claimed, do the same work as big fire engines but were much cheaper to make. <sup>203</sup> At the start about 2000 EFS men were required, the quota for **Dunedin** being 220, for **Christchurch** 275, and for **Auckland** and **Wellington** 450 each. <sup>204</sup> Later, quotas at **Auckland** and **Wellington** were increased, as these were the anticipated sites for any major raid, in which the water supply would probably be broken down, demanding many men to relay it for some distance.

A year later, **Wellington** (including the Hutt area) had a trained EFS of 485 men, alongside its 100 permanent fire brigadesmen, and about 1000 in the fire sections of the EPS, but still more were wanted. <sup>205</sup> The EFS men did not wait for enemy action but turned out if needed for normal fires, for it was extremely important to prevent the loss of buildings and material irreplaceable during the war. <sup>206</sup> The Wellington control room, covering both permanent and auxiliary groups, when fully manned needed a staff of 34; extras could very quickly be summoned from a roster of 60 volunteer women, who held rehearsals three nights a week. <sup>207</sup> Besides all this, volunteer works' fire brigades were organised by management at large industrial concerns, such as freezing works and railway shops.

What were the duties of citizens not active members of Home Guard or EPS? They darkened their windows according to the lighting restrictions, <sup>208</sup> and they prepared to deal with incendiary bombs. <sup>209</sup> City councils provided dry sand cheaply, but citizens had to collect it, and they were in no hurry to do so. <sup>210</sup> People were told that in daylight raids on cities they could shelter under modern concrete buildings or in basements; in the suburbs and at night they should stay at home. Trenches in the garden were their own responsibility; by the end of 1941 very few had them. Late in June the National Service Department issued 400 000 copies of a householder circular (printed in red, on good quality

paper, to be hung in a conspicuous place) giving instructions about cutting off gas, guarding fires, firefighting methods, incendiary bombs, sanitary arrangements, emergency food and first-aid equipment.

During 1941 many towns, large and small, held rehearsals involving all branches of their emergency precautions services. Often a circling aeroplane or two gave a touch of realism, and sometimes, especially in the small towns, the **Home Guard** took part. Thus at **Kaiapoi** <sup>211</sup> on 19 April, some Home Guardsmen attacked from the north side of the river; a circling aircraft had made the bridge 'unsafe', but defenders crossed from the south on a temporary bridge; signallers semaphored messages and installed a telephone system from the scene of action to headquarters. Meanwhile the fire services, both regular and auxiliary, were busy with 'incendiary bombs', fires and rescue work, the St John Ambulance Brigade gave first-aid to the injured and trucked them to the main dressing station at a hall. Traffic was controlled, and a loudspeaker announced proceedings. <sup>212</sup> At Taumarunui's <sup>213</sup> first try-out in November, railway engines whistled for a mock air raid. Fires were reported and put out, dangerous walls were demolished and a burst water main was repaired. The Women's War Service Auxiliary (WWSA) and cyclists of the Athletic Club, and Post Office staff, carried messages, Boy Scouts were fire spotters and Girl Guides were patients. The St John Ambulance with its cadets and nursing division was busy at temporary hospitals in the parish hall and domain grandstand, with injured brought in by **Red Cross** transport. <sup>214</sup>

Usually cities rehearsed one or two branches at a time—say, communications or works or medical services—and often only for certain areas, not the whole city. For instance, during September in the **Wellington** suburb of Karori, wardens, fire patrols, communications and first-aid sections performed, <sup>215</sup> while the suburb of Ngaio practised repairing the damage of an air raid at night. <sup>216</sup> At Auckland's railway yards in November aircraft dropped smoke bombs, fire services put out real and imaginary fires and the traffic section dispersed engines and rolling stock while assuming that the signalling system was damaged;

on the same day, seven city first-aid posts and the advanced dressing station at Seddon Memorial Technical College held a 'realistic' rehearsal. <sup>217</sup> At Pukekohe <sup>218</sup> on 4 December the **Home Guard** played enemy raiders, lighting two real fires in the town, and a large number of children, 'refugees from **Auckland**', were billeted. <sup>219</sup>

Like all voluntary associations, EPS was plagued by non-attendance. There were the faithful and the not-so-faithful. Lack of conviction about the necessity of it all, boredom, interest in other things, disagreements between members, all tended to make impressive lists of workers into paper tigers. Too many, it was felt, would not know their tasks thoroughly in the real thing, but if irritated by pressure they could disappear or resign. So on 12 November, to tauten such slackness, new regulations decreed that for those who had already signed on, service with the EPS must continue until discharge was granted, though no others were obliged to join, and it was not made clear how controlling officers were to assert their authority if challenged. The obvious unfairness of keeping the willing horse in the shafts, while less public-spirited persons played games, was noticed by cartoonist Minhinnick, <sup>220</sup> by editorials and newspaper letters, <sup>221</sup> while the Director of National Service maintained that the EPS was still voluntary. <sup>222</sup>

In June 1941, A. J. Baker, <sup>223</sup> of **Wellington's** works section, had written a memorandum on things as they stood, which indicates some of the details of just one section of a city EPS. There were then 786 wardens, 'nowhere near enough'; Newtown had only eight, Miramar seven; some were good, some bad. They had been trained in fire fighting, bandaging and live wire handling, had made a survey of fire hydrants, and were going from house to house to find the aged, crippled, etc, thinking of possible evacuation. Under city authorities, the organisation of fire patrols and their telephone communications to fire headquarters, and the wardens' communications to headquarters, was moving satisfactorily. Existing city organisation should suffice for repairs to roads, drains, water, gas and electricity supplies. There was as yet no gas decontamination unit. The demolition squad had not begun training; it

was very short of volunteers, though master builders and contractors had offered their trucks, gear and workmen, and the city engineer was preparing working models and shoring diagrams. As for shelters, a competent committee was surveying basements and ground floors, while the city engineer would prefer, in **Wellington**, to use natural features rather than community trenches. There was no regular system of control or compulsion, people often coming to a few parades then dropping out. <sup>224</sup>

During the latter half of 1941 membership of the EPS of Wellington, second to **Auckland** on the danger list, expanded thus:

	At 8 May 1941 <sup>225</sup>	At 24 July <sup>226</sup>	At 25 Nov <sup>227</sup>
<b>Accommodation</b>	162	169	465
<b>Communications</b>	617	852 + 69 Boy Scouts	1 022 + 83 Boy Scouts
<b>Harbour control</b>	592	59 + 41 Boy Scouts	588 + 16 Boy Scouts
<b>Finance</b>	70	66	
<b>Headquarters</b>	117	125 + 6 Boy Scouts	202 + 6 Boy Scouts
<b>Information</b>	128	168	207
<b>Medical</b>	247	552	981 + 94 Boy Scouts
<b>Advanced dressing stations</b>		40 + 40 Boy Scouts	
<b>Traffic officers</b>		73	
<b>Supplies</b>	323	476	670
<b>Police</b>	297	380	540
<b>Transport</b>	491	556	568
<b>Works</b>	1 536	2 049	1 415
<b>Wardens</b>	786	1 301	2 118
<b>Works fire patrol</b>			702
<b>Works fire brigade</b>			130
<b>NZ Railways unit</b>			574 (a new section)
	<b>5 366</b>	<b>7 554</b>	<b>10 381</b>

The difficulty of getting a city EPS organisation off the ground was set forth by the **Christchurch Press** on 11 June 1941:

The scheme exists only on paper. The personnel to carry it out has not been trained or even enrolled, no move has yet been made to obtain the necessary equipment; and in any case there is no money to buy equipment. One reason for this inertia is that the scheme is hopelessly top-heavy. To manage it there are enough committees to govern an empire—an executive committee of six members, 14 general committees each with from 16 to 20 members, about 20 sub-committees, and several committees of local



THE INS AND OUTS  
THE INS AND OUTS

authorities which have schemes of their own within the main scheme. This elaborate administrative mechanism seems immobilised by its own weight; it has done little in 21 months and would probably do little in 21 years. A further source of difficulty is that in the area covered by the scheme there are at least 12 local authorities each independent in its own sphere. They can please themselves whether they co-operate in applying the scheme and raising the necessary money. Some of them are now disposed to argue that the Government ought to pay the whole or part of the cost, and are accordingly waiting to see what happens. A third source of difficulty is that no one knows what powers are vested in the local organisation and where its responsibilities

begin and end. Already there have been several instances of its work overlapping with the work of State departments [in fire protection, transport, a householders' pamphlet, food supplies and evacuation] .... the local situation is not much worse than the situation elsewhere. In Wellington ... there is the same story of delay, confusion and vacillation. 228

The *Press* concluded that responsibility for ending the 'fantastic muddle' rested squarely with the government, which alone had full power and information. Let the government appoint to each area an organiser with powers of compulsion. 229

The possibility of gas attack was not dismissed. In Britain gas masks were prominent during the first two months of the war, they were carried about in the bad days of June 1940 and again in the bleak months of April–May 1941. 230 In New Zealand by June 1940 some 287 persons had had Army-based instruction on gases. The government view was that gas attack while not impossible was improbable; hence there would be no gas masks for the public, who could get away from this unlikely danger. Those who must fight fires and rescue the injured should have masks and protective clothing, and there should be modest decontamination centres. 231 Accordingly, the government ordered 6500 masks for the main cities, most of which would go to **Auckland** and **Wellington**, the quota for **Christchurch** being only 600. 232 Anti-gas classes continued, while Army instructors, dentists, scientists of the **DSIR** and of Otago and Canterbury universities worked to devise masks and protective clothing and to provide gas samples. 233 Thus, in October 1941, on a parents' day the anti-gas squad of Otago Boys' High School, in masks and full anti-gas rig, showed how to tend a victim of mustard gas and decontaminate the area. 234 At Auckland in November it was reported that 18 more members of the WWSA field unit had passed examinations in anti-gas methods, while several members of the original class had had further training and could now give lectures. 235

**Auckland** acquired three decontamination units; 236 **Christchurch** relied on a mobile gas-testing unit and decontamination squads; 237



**Wellington**, reluctant to spend money on a doubtful need, bought some gas masks and protective clothing but merely planned a decontamination centre. <sup>238</sup>

Bombardment from the sea or a carrier-borne raid with incendiary bombs was the attack expected. Some small coastal towns like Patea prepared for wholesale retreat inland, with transport and a receiving place allotted to each family, <sup>239</sup> but generally plans were for the relief of badly hit small areas. As a first step, local schools or public halls would be rest centres, providing shelter and food, and from them accommodation arrangements would take the homeless to billets (preferably with friends) in undamaged suburbs, as near as possible to the breadwinner's work-place, though children with their mothers, and old people, might be sent off to friends in the country. Private arrangements would serve wherever possible; there was no enthusiasm for the large-scale placing of children with strangers, as was necessary in England.

In 1941 **Wellington** <sup>240</sup> planned, if the homeless could not be accommodated in their own suburbs, to distribute them more widely, and use halls selected in all districts. Plans were prepared, and materials calculated, for camps, each housing 500, to be built hastily on 11 park areas, for larger and longer use. If these were not enough, assistance from outside boroughs would be sought. Given the materials and labour, said the city engineer, these camps could be rushed up in three weeks, for people who in the first emergency might have been removed far from their work places, thereby further disrupting civil life. <sup>241</sup> These plans were on paper only, even in 1942, but in some homely details more concrete preparations were made; thus, from the waste metal collection, the city engineer picked 14 old-style washing coppers, and advertised for more. These were reconditioned and made ready for fitting on to oil drum bases, for use in emergency camps or rest centres. <sup>242</sup>

**Christchurch**, with about 135 000 people in its urban area, made paper plans to accommodate 12 000 evacuees in five camps in outlying districts with existing buildings adapted by an assembly of carpenters



and listed materials somehow mustered at the sites. <sup>243</sup> **Dunedin** (about 82 000) modestly expected that only small areas would be damaged, and that people could simply be shifted to other parts of the city. Forms were filled in, and billets in zones regarded as safe were listed. Billets scattered as widely as possible would provide ample selection, and it was thought that they would not be needed for more than a few days. <sup>244</sup>

**Auckland**, <sup>245</sup> the most likely target, obviously had the most difficult evacuation problems, such as the possibility of the North Shore being cut off or of a civilian exodus interfering with troop movements. In mid-1940 it was thought best to stay at home. In December 1940 there were no plans for advance evacuation; military authorities would say whether any sections were to be moved and transport would then be arranged 'if the situation permits'. <sup>246</sup>

Schools posed special problems. Most of them, as State institutions, were outside the range of EPS organisation in general. Educational authorities therefore had to make arrangements for them. Most such authorities were reluctant to disturb young minds with shelters and trenches in school grounds; they also dreaded lost playing space, more rules and more mud. On the other hand there was professional responsibility and there were anxious parents.

In January 1941, a national EPS conference debated the merits of sand-bagged windows and trenches and shelters, deciding that only schools in vulnerable areas, ie in the main centres and seaport towns, and especially those near aerodromes, wharves, transport or industrial targets, need consider such measures. In these areas EPS organisation should include a special protection of school children committee (three or four local headmasters plus a representative of the Education Board), to decide what should be done at each school, 'with a view not only to giving some means of protection to the children, but also to giving confidence to parents that reasonable measures are being taken.' <sup>247</sup>

These committees duly surveyed vulnerable schools, noting brick that might crumble, basements that might protect, and nearby natural

cover that might harbour children who could not get to their own homes quickly. Thus at **Wellington** and **Lower Hutt** <sup>248</sup> many schools were advised to seek cover in handy gullies, scrubby hillsides, or parks; in a good many cases slit trenches were suggested, or surface trenches of sandbags, often in front of existing banks or walls. Before any such shelters could be built, schools must consult the local EPS authorities, who would make recommendations to the Education Department which, if it approved, would arrange for payment. <sup>249</sup> At some **Auckland** schools, trenches recommended by the protection committee at this stage were refused by higher authority. <sup>250</sup>

During the first term of 1941 it was announced that though need for trenches was not expected, the **Education Department** was preparing suitable plans; evacuating school-children, apart from any general movement of an area, was not favoured; the Department recommended drills for speedy exit and dispersal and also, for senior pupils, training in first-aid and fire fighting. <sup>251</sup> Again, on 26 June, a departmental circular told all education boards and secondary schools, both public and private, that headmasters should be wardens or sub-wardens in the EPS, maintaining close contact with general local arrangements; that the chief function of the committees for the protection of school children was returning children to their homes as quickly as possible. For the present, shelter trenches or other such measures were dismissed. <sup>252</sup>

This policy was based on current British reports that till lately no child in **London** had been injured by a bomb during school hours; children should get home if there was enough warning, and if not, lie under their desks. <sup>253</sup> Besides being effective, quick dispersal to homes was welcome because it was not alarming, being merely an extension of normal fire and earthquake drills, and it did not clutter school grounds.

So during 1941 schools organised quick home-going. In June **Dunedin** was satisfied that children could be seen to their homes within 30 minutes of an alarm sounding, those from more distant streets going to temporary billets nearby, <sup>254</sup> while **Christchurch** <sup>254</sup> arranged for cyclists to depart very rapidly. <sup>255</sup> The *Auckland Star*, on 16 August at the

**Dominion Road school (530 pupils), photographed children flattened under desks by an air-raid warning, and at a further signal running in orderly fashion to the football field and its planned slit trench. Port Chevalier school, following [London](#) models and in expectation of five minutes' warning, aimed to get children, with teachers in charge, away and into houses within five minutes of the school where they would stay until collected by parents or could safely return to school. Only if there were no warning and bombs were actually falling would children shelter under desks or preferably take cover wherever possible outside. <sup>256</sup> Quick homing routines were soon adopted all over the country, causing mothers to remark, 'If you can get home in five minutes during an air-raid warning, why not all the time.' <sup>257</sup>**

**The blackout of coastal areas concerned more people than did any other EPS arrangement in 1941, for it was not limited to volunteers. The shelling of Nauru Island late in December 1940 suggested to both the government and public that coastal towns might be surprised by a sudden salvo. For instance, the Waitara Borough Council called government attention to its exposed position and suggested a blackout, while at [Napier](#) the lights of the Marine Parade were shaded on the seaward side. <sup>258</sup>**

**The Prime Minister said that there was no need for alarm, only for precautions that would reduce to a minimum the guide to enemy navigation and gunnery provided by the lights of coastal towns, <sup>259</sup> In mid-February 1941 were gazetted the first of a series of lighting restrictions that progressively dimmed streets, shops and offices, houses, vehicles and public buildings. These restrictions came into force early in March, and were, it was firmly stated, not temporary experiments, but for the duration, and they carried substantial penalties. <sup>260</sup> The National Service Department appointed a Dominion Lighting Controller, F. T. M. Kissel, <sup>261</sup> already Controller of Electricity, and a technical committee at [Wellington](#) to advise and correlate the work of local authorities. At each centre the Department appointed a lighting controller, a man already holding a responsible electrical job, who with the local EPS**

executive selected other qualified men as a committee, to obtain locally the reduction of lights required. Wardens appointed in the general EPS arrangements would patrol their areas, advising people of their duties and their errors and, where necessary, ordering compliance. Lighting restrictions became and remained the wardens' main concern.

The immediate aim was not a blackout but reduced lighting: to obscure all seaward lights and to prevent sky glow, from concentrated lighting, that might assist a raider either in checking its navigation or in selecting a target. Advertising signs and flood lights were disconnected, shop-window and verandah lights shrouded. Street lights were reduced in strength, and those visible from the sea were occasionally extinguished but more often painted or enclosed in lighttrap canisters, which dimmed them so much that some city councillors and others urged turning them off altogether. <sup>262</sup> The Lighting Controller of **Wellington** explained that their glimmer was 'worthwhile' as a guide along the streets and psychologically. It had been proposed to cut off all street lighting at one or two in the morning, but protests came in immediately, for a surprising number of people moved about **Wellington** in the early morning to and from work. <sup>263</sup> When Oamaru switched off half its street lights and screened the rest, the Assistant Dominion Lighting Controller said that it was a good effort but over-done, too dark; the lights should be reduced in strength but not in numbers. <sup>264</sup>

All shop and house lights had to be screened, though only those showing to seaward had to be completely hidden, so there was much buying of dark blinds and curtains. Some people at once bought heavy permanent curtains, but at the start most made shift with inexpensive materials, waiting to see what would prove necessary. Thick paper, cardboard, plywood and dark paint were much used, especially for fan-lights and awkwardly placed windows. In many small suburban shops ordinary pendant lamps were shrouded with opaque shades or coloured tissue paper. <sup>265</sup> **Wellington's** Lighting Controller gave homely advice, such as painting round the edges of windows; fastening cloth to laths

which could be hooked over windows at night; attaching pieces of cardboard to battens at top and bottom to fit neatly into a window, and adding several thicknesses of brown paper to the window side of lamp shades. <sup>266</sup> A woman told how she had made moveable covers for seven casements, costing in all less than £1. <sup>267</sup> There were advertisements: 'Be prepared', urged a quarter-page advertisement in the *Dominion*: 'Screen all glare from home, office, shop, factory and warehouse windows... for only 1/- per sq yard.' Sisalkraft, a paper and fibre compound used throughout *Britain*, came in widths of 36, 48 and 60 inches. Diagrams showed it attached to tension rollers controlled by cords, screening factory sky-lights or, with rollers and tapes, covering the widest windows. <sup>268</sup> 'Temporary methods are no solution to the blackout problem. Solve it now with Black-out Felt....Inexpensive, easy to install and above all, it is a permanent insurance against the escape of light glare. Priced from 1s a yard. Directions given with purchase', <sup>269</sup> or: 'Subdue your indoor lights with 11-inch Dark Green Empire Shades, cone-shaped in heavy parchment, with dark green outside, cream lined... 5s 6d'. <sup>270</sup> Other advertisements added white road paint for steps, kerbs and paths to their blackout material. <sup>271</sup>

Sky glow, from light reflected off pavements and walls, proved stubborn and shopkeepers, reluctant to lose all window displays at sunset, used lights of blue, green or orange, deep friezes of opaque paper or paint, or heavily veiled lights. By degrees the light permitted was lessened, and pressure about restrictions increased. Shops were further dimmed in mid-March <sup>272</sup> and by regulations at the end of May no one light in a window could be of more than 60 watts, with a total of five watts per lineal foot of window frontage, all lights being shielded, while light from doorways had to be dimmed or screened. <sup>273</sup> By mid-June the window wattage had been cut by half, to 25 watts per 10 lineal feet. <sup>274</sup>

Clearly it would be too expensive to cover all the windows of large buildings, nor would there be enough material to go round. Those concerned were advised (as were householders) to black out the rooms needed for essential work and turn off other lights. There were special

difficulties with large windows of buildings used at night, such as **Wellington's** Central Library and the Technical College. Most coverings also excluded fresh air, so that rooms with 30 to 40 students soon became foul. <sup>275</sup> **Wellington's** university had to pay £50 for one large library window facing the harbour. <sup>276</sup> Factories with skylights had very difficult problems. Deep conical metal shades, it was held, gave good illumination directly beneath them, without spreading light around, while floors and machinery reflected little. But such devices must have added to the weariness of overtime or shift work. Manufacturers, recoiling from the large expense of total blackout, tended to do what seemed reasonable and wait for further direction. <sup>277</sup>

Many people accepted the blackout readily, impressed by the idea of raiders over the horizon and feeling perhaps some sense of danger and importance, of sharing in the trials of England, while the gradual stiffening of restrictions made them easier to take. And who should grumble about blackout while our boys were fighting and dying in **Greece** and **Crete**? Some, however, felt that life was being pointlessly disrupted. <sup>278</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* published articles explaining that 'light camouflage' was more confusing to the enemy, while the blackout was inefficient and contradictory: an aircraft navigator could locate **Auckland** by the wave emanations from any one of its four broadcasting stations, be 'guided in perhaps by sweet music or a dissertation on the Nazis by Mr Semple'; no worthwhile sea-captain needed to steer by sky glow which was created in any case by the search-light beam covering the harbour entrance. And were the lights marking the harbour entrance to be put out only when bombardment began? Meanwhile women were prisoners in their homes. <sup>279</sup> Similar doubts were expressed by writers to the *Press*, who added, 'A raider would also wait until break of day, so that it could spot the fall of shot. Why waste time and brown paper on the kitchen windows?' <sup>280</sup> A *Woman's Weekly* editorial remarked on the stuffiness of living rooms with windows closed on a warm evening, on the depressing effect of dark paper shades over lights, on the dark borders round windows that lessened light in daytime so that 'in many houses it seems the household has gone into mourning', while the



unexplained inconsistency of public lights and private dimness induced a sense of mental blackout also. <sup>281</sup> The irritation of some householders, harassed by dutiful wardens while street and other public lamps were still showing, was voiced by one who wrote: 'There are now men who go about in the evenings threatening to report those householders who have not pulled down their blinds ... some people can never resist an opportunity to give orders.' He attacked absurd beliefs in sky glow and dismissed the claim that street lights could be switched off at the first broadside by saying that after the first broadside cities were, in the **RAF** phrase, self-illuminating targets. <sup>282</sup> Other sceptics talked about the flood-lighting effect of a full moon. An irate warden replied that in **Paris** lights were used in patterns to guide bombers. <sup>283</sup>

Some did not take the restrictions at face value because of the shortage of electric power. Householders were urged to turn off radiators, water heaters, etc, where possible, and the summer half hour of daylight saving was extended to ease peak loading and get many workers home in daylight. <sup>284</sup> Hydro-electric development had been checked by the war, while the demands of industry were increasing; some power plants used coal and coal supplies were then low. <sup>285</sup> Suspicion was not lessened when inland towns, such as Rotorua and towns in the Wairarapa, required by the Controller of Electricity to reduce their consumption of power, cut off advertising lights and reduced street lights; <sup>286</sup> **Hamilton's** Council voluntarily took these steps. <sup>287</sup> Power Board officials and others, explaining that street lighting was a very minor use of electricity, stoutly denied that it was all a plan to save power. <sup>288</sup> This suggestion, said the Prime Minister, was 'simply silly'; possible raider attacks must be kept in mind, and temporary inconvenience was a small price for bringing risks to a minimum. <sup>289</sup> He also said that the regulations were inducing the habit of being prepared. <sup>290</sup> An Auckland manufacturer, dubious about installing factory blackouts, thought that the real purpose of light restrictions might be to arouse the public from apathy. <sup>291</sup> At Christchurch (where in mid-April sky glow was visible 34 miles out to sea <sup>292</sup>) the Lighting Controller, replying to a suggestion that it would be time enough to take measures when there was real



evidence of danger, was realistic. He saw an 'unbelievable time-lag' between the issuing of instructions and compliance with them. <sup>293</sup>

Inconsistency undermined enthusiasm. For instance, wardens in **Auckland** suburbs early complained that the city centre was relatively undimmed, warning that unless the authorities and leading citizens observed the blackout, the drift against it would be very hard to arrest. <sup>294</sup> Returning Aucklanders spoke of brilliant lighting at **Wellington** and other southern towns, of **Australia's** coast being ablaze, with **Sydney's** harbour bridge showing miles out to sea. <sup>295</sup> Others challenged the government's insistence on the blackout while it did nothing about air-raid shelters. <sup>296</sup>

A frequent complaint was that government departments and public concerns, such as railway yards, wharves and aerodromes, which were prime targets, were still brightly lit, while houses and shops were darkened. Officials answered that necessary work was going on at those places, work which would be dangerous or impossible in the dark, that steps to shade these difficult lights were being taken, and that meanwhile they could be instantly extinguished in an emergency. <sup>297</sup>

It was not merely chagrined householders or shopkeepers who questioned the need for the darkness that was dampening commercial and social life and worrying both motorists and pedestrians. In April the Mayor of **Auckland** asked Semple whether, now that arrangements were well rehearsed, there could be some relaxation. <sup>298</sup> **Dunedin's** City Council said bluntly that the blackout was not of its making, that it was only carrying out government instructions. <sup>299</sup> An errant Labour member of Parliament, W. E. Barnard, wondered why **Napier** should be darker than **Sydney** or **Cairo**, <sup>300</sup> and **Napier's** Council pleaded that business was waning, social life ended, and people were leaving the town. <sup>301</sup> In July the *Press* editorially complained that the government had not fully presented the reasons for the blackout, but merely declared that it was to guard against helping a raider identify his landfall and was imposed on the advice of the Services. 'Unfortunately, the first argument is open to a number of objections and the second, which is

weakened by association with it, is a plea for the sort of uncritical trust which no democratic government should expect and no democracy should give.’<sup>302</sup> Wellington’s city councillors called on the government to state clearly why the present ineffective system of lighting reduction was necessary. **Sydney** and **Singapore** had trials and rehearsals of complete blackouts, with normal lighting in between; the argument about guiding a ship was ridiculous and Gilbertian.<sup>303</sup> Government speakers steadfastly replied that its steps had been taken on the advice of Service chiefs.<sup>304</sup>

The Auckland EPS executive, after conversations with these chiefs on 18 August, declared itself satisfied that the precautions were necessary. ‘What twelve months ago was a possibility is now a probability,’ said Mayor Allum. At about the same time—that is, after **Japan** had entered Saigon at the end of July, and the Western powers had applied their trade embargoes—the *Press* published a statement by **Christchurch**’s Lighting Controller, E. Hitchcock,<sup>305</sup> that Service authorities considered a hit-and-run raid the most likely form of attack, more likely by raider than by aircraft and at night than during the day; invasion was possible but remote. Hitchcock claimed that the restrictions were a prudent middle course between no action and a full blackout; they would not give immunity from attack but would make it slower and more difficult, which was worthwhile. It was for the public to comply with, rather than analyse and assess, the regulations, for lacking the information on which the authorities acted wise and prudent criticism was difficult. Apparent inconsistencies were more often in the understanding or conscience of those who responded or failed to respond; irritation was apt to be vocal, giving a wrong impression of the degree of opposition, while cooperation was quieter.<sup>306</sup>

As well as producing much debate and some ingenuity, the blackout darkened the interiors of houses: people used weaker lights and heavier shades, especially in halls, while fan-lights covered with cardboard often stayed covered night and day. Friday night shopping was lessened to some extent, but goods that people seriously wanted were bought at

other times. The shops which felt the blackout most were the small suburban confectionery and ice cream establishments, reported the *New Zealand Herald* on 2 April 1941, explaining that normally these were meeting places for young people, 'but dimmed lights and the general gloom make them much less attractive'. Women were unwilling to go out alone, and some women's organisations changed their meetings from evenings to afternoons, as did some churches.<sup>307</sup> The Auckland Chamber of Commerce pointed out that during the winter women workers would be increasingly reluctant about jobs which brought them home after dark.<sup>308</sup> The Westfield meat works usually employed girls in its cannery but when a second shift, ending at midnight, was established in May 1941, 80 men were engaged.<sup>309</sup> Theatre attendances were noticeably higher when the moon was full, and at least one repertory society fixed its production for a full moon period.<sup>310</sup> Torches became regular and prominent equipment. There was no marked increase in crime—crime rates fell heavily during the war and this was noticeable in 1941. Potential criminals were in the Army; wardens were abroad, the police increased their patrols, courts were protective,<sup>311</sup> and both bag-snatching and assaults were isolated.<sup>312</sup>

The Roman Catholic weekly *Zealandia* hoped that the blackout might restore home life: of late people had lived less in their homes and ceased to entertain themselves, relying on the 'cinema, the radio, and an utterly excessive indulgence in dancing.' Also, though educationists had largely abolished homework, for senior pupils homework should be restored. 'At the least it would have its uses as a discipline and as an approvable interest for the child.'<sup>313</sup>

The lights of vehicles were not immune from control. From mid-March 1941, carriage blinds on the seaward side of trains near the coast had to be drawn.<sup>314</sup> Restrictions on car lights were officially gazetted well before they were applied, to let people become accustomed to the idea. The first order was that parked cars must show parking lights, for in darkened streets they were dangerous to other cars and to pedestrians and cyclists.

Late in June, regulations—and large road signs—divided a broad coastal belt into headlight restriction areas and parking-light areas. In the former, covering most roads, only one head-lamp, on the lefthand or near side and in a steeply dipped position, with a parking or sidelight on the right or off side and a tail-light, were to be used. In the parking light areas, that is, seaward-facing streets within three miles of the coast, no headlights at all would appear—only parking and tail-lights, of seven watts at most; the speed limit was 20 miles an hour and, when parked, cars must be right off the road, with no lights at all. In these parking light areas, cyclists' headlamps could be no stronger than a car's parking light, and a red tail-lamp had to be shown. In an emergency, that is a raid or a test, all cars were to use only their parking and rear lights, covered with two layers of newspaper, and they must carry the screening material at all times. <sup>315</sup>

Meanwhile, trams were acquiring shades to confine light where it was needed by the conductor, and shutter devices to reduce headlight glare on seaward runs. <sup>316</sup> Old buggy lamps proved useful and were in keen demand for trams. <sup>317</sup>

Obviously these restrictions increased driving strain and accident risk, and would have been impossibly difficult to apply if petrol rationing had not already greatly reduced traffic. Drivers of taxis, trams and buses all complained of strain and danger. The Auckland Drivers Union protested, asking for two dipped headlights. <sup>318</sup> Nor were Wellington drivers happy, though their streets were not so severely darkened as Auckland's, and they wanted a 20 mile an hour speed limit throughout the city and suburbs. <sup>319</sup> Senior traffic officials agreed: there had been several serious accidents, some fatal, and many minor ones, in which reduced lighting was certainly a factor, 'the difference between death or months in hospital, and bruises and a fright being a split second and a trifle of luck.' <sup>320</sup> The 20-mile speed limit for buses was established and the drivers accepted the lights. <sup>321</sup>

In emergencies all vehicles, except fire engines, ambulances and

**cars carrying police or soldiers, might use only their parking and rear lights, dimmed with double newspaper; consequently even those on other EPS business had to drive very slowly. The awkwardness of this was instanced in Wellington when a mechanical mischance at central control left some street lights on during a blackout test. Operators sent to switch them off could not drive with the prescribed lights, and were repeatedly stopped by wardens when they tried a headlight. <sup>322</sup>**

**There were not many prosecutions for lighting errors during 1941. Householders whose measures were inadequate or who inadvertently exposed light were not defiant and generally a warden's warning sufficed. The most numerous offenders were shopkeepers with window lighting in excess of that permitted, and many were told to disconnect the lights until they were properly shielded. In the courts, a few paid costs or small fines and there were warnings of heavier penalties in store; motorists had similiar treatment. A few stubborn or abusive offenders met rather heavier fines and on 5 December 1941 Luxford SM, imposing a £20 fine, said that in future such offenders would go to gaol. <sup>323</sup>**

**In the last quarter of 1941 there was less of the 'what's it all for?' attitude, more sober acceptance. Early in October, further regulations sharpened precautions about doorways, and insisted that all lights—such as those left on in shop windows—must be immediately blacked out or switched off in an emergency. <sup>324</sup> Without protest, fireworks and bonfires on 5 November were banned (in any case there were very few fireworks available). There was renewed drive in window screening. Thick curtains were too expensive and most blinds inadequate, but heavy tarred paper and black cardboard and sisalkraft had proved themselves.**

**Auckland's first trial total blackout on 12 October was preceded by large advertisements warning that enemy attack was probable, and that measures against it must be tested thoroughly; if all windows and doors could not be screened, householders should concentrate on one room and turn off other lights. <sup>325</sup> After the trial many people, including shopkeepers, were told that their devices were insufficient, and the**

authorities thought that many had sat in the dark, gone to bed, or gone out to see the test for themselves in the main streets and on vantage points such as roofs and Mt Eden. <sup>326</sup> In the second test, on 9 November, though the majority had complied, a circling plane reported 'lights all over the place', a few street lights stayed on, and a few humorists waved torches. The Mayor was disappointed: there would, he said, be no more warnings but instead prosecutions. <sup>327</sup>

Two letters in the *Herald* convey domestic attitudes and arrangements. A citizen, 'Black Mark', who had gone forth to EPS duties leaving a back room lit, but with dark blinds pressed to the sashes, fan-lights covered with cardboard and all closed, was chagrined to receive a notice about excess light: 'I do not know how a warden could see the least bit of light without going to the back of the house.' <sup>328</sup> With virtuous asperity, 'Thorough' answered that he should know that even nigger-brown blinds, plus a deep shade on the light, let through a warm, light-brown glow. 'He deserves no sympathy. I can sit in my well-lit sitting room and show no glow at all, because I did the job properly in one room as we were plainly told to do. Also, does "Black Mark" think only front windows count? Of course the wardens inspected the back.' <sup>329</sup>

**Auckland's** third rehearsal was on 10 December, two days after **Pearl Harbour**. It was, reported the pilot who flew over, 'a very good effort and a vast improvement on previous occasions.' <sup>330</sup>

On 9 November, **Wellington** had its first complete blackout; it was generally rated good, though three out of 36 street lighting circuits failed to go off. There were a few 'idiots', such as a motor cyclist who roared so fast through the main streets with his lights on that the wardens could not check him, and too many people just switched lights off and sat it out. <sup>331</sup>

At the start of December Mayor Hislop complained that, despite the alarming news, houses and particularly shops were relaxing their blackout. <sup>332</sup> But within three weeks the windows of **Wellington's**



exposed hillside houses had almost exhausted supplies of blackout materials. One shop alone had in a few days sold five tons of heavy cardboard (2160 sheets to a ton), more than 100 000 yards of builders' black lining paper, plus gallons of black paint; bulk stocks of black calcimine (a water-mixed powder-paint) were completely sold out. <sup>333</sup> On 17 December, with the EPS out in full force, the circling pilot reported that the blackout test was 'pretty effective', except for five bright lights about Johnsonville, a few car lights and the red glow of the city rubbish dump burning at Moa Point. <sup>334</sup>

Air-raid shelters were a vexed problem, for they would be massively expensive and they might not be needed. Local bodies held back: it was for the government to decide whether they should be built and to design and pay for them, as in England, where 90 percent of ARP expenditure was found by **Treasury**. <sup>335</sup> The government, however, was unwilling to embark on large works using labour and materials needed by other sections of the war effort. The firm belief of the Emergency Precautions conference of January 1941 <sup>336</sup> that any attack would be a hit-and-run air raid or a short naval bombardment precluded heavy expenditure on air-raid shelters. In the larger towns reasonably effective shelter could be provided by EPS arrangements to use tunnels, subways, underground garages and the basements and lower floors of modern ferro-concrete buildings, with the ground floor windows sand-bagged against shrapnel and blast. <sup>337</sup>

This did not quite satisfy the **War Cabinet** which, while approving these conclusions, considered that the 'question of extending precautions and safety provisions further than those suggested in the report should be examined and further entered into.' <sup>338</sup> It did not quite reassure the Mayor of **Auckland**, who in February asked Semple if large air-raid shelters were still deemed unnecessary. <sup>339</sup> Semple replied that there had been no change in policy, and a complete survey by EPS would probably disclose many places suitable as temporary shelters, which were all that would be needed. <sup>340</sup> The Mayor of **Wellington**, while publishing in February the conference conclusions on shelters,



emphasised the danger of attack by telling householders that a circular would show them how to dig shelters, 7 feet deep and about 3½ feet wide, well roofed and drained, in their own gardens. <sup>341</sup> Experts immediately warned against 'light-hearted digging into **Wellington** hillsides' which could cause slips, cavings-in and undermining of steep faces, boundary walls and even houses, while drainage would be very difficult. <sup>342</sup> When on 5 June 1941 Hislop complained publicly of government indecision on shelters, Nash replied by quoting the January conference conclusions which had been issued as a circular to EPS heads on 14 March. <sup>343</sup>

All through the year the government maintained this no-public-shelters policy against various anxious pressures, particularly from **Auckland**. A few Labour bodies wrote fraternally to ministers asking for shelters. <sup>344</sup> The New Zealand Institute of Engineers stressed the need to plan ahead, as even the simplest shelters would need labour, materials and, above all, time. <sup>345</sup> In Mt Eden, the use of caves was discussed. <sup>346</sup> Newspapers printed plaintive letters, <sup>347</sup> while *Truth* nagged steadily, declaring on 5 November that people were uneasy and alarmed at the lack of shelters; property was well protected, <sup>348</sup> but lives might be lost through government indecision and baulking at cost.

The public was used to the idea of Londoners sheltering from the Blitz. They were less familiar with actual developments in **Britain** where it had been found that, for some people, deep shelters had a most demoralising effect, and where after the first few weeks factory workers and clerks carried on with their jobs in daylight raids while at night the majority slept at home. In December 1940 the British Ministry of Health reported that only 5 per cent of **London's** population used public shelters, 19 per cent slept in domestic or communal shelters, while the rest, realising the value of dispersal, preferred to take the strain in their own homes. <sup>349</sup> Moreover, the alert householder on the spot could cope with an incendiary bomb, whereas he might emerge from a shelter to find his home a heap of ashes.

The Director of National Service, J. S. Hunter, reviewed the situation

at the end of October in a departmental memorandum. Improvements in air reconnaissance and coastal defence would discourage the expected hit-and-run raid at some main ports, while for many undefended ports quick withdrawal and dispersal was the logical procedure, and some coastal EPS organisations were fully prepared for this. Incendiary bombs would be more effective than limited use of the high explosive sort, and therefore were more likely. The possibility of serious attack by a heavily escorted expedition with aircraft-carriers must be considered, 'remote though it may be at present'. The enemy would need command of the sea, and would first tackle targets nearer and more valuable, 'but it is to meet such an attack that the Dominion is putting itself into a state of defence.' Trenches in suburbs could be left to individuals, with professional guidance, but municipalities should be directed to survey buildings for the blast and splinter-proof shelters that their basements and lower floors might afford. Only Auckland and Wellington had begun such surveys. So far, Auckland had found 37 buildings, out of 332 examined, which could be adapted to shelter about 20 000 (including their own normal population of 8500), while the peak daytime population of the densest commercial area was about 50 000. Much strengthening and protective work would be necessary, with alternative exits and sanitary arrangements, all needing much preliminary planning; the whole would be a 'Very big major job.'<sup>350</sup> Wellington, where a committee of professional men were making a part-time voluntary survey, was in a very similar position.<sup>351</sup> Protection against blast and splinters would be relatively easy, but a shelter must be strong enough to withstand masses of falling debris should the building itself be largely destroyed. General experience abroad and local professional opinion did not rate basement shelter highly.

Statutory authority for the provision of shelters would be necessary, and it should be drafted immediately, in case it should be required in a hurry. But Hunter did not propose launching a large scheme yet. To plan and construct shelters for daytime city populations would be a 'stupendous job', taking men and material from all other construction work in the country. If a start were made anywhere, all areas would

**press for shelters, regardless of relative needs. Undue regard must not be given to sentiment and clamour; Service appraisals, the labour and materials available, the total war effort and the huge demand of shelters, must be considered together.** <sup>352</sup>

**On 13 November, after Service and EPS chiefs had met, Fraser repeated the hit-and-run theme, with slight variations: the probable attack would be ‘neither severe nor prolonged’, but one aircraft could carry 1000 incendiary bombs. Therefore property owners had been ordered to install fire-fighting equipment such as bucket pumps, sand, rakes and shovels, and occupiers would act as fire guards. As for costly, difficult shelters, it was essential to maintain a due sense of proportion; the government was watching the situation constantly and would act as need arose. A week later he added that this did not mean acting when the enemy was at the door but ‘when the likelihood of developments other than those now thought possible emerged.’** <sup>353</sup>

**So matters stood when the bombs fell on [Pearl Harbour](#).**

**EPS quickened almost convulsively. A city engineers’ conference was due on 11 December to discuss the use of basements as air raid shelters.** <sup>354</sup> **Instead they outlined an entire shelter programme, which was adopted by a concurrent emergency conference of 25 mayors from main centres and seaport towns. A central technical body would be set up to guide local authorities who, besides planning dispersals to such features as tunnels, gullies, hillsides or quarries, would immediately as temporary shelter dig slit trenches in parks and any open city spaces, the trenches to be roofed and strengthened as soon as possible. Owners of buildings must provide shelter for their staffs. In suitable buildings, space could also be taken over and adapted for public shelters. The State, added the mayors, should help pay for construction and for owners’ compensation. They also realised that their EPS organisations were short of 15 000 workers, and they returned to their towns to recruit, plan dispersals, dig trenches, impress vehicles, improve sirens, tighten blackouts and conduct comprehensive tests in daylight and in darkness. Citizens, said**

the mayors, must forget conditions that existed last week, and must respond vigorously to the demands of the new situation; in their own gardens they should dig shelters for their families following directions published in newspapers, and they should also assist municipal workmen in digging public shelters. <sup>355</sup> The government hastened to set all this in order with new regulations.

**Auckland** was active with the shovel. In Albert Park digging began at 8 am on Saturday 13 December. Meanwhile, in suburban gardens household trenches were appearing. An official EPS design proposed an excavation 3 feet wide, 3½ feet deep, and 2 feet long per person, with scoria drainage at the bottom and a timber frame for steadiness; the dug earth should form a mound covered over with turf eighteen inches from the edge of the trench. <sup>356</sup> City Council labourers, their normal work set aside, did much of the public digging aided by a mechanical excavator; by Christmas Eve they had dug 10 000 feet of trenches, nearly two miles, of which 9000 feet were then timbered. <sup>357</sup> Some of the public helped, such as members of the local Women's National Service Corps who tackled hard clay in Myers Park, <sup>358</sup> while several Chinese volunteers skilled with spades joined the city workmen. <sup>359</sup> Railway employees trenched near the station, and Harbour Board workers on an open site in Quay Street. By the first week of January some 16 300 feet of community slit trenches had been provided. <sup>360</sup>

In the suburbs, and at some schools, volunteers turned to, often with their own garden tools. Between the demands of the Army and new government defence works, labour was suddenly scarce; for instance, 50 subsidised labourers of Mt Eden borough were requisitioned by the government on 16 December, leaving the trenches they had started to be finished by volunteers. Some EPS and Home Guard members dug shelters for the wives of servicemen overseas, for the sick, and the old. Where wet or rocky ground precluded ordinary trenches, other shelters were devised. About Mt Eden, caves long closed against adventuring children were opened up and more were tunnelled out, <sup>361</sup> while shallow trenches were carefully dug where stony ground had already been broken

for drains. <sup>362</sup>

At Birkenhead, tunnels 20 feet long, 9 feet wide and 7 feet high were made in the cliff face near the ferry wharf; <sup>363</sup> the old Parnell tunnel, superseded 20 years before, was opened, cleared and lighted, with baffle walls at each portal. <sup>364</sup> A few sandbag shelters appeared in areas with drainage problems, while some important utilities, such as the Electric Power Board building and the Central Fire Station, protected their ground floors with sandbags. <sup>365</sup>

A large map was published on 16 December showing how those in various areas should hasten to trenches or natural cover, but a dispersal test on the 18th was taken coolly: the streets were cleared very quickly, but many people did not leave the buildings; an EPS worker remarked that if all the women and children and soldiers and sailors who suddenly re-appeared in **Queen Street** at the all-clear had come from the dispersal areas, they must have broken records for distance running.

**Wellington**, relying much on its hills and gullies, its cuttings and tunnels, decided to provide only a 'certain number' of trenches in the inner area for those who could not get away in good time; the public in general was told not to use these trenches but to disperse to natural cover, following the plan published, as was its **Auckland** counterpart, on 16 December. Nature however needed improvement, such as clearing scrub, blackberry, gorse and general debris, and cutting access tracks. On Tuesday 16 December, citizens were asked to dig or to clear at assorted sites, <sup>366</sup> bringing axes and slashers, spades, shovels, picks and mugs. But at 11.30 am there were only six volunteers, most men being at their normal work. The mayoress called for women to join her at the working posts, and at the Mayor's request Saturday tennis, cricket and other sports were cancelled. Several hundred volunteers, including women and boys, dug and chopped and blistered their hands on 20 December, but afterwards it was announced that communal digging and clearing would cease pending the laying out of further areas and fresh consideration. <sup>367</sup> There was some criticism of the trenches being

constructed too long, too wide and not deep enough, making them ideal strafing targets and giving poor protection from blast.<sup>368</sup> After this first scurry, citizen volunteers were not again set to digging, though civic authorities pleaded for regular labourers. The general difficulties of keeping trenches a safe distance from buildings (20 feet per storey), from retaining walls and from foundations were heightened in Wellington, where engineers also warned against digging near high banks, on steep slopes, or deeper than 3 feet in wet or sandy soil unless with proper supports, all beyond general experience and skill.<sup>369</sup>

On 20 December a large-scale trench plan was published, with directions, and the public was urged to provide for itself in the domestic area, with 28 expert advisers on call. Little immediate use was made of them; by the end of the month they had received only 57 enquiries.<sup>370</sup> Suburban groups that worked on communal trenches rather than individual slit trenches on their own sections were firmly discouraged by Mayor Hislop. Wide dispersal was the best protection in residential areas, he advised, and homes should not be left without someone on firewatch; if people left their sections to gather in communal trenches, homes might be lost for want of someone on the spot to tackle small fires at their start.<sup>371</sup>

The city engineer of **Christchurch** warned against any southern sense of remoteness: 'Personally I cannot see that we are one whit safer here than in **Wellington** or **Auckland**.'<sup>372</sup> On 12 December 300 local body workers began digging in the central squares, on the city banks of the Avon, and in various open spaces. 'Temporary shelters first, improvements to them later, and permanent shelters later still, if time permits' was the programme.<sup>373</sup> The water-table being often close to the surface, parapets were needed and the Mayor called for thousands of sandbags. The traffic staff was set to making a rough count, block by block, of employees and the likely numbers of customers and clients in buildings, of which very few had basements suitable for shelters. By the evening of Monday 15 December, about 2500 feet of trenches, protection for more than 2000 people, had been fully or partly dug in the central



areas, and timbering had begun.

In mid-January, with most excavating and side timbering finished, roofing was started. In open places roofs were light, but near buildings they were of heavy materials, such as 6-inch rough pine logs covered with earth and rubble. <sup>374</sup> This work, on trenches now sufficient for 12 000 people at six persons per 10 feet, proceeded more slowly, while a few business houses began to strengthen their basements. <sup>375</sup>

Wall cards issued at the end of January directed all **Christchurch** householders to dig slit trenches at least two feet deep. They also advised sending old folk and invalids to friends inland, the removal of all clutter material between roofs and ceilings, reserves of food for at least 24 hours, and staying quietly at home in any emergency, blacked out and off the telephone; even if poisonous gas were used, an upper storey would be relatively safe. <sup>376</sup>

Like Wellington, **Dunedin** rejoiced in the natural protection of gullies and stands of trees, and did not embark on extensive digging. A few trenches, begun on 15 December, appeared in the Octagon, and the old Caversham tunnel, with lighting and sanitation, would shelter about 2000 people. Citizens were urged to think for themselves, to decide on dispersal areas, to dig trenches if their sections were suitable or build up earth walls where water was too near the surface. Small trenches were less likely to collapse, so they should be of two-person size, 2 feet wide, 3 feet deep and not more than 6 feet long. <sup>377</sup>

Smaller centres did not feel that the four cities had a monopoly of danger, though preparations varied, probably reflecting the attitudes of leading citizens. At Hamilton the borough council staff was set to trenching in the business centre on 13 December, and on 22 January the Mayor, H. D. Caro, <sup>378</sup> asked sports bodies to encourage volunteer digging on Saturday afternoons by postponing their competitions. It was remarked that citizen diggers were mainly middle aged, from shops, offices and the professions. <sup>379</sup> In a test alarm on 19 December **Hamilton's** public was 'most apathetic'; shops were not cleared or their



staffs released, buses and cars continued to run, and only some one per cent of the people about sought cover in the new trenches or along the river bank. 'We are not doing this for fun,' said Mayor Caro, promising further tests in which, if premises were not cleared in five minutes, those responsible, along with laggard pedestrians, would be prosecuted.

380

At Tauranga, normal borough work was promptly suspended in favour of trench digging, and at the Monmouth Redoubt trenches made in the New Zealand wars of the 1860s were cleared and timbered for public use. For old people, and for soldier's wives who could not pay for building, the borough would provide domestic shelters at cost or free. <sup>381</sup>

On 7 January **Wanganui**, which had embarked on public trenches for 5000 people, regretted that only one-sixth was as yet available, because of the bad weather and volunteers falling off to one or two daily, leaving the task to council workmen. <sup>382</sup>

**Invercargill** took its trenching briskly, with about 60 sportsmen, mainly cricketers and anglers, prominent in weekend digging. Before 6 January public trenches measured more than a mile and a second mile was planned, while in back yards householders were busy, sometimes several sharing in a convenient section, while many business firms with vacant ground were also providing shelters. <sup>383</sup>

By 13 January **Gisborne** had more than a mile of slit trenches, accommodating 1800 people, using all available space near the business area. <sup>384</sup> **Oamaru** reported good progress with its trenches, notably at schools; <sup>385</sup> nearby Waimate, not regarded as a likely target, dug no trenches, though a survey showed that there was room for several hundred persons in the cellars of all four hotels, two large stores and the silo of the flourmill. <sup>386</sup>

Trenches, it was often said, were immediate and temporary protection against blast and splinters; they were not effective against a direct hit or the machine-guns of low-flying aircraft; many people would

not be able to reach them quickly, nor could they possibly contain a city's daytime population, while thoughts of winter made them less and less attractive. In cities likely to be targets for heavy bombing, reinforced shelters in the ground floors and basements of suitable buildings, and covered shelters on patches of open ground, were the next step.

Regulations early in January 1942, in logical sequence to the local authorities agreement of December, <sup>387</sup> gave local authorities power to take over buildings or land for shelters or for access, and to require owners of business premises where 30 or more people worked to provide approved shelters for them. Owners and the local council would each pay 25 per cent of the cost and the Crown 50 per cent, though where members of the public were included the Crown paid more in proportion. For public shelters and access ways, local bodies paid 25 per cent and the Crown the rest.

Sheaves of such directions were sent out during January and succeeding months. For some firms, basement and storage space was already cleared because supplies of goods were smaller; other firms made changes. <sup>388</sup> Much co-operation was called for all round, as in **Christchurch** where the Council, issuing 150 notices, said that in some of the buildings shelters could not be constructed, but their owners might be induced to work in with the owners of suitable buildings. <sup>389</sup> Generally, exterior walls would be strengthened and window spaces filled in; there would be protected entrances, interior partitions, ventilation, sanitation and lighting, while water and sewer pipes that could cause flooding would be re-sited. <sup>390</sup>

At the end of March, across a rising welter of requisitions, excavations and plans fell an embarrassing reversal of policy, the edict of James Fletcher, newly-appointed Commissioner of Defence Construction: cement and brickwork must be reserved for main defence jobs; their use was prohibited in private building and industry, but in shelters current stages of work could be completed. Sawn timber also was to be used as little as possible. Designs must be adapted to use other

materials, such as bulkhead walls of sapling logs, the interstices filled with sand, earth or rubble, with floors of gravel topped by duckboards. <sup>391</sup> From the end of April cement supplies gradually eased, <sup>392</sup> but labour and materials generally remained short; for several months, except for tunnelling and timber work with unsawn logs, EPS constructions were substantially checked, and meanwhile their urgency became more doubtful. The Wairarapa earthquakes of June and August 1942 made fresh demands on labour, and experts became concerned about the ability of shelters to withstand earthquakes. It was decided that various types should be tested against both bomb blast and earthshock and meanwhile EPS controllers were told, in strictest confidence, that no more shelters should be undertaken. <sup>393</sup> Thereafter the threat of danger steadily receded, and with it the need for shelters. Towards the end of March 1943, **War Cabinet** finally decided that all work on shelters should cease. <sup>394</sup>

Only in the four main centres were shelters other than trenches much developed, and the four courses taken differed so widely that they need separate description. In Auckland, where the estimated daytime population of the high risk business area was 70 000, 35 modern buildings were in January 1942 considered to have suitable basements, which would provide shelter for 18 000. <sup>395</sup> Actual work on the first shelter started in mid-February and a month later the Dilworth and Dingwall buildings had accommodation for 300, while in several other buildings constructions were under way. <sup>396</sup> By April there was shelter for about 20 000 people in central **Auckland**: 4000 in buildings, 3000 in the old Parnell tunnel, 2000 dispersed in the Domain and Grafton Gully and 11 000 in trenches that were being roofed. <sup>397</sup>

British experience promised a large measure of protection by such means, but less than from deep underground shelters, which could withstand a direct hit. A plan for linked tunnels under Albert Park, which rose steeply in the midst of the commercial area, was devised by James Tyler, <sup>398</sup> the city engineer. These tunnels, with about a dozen entrances, ventilation, sanitation and electric light, would connect with

a subway from Victoria Street to Gittos Street under Constitution Hill,<sup>399</sup> and would protect about 20 000. The estimated cost was £119,700, about £6 per head, of which the government would pay 75 per cent and **Auckland** 25 percent; by working three shifts seven days a week it might be finished in four to six months.<sup>400</sup> The Public Works Department approved, remarking that it would probably take nine to twelve months and cost up to £40,000 more than estimated.<sup>401</sup> On 5 February National Service told **Auckland** to go ahead on the tunnels but at the same time to press on with shelters in buildings, reminding that military authorities advised taking shelter in any building if a raid started.<sup>402</sup> With this approval given, more details were published: there would be a group of galleries, large enough for a wooden bench on each side plus standing room between them, in gridiron fashion under Albert Park and Bowen Reserve, with cross galleries at intervals so that there would be no dead ends. The work would take about four months, but it should be possible to start using the tunnels at a fairly early stage. Preparatory work began on 12 February. Mechanical excavators could be used only at the portals, of which there were nine, and as but few men could work on each tunnel face, these faces were multiplied by sinking eight shafts from the surface to where the galleries would intersect, shafts that would later be used for ventilation.<sup>403</sup>

With contracts let on a co-operative system, up to 300 men in gangs worked three shifts a day six days a week, through loose volcanic rock, hard sandstone and papa. On 12 August the last few feet of rock in the middle of the 2000 foot main tunnel were blasted through. With 9 entrances,<sup>404</sup> the arched access tunnels, 9 feet high and 15 feet wide, totalled 3700 feet in length; there were 6000 feet of accommodation tunnels, 7 feet square, and all were lined with timber. Engineers, surveyors and labourers had toiled ungrudgingly, and all the drives met truly. Carpentry and plumbing were still to be done, but it was thought that the cost would not exceed £120,000.<sup>405</sup> Two months later, one and a half million feet of squared timber and a large quantity of pine trunks were lining and propping the tunnels, the floor was covered with scoria, fans provided ventilation; a diesel power plant, formerly used in a

meatworks, would provide auxiliary lighting if the city power failed, and seats were being built. <sup>406</sup>

By the end of September about 58 000 Aucklanders could be sheltered: 20 000 in the Albert Park tunnels, 10 000 in 30 city buildings, 3500 in government buildings, 11 000 in covered and slit trenches, 3000 in the old Parnell Tunnel and 7800 in covered trenches in the outer parts of the metropolitan area, while dispersal areas would provide for 2000–3000. Nine more city buildings were being prepared, and more than 20 others were under survey. <sup>407</sup> Meanwhile winter rains had tested both public and private trenches and some, dug in clay and in low-lying places, were filled with water. Private shelters varied greatly: some were timbered, covered with corrugated iron plus a protective mound of earth, and snug within; some were quite elaborate, while others were dank holes that ‘one would enter only under the compulsion of immediate danger.’ <sup>408</sup>

In Wellington on a busy day there could be 30 000 people between Cuba Street and the wooden Government Building in Lambton Quay. <sup>409</sup> On the east lay Lambton Harbour, to the west a few steep streets and access ways climbed to **The Terrace**, then almost entirely a street of houses, with a long sheltering gully (later to become a motorway) behind it. By 3 February 1942, 200 requisitions had been issued, ensuring public right of way from Lambton Quay and Willis Street to **The Terrace** and through its gardens to the gully and beyond. Before the end of the month there were paths and steps and notices. <sup>410</sup> Meanwhile about 100 owners were instructed to provide shelter for those occupying their city buildings, though only about 50 could be made suitable even after costly alterations. <sup>411</sup> By 11 February plans for 23 basement shelters for about 4000 people at an estimated cost of £24,000 had been forwarded to the Public Works Department. <sup>412</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce advanced the proposals of two prominent architects, F. de J. Clere <sup>413</sup> and E. Anscombe, <sup>414</sup> for driving a tunnel, or temporarily disconnected lengths of tunnel, under **The Terrace**. This, they claimed, would in peace time be a city asset, as public garages or to

relieve traffic on Lambton Quay and Willis Street, and meanwhile would protect, well away from heat and fire and smoke, many more people than could the proposed shelters in buildings; tunnels could be built with less expense and as rapidly as such shelters, which would be worse than useless after the war and expensive to remove. Alternatively, the business men suggested surface shelters on vacant lots which would be infinitely superior to shelters in buildings: they would be accessible to the public, and could be built in concrete without steel, economising on materials, skill, manpower and time. Also, public shelters, whether surface or tunnels, would be paid for by the Crown and the city, whereas some firms would be faced with a total expenditure of £3,000, although after subsidies they would pay only 25 per cent and could recover this through increased rents. <sup>415</sup>

The Automobile Association backed **The Terrace** tunnel, and the Building Trades Federation, which was communist-led, <sup>416</sup> urged tunnels there and at other necessary points; their 'experienced tunnellers' stated that progress could be made, with eight foot drives, at 80 feet a day from each set of two faces. <sup>417</sup> Semple airily promised to find the labour. <sup>418</sup> At a public meeting called by the Chamber of Commerce on 11 February, which advocated immediate tunnelling, a seismologist, Dr L. Bastings, <sup>419</sup> said that **The Terrace** was one of the areas most liable to suffer considerable slips from mild earth tremors, and though a safe tunnel would be possible it would take much longer than was proposed. A city spokesman, R. H. Nimmo, replied that he would take the rare chance of an earth tremor rather than be buried under tons of masonry. <sup>420</sup>

Against all this, Mayor Hislop pointed to the danger of running through streets in a raid to get to a tunnel instead of going down to the basement of one's building. The strengthening of city buildings must go on, he said, with the City Corporation leading the way. At the same time, a new type of easily constructed, concrete, communal shelter would be placed on all suitable sites, even in the streets; the city engineer would examine the possibilities of short tunnels. The foundations of the demolished 'Dominion' building near Plimmers Steps



would for about £4,500 provide a very strong, well-placed shelter for 1000 people, and needed only roofs, flooring, sanitation and entrances.

421

Two days later, as **Singapore** fell, Hislop announced that work on both surface and underground public shelters would proceed at once, if labour and material could be obtained. There would be three timber-lined tunnels, at Hobson Street gully (for 2000 people), near the Carillon (1500 people) and off Hospital Road, Newtown (1500 people); shelters, mainly of concrete blocks, would be started at such populous places as Miramar, Evans Bay, Kilbirnie, Courtenay Place, **Kent** and Cambridge Terraces and Te Aro Flat. In city buildings 26 shelter plans, for about 5000 people, had been already submitted to the Public Works Department. <sup>422</sup> By 20 February, 92 labourers, eight carpenters and seven tunnellers were working on public shelters. Two tunnels had been started in the sides of Hobson Street gully, and there were large excavations for semi-surface shelters in front of the Public Library, in Parliament grounds and in **Sydney** Street near the Waterloo Hotel, in the reserve at the corner of Wakefield Street and Jervois Quay, in Kent Terrace, at the Carillon and other places. <sup>423</sup> The grounds of Parliament were much disturbed, for besides three ordinary public shelters they concealed a massively strong underground room where the **War Cabinet** and Service chiefs could continue their work under heavy bombing. <sup>424</sup> Vacant sections or open spaces in industrial areas became shelter sites, such as the parking grounds of a motor firm in Taranaki Street where six big trenches were dug in the current style: their floors were five and a half feet below the surface, they were roofed and boarded with timber and packed over with about two feet of soil. <sup>425</sup> A long row of municipally-owned garages under Bowen Street became shelters. <sup>426</sup>

It was, however, firmly pointed out that in both city and suburbs dispersal would be the principal protection; even in the city proper it was not intended that everyone would make for a constructed shelter. <sup>427</sup> Dispersal routes were worked out, mapped and rehearsed, from buildings, from blocks, and from larger areas, using the additional exits to **The**



**Terrace gully and the Town Belt.** <sup>428</sup> Directed by wardens and by numerous signs, people in the streets moved away first, followed by those in the buildings; they went obediently, but without any Boy Scout or Tom Wintringham-type realism, many treating such excursions as a joke. On 17 March, although 15 000 moved in 15 minutes from the city between Bunny Street and Plimmers Steps towards **The Terrace** gully, Bolton Street cemetery and the Botanic Gardens, the *Post* remarked that the ambling crowds would have been good targets for machine-guns.

The shortage of concrete checked and changed the semi-surface shelters, <sup>429</sup> but by 18 April it was claimed that 42 of them were so well advanced they would already afford some protection. By the end of June 1942 60 were completed in the city area, including 13 on the waterfront, each seating 50 but taking twice as many at a pinch. They had concrete floors, ventilation, sanitation and candle light, and their doors were locked against larrikins, with all nearby wardens carrying keys. In large buildings there were basement shelters for several thousand people. <sup>430</sup> Meanwhile concrete economy had produced the log-cabin shelter, the first appearing in the centre of lower Taranaki Street, made of radiata pine logs 8 inches thick and 9 feet high, upright in the ground. <sup>431</sup> Others of this type were built along the wharves and in other central places. <sup>432</sup>

Tunnelling was not halted for materials, and at the Hobson Street gully 30 to 40 men working till midnight in two shifts had, by the end of April, driven two tunnels running north and south, each about 75 yards long, 12 feet wide and 9 feet high, through fairly yielding ground, the whole being timbered with three rows of stout pine logs from **Rotorua**. On one side to the gully the soil was dry, but the other proved so wet and puggy that extensive concrete lining was needed. <sup>433</sup>

In June, the commandeer of men and materials for camps and airfields relaxed slightly. The conversion of the old foundations near Plimmers Steps into a many-compartmented shelter, now expected to hold up to 2000 people behind brick walls 3 feet thick, under 12 inches

of reinforced concrete, was completed, and in Thorndon work began for a similar shelter in the foundations of the Social Security building burnt down in 1938. <sup>434</sup>

At this stage, on the night of 24 June 1942, a severe earthquake centred in the Wairarapa caused widespread havoc, without loss of life. In Wellington thousands of chimneys were wrecked and scores of buildings suffered major structural damage. This cut across shelter work, but the EPS men had plenty of demolition practice, mostly on the chimneys, and all possible labour was directed to repairing the damage. Six weeks later, on the night of 2 August, a second earthquake brought down most of the newly built chimneys over a wide area. In Wellington buildings the effect was cumulative: minor cracks became gaps, weakened brickwork collapsed, some heavy parapets crashed down and others showed alarming breaks; the Chief Post Office, the Town Hall and many other buildings were partly disabled; the main part of the **Porirua** mental hospital had to be emptied of patients. Demolition of parapets and towers that were dangerous, or might become so in another shake, was now an urgent task; engineers and architects, with steel ties and girders and reinforced concrete, repaired and anticipated damage; labourers, bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers and plumbers were brought in; shelters paused.

As the *Post* explained in September, the shelter programme for various reasons had been interrupted and delayed, but work had never wholly stopped and **Wellington** had shelter for 25 000 of the public, apart from that provided for business staffs, schools and hospitals, the waterfront and Service headquarters. What happened in the **Pacific** during the next few weeks would decide whether construction would be taken up with a rush, mark time, or be abandoned. <sup>435</sup>

For the first three months of the **Pacific** war **Christchurch** concentrated on its trenches, which would hold 12 000 people. Early in March the City Council decided that the owners of 150 buildings, in each of which more than 30 people worked, should be told to provide shelters. Only 40 such notices had been issued when the cement ban

deferred action. <sup>436</sup> The Council then planned surface shelters in the streets, using timber and rubble, anything but concrete: they would not, remarked Mayor Andrews, <sup>437</sup> be very sightly. <sup>438</sup> As winter approached, the open trenches in parks and squares were roofed and made as water-free as possible, sufficient for about 5000 people being thus treated by the end of May. <sup>439</sup> Meanwhile engineers and architects hastened to devise shelters within buildings, using substitute materials and a little necessary concrete, of which a small quantity was now available, remarking that in some cases substitute materials would actually be better, because permanence was not wanted. Thus a wooden floor over a basement could be made fire resistant by covering it with eight inches of shingle or six inches of brick, supported by understrutting; basements were strengthened by timber partitions filled with shingle. <sup>440</sup> By 16 June, Public Works had approved plans for 26 such shelters, and 58, accommodating 5250 people, were completed by September. <sup>441</sup> Many of the older buildings, however, were not suitable for shelter development. By November the programme was lagging, <sup>442</sup> and as need receded, it quietly faded out.

**Dunedin**'s first places of refuge were the Caversham tunnel, estimated to provide for 3000 people, and in the Town Belt, where fireplaces and sanitation were arranged, but the City Council was also prompt in prescribing public shelters under suitable buildings, beginning with the Town Hall (750 people) and a new brewery (1000 people), while in a rock face behind the Electricity Department a tunnel shelter was made for the staff. About 250 buildings had 30 or more employees; 50 were served shelter-notices at the start, <sup>443</sup> but a month later shelters for more than 7000 people were being planned in 140 buildings. <sup>444</sup> At this stage, **Dunedin** adopted a new shelter idea: locally made concrete pipes, five feet and six feet in diameter, were set in specially prepared beds, with concrete walls protecting each end to stop blast, wooden seats built along each side and duckboards down the middle. <sup>445</sup> The city engineer took an elaborate census to discover population densities in various areas at different times of day and night, and placed the pipes accordingly, in streets, public squares, church grounds and the

basements of modern buildings. <sup>446</sup> In August, W. A. Bodkin, Minister of Civil Defence, was loud in praise of **Dunedin's** system which he did not think was bettered anywhere in the country; experts held that the pipes would be thoroughly safe in a blitz, they were well placed, efficient and economical. <sup>447</sup> By September more than 3000 feet of pipes, which would accommodate nearly 5000 people, had been delivered by the manufacturers and were being installed, with more on order to protect a further 3000 people. <sup>448</sup>

The four main cities were reckoned the first targets, but towards the end of January, the **National Service Department** warned 18 secondary centres <sup>449</sup> to start digging in their business areas. The most likely attack, they were reminded, would be by shelling and a few bombs from ship-borne aircraft, directed against shipping, wharves, stores of oil and primary products. They should examine their natural cover for quick dispersal purposes, and see if their buildings could produce up-to-standard shelters. Slit trenches required constant maintenance, but there were standard plans for converting them to covered shelters. These towns, however, should remember that they were less liable to attack than the main cities and modify their schemes accordingly. <sup>450</sup>

Some centres had already prepared shelters, others followed: thus, **Palmerston North** dug trenches for 1000 people in the Square; <sup>451</sup> **Lower Hutt** and **Petone** prepared both slit trenches and covered shelters, while shops and factories dug their own trenches; <sup>452</sup> **Greymouth** tackled its shelters late in March. <sup>453</sup>

Schools, congregations of children, raised anxiety. Quick dispersal to homes in an alarm was established policy, well rehearsed before December 1941 <sup>454</sup> and remained so. But it was eroded by visions of bunched children on roads being targets for machine-guns, of stray children lost and panic-stricken, of parents, disobeying orders, hurrying out to look for them. Immediately after **Pearl Harbour** there was an impulse to dig. An EPS notice in **Auckland** papers on 15 December asked school committees to organise volunteer labour for slit trenches in

school grounds where EPS could not and did not intrude; generally, however, word from education authorities was awaited and the summer holidays passed.

On 23 January 1942 the **Education Department** told boards that protection works should be considered only for schools in specially vulnerable areas, though not all of these would get them; boards should confer with the Public Works Department over each school; the government would pay but volunteer labour was to be used wherever possible. <sup>455</sup> When voluntary labour was available the Works Department could authorise spending of up to 12 s 6 d per child on material for approved plans. <sup>456</sup>

The Auckland Education Board asked its schools to seek every means for dispersal. It did not favour trenches which would concentrate large numbers, usually in full view, and when without head cover were only a temporary expedient; some warning could be expected; most schools needed all their playing space. <sup>457</sup> But in the disasters of February uneasiness grew, especially in **Auckland**. Headmasters were worried about the lack of under-surface shelters and about the uncertainties of dispersal. <sup>458</sup> **Auckland's** EPS said that headmasters and wardens should consult, and gave guidance: if there were prior warning of an attack children should stay home or go home; if the alarm and the enemy action coincided children should shelter in the buildings, in trenches or nearby cover; if an alarm sounded before actual enemy action every effort should be made to get the children home or to friends nearby. <sup>459</sup> But many children lived at least 15 minutes away from school and Darwin on 19 February had had two minutes' warning of its first raid.

At each school the shelter programme varied according to the kind of ground, the space and labour available, the cover nearby. There would be trenches at Mt Albert and Takapuna Grammar schools, where the soil was suitable, and trenches for Auckland Girls in Western Park, but pupils at Auckland Boys' Grammar and Epsom Girls' Grammar, which schools stood on rock, must disperse. <sup>460</sup> The boys of King's College and of many other secondary schools dug their own trenches. <sup>461</sup> A few examples

illustrate shelter-building in **Auckland** primary schools. The Auckland Education Board erected its first surface shelters at **Devonport**: 9 units each to hold 50 children, 40 feet long, 5 feet high, 4½ feet wide, either of concrete building blocks set in cement to give a thickness of 16 inches, or of massed concrete 14 inches thick, roofed with reinforced concrete 5 inches thick, the reinforcing steel tied to steel rods in the concrete blocks at 5 foot intervals. Schools at Stanley Bay, Vauxhall, **Napier** Street and Parnell had similar shelters. They were specially suited to inner city schools as they could be close to buildings and so took little playground space. <sup>462</sup> They also took a great deal of concrete which from the end of March was reserved mainly for military works.

At St Heliers 90 parents and EPS and **Home Guard** members dug and trenched eight covered shelters, each 31½ feet long, 5½ feet wide and nearly 6 feet deep, to hold 40 children. The Education Department supplied the design and material worth £200; they looked like railway carriages partly sunk in the ground and topped with earth. <sup>463</sup> At Orakei a borrowed mechanical shovel dug eight trenches about 30 feet long, 5½ wide and 4½ deep. They were timbered by 80 parents and EPS men, working 10 hours a day over a weekend, and the shovel piled the earth back. <sup>464</sup> At Gladstone School, Mt Albert, trenches for 500 children were dug in one day: 150 men including a clergyman, lawyers, accountants, bankers, the school staff and committee, **Home Guard** and EPS members, dug six slit trenches each 31 feet long, 3 feet wide, 3½ feet deep, and six deeper trenches, to be timbered and covered later. Local women supplied teas and a mid-day meal, with a large surplus going to Mt Albert Orphanage. <sup>465</sup>

By mid-April 21 schools in **Auckland's** metropolitan area had shelters for 7000 children. <sup>466</sup> In May the Commissioner of Defence Construction ordered that there should be no further contracts for school shelters until he could advise that more labour was available, though with volunteer labour for shelters approved by Public Works engineers, school committees could obtain up to 20 s per child for materials. <sup>467</sup> By August the **Education Department** had decided that it would not erect



any more shelters or give money for their construction; **Auckland** school committees argued that although most schools in the danger area had shelters, all should have them. They made parents at work feel happier, while making everyone aware that there was a grim war in the **Pacific**.

468

At Wellington dispersal resources seemed less adequate than they had during 1941 but official action barely preceded a flare of public anxiety for shelters in mid-February. This was led by a district warden in the Hutt Valley, where schools, amid military and industrial targets, had no protection and teachers were told to shepherd children into 'natural shelter' which did not exist. He knew that substantial shelters were proposed but there should be temporary trenches immediately. <sup>469</sup> Headmasters complained that for some city schools dispersal routes lay through dangerous areas, that fire-fighting equipment and instruction had not been given and that even tin cans for water were scarce; 28 school committees called for prompt action. <sup>470</sup>

The Wellington Education Board and the Public Works Department had various plans ready: for large concrete shelters, for covered, timbered trenches, for reinforced concrete pipe shelters and for another type which later could be converted into a swimming pool; but it was hard to get materials and labour. <sup>471</sup> In mid-February contracts were made for concrete shelters at five schools—Randwick, Gracefield, Petone Central, Miramar South and Miramar Central. <sup>472</sup> By early March shelters were authorised at 12 other schools, £37,000 was involved and official procedures were hastened. <sup>473</sup> But much lay between authorisation and completion: of the eight shelters intended for Hutt Central School (infants) and the Technical College, only one was partially completed when work was suspended in mid-June. <sup>474</sup>

At a few **Wellington** primary schools parents were active, notably at **Lyall Bay**, where they first built ramps to speed dispersal and began a series of short slit trenches which later could be converted into an underground shelter. <sup>475</sup> Parents also dug at Wellington South and did what they could in very limited space at Newtown.



At Christchurch shelter designs and ways and means were being studied early in February and the Canterbury Education Board considered whether five-year-olds at vulnerable schools should stay at home till danger from enemy action was past.<sup>476</sup> Dispersal to homes was the basic policy but the many schools and colleges near Hagley Park practised running to it and later shallow trenches were dug under the trees.<sup>477</sup> In general the Board undertook provision of shelters at its schools for children who could not get home within seven minutes, beginning with the most vulnerable, steadily excavating and timbering its earth-covered shelters or building in concrete or brick against retaining walls; the first completed were at **Lyttelton**.<sup>478</sup> By mid-July, there were shelters costing £7,300 for 3910 children at 20 schools, whose rolls totalled 6076, including several at **Timaru** and on the **West Coast**. Work was in hand at 10 other schools to shelter 2131 of their 3808 pupils, at an estimated cost of £2,500; 23 more schools were listed for shelters estimated at £9,000 to receive 3216 of their 7861 children.<sup>479</sup> This methodical progress was questioned on 28 and 30 July by the *Press*, which was concerned that so many schools were still quite without shelters and thought that a measure of protection should be provided in shallow, open trenches that could be dug quickly by volunteers and completed later. There might not be enough time to get children home, immediate danger, including defensive fire, might coincide with the first warning. 'To disperse children in the hope that they will escape or survive these risks is not a precaution but an incredible folly.'<sup>480</sup>

Here the *Press* implied criticism of the division into home goers and shelter stayers. More directly, parents at **Greymouth** took this question up with the **Education Department**, whose Director consulted National Service, receiving the awkward answer that 'in the view of this Department' shelters at a school in a vulnerable area should be for all pupils, not only for those living more than seven minutes away from home.<sup>481</sup> There was, however, no public statement from the Canterbury Board reversing its policy of division.

**Dunedin** held to dispersal. The Otago Education Board in February 1942 adopted a 'very fine, commonsense report' from its architect: school grounds were too small to have open trenches well clear of buildings for all the children and it was unwise to shelter only some of them; surface shelters again would take too much space and cost £100–150. Since some schools had been taken over by the Army they could be military targets, and would parents remain at home in an alarm, with their children congregated in a school shelter? It was better to rely on quick dispersal. <sup>482</sup> In March, again considering shelters, the Board took comfort from the Mayor's promise to share any preliminary alert, whereon children would be sent home and the schools closed for a few days. <sup>483</sup> The Board held to this policy in mid-April: vulnerable schools would be closed as soon as the authorities advised that daylight raids without warning were possible and the Board would 'err on the side of safety even if loss of some schooling may result.' <sup>484</sup>

In smaller centres, some of which were classed as secondary vulnerable areas, <sup>485</sup> there was a wide range of activity. In February at **Greymouth**, where parents demanded that their Education Board should at once provide trenches, proposing to keep children below Standard III at home in the meantime, trenches were rapidly constructed. <sup>486</sup> At Pahautahanui, early in March an EPS working bee dug slit trenches. <sup>487</sup> At Whangarei's primary school the **Home Guard** dug, <sup>488</sup> but three months later the High School Board of Governors, advised by the Northern Area military commander, decided against trenches since for a large daylight raid there would be warning enough. <sup>489</sup> At Hamilton, again on military advice, it was decided that children should be sent home in two stages: at an alarm, children would spread over as wide an area as possible near the school, in trenches, gullies and under trees. From there, during breaks in the attack, they would make for home a few at a time, under the care of wardens or trained senior pupils. Where cover was too scanty, it was decided to dig trenches in school grounds and a large number of parents did so, guided by a lieutenant-colonel and the borough engineer. <sup>490</sup> **Gisborne**, in April, decided that its High Schools' 600 yards of slit trenches should not be covered in; the money

would be better spent on weapons. <sup>491</sup>

**Hawera's High School** had trenches and pupils practised getting into them, preceded by hedgehog-removing monitors. <sup>492</sup> At **Titirangi**, parent labour cut a crescent-shaped tunnel 205 feet long, 7 feet high and 5 feet wide, into cliffs of volcanic ash below the school. It was timbered and had seats as in **Auckland's Albert Park tunnel**. <sup>493</sup>

Local zeal, fired to protect its children, could see danger in some quite remote areas.

As fears of Japanese invasion spread interest in evacuation, which had been very slight, increased in some areas and among some people. In cities, some who had saved petrol kept food and clothing packed ready, planning, if attack came, to make for the back country. EPS authorities warned that such French-style flight, impeding roads and damaging morale, would be turned back by wardens in the towns and by traffic guards on the main roads; <sup>494</sup> they favoured children and old people being sent well before an emergency from danger areas to friends inland, thereby reducing problems.

In December 1941, **Auckland's EPS**, with **War Cabinet** approval, declared that it had no plans for advance evacuation though it would be ready to shift sections of the community as directed by the military. <sup>495</sup> But nervousness grew, starting in North Shore suburbs which could see themselves being cut off. On 5 January, C. J. Lovegrove <sup>496</sup> was made **Auckland's** controller of evacuation. He promptly travelled south as far as **Rotorua** and **Taumarunui**, inquiring where and how **Auckland's** women and children could be absorbed. He found people highly responsive and glad that the problem was being tackled early, country districts being specially willing to accept evacuees. Eighteen districts together offered to take in 46 120, mainly in rural areas, though some would be in towns and some, for a time at least, housed in halls. Priorities and transport would be worked out, possibly with launches, tugs and barges taking an all-water route from **Onehunga** to **Cambridge**. Refugees would bring their own bedding, but reserves of basic foods

could be built up in the reception areas, and billet charges would have to be discussed. <sup>497</sup>

Some further attitudes of country people to the possible invasion were expressed in a letter by a woman:

In this country district lists of people willing to take children have been compiled. In many cases, mothers of several young children and who milk, have offered to take, perhaps, two children. Their hearts never fail them where children are concerned.

Our homes are already overcrowded, and we work all day and half the night. In our district are several big homes, an occasional empty house, etc.—a good hall may be in some districts.

I suggest, humbly, that these homes and other available buildings be equipped, provisioned, staffed by some of those pretty city girls in uniforms, the children sent in groups and well cared for....A heavy burden cannot be thrown onto the already overburdened country mothers, although, be assured, little ones, that while we have the strength you shall always have what refuge we can give you. <sup>498</sup>

Lovegrove urged that the government should authorise voluntary, or even compulsory, advance evacuation from some danger zones, notably the North Shore, with assistance to those who could not meet the cost. <sup>499</sup>

Meanwhile, the Auckland Committee for the Protection of School Children advised obtaining, through schools, the names of friends and relations to whom children could go; this would be a step towards billet-placing and bring before parents the prospect of evacuation. <sup>500</sup> In mid-February parents were asked if they would allow their children, in an emergency, to be taken by teachers to country reception areas, the idea being to keep schools and classes together as much as possible so that each child would meet familiar faces in unfamiliar surroundings. Generally the idea was not accepted: some of the discussion meetings called by headmasters in 64 schools were well attended, but in others

there was very little interest. Parents in the most vulnerable areas did not by their voting show particular concern. In some schools the vote was 90 per cent against removal, and nowhere did the vote for it reach 50 per cent. <sup>501</sup>

The government, shrinking from panic, expense and disruption, held to the policy of evacuation only on military orders, and avoided other decisions. When pressed by the Waikato County Council about billeting allowances, David Wilson, Associate Minister of National Service, replied that some evacuees might pay for themselves, some hosts might refuse payment, and others could lodge claims with local authorities. <sup>502</sup> The Waikato Council, backed by the *New Zealand Herald*, said that this was unsatisfactory; Lovegrove had gone as far as he could, and government indecision was halting vital preparations. <sup>503</sup> The mayors of **Cambridge** and **Te Awamutu** explained their anxieties at the prospect of impoverished refugees in thousands, each costing at least 10 s a week in upkeep. <sup>504</sup> Lovegrove repeatedly urged comprehensive regulations that would define priorities and set a scale of billeting fees. Those who could not pay should have government assistance and there should be power to impress accommodation and control evacuees. The chief warden of **Auckland** as regional Commissioner should be able, in given circumstances, to order evacuation. If this decision was to remain with the military authorities, they should indicate the conditions in which they would order it. Public opinion in **Auckland**, he claimed, was that the order should not await the emergency. <sup>505</sup>

The *New Zealand Herald* declared that this was so sound as to be unanswerable, <sup>506</sup> but the Prime Minister on 3 March 1942 replied firmly that, as no one could say where or when attack would come, it was most unwise to disrupt community life by evacuating selected areas in advance; essential work must continue unimpeded, and wives could help by staying with their husbands. If any area had to be evacuated, its essential workers would be moved as short a distance as possible, but it might be necessary to move women and children to more distant localities when danger threatened. EPS could arrange accommodation

lists in advance, but the Army would decide if evacuation were required. Meanwhile shelters and trenches should be made ready. <sup>507</sup> The *Press* approved: belief that evacuation was essential grew from false analogies with vastly more crowded cities, and plans must be based on carefully calculated probabilities rather than on the worst, but unlikely, possibilities. <sup>508</sup> The *Evening Star* also approved: 'Mr Fraser's advice was neither thoughtless nor heartless.' <sup>509</sup> The *Herald*, however, held that panic evacuation overseas had been due to military delay and inaction, while Lovegrove's main points, notably those on finance, had been avoided. <sup>510</sup>

Lovegrove's proposals were also supported by the 2NZEF Association, some members claiming to have seen disasters resulting from unpreparedness, and seeing no reason why muddle-headed optimism should make war more dreadful than necessary. <sup>511</sup> A public meeting on 15 March, at which Lovegrove reiterated his views, declared itself gravely perturbed by the conflict between him and the government, and wanted his plans adopted; so did both *Auckland* papers and the local Chamber of Commerce. <sup>512</sup>

Regulations that finally emerged towards the end of April left compulsory evacuation fully in military hands, and guarded the government purse by making the local authorities which would receive people pay the billeting charges, recovering them from the local authority of a refugee's home area, which in turn could recover them from the family breadwinner. <sup>513</sup> Neither Lovegrove nor the *Herald* were at all contented, the latter pointing out that a local authority under enemy attack would have to pay for its evacuated women and children until it could recover their upkeep from fathers who might be in no condition to pay. The Minister of National Service explained that under existing policy any bad debts would, like other EPS expenditure, receive government's 75 per cent subsidy. If the government accepted financial responsibility for evacuees in the first instance, the work, staff and delay involved would inevitably be greater than for a decentralised local body. <sup>514</sup> On 19 May some compromise on the civilian-military control



issue was achieved: three colonels were seconded to the **National Service Department** as regional commissioners for areas corresponding to the northern, central and southern military commands, to make liaison between military and civil defence.

The government's 'stay put' policy avoided the many-faceted disturbances in living and feeling that could have snowballed, affecting other centres besides **Auckland**,<sup>515</sup> if pre-emergency evacuation had been made financially easier. In June 1942 news of the Coral Sea and Midway battles restored faith in the **United States** navy and lessened anxiety. Late in August when, unknown to the public, the **Guadalcanal** campaign was going badly, Bodkin, Minister of Civil Defence since 26 June, said that, with the advice of the Services, areas to be compulsorily evacuated had been agreed upon, but no good purpose would be served by proclaiming these in advance of the emergency. People in other areas would stay put, and there would be no voluntary evacuation.<sup>516</sup>

Meanwhile Lovegrove and **Auckland's** EPS turned their energy to nearer fields. Wardens made a house-to-house survey of the metropolitan district and Manukau and **Waitemata** counties, noting floor space, the number of rooms, the adults and children in each dwelling, so that if it became necessary to move people, the authorities would know how many were involved, how much house-room there was to absorb them, and how much transport would be needed.<sup>517</sup>

No such heat developed at **Wellington**, where the EPS had plans for moving stricken individuals or groups from one suburb to another, with 25 nearby rest centres organised for temporary accommodation.<sup>518</sup> There were also plans for moving women and children further afield, notably to the Wairarapa which was reported ready to receive thousands in selected buildings and private homes, billets for 8500 in homes being listed by the end of February.<sup>519</sup> Decision to evacuate women and children was to be a matter for the government, acting on military advice. As February's anxious days passed, there was some restlessness. The Wellington Ratepayers' Association respectfully suggested to the government the wisdom of giving evacuation plans early and serious



thought. <sup>520</sup> The EPS authorities, after special discussions, said that they had made arrangements for minor scale evacuation and the government had plans for larger movements, but meanwhile it was desirable that all the women and children, the old and the ailing who could leave **Wellington** to stay with friends or relatives in safer areas should do so, thereby easing the work of those responsible for their safety. <sup>521</sup>

The Prime Minister's 'stay put' direction on 3 March, playing down the likelihood of large-scale evacuation, was accepted without any public opposition in **Wellington**, where two further official statements during the month moved progressively away from the exodus theme. On 11 March, Mayor Hislop said that although no great publicity had been given to EPS evacuation plans, their foundations were laid well in advance and they were now ready, with the final points on transport, billets, the maintenance of billeting centres and food supplies being settled with the Wairarapa authorities. Brigadier A. Greene, <sup>522</sup> of the **Salvation Army**, schooled in the **Napier** earthquake and now in charge of **Wellington's** evacuation unit, on 20 March clearly envisaged not invasion but a tip-and-run raid or bombardment. He touched very lightly on movement from **Wellington** and dwelt on the local arrangements that would deal with scattered damage, on the lines of British mid-war routines. He said that the **Wellington** unit had been preparing for a long time, and had lately been enlarged to 1000 workers. There were 26 district rest centres in churches, halls and schools, each with tank water, portable boilers, emergency rations and clothing, and a Plunket nurse, but clients should bring their own blankets. Thence they would be directed to temporary billets, preferably near their homes; if necessary emergency buildings would be quickly erected in parks, and the overflow would go to accommodation outside **Wellington**. Brigadier Greene repeated these assurances in April, adding that there were plans for camps at 10 suitable sites around **Wellington** and preliminary arrangements for railing some thousands of evacuees to the Wairarapa.

The earthquake on the night of 24 June 1942 <sup>524</sup> brought some of **Wellington's** accommodation plans into action. More than 70 people were moved from damaged houses, notably in streets off Cambridge and Kent terraces. At the start many were quartered in nearby St Mark's schoolroom, 'due to the absence of the billeting list', with hot meals provided at the Brougham Street rest centre. Within two days most had been placed in houses or rooms, and for the remainder EPS commandeered two large empty houses in the area. Meanwhile a mobile canteen helped to feed the hundreds of workers hastily mustered to repair the damage. <sup>525</sup>

At Christchurch, with its well-spread suburbs, there were paper plans at the end of 1941 for adapting some large buildings in the Kirwee–West Melton area, to house several thousand people temporarily, <sup>526</sup> but there soon appeared some agitation for organised retreat, especially for children. A letter to Semple, dated 1 January 1942, combined the liveliest fears of invasion with apparent belief that the Japanese would not go far inland:

Why have the school children not been evacuated to the country? There are large empty hotels and boarding houses all over the country....

I read recently in the American Readers Digest that the Japanese send their men to search the countryside and take any girls they can lay hands on....

I do not always agree with your policy or your utterances but one thing I have come to expect from you, Mr Semple, is getting things done. This is a crying problem and we have very little time to do it in—can't we mothers look to you to *do* something in this respect.

.... personally I am of the opinion that **Japan** will endeavour to take New Zealand before she attacks **Australia**, as **Australia** will then be surrounded, and if our daughters are left at the mercy of the Japs what a—well, words fail me. You can't beg this question, and you, if you have any conscience, can't delay dealing with it.... If I had a gun, I'd shoot

my children myself before I'd let the Japs touch them. <sup>527</sup>

This letter was minuted by J. S. Hunter, Director of National Service: 'For carefully drafted reply. This fear can easily spread and a bare statement that action is not considered necessary will not allay simple fear of the [ sic] kind.... The best line to take with such correspondents I think is to say that the danger is fully realised and should the war situation be such as to make action necessary and desirable, the present organisation is being designed to cope with it.'

In the *Press*, some anxious mothers suggested taking children to the hills, complaining also of insufficient trenches and orders to die on their doorsteps. <sup>528</sup> EPS spokesmen replied that they could take themselves off at once or even when 'an alert' was sounded, which would probably be well in advance of 'an alarm' when such movement would not be permitted; hysterical talk about dying on doorsteps did not help. <sup>529</sup> A retired lieutenant-colonel also reproved the nervous, and classed **Christchurch** as a reception area rather than as one to be vacated. <sup>530</sup>

On 6 March the *Christchurch Star-Sun* advocated that discussion of moving women and children from **Lyttelton**, from near the aerodrome, perhaps from near industrial plants, should be completed, and the public should know about arrangements for transport and billeting. Large-scale evacuation was not possible, however, and shelter building should be hurried. Later in the month when some women's organisations, introduced by **Mabel Howard**, city councillor, proposed evacuating about 30 000 women, children and old people, the Mayor thought that such people would suffer more in damp, improvised camps with doubtful sanitation than in any probable attack, and said that most people had no wish for extensive preparations. <sup>531</sup>

It was recognised, however, that about 8000 people lived in four small coastal areas—Sumner, Redcliffs, Mt Pleasant and New Brighton—which would be exposed to attack and which the Army might want cleared at very short notice. Nearly half could go to friends inland, and billets were arranged for the rest, aided by 1000 two-decked bunks which

the EPS made at 20 s 6 d each, plus a large number of stretcher beds, also made by EPS, and stored in the country. Transport was arranged by some 600 to 700 private cars, plus trams, trucks and buses, to **Christchurch**, and thence by train to inland towns. People were told to have their basic necessary possessions wrapped in blanket bundles of about 56lb each. Mattresses should have strong labels of name and billet address tied on, as they might be collected later, and keys could be left with wardens. There were identification cards giving names, original addresses and destinations; there were even arrangements with the Post Office and Social Security to send on mail and pensions. <sup>532</sup>

**Dunedin** did not make special preparations for flight. Many coastal towns which had some evacuation plans on paper as part of their EPS programme before **Japan** entered the war, now made detailed arrangements to send away the aged and infirm, the women and children, leaving the men free to fight off the invaders. The extent of such preparations varied according to the zeal and imagination of organisers. **Wanganui**, for example, was highly prepared, with billets arranged in woolshed camps and other inland accommodation; cars were allotted, collection points fixed, baggage prescribed. Cards were issued, to give directions and to serve as evacuation passports. <sup>533</sup> Local pride helped to make people see such towns as **Wanganui**, Patea, **Gisborne** or Westport as important to the enemy, either as invasion points or because of valuable industries such as mines or meatworks. Some EPS authorities, taking their responsibilities very earnestly, felt that planning must be all-embracing. Thus at Rangiora one man said that Rangiora was a place for receiving refugees; if the Japanese landed they would concentrate on Christchurch. Another argued that there might be a landing at Waikuku or Leithfield and, as an EPS executive in a danger zone, said they should plan for evacuation. <sup>534</sup>

There were also sturdy souls, like Mulholland of the Farmers' Union, who would meet the enemy at all points with weapons to hand, and wanted no talk of running away. But some argued that fighters could fight better untroubled by non-combatants, who should withdraw from

homes near military targets. <sup>535</sup> The Communist party, pointing to street-by-street fighting in **Russia**, claimed that such evacuation, plus deep shelters, did not lead to defeatism. <sup>536</sup>

There was no sustained popular drive for evacuation. Children in England had been sent from their homes in thousands, and only the more cheerful or touching aspects had had much publicity, but

EVACUATION	
Evacuee Name	Address
Mr. G. Berry and child	72 Minor Street
In the event of evacuation following necessary inspection provision has been made for your evacuation with—	
Name	Address
PIPIRIKI HOUSE - PIPIRIKI	
VIA.	WAIMIRIRI
<b>IMPORTANT</b>	
When crossing, via Dublin Street and Anson's Bridge, Stand in middle road, waiting until Acetylene in quantity that you can conveniently transport is empty.	
If transport is not arranged with in direction of your destination and proceed as directed by Traffic Control Officers. Make use of all cycles.	
Orders from Traffic Control Officers and Warden, must be strictly complied with.	
How this card shall still serve as an evacuation pass- port.	
B. R. DARWIN, Controller of Evacuation.	
1st July, 1945.	
This Form of Authority is Not Transferable.	

everyone knew that English conditions were very different; England also had a 'stay put' policy. Few New Zealand parents, except those with very close friends or relatives in the country, thought actively of parting with their children. Mass movements were too unwieldy and expensive without government help, and the government, risking reproaches for possible lost lives, kept preparations in the listmaking stage, leaving further decisions to military experts. Nervousness waned as **Japan's** advance slowed. The idea of dispersal, always present, came to dominate that of evacuation. On 9 September Bodkin, Minister of Civil Defence, said that although evacuation of any area was a remote possibility, the authorities were ready for any emergency. Both evacuation and dispersal would be carried out only on military orders: dispersal was a temporary measure, while evacuation was the definite removal of people in whole areas from their homes to temporary quarters elsewhere. Country towns or rural areas would be liable, not to removal, but to receive people.

That these orders were never necessary perhaps avoided exacerbation of the deep-seated resentment felt by many country people for town-dwelling 'softies', their easy lives upborne by farmers' efforts, if

a letter that appeared in the *Press* on 4 May 1942 voiced more than a solitary opinion:

I look forward to the day when townswomen get evacuated to the country to learn to understand what country women have to put up with—no means of transport except cars in most cases and the same petrol ration as townswomen with trams and buses at their doors almost, no cake shops to run to when out of sugar or too tired to bake; no pictures, concerts, war charity parties or dances, or any form of recreation except heavy farm work to break the deadly monotony of the housework; not even a chance to meet other women at service club teas or camouflage net making etc.; just an endless lonely routine with men out all day and to all hours at night.

While most people remained at home in the alarms of early 1942, many library and art treasures, especially at **Auckland**, were sent into country places or stowed away. The *Dominion* reported on 7 April that pictures from the National Art Gallery had been ‘placed in what is hoped will be safety in an inland town’, while others were cased and stored underground in dry cellars. Its best pictures, then worth about £25,000, removed from their frames and packed in 16 cases, were stored in a concrete room at Hastings until late in 1945.<sup>537</sup> **Wellington** was not entirely deprived of its art collection for all that time. Most of the Gallery building being taken over by the Services, some pictures from the national collection were displayed in an improvised gallery, the tearooms of a central department store, the DIC, with special groupings shown periodically. The seasonal shows of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts were also held there.

From the Supreme Court in **Wellington** five oil paintings of deceased judges were rusticated to safety, along with volumes of English law reports which would be hard to replace.<sup>538</sup> From the **Alexander Turnbull Library** 30 000 of its 80 000 holdings, manuscripts, books and pictures,<sup>539</sup> along with material from the General Assembly Library and the infant Archives section,<sup>540</sup> were sent inland. Ironically, some of this material was stored in **Masterton**. The Parliamentary librarian and



archivist, G. H. Scholefield, inspecting the repository on 25 June 1942 after the previous night's earthquake, wrote:

**25 June (Thursday). Visited Masterton to inspect book repository. Found building just standing, having lost a length of parapet in Chapel Street and a broken cistern pipe freeing water near the door. All the book cases prostrate against eastern wall, but most of the books hanging to shelves. Turnbull collection in Public Trust Office in much the same condition, but books are more likely to suffer from sun than anything else.**

**From Auckland's Public Library rare books of the Grey and Shaw collections, other important New Zealand books and some old and precious English volumes were sent to safety. The Art Gallery sent away its best pictures; historic municipal records left the Town Hall; the Manukau Road statue of John Logan Campbell,<sup>541</sup> father of **Auckland**, was buried in a nearby reserve, along with that of a Maori chief which had previously stood atop One Tree Hill.<sup>542</sup> In the Auckland Museum the Maori section, under skylights, was specially vulnerable. Many exhibits were removed to safety. The inflammable thatch of the meeting house was removed; a canoe 107 years old and the only authentic large one of its kind was too long to be removed entirely, but its prow and stern posts were taken away and over the remainder was placed a structure of large cones of 3-ply wood covered with sandbags.<sup>543</sup>**

****Dunedin**, though more remote from likely attack, also took precautions. In a large vault beneath the Museum, Maori and Easter Island carvings were stored, along with takahe and moa material, a collection of Attic pottery, and manuscripts from the Hocken Library.<sup>544</sup>**

**In Britain fear of losing records had stimulated methods of duplication of which three were available in New Zealand. A document or drawing could be photographed directly on to sensitised paper, or a new application of the reflex method could be used. Both these processes gave copies of the same size as the originals and could be done by junior workers after brief instruction, on apparatus which could be installed in**



offices. The third method, photo-copying on small film, needed special apparatus and skilled operators. <sup>545</sup> In the business world and in some government departments especially at **Auckland** but also in **Wellington** and **Christchurch**, there was much photo-copying of key records. Banks and the larger insurance companies photographed ledger books and other documents; one large company was reported to have compressed its records on to films which could fit into an envelope box, stored safely miles away from the city. <sup>546</sup> Other firms pinned their faith to fireproof and bomb-proof cabinets similar to those proved effective in **London**. <sup>547</sup> In the *Press*, on 21 March 1942, a large advertisement read: 'Are your valuables safe? The Public Trustee has available for leasing specially built, self-contained steel lockers in fire and thief resisting vaults ....'

At the same time, emergency food reserves were arranged. Late in November 1941, at **Auckland**, an EPS supply committee had plans for reserves of wheat and flour, and advised householders to have baking powder and at least 25lb of flour on hand lest bakeries should be temporarily out of action. <sup>548</sup> In mid-December the WWSA listed staple foods, such as oatmeal, wholemeal flour, dried milk and fruits, beans, biscuits, sugar, cocoa, tea, tinned meats and fish, which prudent housewives should keep. <sup>549</sup> Early in February 1942 a Dominion Controller of Supplies and four regional EPS controllers were appointed with authority over all local controllers of food supplies and other commodities such as building timber, transport and electricity, <sup>550</sup> and by March good progress was reported in decentralising supplies of essential foods. <sup>551</sup> Meanwhile, lest a breakdown of normal yeast supplies should disrupt bread making, the Wheat Research Institute advised bakers about alternative yeasts. <sup>552</sup>

Lighting restrictions increased. New regulations coming into force on 12 December 1941 required light escaping from houses, shops, factories and offices to be drastically reduced. All decorative lighting in shop windows was prohibited; no light could be left on anywhere unless there was someone on hand to turn it off if need be; even in areas not visible from the sea, windows must be fully screened in every room in

which a light could appear; all windows in seaside baches must be thoroughly darkened; parked cars visible from the sea must not show any parking lights; officers of the Electricity Department and the EPS had authority to visit, inspect, advise and insist on precautions.<sup>553</sup> A few days later the order to black out at least one room totally in any house or commercial building was repeated and extended, to ensure that there was enough blacked-out space to accommodate all persons likely to be on the premises after dark.<sup>554</sup>

The restrictions now applied to towns as far inland as **Rotorua**,<sup>555</sup> and all over the country blackout trials were held, often combined with EPS exercises, as at Feilding on 18 December, when bridges were supposedly bombed, buildings on fire and families homeless.<sup>556</sup> **Auckland** and **Wellington** had already darkened their nights and held tests during October and November.<sup>557</sup> Now the southern cities followed quickly. **Christchurch**'s first trial on 14 December was thoroughly black, as the many who had not shrouded their windows merely turned off their lights, and some made the most of the new experience. 'Big numbers in Cathedral Square made the night almost as noisy as it was black,' remarked the *Press*, and larrikins shone torches.<sup>558</sup> The local lighting controller gave detailed advice about pasting dark paper round the edges of windows, on varieties of movable screens, the handiness of blackout curtains run on rings and wires over the whole window, and devices such as loops or rings sewn to any heavy dark cloth, rugs, old table covers, even large pieces of clothing, to be hung up quickly on nails or hooks over architraves.<sup>559</sup> Blackout materials were prominently advertised.<sup>560</sup> In a test on 18 January, again the electricity load dropped remarkably, but an aircraft overhead reported many house lights;<sup>561</sup> the next test on 18 February, showed some improvement and room for more, which the authorities ensured by cutting off the lights for one week in 81 offending houses, prosecuting 18 firms, and issuing more than 1000 warnings.<sup>562</sup> There were now 1500 wardens active, indeed, according to some press letters, revelling in activity.<sup>563</sup> After a further test on 29 April, there were only some 500 warnings, 13 prosecutions, and 39 houses darkened, this time for a fortnight.<sup>564</sup> **Timaru** was even sterner,

cutting off all electricity in 30 offending premises. <sup>565</sup>

**Dunedin's** first trial on 21 December was far from perfect, and its second, on 18 January, little better: apart from the 'direct gibe' of a bonfire on **Signal Hill**, many blinds were not dark enough, many fan-lights uncovered and many lights merely switched off. <sup>566</sup> Viewed from the air, **Port Chalmers** was well blacked out, but in all other areas the trial was declared a failure of the first magnitude; the city was visible from 15 miles off. <sup>567</sup> 'If it was'na weel bobbit, weel bobbit, weel bobbit, If it was'na weel bobbit, we'll bob it again', said the *Evening Star*, quoting a Scottish song. <sup>568</sup> The next attempt, on a darker evening late in March, was more satisfactory, though in two suburbs where the alarm sounded too soon there was confusion, with street lights still on; a coloured signal lamp betrayed the railway station. <sup>569</sup>

There were now official blind-drawing times, which grew earlier as summer passed into autumn and winter, published in newspapers. <sup>570</sup> Places with big windows, such as technical colleges and universities, reduced the number of rooms in use and faced up to the expense of blacking out the remainder. <sup>571</sup> Skylights in factories and workshops were difficult; lighter grades of sisalkraft were used in some cases, <sup>572</sup> and in others cowlings were fitted over the lights or they were brought down to near the machinery and away from the skylights; sometimes the skylights were painted over, making them useless in daytime. <sup>573</sup> Apart from sky glow and lights visible from the sea, total factory darkness was not demanded. The Dominion Lighting Controller ruled that factories working at night had to provide sufficient blacked out space for those who in emergency had to remain at work, with the rest dispersing and switching off their lights; if the whole plant had to continue working then complete blackout screens must be provided. <sup>574</sup>

**Wellington's** third test on 23 February, combined with a practice by the fire services, was its best yet, although car lights, even on EPS cars, remained a problem. Many householders were told that their screenings left straying chinks, and Army headquarters was a conspicuous and

high-handed offender. Many people went outside to view the effect, and among several hundred gathered about the Manners Street–Willis Street corner there was singing. <sup>575</sup>

Acceptance of the blackout settled firmly, aided by prosecutions. These were fairly widespread. Seven Aucklanders were prosecuted on 23 January, with fines ranging from £2 to £6, and seven more a week later. The first prison sentence was given on 6 February 1942, with a repeated offender jailed for the weekend until 7 am on Monday, in time for his work on the waterfront. <sup>576</sup> Hundreds of householders found wardens on their doorsteps, complaining of errant gleams or of windows forgotten in little-used rooms. As in England, wardens came to be known as blackout wardens; some were understanding, some officious; there was mounting worry if one's name were taken, for future slips could mean trouble.

Car light restrictions were a persisting difficulty. Apart from only parking lights being allowed in sea-facing areas, regulations required that one headlight must not exceed seven watts, and that the other should be tilted downwards eight inches for every ten feet of beam (adjustments which tended to wear off). Non-compliance was rated dangerous because, apart from any possible enemy, all eyes in the prevailing darkness were very sensitive to glare and accident risk was high. Although there was much less driving, traffic authorities at **Auckland**, for instance, commented that motorists were prosecuted every week for lighting faults. <sup>577</sup> In July, of 61 traffic cases heard by an **Auckland** magistrate, more than 40 concerned lights, with fines of from 20 s to 30 s; the magistrate warned that these would rise if offences continued. <sup>578</sup>

Japanese submarine action in the Tasman, raiding **Sydney** <sup>579</sup> and sinking several ships in the first week or so of June 1942, intensified lighting restrictions and renewed vigilance from wardens. Service authorities, particularly anxious to avoid ships being silhouetted against a lighted background, insisted on coastal city street lights being turned off. As this involved all lights on certain wiring circuits, some areas not visible from the sea were lightless. While inconsistency was heightened

by the wharves themselves where work was going on at all hours continuing to be brightly lit, harbour boards claiming that they could be darkened instantly in emergency. The cities were full of soldiers, home forces, now at top mobilisation, being augmented by thousands of Americans; darkness promoted unaccustomed candour in both amatory behaviour and excretion. Molestation and bag-snatching were further risks to worry women whose work did not begin or end in daylight.

The *Evening Post*, while dismissing the repeated complaint that the darkness was a device to save electricity, pointed to anomalies and hazards: 'Such streets as Manners Street and Cuba Street are dead black, filled with voices and footfalls, until cars and trams come along and break the blackness, and suburban roads—some with paths and a lot without—need a torch or extraordinary circumspection'. Round the hills house lights were as bright as ever behind thin blinds and the headlamps of cars could be seen for miles, while what sky reflection had been saved from street lights had been multiplied several times by new wharf lights. Accidents had been few because pedestrians knew that they could take no chances, and that if they did not have to be out it was wiser to stay at home. Street behaviour had been good, but the streets in the morning were 'not as clean as they used to be, by a long run'. Some pavement lighting in the centre of the town would be the cheapest police force and discourage unpleasantness likely to increase.<sup>580</sup> Civic authorities and tram men pleaded with Service chiefs for more light,<sup>581</sup> but on 23 July the Minister of Civil Defence said that circuits must remain switched off till the lights which would offend could be more heavily screened, which would take some time. A few days later, however, the simpler method of removing such lights from their sockets and switching on the remainder was under way.<sup>582</sup> Pre-*Sydney*-raid visibility was soon restored to about 80 per cent of *Wellington*'s streets, though areas verging the port and hill suburbs overlooking it remained in Stygian gloom;<sup>583</sup> *Auckland* took a like course.

These steps presaged the beginning of the dawn. It was announced on 29 July 1942 that the *War Cabinet* had decided that, to lessen the

total blackout burden, inland areas could revert to pre-war lighting, provided that their sky glow was not visible ten miles out to sea; in a coastal strip, three to twelve miles wide according to topography, lights visible from sea and harbours had to be blacked out or screened. More sky glow would be permitted, allowing some increase in street and exterior lighting. New regulations were gazetted on 20 August. Coastal towns were still firmly darkened: for instance, at **Whangarei** the borough council, disturbed by nuisances in telephone boxes and happenings in doorways and recesses in the main street, proposed under-verandah lights, but the Dominion Lighting Controller would not allow this; instead civilian and military police were increased. <sup>584</sup>

With no more Tasman raids and the news permitting more optimism about the **Solomons** than events there really justified until mid-November, impatience with the coastal blackout grew. This was heightened at the start of November by the **New South Wales** Minister for National Emergency, R. J. Heffron, <sup>585</sup> who declared that the brownout was the brain-child of brass hats who had refused to admit the error of their ways, but he intended to fight unceasingly for a relaxation 'of the present intolerable darkness that hinders instead of helps, the vigorous prosecution of the war.' <sup>586</sup> Public response to the blackout demands was flagging. <sup>587</sup> The *Auckland Star*, on 12 November, wrote of the widely held belief that the continuous brownout could now be relaxed. Already wardens had been advised that, in areas not facing the sea, less strictness was needed, but some entirely disregarded this suggestion. They said outright that having secured a close observance by drawing attention to every infraction, they would not permit the slightest relaxation. Meanwhile more open-minded wardens, noting the current of the war, interpreted their instructions with some liberality. The result was a 'patchwork of dark and twilight all over the city'. The restrictions, pronounced the *Star*, had become 'an inconvenience to everyone who stays at home, a danger to everyone who goes abroad at night, and they serve no apparent useful purpose.'

There were complaints of officious wardens and refusal to admit



futility. <sup>588</sup> Also, although these did not get much publicity at the time, there had been many minor accidents, and some not minor, through tram passengers alighting too soon, unable to see whether the tram had actually stopped. <sup>589</sup> **Auckland**'s coroner was to say on 8 February 1943 that the brownout had taken a fairly heavy toll of life, and so many minor accidents had been caused by falls and collisions in darkened streets that even a hit-and-run raid by an aircraft might have caused less personal injury. <sup>590</sup>

On 8 December 1942 **War Cabinet** announced that, except at **Auckland** and **Wellington** where the degree of relaxation had yet to be determined, lighting restrictions, along with firewatching, would be suspended, to be reimposed if the **Pacific** situation worsened. Regulations at the end of December confirmed that, except in certain areas in **Auckland** and **Wellington** visible from the harbours, windows could be uncovered and lights returned to normal, provided that there was someone at hand to turn them off if necessary; likewise car lights were restricted only within certain harbour and sea commanding areas.

**Christchurch** began taking the shields from street lights at once, beginning in Cathedral Square, <sup>591</sup> but other cities and towns were more cautious: shrouding might be reimposed, and no one wanted to remove paint or shields only to replace them. **Auckland**'s transport board, on its own initiative, at once restored normal lights on trams, and their glowing windows on New Year's Eve gave an air of pageantry in the still darkened streets. <sup>592</sup>

By mid-February 1943 most of **Auckland**'s street lights, except those in harbour areas, had been restored, <sup>593</sup> but in **Wellington**, although neon signs in commercial buildings made flashing inroads on the gloom, shrouds had not been taken from street or tram lamps, though in some trams interior shades had unofficially disappeared; <sup>594</sup> shortage of labour for careful removal contributed largely to the delay. <sup>595</sup> Meanwhile **Dunedin** authorities, warning against discarding blackout materials, held a trial on 23 March and promised more. <sup>596</sup>



By the end of May, further regulations brightened even **Auckland** and **Wellington**, though it was repeated that attack was still possible: lights must not be left unattended and people must be prepared to black out if the sirens sounded. Said the *Auckland Star*.

Of the dim-out itself nothing remains but a prohibition on lights which cannot be switched off in a moment, and unhappy memories of darkened streets, of increased traffic dangers, and of better cover by night for the lawless. The traffic dangers involved were considerable; the restrictions were in no small measure responsible for the fact that while petrol restrictions reduced street traffic to a skeleton, there was no proportionate decrease in the actual number of accidents. <sup>597</sup>

Fire was obviously a main hazard. Incendiary bombs could start many small fires which might grow rapidly into a conflagration. City commercial and industrial areas had many buildings of wood, or of brick with wooden floors, and they were largely deserted at night: **Auckland's** commercial area, for instance, had fewer than five persons to the acre. <sup>598</sup> Regulations in October 1941 had directed owners of city buildings to install fire-fighting equipment, and occupiers to serve as fire guards. On 13 December this came into force more urgently: owners must provide for each floor at least two 20lb bags of sand (costing 9 d each) and a bucket pump (£3 to £6) with a hose and spray nozzle. Such pumps were made locally but were at first very scarce and people were told to improvise with any sort of garden pump. Inflammable clutter that might hinder access to a bomb should be cleared from attics and upper floors. Occupiers must arrange to have fire guards, of three men per bucket pump, living within 15 minutes' walk of their building, ready to report there when an alarm sounded. There should be one man or more, according to the size of the building, on firewatching duty 24 hours of the day, which effectively meant during all non-working hours. Each of the watchers would do about 12 hours a week, without pay; management would provide sleeping accommodation and refreshments. <sup>599</sup>

In the four main cities, EPS authorities appointed firewatching

committees and organisers whose arrangements varied from place to place. Generally, however, in each building or group of small buildings, a staff member was appointed fire organiser, arranging rosters and sending his lists to the central body. For male staff not in the **Home Guard** or in key EPS work, fire duty was compulsory, and there were penalties for non-performance, a fine of up to £50 or three months in prison. Women were invited to volunteer.

An incendiary bomb could be extinguished easily in its first two minutes of burning. Therefore it was originally prescribed that watchers should be able to patrol their whole area every two minutes where floors and ceilings were fire resistant, while where they were of wood this two-minute patrol should include ceiling space; there should be one extra person for the top floor of every building with a ground floor of more than 2000 square feet. Clearly this would require much organisation and many firewatchers. **Auckland's** Organiser hesitated to lay down hard and fast rules,<sup>600</sup> but elaborately detailed instructions along these lines appeared in **Dunedin** and **Wellington**.<sup>601</sup> The patrol system would operate only in actual emergency, hence the condition that reinforcing fire guards must live within 15 minutes' foot travel,<sup>602</sup> while on the site one man, or more, according to the size of the building, was supposed to be awake at all times, ready if need be to arouse the others and admit reinforcements.<sup>603</sup>

There was considerable lethargy about embarking on this ocean of organisation and lost sleep. By the start of February, in Wellington, the first step of appointing an organiser had been taken in only about 500 of the 3000 buildings concerned,<sup>604</sup> but on 20 February, after the fall of **Singapore**, local regulations obliged these organisers to arrange for continuous watches at two-minute patrol strength during an alarm; on 17 March a skeleton service began.<sup>605</sup> By mid-April, **Wellington's** grand total of watchers, including women, was 11 875, in 549 buildings or groups of buildings, with 1319 on duty each night;<sup>606</sup> and by the end of the month weekly instead of nightly duty was being adopted to stretch manpower.<sup>607</sup> Three months later V. E. Hampson-Tindale,<sup>608</sup>

**Wellington's** organiser, made a realistic appraisal: 50 per cent of the buildings concerned had a first-class service, 30 per cent were more or less satisfactory, 20 per cent ranged down towards gross negligence. The system was still 'as full of holes as a colander', but having all buildings manned was safer than block or post watches. There was talk of the futility of sleeping guards, but men who worked must sleep, and they would be alert if danger were imminent. Watching was futile or valuable according to the attitudes of the watchers themselves; they needed not detailed regulations but common sense, initiative, and willingness to make the scheme efficient. <sup>609</sup>

On 7 February, **Auckland's** Mayor, exasperated by inaction, ordered services to be fully organised by the 19th, when inspection by block wardens would begin. The continuous watch was to be strong enough, with an equal number of reinforcements arriving in an alarm, for two-minute patrols; compulsory duty would not be more than 12 hours a week, or one week in 11; <sup>610</sup> businessmen were encouraged to devise group firewatching schemes among themselves. <sup>611</sup> As more men were drawn into the forces and the Home Guard, fewer were available for firewatching. It was clear that, lacking transport, extra men could not in an attack arrive within 15 minutes. In June it was decreed that firewatchers should spend the nights of one week in four on their work premises, doing other EPS duties in the rest of their time. <sup>612</sup> In some buildings, especially those staffed mainly by women, the shortage of manpower was acute: the *Auckland Star* of 1 July instanced a four-floored building which by the rule needed 32 men but had only three available. It was possible to apply for outsiders, but businessmen were reluctant. One wrote that in small stores, stock and cash 'will for 112 hours a week be at the mercy of complete strangers. When will the authorities work on practical lines?' <sup>613</sup> Access remained a problem throughout firewatching. Keys were supposed to be given to building organisers in sealed packets, to be opened in an emergency, but this did not fully reassure proprietors, and in a real raid the watch would have had to work in unfamiliar places. <sup>614</sup>

In some buildings women helped notably to fill the rosters. Initially they were supposed to do daylight weekend duty and the early evening shift between 5.30 to 9 pm in buildings where the fire risk was low. <sup>615</sup> Some dressed for the part, like the girls at Ballantyne's, **Christchurch**, in battle-dress style blouses and roomy slacks. <sup>616</sup> In practice, many women took their turn at all-night duty. Dr Scholefield recorded on 31 January that at **Wellington's** Public Library women firewatchers in groups of four were sleeping-in, one being constantly alert. <sup>617</sup> Marie Bullock <sup>618</sup> was one of four girls in the *Listener* office who played bridge and stayed the night. 'It was rather a giggle, but we were there, waiting for bombs', she recalled in 1970. Some groups were zealous; there were 70 volunteers from the DIC building, and girls from the dental clinic took charge of three buildings entirely and one partially. <sup>619</sup> In other places response was poor, resulting in long shifts at short intervals, as complained one woman who served from 9 am to 6 pm on frequent Sundays. <sup>620</sup>

As it was clearly advisable that normal life should be disrupted as little as possible, the government agreed to the Federation of Labour's demand for a two-hour break, time to go home for a meal, between knocking off work and starting firewatch. <sup>621</sup> It was also clearly necessary, for the sake of their normal work, that watchers should sleep as much as possible. Folding beds and stretchers were rapidly devised and advertised, <sup>622</sup> along with such other comforts as a 'good used radio', <sup>623</sup> and small electric cookers for the toast and soup and sausages that would contribute to vigilance, comfort and morale. <sup>624</sup> At first it was proposed that the night would be divided into shifts of, say, two hours, during which one or two would remain awake patrolling the building hourly, while the others slept, <sup>625</sup> but such demands soon subsided. Even at **Auckland**, supposedly most vulnerable, it was officially stated early in March that the patrol system was not necessary as yet: watchers would take their rest at their work places, on hand in case of emergency, but if things grew worse patrols might be needed. <sup>626</sup> By July the general practice was for all members of a team, having familiarised themselves with their post, to make up their beds and go to sleep. <sup>627</sup>

The Wellington Organiser explained that until raiding started, a continuous watch would benefit only the insurance companies; the purpose was to have enough fire fighters immediately available inside familiar city buildings if bombs fell. <sup>628</sup>

Although firewatching might be taken as lightly as possible, over months it added a good deal to fatigue. At least one doctor regarded it 'as one of the chief causes of sickness and absence among a certain class of workers'. <sup>629</sup> Apart from the tedium of extra travelling, of evenings and weekend days spent in offices and factories, of improvised beds, of lonely wives and children, there were also some complaints about workers being required to guard city property, unpaid, while their own houses and families might be in danger, and while owners merely provided equipment. <sup>630</sup> On the other hand, some EPS organisers at **Whangarei** complained that firewatching was an overpopular 'racket' for avoiding other duties. <sup>631</sup>

There were a few warning prosecutions for refusal. At Wellington, for instance, two men who refused roster changes at Easter were fined £5; <sup>632</sup> the magistrate who fined the first three at **Auckland** £2 10 s said that if there were many such charges the fines would rise steeply. <sup>633</sup> **Auckland University** arranged to fine shirking students itself. <sup>634</sup> There were also a few reports of normal fires quickly reported or quenched by firewatchers and through buckets of water being handy. <sup>635</sup>

Only at **Auckland** and **Wellington** were buildings attended nightly and at weekends for most of one year. Small towns installed equipment, allocated watchers and waited to go into action when instructed by the government. **Christchurch** and **Dunedin** decided that once equipment was ready and rosters arranged, occasional musters to stations and practice in handling the gear would suffice; actual watching would not be needed till the authorities saw danger looming more closely. At the end of January, Mayor Andrews of Christchurch said clearly that the original proposal for a permanent patrol had been abandoned; equipment and rosters should be prepared, and fire fighters trained, but he expected a warning period of at least some hours in which the guard could

On 4 March, as **Java** fell, **Christchurch** businessmen were reminded that they had to have equipment ready, rosters posted, buildings cleared of waste material and arrangements made for sleeping and refreshments. Within the EPS, fire guards for the commercial parts of the city had been appointed, with five area organisers and 130 section officers, who were visiting every business block to advise and check that all was in order, including sleep-in arrangements. <sup>637</sup> A three-day trial, ending with an EPS test and blackout, took place at the end of April. Most firms had acquired bedding, but the rest could not then buy blankets and asked watchers to bring their own. In each group a single watcher stayed awake for a three-to-four hour shift, while others slept, most firms giving time off to compensate. In general there was satisfaction with arrangements. <sup>638</sup> The *Star-Sun* on 25 May noted that some of **Christchurch's** fire precautions could be seen from the top of a high building: buckets and large containers of water were everywhere, along with hoses; ladders had been placed to give easy access all over roofs and many firewatchers' look-outs had been constructed.

**Dunedin**, between Frederick and Market streets and east to the waterfront, was at first divided into 84 blocks, each of one large building or groups of smaller ones, and with fire brigade advice it was decided how many watchers and what equipment would be needed. <sup>639</sup> The first trial, lasting five days, began on 7 June, as news came of victory at Midway. By then the city area was organised in 150 groups of one or more business houses, with 24 firewatchers attached to each (making 3600) and 150 more men on premises outside the main area from **Port Chalmers** to **Mosgiel**. In each group of 24, a senior man was appointed to arrange rosters and pass on to the team what the fire brigade had taught him, while firemen checked equipment. During the trial four or more from each group were on duty nightly, sleeping on the premises or close by: some employers, unable to muster bedding, had to put up watchers at nearby hotels. The trial was rated satisfactory, with minor failings. <sup>640</sup>



In the lull that followed the Coral Sea and Midway battles, only the vigilant or well informed were aware that **Japan** was extending its hold on the **Solomons**, until 3 August when it was made public that for some weeks past **Japan** had been building bases at **Tulagi** and **Guadalcanal**. A few days earlier the National Service Department, through the Dominion Fire Controller, ordered that **Christchurch** and **Dunedin** should begin regular nightly watches. There was consternation and resistance in the southern cities. With firmness Mayor Andrews stated: 'We are not having a continuous fire watching service in **Christchurch**, at least for the present. It can't be done. We simply have not got the personnel.' **Christchurch**, he said, differed from other centres in having residential areas close to the heart of the city, so that firewatchers could be at their posts within the few minutes' warning that the authorities had always promised; the general system was very efficient and many of the large firms already maintained a continuous service. <sup>641</sup>

At **Dunedin**, a resentful group of business men arranged a meeting to propose that the cost of bedding should be shared between owners and tenants, or preferably be borne by the government, and that there should be paid auxiliary firemen instead of voluntary firewatchers. The meeting was prohibited by the police: it was an offence to attempt to interfere with any instruction given by the National Service Department or its agents. <sup>642</sup> On account of an influenza outbreak, the night watch programme was postponed till 17 August; and the Mayor, A. H. Allan, <sup>643</sup> recollecting that the regulations required him, as chief warden of his city, to introduce a continuous firewatch if so directed by the Minister, decided to wait for such a direction. <sup>644</sup> The Minister decided to postpone decisions over **Christchurch** and **Dunedin** until two visiting British experts could visit those cities and advise. <sup>645</sup>

**Christchurch** promptly had another trial, calling on all concerned to make it a success, lest permanent watching ensue. <sup>646</sup> This trial showed that some owners still had not supplied the necessary gear, and that there was some carelessness such as hoses not being attached to taps and buckets not filled, but arrangements were declared as good as they



could be under non-emergency conditions. <sup>647</sup> On 22 October it was announced that the position disclosed was so satisfactory that the continuous firewatching trial proposed for that month was not necessary. <sup>648</sup>

In Wellington opposition to firewatching was growing. In August, Harbour Board employees questioned its value and spoke of fatigue. <sup>649</sup> A letter in the *Dominion* of 12 August expressed some of the discontent: the **Pacific** situation did not warrant continuing the 'present farce of top-heavy over-organisation'; to meet the present small threat of bombing, a street-by-street patrol would suffice.

One plain fact is that unless the enemy seizes **New Caledonia** and **Fiji**, northern New Zealand, and still less **Wellington**, is not within a coo-ee of his land-based bombers. Another is that the Jap is hardly fool enough to waste what remains of his diminished carrier strength on tip-and-run errands of doubtful military value ...If the war develops badly down here we shall have warning enough. Meanwhile the new Minister of Civil Defence would perform a public service if he ordered the modification of a fire watch that has outlived its plausibility. <sup>650</sup>

A deputation from a Town Hall meeting told the Minister of Civil Defence that in the changed **Pacific** situation the present system was unnecessary, besides being inefficient, with watchers not properly trained and regulations and equipment circumvented. <sup>651</sup> Bodkin replied with 'confidential information'; <sup>652</sup> he spoke of careful planning with Service chiefs and of intended improvements; he said that the prevention of even normal fires was in the public interest as goods lost could not now be replaced, and stressed that the fundamental purpose was to have people actually in buildings if bombs fell.

Perhaps Bodkin's 'confidential information' was too discreet; the critics were not persuaded that the war situation had deteriorated from that indicated earlier by Service chiefs. Another meeting on 7 September held that current firewatching was no longer necessary, was a social and economic burden and, further, 'we feel that our legs are being pulled and

that we are just acting in an unpaid, unofficial capacity for the insurance companies'. <sup>653</sup> Another argument was that if bombs fell on some of the old wooden buildings while watchers were asleep in them, they would be lucky to save their lives, never mind putting the fire out. <sup>654</sup> The charges of equipment evasion were endorsed by the Wellington Organiser, who said that recent inspections had shown watchers had good reason for complaint when they were called to buildings which did not have the prescribed tools; some owners had done very well, others had taken the least possible action: this could not and would not continue. Safety measures had lately been improved by putting in knotted rope escapes, and ladders or duckwalks over roofs. Many complaints about quarters could be met by watchers themselves sweeping floors daily and mopping them at weekends. <sup>655</sup> A long article in the *Evening Post* on 29 August said that while firewatching designed to meet a British-style Blitz had been necessary earlier, such an attack in the greatly improved situation was now a manifest impossibility, and that the war would be won not by effort fruitlessly expended on purely defensive measures in New Zealand, but by increased striking power: sending forth more soldiers, working munition plants 24 hours a day, salvaging scrap material, growing vegetables. <sup>656</sup>

In Auckland also the months of waiting for something that did not happen had produced feeling that firewatching was unnecessary, ineffective and a farce. 'I go on duty at 7 p.m. of an evening and sleep on the premises till the caretaker calls me next morning,' wrote one watcher. Some watchers merely kept a farcical appointment with the caretaker in the morning. <sup>657</sup> Late in October, **Auckland** businessmen and EPS organisers, aware that the existing scheme demanded too much manpower and was not practised in many buildings where it was required, tried to arrange for fewer watchers to be inside buildings; apart from tackling fires themselves, they would open doors to mobile patrols that would report to EPS blocks in a raid alarm. <sup>658</sup> Meanwhile, as another *Evening Post* article stated on 25 October, watchers continued to turn up, thousands of them, every night, all day on Sundays, and on Labour Day, bored till bedtime and grumbling, but more about farce and

futility than attendance.

During November complaints continued to come from sources such as the Auckland Chamber of Commerce <sup>659</sup> and the Mayor of **Wellington** who argued that continuous firewatching by tired men was unnecessary because the organisation had reached efficiency. <sup>660</sup> The southern cities maintained their resistance to continuous watching though National Service officials visiting them in mid-November insisted that it was necessary. **Dunedin** manufacturers stated that already production was falling because men were physically and mentally exhausted; <sup>661</sup> the *Press* said that though the reasons given by the Minister (mainly the value of having people on the spot to put out bomb fires immediately) were in themselves good, 'the Government has proved many times, and lamentably, that it is easier to see one need and pursue it than to see needs in relation and to give them their relative place in policy.' <sup>662</sup> Mayor Andrews declared again that the **Christchurch** organisation, involving 5570 watchers, had been tested repeatedly and proved 85 per cent effective, while continuous watching since the previous January would have bred staleness and inefficiency. The people of **Christchurch** resented interference from **Wellington** officials and a resentful team was never efficient. 'However, we regard obedience to the law... as essential,' he continued, 'and to maintain this must at times pay the price of obeying arbitrary, irksome, and unnecessary regulations.' <sup>663</sup> The Canterbury General Labourers Union strongly protested against men of advanced years and poor health being expected to sleep in vermin-infested buildings. <sup>664</sup>

At length **Dunedin**, amid scepticism, protest and resentment, began nightly watching on 23 November 1942. <sup>665</sup> At Christchurch, where the issue was complicated by the resignation of many top EPS officials, the Mayor said on 26 November that the government's order had ruined the firewatching system that **Christchurch** had and put nothing in its place; many people were saying that they would take the consequences of refusing continuous watch in all buildings. 'They are as rebellious and resentful as they can be.' <sup>666</sup> Meanwhile, a few days earlier, the **United**

**States** navy had at last won decisively in the **Solomons**. On 8 December, a government order that firewatching was to cease met general joy. The only mourners were 'the many elderly men' who had been quietly installed as paid watchers and who were sorry to lose a welcome source of income just before Christmas. <sup>667</sup>

In addition to the large new items of shelters, firewatching and evacuation plans, all established EPS activities strongly increased after **Japan's** assault. Thousands volunteered, and on 23 January 1942 enrolment in the Emergency Defence Corps, of which the EPS, the Emergency Fire Service and the **Home Guard** were branches, became compulsory for every male of between 16 and 66 who was not an invalid or in prison, etc, or in the military forces; judges, magistrates, clergymen, police and seamen were also exempt. Women were asked to volunteer, and once enrolled they could not resign at will. In the months that followed, as successive thousands of men were called into the forces, there was a vast amount of re-allocating of postings and training. For instance, by June, **Auckland** was facing the prospect of most warden's work being done by women. <sup>668</sup>

Wardens came out of obscurity. There was a 'get to know your warden' movement: notices were nailed on gates, names were published in papers, districts published reports on the progress and imperfections of their various services. <sup>669</sup> **Auckland** adopted a new mass training system for wardens, hoping for more uniformity. <sup>670</sup> There were also complaints of inadequacy, confusion, frustration and lack of practical detail. <sup>671</sup> In newspapers, especially during April, series of official air-raid hints or EPS notices appeared, giving detailed information on every aspect of protection and EPS arrangements. For instance, the ***New Zealand Herald*** of 1 April advised that any house gave some protection against high explosives, much depending on its construction and where one chose to shelter: the more walls and the less window the better; one should sit or lie under a table or a bed with plenty of bedding, screened against glass by sofas etc. The *Press*, 15–28 April, explained about wardens and siren signals, shelters, first-aid, fire precautions, reduced

lighting and total blackout, dispersal and evacuation. Revised instructions on incendiary bombs were also given on a wall sheet issued by the government to all householders. <sup>672</sup>

All over the country, in cities and in small towns, tests were held, of both total EPS organisations and sections thereof. Group members rushed to their posts, the by-standing public was sent to dispersal areas or trenches; children ran home or to their appointed shelter places; make-believe fires were put out, mains mended, the wounded bandaged and borne on stretchers, dangerous areas cordoned. Full scale tests were too disrupting to be frequent. After Auckland's third, early in March, the Mayor announced that there would be no more: the organisation would work if the real thing happened, it was not 100 per cent effective, but scores of full-scale tests would not make it so, and there were private, less expensive ways of improvement. <sup>673</sup>

To add realism in major tests, aircraft often flew low over cities, as in **Dunedin's** first trial, lasting 90 minutes, on 12 April. This rated a full column of description in the *Otago Daily Times*, which may be quoted as being more or less typical of many others:

The peace of a beautiful autumn morning, with the city waking under a soft cloak of smoke and haze, was shattered by the wailing of sirens... and long before the drone of approaching aircraft could be detected, EPS workers were hurrying to perform their allotted tasks.

Medical aid posts were manned, EPS headquarters staff and fire services were standing to, wardens, 'the eyes and ears of the scheme', were patrolling the streets, as were traffic and law and order officers, transport was ready, and all the other sections likewise.

The drone of the planes grew louder, and less than twenty minutes after the sounding of the alarm they were 'in action' over the heart of the city....Diving, banking, and climbing steeply the planes kept up incessant 'attacks' on targets scattered all over the area. It was the most spectacular exhibition of flying the people of **Dunedin** have witnessed,

and it must have brought a clear realisation to many of the horrors and effectiveness of air attacks ....

The scene in the chief warden's office was typical of the smoothness and efficiency of the whole scheme. Messages from wardens were transmitted by telephone or runner to the control room. An unexploded bomb had fallen in Wilkinson Street, Liberton, and the aid post was out of action. Immediately the transport, medical, law and order, works and evacuation sections were advised. The aid post had to be shifted, the danger area guarded, the people evacuated, and the unexploded bomb had to be removed. This information was posted up in simple form on a large hoarding, and on a large map of the area coloured pins were used to show the EPS sections operating at the bombed locality.

Similar reports of damage followed....A high explosive bomb had struck the Ross Creek Reservoir and the Leith Valley was flooded; the Caversham tunnel had been hit and 2000 people were trapped; a plane had crashed at 10 Mayfield Avenue, Wakari, blocking a street, setting fire to a house, and wrecking vital power lines; the city gas works and the Rugby Hotel had been set on fire; Onslow House had been wrecked and its inhabitants had to be evacuated....At one stage the telephone exchange was supposed to have been hit and messages had to be transmitted by runner, but not once did a hold-up or a 'bottle-neck' occur.

... Casualties were presumed to have occurred at each of the 41 aid posts scattered... from [Port Chalmers](#) to [Mosgiel](#). Several hundred casualties were dealt with, and the more serious cases taken by ambulance to the Public Hospital.

Even gas attack was included. A gas bomb had exploded near the south-east corner of the Queen's Gardens, and the anti-gas squad in masks and special oil-skin uniforms hurried to meet 'clouds of noxious-smelling fumes, representing mustard gas and Lewisite'; they decontaminated twelve gas casualties and the ground affected. The ambulance that took the casualties to hospital, with its workers and gear, was also



decontaminated, and further precautions were taken in hospital. Other gas reports were investigated, and an aid station that became contaminated had to be closed down.

Five 'fires' in the city area were put out, the fire brigades and the EFS co-operating most effectively. Firewatchers did not man the buildings but remained outside to show that their organisation was complete. 'Although this part of the major scheme has been in operation only a few months, it was obvious that the area is well covered.' All other sections, transport, public works supplies, evacuation, accommodation, communications, law and order, publicity and records, were involved. The authorities were pleased at the general success and the experience gained; the organisation was not perfect, but further work would eliminate faults. <sup>674</sup>

A not infrequent complaint was that the public did not treat EPS trials seriously. Thus, in a full rehearsal at **Wellington** on 29 April there was a 'tendency to take the whole thing as a joke', and efforts to get people into shelter were resented by some, especially by girls who obeyed instructors and then saw others strolling along uninterrupted because they were escorted by soldiers. Some drivers refused to stop when ordered: 'some drove with determination to theoretical death in spite of being told that the Kelburn Viaduct had been destroyed; others went too fast to be told.' <sup>675</sup> A stern line was taken with a few of the disrespectful: thus at **Te Aroha** a man who was walking along a street when the alarm sounded and who refused to take cover, though twice spoken to by law and order officials, was fined £2 and costs; <sup>676</sup> so was a **Wellington** woman who likewise disobeyed repeated orders on 20 June 1942; <sup>677</sup> a **Wanganui** man, who continued loading furniture bound for a train during a dispersal trial on 9 October, was fined costs. <sup>678</sup>

Transport was difficult. Apart from local body vehicles, the EPS depended on private cars or trucks that were lent or impressed. They were used for training and trials only, being returned to their owners at other times. In many cases owners drove their own cars and trucks on fire patrols, communications and other services, sometimes as



volunteers, sometimes by impressment: for instance, **Auckland**'s taxis with their drivers were impressed to convey key personnel from the city to their posts in the suburbs if an emergency occurred in working hours. <sup>679</sup> Readiness to lend cars was increased by the scarcity of petrol which was entirely denied to private cars from mid-December 1941 till March 1942, and thereafter was limited to one or two gallons a month, depending on the car's size. EPS vehicles received a gallon of petrol in February, to keep them mobile, <sup>680</sup> and free battery charging services were arranged. <sup>681</sup> Sealed two-gallon tins of petrol were delivered to the owners of these vehicles, for use in an emergency, and they had special coupons for further supplies at such times. <sup>682</sup>

Fire fighting was recognised as the most necessary emergency service. <sup>683</sup> District fire patrols, of volunteer car owners with helpers and lightweight fire gear, were increased, as were the truck squads, equipped to work from street hydrants. The government-run EFS, trained for larger fires and using heavy pumps on trailers mainly towed by taxis, was made more professional, with a 24 hour roster and weekly billeting. During working hours these men were rostered to action stations near their places of work. At night, for one week in three, groups in rotation were billeted in boarding houses on the fringe of the business area, with their equipment at hand, ready to turn out as quickly as regular firemen. Those not in billets were allotted in an alarm to suburban duty points near their homes. <sup>684</sup> To increase their skill and experience, those in billets were called out to all fires in their districts along with the regular fire brigades. <sup>685</sup> Fire services were always hungry for workers: by May the EFS in **Wellington** and the Hutt was 485 strong, while EPS units mustered 1000, but 600 and 1300, respectively, were wanted. <sup>686</sup> In June the **Christchurch** EFS was still 77 short of its required 400 men. <sup>687</sup>

As damage to water mains was expected, independent supplies were arranged. At Auckland, following **London** models, several semi-sunken tanks were built, about eight feet deep, of double timber with waterproof material between, bottomed with concrete or puddled clay and with

mains leading to fire plugs in city streets. The first, at the corner of Albert and Cook streets, held 60 000 gallons; there was one behind the Supreme Court, and another in Albert Park held 100 000 gallons. <sup>688</sup> Similar reservoir cisterns were later built at **Hamilton**. <sup>689</sup> At Wellington any large private tanks were sought out, <sup>690</sup> and some 300 000 gallons, ponded in abandoned building foundations in Bowen Street, were increased to 1 million gallons, providing a spectacular reservoir for EFS trailer pumps. <sup>691</sup> Through fire hose leads into salt water mains ('risers') from Jervois Quay, high-powered pumps drew many streams of sea water into canvas reservoirs, whence it was drawn out again by pumps and hoses fanning out over **Wellington's** business area. <sup>692</sup> Similar use was made of the Avon River at **Christchurch**; <sup>693</sup> in the streets of **Wanganui** steel pipes with quickly fitted couplings lay ready to bring water gushing from the river. <sup>694</sup> Steps were also taken to provide emergency drinking water. Thus in **Wellington** some 130 tanks, each holding about 400 gallons, were placed around the city and suburbs. They were filled by tankers with chlorinated water, changed as necessary, under the supervision of a committee of chemists; while nearby streams, at the back of Karori and in Happy Valley, were tested for purity in advance. <sup>695</sup>

Films and photographs had made the helmets of British ARP workers familiar, and New Zealanders wanted them. The era of hard hats on construction sites was many years in the future, the Army's helmets were imported, and there were none for civilian defenders. At Auckland an engineer, H. J. Butcher, acquired steel plate sufficient for several thousand, found a luggage manufacturer to supply linings, and was soon turning out helmets 'ninety per cent effective'. <sup>696</sup> **Wellington** followed, three firms co-operating to make about 2000 a week: the metal was stamped out in a factory that had formerly made radios; linings were made at a slipper factory; painting and assembly done with machinery that was previously used on washing machines. <sup>697</sup> Some of these steel shapes went to Christchurch, where they were painted and lined. <sup>698</sup>

On 10 May 1942, Churchill promised reprisal in kind if gas were used

against **Russia**,<sup>699</sup> and there were occasional reports of the Japanese using it<sup>700</sup> and of the Germans being about to do so.<sup>701</sup> Though New Zealand authorities considered gas attack unlikely, government, industrial and university chemists, especially at Auckland and **Christchurch**, worked to extend knowledge and recognition of gases, and training was extended at all main centres.<sup>702</sup> During March 1942 a **Christchurch** rubber firm began work on a government order for 250 000 masks for civilians. These had a fitted rubber face piece, celluloid windows, a canister with a filter of raw cotton and cotton wool plus government-supplied activated charcoal made from coconut shell, treated so that it absorbed poisonous gases; a valve prevented exhalation through the canister.<sup>703</sup> **Timaru** wanted to make its own masks at 5 s each, and when told by the National Service Department to wait for its share of tested and approved respirators, complained of yet another instance of the smaller communities being badly treated: 'we will probably have to wait until the cities have been supplied.'<sup>704</sup> By June, rubber was desperately short and the official view that gas attack was remote checked the issue of masks to any but front line sections of EPS.

705

Late in 1942, as the **Pacific** crisis began to wane, thousands of gas masks were sent to vulnerable centres. Some centres briskly issued them to EPS workers, as at **Timaru**;<sup>706</sup> others, such as **Wellington** and **Christchurch**, decided to store most of them in depots in the meantime.<sup>707</sup> **Auckland** began issuing, then paused;<sup>708</sup> by March, it had received 60 000 respirators and issued 25 000 of them.<sup>709</sup> The **National Service Department** issued a handbook, *War Gases, Decontamination and Protection Measures*, in August 1942.

The main centres had early decided that, in emergency, all medical care would be arranged through the EPS. There would be no private calls for doctors, even for such civilian needs as heart attack or childbirth. Walking patients would go to the nearest first-aid post, usually in a school or public hall, where there would be a doctor and trained nurses. If a person could not leave the house, a large white sheet should be hung

at the gate or a front window, to attract the notice of passing wardens, who would arrange for medical attention. <sup>710</sup>

In many places the public had been sluggish in producing equipment for first-aid posts and advanced dressing stations; <sup>711</sup> now this was readily provided. A notable example was Kelburn's post, the vacant tea rooms near the top of the cable car at **Wellington**, which was inadequately stocked in December. <sup>712</sup> By the end of January 1942 it was considered ready for anything short of a major operation, with 28 beds and matching supplies, blood donors and transfusion apparatus, a well supplied kitchen and abundant VADs. <sup>713</sup> In Dunedin by mid-1942, schools and halls could, in half an hour or so, be transformed into medical posts, each with 10 to 25 beds made up, plus screens, hot water bottles, kerosene heaters and lamps, medical equipment, sterilisers, stretcher-bearers with improvised ambulances, doctors, nurses and various assistants. <sup>714</sup>

At the main hospitals it was arranged that patients not seriously ill would be moved to temporary hospitals to make room for raid casualties. For this purpose, and also to expose fewer people to bomb risk, admissions were reduced at **Wellington's** public hospitals, where only urgent cases were taken in, and only 440 operations were performed during January compared with 1189 in January 1941. Non-urgent cases were advised to apply to provincial hospitals. <sup>715</sup> Shelters were built in hospital grounds and basements, the moving out of patients was practised, operating theatres were protected against blast, there were emergency supplies of water and of electricity. <sup>716</sup> At **Auckland** two upper wards that were grave fire risks were cleared, patients from three others moved into the corridors, and much glass was covered with protective fabric. <sup>717</sup>

Buildings suitable as emergency hospitals were sought out, beds and equipment and medical supplies stored there, and sometimes minor alterations made. Schools were favoured, but they were not generally taken over, carrying on with their normal work meanwhile. <sup>718</sup> Kelburn's now well-equipped first-aid post in the tea rooms was taken over as a

standing emergency hospital, Kelburn EPS workers having to transfer to the nearby Teachers' Training College. <sup>719</sup> Some hospital centralisation was arranged at both **Auckland** and **Wellington**: many old people were moved from **Wellington** to the Otaki Health Camp, which made visiting difficult, <sup>720</sup> while at Auckland St John's College and St Stephen's College, **Bombay**, were used for like purposes. The crippled children from the Wilson Home at Takapuna, considered a danger zone, were transferred to the new **Onehunga** school. Ellerslie racecourse buildings, in partial use from time to time as a military hospital, could take up to 450 beds. <sup>721</sup>

Appeals for blood donors were strengthened by awareness, gained from British air raids, of the wide usefulness of blood transfusions. <sup>722</sup> Many transfusions were then given directly, but hospitals' supplies of blood, which could be refrigerated for two weeks, and serum, which could be preserved for some months, was built up and donor lists lengthened. At Wellington, the 519 calls on donors of 1940 rose to 942 in the year ended March 1942, and by July there were 1148 donors on call. <sup>723</sup> **Dunedin**'s blood donors increased from 290 in 1940 to 777 in 1941-2, and a further 253 were available for emergency, making more than 1000. <sup>724</sup> Many EPS medical posts had transfusion equipment, and known blood group supplies were available 'on the hoof' from EPS workers.

Identification discs, widely worn in **Britain**, now became an item of worry for New Zealanders. Some Plunket and school authorities alarmingly advised mothers to sew labels into their children's clothing. <sup>725</sup> The Mayor of **Auckland**, hearing that expensive discs were being sold (at 10 s 6 d) and believing that they would soon be compulsory, arranged for silver-plated discs of sheet copper, with inscriptions reproduced from typewriting by a photo-etching process, to be retailed at 1 s each. <sup>726</sup> Army authorities and the 2NZEF Association wanted soldiers' next-of-kin to wear some identification, so that if they became casualties soldiers could be notified. <sup>727</sup> **War Cabinet** finally decided against imposing identification discs by regulation, preferring that the Prime Minister

should appeal for them to be worn as a commonsense precaution. <sup>728</sup> By mid-July more than 20 000 had been sold at **Auckland**, but in **Wellington** they did not catch on: in four months James Smith's sold 1850 and Woolworth's, after selling 2500, withdrew them as sales did not justify the accounting work. <sup>729</sup> The wearing of identification tags was widespread though not compulsory in schools and various sorts were devised, such as a slim wooden label, about two inches by one inch, neatly printed and varnished. <sup>730</sup>

As 1942 wore on EPS reached full, almost blousy, development while retaining some youthful imperfections. Its sections and subsections increased. Several government emergency schemes had been developed to ensure the continuance of vital services such as railways, road services, post and telegraph, electricity and broadcasting. By mid-1942 there were about 6 technical units, quite separate from the municipal organisations, <sup>731</sup> while within the latter subdivisions had proliferated. Throughout, EPS was bedevilled by changing membership: thousands were moved into the **Home Guard** and, as the ballots ploughed on through the 30 to 40-year-olds, many of the most competent disappeared into the forces. This involved tangled chains of re-allocation and replacement, while at team level there was much repetitive training for the benefit of newcomers. There were criticisms, such as:

We are an almost unlimited number of units, each incompetently (with a few exceptions) taught our one special job—police, ambulance, fire patrol, and a score of other jobs, all useful, but only a small proportion likely to be needed. Train all these specials, I say, but also train every member to do every job when necessary. I am a fire patrol, but am heartily sick of the whole thing. I have been taught or shown nothing, and meetings are a waste of time. We should all learn first-aid, fire fighting, traffic control, etc. Suppose I, a fire patrol, find an injured man. Is it not better that I administer first aid than run off to find an ambulanceman? <sup>732</sup>

In Auckland a warden who had served in **Glasgow** and the Midlands



spoke of conflicting orders from headquarters, of changing membership, scanty training of wardens, and a lack of preparedness in civilians that was shocking by British standards; he also spoke of seeming emphasis on saving property rather than lives, with wardens' posts unprotected, of EPS workers in an alarm hurrying to their posts regardless of danger, and of 'serious casualties' bandaged and splinted in the open. <sup>733</sup> There were complaints of wardens' lectures being heavy but without practical details, and of administrative complications. <sup>734</sup>

Tests continued modestly. In cities usually only some EPS sections were involved: thus **Petone** called out its wardens, firemen, works and medical units to deal with unexploded bombs and damage to gas mains, water pipes and people. <sup>735</sup> Suburbs such as Mt Eden or Grey Lynn would have a local blackout, with wardens, fire patrols and law and order men out, and medical posts at the ready. <sup>736</sup> Sometimes realism was induced by bonfires or sound effects, as at Wellington's Eastern Bays where heavy planks dropped from a height gave a mild imitation of bombs exploding, and hosepipe on a lathe turning rapidly against an empty tin simulated machine-gun fire; <sup>737</sup> smoke bombs were placed on city buildings, to give point to the actions of fire services. <sup>738</sup> Sometimes exercises were comprehensive, as when **Hamilton's** business was completely suspended for an hour-and-a-half while under a light drizzle EPS units dealt with supposed bomb damage, fires and casualties, and citizens were thankful that they were not required actually to enter trenches 'on account of the water and mud in them'. <sup>739</sup>

**Christchurch** services were challenged by a hundred unrehearsed incidents when lorries moving through the night announced by gunshots the dropping of white sacks containing descriptions of damage, to be picked up and acted upon; some controllers took 18 minutes to issue instructions, some two minutes, and the average was 5.95 minutes, with experienced men well ahead of late comers. <sup>740</sup>

To avoid interrupting production, tests were usually in the evenings or weekends, while ordinary traffic was not halted, or people hustled into shelters or 'evacuated' from buildings or areas. Such dislocation would



have been irksome, but lack of it, and of large-scale trials, worried some critics who lamented wasted early energy and growing apathy: it was 'drilling everyone but the troops. The sergeants have done wonderfully well to maintain their own interest in the theory of helping the public and the practice of giving their time and energy, and some of them their money, but they know that the public is not being instructed'.<sup>741</sup> The *Dominion* on 27 October said that some district groups had not assembled, let alone practised, for months past, and hundreds of EPS members were in danger of forgetting what little they had learned.

The early stimulus of fear had waned: the shock of **Japan's** attack had worn off, people were used to the nearer war. In April–May it had seemed that the main drive was turning towards **Burma** and **India**; in June the Coral Sea and Midway victories made for comfortable talk about the tide turning and, in the lull that followed, people were not sharply alarmed that **Japan** was thrusting deeper into **New Guinea** and more quietly occupying obscure islands in the little-known Solomon chain. On 10 August came the news of America's attack on **Guadalcanal** and though it was soon clear that this was a slow-moving fight there was little awareness of the narrow American hold. Meanwhile British forces were barely holding the Nazi panzers in Egypt, and Germans were pushing towards Stalingrad, but who could argue that New Zealand's EPS activities would help the Russians or the **Eighth Army**? Leaders demanding effort in the name of urgency and danger were flogging a dead horse as long as the news gave no more than accustomed discomfort, especially with the presence of thousands of Americans giving both assurance and pre-occupation.

In mid-November, when air and naval success at **Guadalcanal** had achieved what the ill-informed majority had prematurely taken for granted, a few long-intended EPS tests proved a rather tame finale. **Auckland's** fourth full-scale effort, with districts from Mercer to North Cape also participating, was held between 6 and 7.15 am on 27 November, with cloud and rain precluding the excitement of bombers overhead; it affected few but its well-warned EPS personnel, who scurried

to their posts in thousands. Indeed, the *Auckland Star*'s 'first and outstanding impression' was that almost every adult male in the city, many women and a large number of boys had some EPS right to be on the streets, and in a real raid too many would have been exposed to injury. The usual incidents with imaginary fire and bomb damage were staged, and more than 400 hospital beds were vacated by shifting suitable patients into temporary quarters in the museum. <sup>742</sup>

After a blackout on 9 November, the *Evening Post* said that Wellington would have been easy to find and that EPS traffic had been immobilised. After three years, regulations still required urgent traffic, in an alarm, to drive behind parking lights covered with two thicknesses of newspaper—'Given a sufficiently long war, this problem will undoubtedly be solved, but until it is, EPS transport at night will be a farce.' Before a general trial at **Wellington** in mid-December it was announced that the public would take cover, but as very few were abroad between 7 and 9 on a Sunday morning, shelters were empty; some wardens 'moved with alacrity, others strolled along', and one called it all a 'complete farce'. <sup>743</sup> **Dunedin** was more steadfast: according to the *Evening Star*, 10 000 willing EPS workers went into action at 6.20 am on Saturday 29 May 1943 and, although the all clear sounded 20 minutes later, it was nearly 9 o'clock before all the incidents were cleared up. On the other hand, **Hamilton**'s EPS, which had been zealous, streamlined itself in mid-November, reducing its 4200 members to 1557. <sup>744</sup>

With lighting restrictions eased and nightly firewatching called off shortly before Christmas 1942, there was widespread feeling that the EPS was finished. In the New Year it was given new direction and its name changed to Civil Defence, and schools of instruction were set up in **Wellington** to give three weeks' intensive training in a revised general personnel course to groups of about 30, drawn from the principal towns. These, armed with the latest gospel on fire fighting, first-aid, resuscitation, unexploded bombs, protection from high explosives, hygiene, stretcher bearing, crowd dispersal and chemical warfare, were

to begin training their fellows uniformly throughout the country. <sup>745</sup> On 27 February a new policy was announced. For the 25 vulnerable centres there would henceforth be fixed civil defence establishments. **Auckland** would have 7500 members, **Wellington** 5250, **Christchurch** 3750, **Dunedin** 3000, **New Plymouth**, **Wanganui** and **Napier** 1200 each, **Hamilton**, **Palmerston North** and **Lower Hutt** 1050, **Whangarei**, **Timaru**, and **Invercargill** 900, **Westport** and **Masterton** 600, and so on, nearly 35 000 in all. They would be allotted to six first-line sections in each centre, wardens, fire, works and medical units each claiming 20 per cent, law and order and communications 10 per cent apiece.

In addition, at the four main centres and the secondary ports, there would be mobile squads, 10 per cent of the establishment numbers, which would train alongside established units and reinforce any of them in a crisis. They would have 30 hours' training in the revised general course, spread over six months. All other EPS members would remain, on paper, in their old units, liable to occasional parades; <sup>746</sup> but in effect they were retired.

In April there was a specialist rescue course, highly technical, involving lifting gear and tackle, rescue methods, ladder, rope and stretcher work, shoring of damaged buildings, demolition, and removal of the dead. This was followed in May by a short specialist course in law and order. <sup>747</sup> Such training would, apart from enemy action, be of value in destructive earthquakes etc, but there was widespread desire to reduce unnecessary service, releasing energy and money for more productive use. In July, **War Cabinet** decided that the new training programme was no longer necessary and that the front line units should be cut back by about 64 per cent, to between 12 000 and 13 000 volunteers in all. These would attend one parade a month in respect of their own particular unit. <sup>748</sup>

Meanwhile some school grounds, parks and open spaces were disfigured by overgrown, waterlogged trenches, open or covered; other school grounds, the basements of buildings and vacant sections were

cumbered with shelters. By August 1943 the **Pacific** war seemed safely distant, and short-lived hopes that the war in **Europe** might be soon over heightened impatience with these encumbrances. But there was no sudden demolition; their position and sturdiness largely determined how long they lasted. Labour urgently needed for productive work could not be spent on their removal, except where they were dangerous or expensive to maintain. <sup>749</sup> Open trenches were the first to go, some quite early in 1943: for instance, those in the gardens of Parliament Buildings, in certain play areas, and some, overgrown and crumbling, that pitted the wasteland of Albert Park, once **Auckland's** pride; <sup>750</sup> most household trenches were already replaced by vegetables or grass.

During the first part of 1943 authority, advised by Chiefs of Staff, required the retention 'of all necessary Air Raid Shelters in a full state of efficiency', <sup>751</sup> especially in the port areas of **Auckland** and **Wellington**. Thus, the Wellington Harbour Board's request to demolish shelters occupying much needed space near the wharves was refused in March, again in August, and not granted till December 1943. <sup>752</sup> Notwithstanding this caution, Air Commodore R. V. Goddard, as early as December 1942, had asked that the protective pinex partitions in Air Headquarters, Stout Street, **Wellington**, should be replaced with glass, to give more well-lit space, stating: 'there is no doubt whatever that the possibility of enemy action against the Dominion has become more remote, and accordingly the precautions which were taken originally are not now warranted.' This was minuted: 'As he is in a better position than PWD to assess the danger of using glass, let him decide.' <sup>753</sup>

By October, shelters were officially rated no longer necessary and removal was sanctioned, <sup>754</sup> but labour shortage was the main factor retaining them. They disappeared piecemeal over the next 18 months. An example of the delay was provided by the log cabin surface shelter in lower Taranaki Street, **Wellington**, which occupied about one third of the roadway: in December 1943, with grass three feet high growing round it, it was booked for early removal; at the end of April 1944, gorse bushes were in full bloom on its roof; in June 1944 the timbering was

coming apart, releasing the rubble filling. <sup>755</sup> Meanwhile, brickwork protecting windows and doorways in some public buildings was removed, restoring much-needed light and air, as in the outpatients' department at Wellington Public Hospital. <sup>756</sup>

By slow degrees the laboriously built impedimenta were whittled away: most of Albert Park was regrassed in the autumn of 1944, <sup>757</sup> trench shelters in the small reserve at Wellington's Jervois Quay–Wakefield Street junction were levelled during April 1944, and in Kent Terrace a month later. <sup>758</sup> In June 1944 at Auckland the Symonds Street–Wakefield Street reserve was restored, soon to be followed by others. <sup>759</sup> Emergency water tanks disappeared at about the end of the year. <sup>760</sup> In the Albert Park tunnel, pride of New Zealand's deep shelters, the timbers were beginning to falter by the end of 1943, and as conversion to a traffic way or a parking area would cost more money and labour than could be spared, tenders for filling it in were, after much debate, sought in February 1945. <sup>761</sup> At about the same time, the solid public shelters in Parliament grounds were unearthed and removed, the power shovel providing lunchtime entertainment for many civil servants. <sup>762</sup> The deep bunker for War Cabinet, built nearby under the main roadway, was to remain, however, till excavated for the carpark in 1970. <sup>763</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *NZ Herald*, 20 May 40, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 17 Jul 40, p. 13

<sup>2</sup> *NZPD*, vol 258, p. 88

<sup>3</sup> The Defence Department's report in May 41 gave the number of trained Territorials as 24 266, with 8200 in the *National Military Reserve*. *A to J* 1941, H-19, p. 2

<sup>4</sup> 4th Reinforcements, more than 7500, sailed between 8 November 1940 and 1 February 1941; 5th Reinforcements, 6288, on 7 April 1941. *Kay, Chronology*, pp. 16–19, 22

<sup>5</sup> eg, *NZ Herald*, 1, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16 May, 5, 20 Jun, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 15 Jul, 2 Aug 40; *Evening Post*, 10, 18, 21 May, 3, 20, 24 Jun 40; *Press*, 28 Apr, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 22 May 40; *Otago Daily Times*, 5 Jul 40; *Southland Times*, 15 Aug 40; *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 11 Jul 40

<sup>6</sup> Deer-stalkers and rifle club members felt that they already had the skill, ability and equipment to be highly useful, and needed only some training and organisation. 'What better equipped men than we to stalk a wily Hun instead of a stag?' asked a writer to the *Southland Times*, 10 Jul 40; *ibid.*, 27 Jul 40; *Evening Post*, 10, 18 May, 24 Jun 40; *Wanganui Herald*, 11 Sep 40

<sup>7</sup> *Greymouth Evening Star*, 22 May 40, p. 7

<sup>8</sup> *Press*, 18 Jun 40, p. 8

<sup>9</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 21, 26 Jun 40, pp. 6, 6

<sup>10</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18 Jun 42, p. 5

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Jun, 9 Jul 40, pp. 2, 10

<sup>12</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Jul 40, p. 9

<sup>13</sup> *NZPD*, vol 257, p. 358

<sup>14</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 31 Aug 40, p. 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Jul 40, p. 7

<sup>15</sup> War History Narrative, 'Home Guard in New Zealand' (hereinafter WHN, 'Home Guard'), pp. 2–5, referring to Nat Service Dept (hereinafter NS) file 13/3/1

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, referring to NS file 13/2/3

<sup>17</sup> Duigan, Major-General Sir John, KBE('40), CB, DSO (1882–1950): Chief of Staff Northern Cmd 1919, OC 1930; CGS and First Military Member NZ Army Bd 1937–41

<sup>18</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', p. 4

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7, quoting a memorandum Army HQ to Dir Nat Service, 31 Jul 40

<sup>20</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 2 Aug 40, p. 8; *Hawke's Bay, Daily Mail*, 7 Aug 40, p. 8

<sup>21</sup> See p. 1068ff

<sup>22</sup> Wilson, Hon David (1880–1977): b **Scotland**; Nat Sec NZ Lab party; MLC from 1937, Leader 1939–40, 1947–9; Min Manpower, Immigration, Broadcasting, Civil Def during WWII; member War Council; NZHC **Canada** 1944–7

<sup>23</sup> Young, Major-General Robert, CB('16), CMG('18) (1877–1953): b **UK**; GOC NZ Military Forces 1925–31

<sup>24</sup> *Evening Post*, 19 Aug 40, p. 4

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 21 Aug 40, pp. 13, 11; *Press*, 22 Aug 40, p. 8. These purposes were reported with more or less detail from other centres during the next month, though allegiance and rumour-checking got little space. Wilson's explanations, eg, *Hawke's Bay Daily Mail*, 24 Aug 40, p. 7, had rather less froth and perhaps more facts.

<sup>26</sup> *Timaru Herald*, 11 Oct 40, p. 6



- <sup>27</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 16 Nov 40, p. 10, 24 Feb 41, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 4 Dec 40, p. 5, 25 Mar 41, p. 9; *Palmerston North Times*, 13 Feb 41, p. 4; *Press*, 21 Nov 40, p. 10, 26 Feb 41, p. 10
- <sup>28</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 18 Feb 41, p. 9
- <sup>29</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 Oct, 17 Dec 40, pp. 10, 6, 31 Jan 41, p. 6
- <sup>30</sup> ‘Answer the Call/Back up the Fighting Forces/Join the **Home Guard**/“Sunk off coast ...400 miles from Dominion”/Smash the Invader/ **Auckland** is in the Danger Zone/We must Defend our City. Only trained men can do this. Don’t wait until it happens...’ *NZ Herald*, 5 Dec 40, p. 12
- <sup>31</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Mar 41, p. 8
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 17, 22 Oct 40, pp. 12, 10
- <sup>33</sup> *Press*, 5 Nov 40, p. 3
- <sup>34</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Oct 40, p. 10
- <sup>35</sup> *The People’s Voice* of 27 August warned: ‘The whole idea is to build up an organisation parallel in structure to the Army, to be partly controlled by the Army and in times of “crisis” to be handed over completely to military control. It aims at introducing the Nazi fashion of civilians having physical drill in the parks. It aims at building up a **Gestapo** to combat the “spreading of rumours” and to provide free (“scab”) labour under the pretext of ensuring effective use of the country’s manpower. *The official personnel will not be elected but appointed* and the local body authorities are to be used to give a semblance of democracy to the scheme at its inception, but after that they will obviously have no control over the function of the **Home Guard**.’

<sup>36</sup> *Press*, 16 Nov 40, p. 10; *Star-Sun*, 12 Nov 40, p. 9

<sup>37</sup> At the beginning of 1914 a widespread strike originating with shipwrights and watersiders jeopardised the export of primary produce and Massey authorised the enrolment of special constables to enforce order until the strike ended.

<sup>38</sup> A. B. Grant, a trade union secretary, said that no Minister could say straight out that New Zealand could expect invasion from a certain country; that would be asking for trouble. Another said, 'If the appeal for recruits has failed so far, then it is because while our speakers are able to go to the factories and tell the people that the **Home Guard** is being formed to counter a possible invasion, their statements are not backed up by statements from Ministers, who say something else.' *Press*, 13 Nov 40, p. 12

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Oct 40, p. 8

<sup>40</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Sep 40, p. 13; *Otago Daily Times*, 30 Nov 40, p. 16; *NZ Herald*, 29 Nov 40

<sup>41</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Oct 40, p. 13

<sup>42</sup> *Point Blank*, 14 Dec 40, p. 5

<sup>43</sup> Chairman Horowhenua County Council, *Evening Post*, 13 Jan 41, p. 6

<sup>44</sup> *Press*, 6, 26 Nov 40, pp. 10, 10

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Dec 40, p. 8

<sup>46</sup> Thus in March 1941 a **Wellington** city councillor said that the uninformative nature of public statements was the root of failure

to respond; surely something definite could be said 'without antagonising other people'. The idea of raiders coming was absurd; British people hated hints and wanted plain speaking. *Evening Post*, 13 Mar 41, p. 6

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Oct 40, p. 13

<sup>48</sup> *NZ Herald*, 28 Nov 40, p. 10

<sup>49</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 Feb 41, p. 8

<sup>50</sup> *Truth*, 30 Oct, 27 Nov 40, pp. 28, 7

<sup>51</sup> Home Guard Circular No 1, 12 Nov 40, quoted in WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 11–12

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>53</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 Dec 40, p. 5

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Dec 40, p. 9, 24 Jan 41, p. 5

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Feb, 30 Apr 41, pp. 9, 7

<sup>56</sup> Home Guard Circular No 1, 12 Nov 40, quoted in WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 11–12

<sup>57</sup> The Lands and Survey maps then current did not show relief or ground cover.

<sup>58</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 16, 34

<sup>59</sup> *Evening Post*, 2 Dec 40, p. 9, 16 Jan 41, p. 11; *Otago Daily*

*Times*, 14 Jan 41, p. 7; *NZ Herald*, 11, 24 Jan 41, pp. 11, 9

<sup>60</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Dec 40, p. 9

<sup>61</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', App IX, p. 118

<sup>62</sup> Figures for 20 Nov & 7 Dec 40 in *Evening Post*, 17 Dec 40, p. 9; for 31 Jan & 28 Feb 41 in *ibid.*, 25 Mar 41, p. 8. Figures for all five dates are in WHN, 'Home Guard', App IX. The total for 7 Dec 40 should read 37 703.

<sup>63</sup> *Evening Post*, 19 Feb 41, p. 8

<sup>64</sup> *Dominion*, 23, 31 May 41, pp. 8, 10

<sup>65</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 Mar 41, p. 5

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Mar 41, p. 10

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Mar 41, p. 8

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 25 Feb, 1 Mar 41, pp. 8, 8, 8

<sup>69</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23, 25, 31 Jan, 12 Feb 41, pp. 6, 11, 10, 12; *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Mar 41

<sup>70</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24, 28, 29 Jan 41, pp. 9, 9, 10

<sup>71</sup> *Wanganui Herald*, 20 May 41, p. 4; *Press*, 7 Feb 41, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 22 Jul 41, p. 8; WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 16–17

<sup>72</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', p. 17 and App XX

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17–20; *Wanganui Herald*, 13 May 41, p. 9; *NZ Herald*, 21 Apr 41, p. 8; *Press*, 6, 18 Jun 41, pp. 6, 4

<sup>75</sup> *The Home Guardsman*, 28 Jun 41, p. 4

<sup>76</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Apr 41, p. 6

<sup>77</sup> For instance, by mid-March the Karori Battalion was getting familiar with the Makara area, using improvised equipment of various sorts, with transport, signals, ambulance, mortar and machine gun platoons, as well as infantry companies. *Evening Post*, 15 Mar 41, p. 11

<sup>78</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 17 Feb 41, p. 6; *Wanganui Herald*, 1 May 41, p. 11

<sup>79</sup> *Press*, 18 Jun 41, p. 4

<sup>80</sup> *Taranaki Daily News*, 11 Feb 41, p. 8

<sup>81</sup> *Press*, 26 May 41, p. 6

<sup>82</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 14 Jan 41, p. 7

<sup>83</sup> *NZ Herald*, 7 Mar 41, p. 6

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Apr 41, p. 13

<sup>85</sup> *Evening Post*, 17 Apr 41, p. 4

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Mar 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 7 Apr 41, p. 6

<sup>87</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 61–3 and App VII

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64–5 and App XII

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 29, 34 and App XII

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68 and App XII; *Otago Daily Times*, 8 Feb 41, p. 5

<sup>91</sup> *Press*, 18 Mar 41, p. 8

<sup>92</sup> eg, *Dominion*, 2 May 41, reprinted in the *Home Guardsman*, May 41, p. 26

<sup>93</sup> *NZ Herald*, 20 Feb, 14, 22 Mar 41, pp. 9, 9, 11; *Press*, 7 Jun 41, p. 3; *Evening Post*, 21 Jun 41, p. 8

<sup>94</sup> *Press*, 16 Jun 41, p. 4

<sup>95</sup> Williams, General Sir Guy (1881–1959): C-in-C Eastern Command 1938–41; Military Adviser NZ govt 1941

<sup>96</sup> *Press*, 16 Jun. 41, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 24 Jun 41, p. 9

<sup>97</sup> *NZ Herald*, 2 Jul 41, p. 8

<sup>98</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Jul 41, p. 6

<sup>99</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, p. 488

<sup>100</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 26–30

**101 *Ibid.*, App XVI, Home Guard Special NZ Army Order 261/1941**

**102 *Ibid.*, App XIV, Operational Control of the **Home Guard**, D. 304/1/1/G, 11 Aug 41**

**103 *Ibid.*, App XV, Training Directive, **Home Guard**, D. 305/1/26G, 9 Aug 41, App XVI, Army Order 261/1941**

**104 *Ibid.*, App XVI, Army Order 261/1941, p. 4**

**105 *Dominion*, 2 Oct 41, p. 9**

**106 *NZ Herald*, 28 Oct 41, p. 8**

**107 *Ibid.*, 31 Oct 41, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 30 Oct 41, p. 11**

**108 *NZ Herald*, 1 Nov 41, p. 8**

**109 *Press*, 26 Nov 41, p. 8**

**110 *Ibid.*, 5 Nov 41, p. 6**

**111 *NZ Herald*, 3 Nov 41, p. 9**

**112 *Ibid.*, 7 Nov 41, p. 7**

**113 *Ibid.*, 15 Nov 41, p. 10; *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Nov 41, p. 4**

**114 *Evening Post*, 12 Dec 41, p. 9**

**115 WHN, ‘**Home Guard**’, p. 36; *Press*, 6 Feb 42, p. 4**



<sup>116</sup> **Press**, 22, 23, 27, 30 Jan, 7 Mar 42, pp. 6, 6, 8, 4, 6; **Star-Sun**, 7 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>117</sup> **Evening Star**, 22 Jan, 16, 27 Feb 42, pp. 6, 7, 2

<sup>118</sup> **Press**, 23 Jan 42, p. 6

<sup>119</sup> **WHN**, ‘**Home Guard**’, p. 37

<sup>120</sup> See p. 463

<sup>121</sup> **NZ Listener**, 23 Jan 42, pp. 6–7

<sup>122</sup> **WHN** ‘**Home Guard**’, App XXI, p. 181, Report by GOC on paper submitted by Committee of Inquiry

<sup>123</sup> **NZ Herald**, 20 Feb 42, p. 4

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>125</sup> **WHN**, ‘**Home Guard**’, pp. 40–1

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 41. The capitation grant was paid to units, not to Guardsmen, for expenses.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, App XXI, p. 181

<sup>128</sup> **NZ Herald**, 11, 27 Apr, 1 May 42, pp. 6, 6, 4

<sup>129</sup> **WHN**, ‘**Home Guard**’, p. 42

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182

**131** *Dominion*, 26 Feb 42, p. 8, *Truth*, 11 Nov 42, p. 9

**132** *Auckland Star*, 6 Mar 42, p. 4

**133** WHN, 'Home Guard', App XXI, p. 181

**134** *Press*, 16 May 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 20 Nov 42, p. 2

**135** WHN, 'Home Guard', App XXI, p. 182

**136** *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 182

**137** A to J1942, H-19, p. 1

**138** *NZ Herald*, 25, 27 Feb 42, pp. 9, 7; *Auckland Star*, 12 Mar 42, p. 8

**139** See p. 345

**140** *NZ Herald*, 23 Feb, 3, 12, 16 Mar 42, pp. 4, 6, 9, 6

**141** *Ibid.*, 16 Apr 42, p. 8

**142** See p. 463

**143** *Auckland Star*, 26 Feb, 12 Mar 42, pp. 8, 9; *Press*, 2 Mar 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 25 Feb, 13 Apr 42, pp. 9, 6

**144** WHN, 'Home Guard', App XXI, p. 184, comment by Lt-Gen Puttick

**145** *Auckland Star*, 2 Feb, 13 Mar 42, pp. 4, 5

<sup>146</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13, 14, 15 Apr 42, pp. 7, 7, 6; *Truth*, 22 Apr 42, p. 8

<sup>147</sup> *Auckland Star*, 2 May, 2 Sep 42, pp. 8, 4

<sup>148</sup> *NZ Herald*, 7 Apr 42, p. 4; *Dominion*, 6 Apr 42, p. 6

<sup>149</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Jun 42, p. 6

<sup>150</sup> *Dominion*, 22 Jun 42, p. 4

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> WHN, 'Home Guard', pp. 51–2, 70, 99

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51, 66

<sup>154</sup> *NZ Herald*, 27 Mar 42, p. 4

<sup>155</sup> *Auckland Star*, 27 Mar 42

<sup>156</sup> Russell, Sir Andrew Hamilton, KCB('18), KCMG('15) (1868–1960): GOC NZ Div 1915–19; Pres NZRSA 1920–4, 1927ff; Inspector-Gen NZ Military Forces, member War Council 1940ff

<sup>157</sup> Lowry, Leonard George (1884–1947): b London, to NZ 1906; with 5th Reinforcements World War I; MP (Lab) Otaki 1935–46

<sup>158</sup> Tirikatene, Hon Sir Eruera Tihema Teaika, KCMG('60), JP (1895–1967): MP (Lab) Southern Maori from 1932; Min representing Maori Race NZ Exec Council 1943–9, of Forests, Maori Aff 1957–60; member War Council

**159** A complete copy forms App XXI of WHN, ‘**Home Guard**’

**160** WHN, ‘**Home Guard**’, p. 183

**161** *Ibid.*; *Auckland Star*, 14 Oct 42, p. 2; *NZ Herald*, 15 Oct 42, p. 4

**162** *Press*, 26, 29 Sep, 9 Oct 42, pp. 6, 6, 4

**163** *NZ Herald*, 1 Oct 42, p. 2; *NZPD*, vol 261, p. 708

**164** *Auckland Star*, 13 Nov 42, p. 4

**165** *Ibid.*, 4, 13 Nov 42, pp. 4, 4

**166** WHN, ‘**Home Guard**’, App XII, p. 136, strength summary at 1 Mar 43

**167** *Dominion*, 15 Mar 43, p. 6

**168** *NZ Herald*, 28 Jun 43

**169** For response to the entry of **Japan**, See p. 326ff

**170** Wood, pp. 85–6

**171** War History Narrative, ‘Emergency Precautions Scheme’ (hereinafter WHN, ‘EPS’), p. 8, referring to IA 178/1, pt 1, minutes of EP committee, 16 Jun 37

**172** *Ibid.*, p. 9, minutes of EP committee, 18 Aug 38

**173** Meanwhile some local bodies had already planned how they would cope with other dangers. The Mayor of **Dunedin** in March 1941 said that three years earlier **Dunedin** began preparing a 'wide and complete scheme' for natural disasters; it was finished in November 1939, and did not consider war. *Otago Daily Times*, 14 Mar 41, p. 4

**174** In June 1940, W. E. Parry, Min Int Aff, told the House that in the main centres 287 persons had been or were being trained and they in turn would instruct others. *A to J* 1940, H-22B, pp. 4, 5; *Dominion*, 24 Jun 40, p. 9

**175** *Taumarunui Press*, 7 Nov 40

**176** *NZ Herald*, 22 Jun 40, p. 12

**177** Parry, Hon William Edward (1878–1952): b Aust, to NZ c. 1906; Pres Waihi Miners Union 1913; Sec Coal Miners Fed 1918; MP (Lab) Auck Central from 1919, Min Int Aff, Pensions 1935–49, Social Security 1946–9

**178** *A to J* 1940, H-22B, p. 2

**179** *Auckland Star*, 22 Jun 40

**180** *Ibid.*, 9 Jul 40, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 18, 25 Jun, 23 Jul 40, pp. 8, 10, 10

**181** *NZ Herald*, 2 Aug 40, p. 9

**182** *Ibid.*, 24 Aug 40, p. 12. When compulsory military service was introduced in June 1940, the **National Service Department** was established, consolidating and extending earlier machinery for controlling manpower in order to maintain essential industry. This function was strengthened in 1942 and 1944 by industrial

manpower regulations and the Department also dealt with military defaulters and conscientious objectors. Emergency Precautions Services, linked with fire-fighting, light restrictions and the provision of air-raid shelters, were further concerns of the Department. *A to J* 1943, H-11A, pp. 2-4, 14-20

<sup>183</sup> Nat Service Circular No 9 of 14 March, quoted in Nash to Hislop, 6 Jun 41, IA 178/8

<sup>184</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Jan 41, p. 8

<sup>185</sup> *Dominion*, 8, 15 Feb, 6 Jun 41, pp. 10, 10, 6 (editorial); *Evening Post*, 19 Feb 41, p. 8 (Stratford Borough Council)

<sup>186</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Apr 41, p. 7

<sup>187</sup> J. S. Hunter to EPS Taumarunui, 8 Oct 41, IA 178/6

<sup>188</sup> These things were learnt by house-to-house canvassing. *Evening Post*, 24 Feb 41, p. 9

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Feb 41, p. 8

<sup>190</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 6 Mar 41, p. 6

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*; *Dominion*, 4 Dec 41, p. 8; *Press*, 7 Nov 41, p. 2

<sup>192</sup> *NZ Herald*, 14, 16 Jun 41, pp. 10, 9

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Jun 41, p. 8

<sup>194</sup> *Dominion*, 14 Feb 41, p. 4; *Taranaki Daily News*, 12, 25 Feb 41, pp. 10, 6

<sup>195</sup> Statement by A. H. Nordmeyer, *Dominion*, 18 Dec 41, p. 8; WHN, 'EPS', Chap XV, pp. 1-4

<sup>196</sup> *Evening Post*, 10 Jan 41, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 27 Feb, 1, 4 Mar 41, pp. 8, 8, 11

<sup>197</sup> *Press*, 3 Dec 41, p. 6

<sup>198</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Dec 41, p. 13

<sup>199</sup> C. W. Lopdell to Nat Service Dept, 23 Jul 42, IA 178/267

<sup>200</sup> WHN, 'EPS', chap VI, p. 2

<sup>201</sup> *Dominion*, 27 Jan, 5, 7, 8, 20 Feb 41, pp. 9, 11, 10, 9 (photo), 3; letters, photograph and insignia sent by Mrs B. Dense of Moana, Westland, to author, Oct 69

<sup>202</sup> *Press*, 7 Mar 41, p. 10; *Evening Post*, 4, 29 Apr 41, pp. 5, 11; *Wanganui Herald*, 13 May 41, p. 8

<sup>203</sup> *Evening Post*, 12 Aug 41, p. 8

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Jun 41, p. 11

<sup>205</sup> *Dominion*, 21 May 42, p. 4

<sup>206</sup> *Press*, 12 Mar 41, p. 10

<sup>207</sup> *Dominion*, 21 May 42, p. 4

<sup>208</sup> See p. 497ff



**209 See p. 550**

**210 *Evening Post*, 11 May 41, p. 6; *Press*, 5 Jul 41, p. 1; *NZ Herald*, 30 Dec 41, pp. 6, 8**

**211 Population 1610, *Yearbook 1942*, p. 53**

**212 *Press*, 14 Apr 41, p. 5**

**213 Population 2760, *Yearbook 1942*, p. 52**

**214 *Taumarunui Press*, 27 Nov 41**

**215 *Evening Post*, 8 Sep 41, p. 9**

**216 *Ibid.*, 18 Sep 41, p. 10**

**217 *NZ Herald*, 3 Nov 41, p. 9**

**218 Population 2690, *Yearbook 1942*, p. 52**

**219 *Ibid.*, 5 Dec 41, p. 8**

**220 *Ibid.*, 14 Nov 41, p. 8**

**221 *Ibid.*, 13, 14, 17 Nov 41, pp. 8, 4, 4**

**222 *Ibid.*, 15 Nov 41, p. 10**

**223 Baker, Alfred James (1881–1961): Asst Engineer-in-chief, Public Works Department 1932–40**

**224 Report of A. J. B[aker], nd[c.17 Jun 41], IA 178/8**

**225 *Ibid.***

**226 *Evening Post*, 24 Jul 41, p. 10**

**227 *Ibid.*, 25 Nov 41, p. 8**

**228 On 5 June Mayor Hislop had publicly complained of government delay in issuing a circular to householders, lack of direction about shelters and of information about subsidies to local bodies, and muddled transport arrangements.**

**229 *Press*, 11 Jun 41, also 12 Jun 41, p. 6**

**230 Calder, pp. 55, 66–7, 112, 243**

**231 Semple to J. Williams, 12 Jun 41, IA 158/238/12**

**232 *Press*, 8 Nov 41, p. 8**

**233 *Ibid.*, 27 Jun 41, p. 10; See p. 564**

**234 *Otago Daily Times*, 13, 14 Oct 41, p. 7, photo**

**235 *NZ Herald*, 28 Nov 41, p. 2**

**236 *Press*, 14 Apr 41, p. 4**

**237 *Ibid.*, 27 Jun 41, p. 10**

**238 *Dominion*, 13 Jun 41, p. 8**

- 239** *Wanganui Herald*, 22 May 41, p. 6; J. S. Hunter, Dir Nat Service, to Min, 30 Oct 41, IA 178/259
- 240** The city population was 120 700; total, with Hutt, etc, 160 500. *Yearbook* 1942, p. 50
- 241** *Evening Post*, 24, 31 Jul 41, pp. 10, 10
- 242** *Ibid.*, 7 Aug 41, p. 8
- 243** *Press*, 4 Nov 41, p. 8
- 244** *Otago Daily Times*, 17 Apr 41, p. 8
- 245** City population 106 800, in total urban area 223 700. *Yearbook* 1942, p. 50
- 246** Mayor Allum, *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 41, p. 8
- 247** Report of EPS conference, 16 Jan 41, IA 178/247; *Taranaki Daily News*, 1 Mar 41, p. 6, reporting from a Nat Service Dept circular
- 248** Surveys dated 15 and 26 August 1941 on IA 178/247
- 249** *Evening Post*, 24 Apr 41, p. 10
- 250** Sec EPS **Auckland** to headmasters, 13 Dec 41, IA 178/247
- 251** *Evening Post*, 26 Mar, 24 Apr 41, pp. 6, 10
- 252** Circular, 26 Jun 41, IA 178/247

**253** Overton, Educ Dept, to Mulligan, Nat Service Dept, 10 Jun 41, IA 178/247/1

**254** *Dominion*, 17 Jun 41, p. 8

**255** *Press*, 6 May 41, p. 5

**256** *Auckland Star*, 15 Sep 41, p. 5

**257** Letter from Mrs R. G. Spooner, *Opotiki*, to author, 15 Sep 69

**258** *Taranaki Daily News*, 11 Jan 41, p. 8

**259** *Evening Post*, 3 Feb 41, p. 9

**260** Imprisonment of up to three months and fines of up to £50 for individuals, with a maximum fine of £200 for a stubborn company.

**261** Kissel, Frederick Templeton Manheim, ISO('49) (1881–1962): Gen Manager Hydroelectricity Dept 1945–8

**262** *Evening Post*, 21, 22 Mar 41, pp. 6, 8; *NZ Herald*, 4 Apr 41, p.6

**263** *Evening Post*, 1 Jul 41, p. 8

**264** *Auckland Star*, 5 Jul 41, p. 6

**265** *NZ Herald*, 13, 22 Mar 41, pp. 10, 10; *Wanganui Herald*, 21 May 41, p. 4

- 266** *Dominion*, 14 Mar 41, p. 5
- 267** *Evening Post*, 23 May 41, p. 14
- 268** *Dominion*, 28 Feb 41, p. 9
- 269** *Evening Post*, 20 Mar 41, p. 17
- 270** *NZ Herald*, 15 Mar 41, supplement, p. 6
- 271** *Ibid.*, 15 Mar 41, p. 6
- 272** *Evening Post*, 14 Mar 41, p. 8
- 273** *Ibid.*, 26 May 41, p. 8
- 274** *Ibid.*, 16 Jun 41, p. 9
- 275** *Ibid.*, 24 Jun 41, p. 6
- 276** *Ibid.*, 19 Dec 41, p. 4
- 277** *NZ Herald*, 18 Mar 41, p. 8
- 278** *Ibid.*, 25 Mar, 4 Jul 41, pp. 9, 4
- 279** *Ibid.*, 27 Mar, 3 Apr 41, pp. 6, 10
- 280** *Press*, 7, 8 Jul 41, pp. 9, 10
- 281** *NZ Woman's Weekly*, 17 Apr 41, p. 1

**282** *Press*, 14 Aug 41, p. 8, also 30 Jun 41, p. 8

**283** *Ibid.*, 16 Aug 41, p. 5

**284** *Evening Post*, 22, 23 May 41, pp. 10, 8

**285** *NZ Herald*, 7 Apr, 14 May 41, pp. 9, 8; *Evening Post*, 22, 23 May 41, pp. 10, 8

**286** *Evening Post*, 30 May 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 16 Jun 41, p. 6

**287** *NZ Herald*, 3 Apr 41, p. 10

**288** *Ibid.*, 18 Mar 41, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 21 Mar, 23 May, 17 Jul 41, pp. 8, 8, 10

**289** *NZ Herald*, 20 Mar 41, p. 12

**290** *Evening Post*, 1 Apr 41, p. 9

**291** *NZ Herald*, 18 Mar 41, p. 8

**292** *Southland Times*, 16 Apr 41, p. 4

**293** *Press*, 26 Jun 41, p. 6

**294** *NZ Herald*, 22, 25 Mar 41, pp. 8, 10

**295** *Ibid.*, 2, 9 Apr, 27 May 41, pp. 12, 10, 6; *Auckland Star*, 22 Sep 41, p. 6

**296** *NZ Herald*, 1, 9 Apr, 41, pp. 10, 13; Report of Wellington

**297** *NZ Herald*, 28 Mar, 3 May 41, pp. 9, 8; *Evening Post*, 12 Mar 41, p. 13; *Press*, 28 Jun 41, p. 10

**298** *NZ Herald*, 4 Apr 41, p. 7

**299** *Ibid.*, 8 Apr 41, p. 6

**300** *Ibid.*, 12 Apr 41, p. 8

**301** *Ibid.*, 5 Apr 41, p. 8

**302** *Press*, 8 Jul 41

**303** *Evening Post*, 17 Jul 41, p. 10

**304** *Ibid.* (Nash); *NZ Herald*, 26 Mar, 7, 21 Apr 41, pp. 7, 6, 6 (Semple)

**305** Hitchcock, Edward (1883–1966): Gen Manager MED Chch 1920–49

**306** *Press*, 14 Aug 41, p. 4

**307** *NZ Herald*, 24 Mar 4, p. 9

**308** *Ibid.*, 1 Apr 41, p. 6

**309** *Ibid.*, 1 May 41, p. 8

**310** *Ibid.*, 30 Jun 41, p. 6



**311** A judge, sentencing a man to two years in prison for assaulting a woman on a Ponsonby street, said that it was the court's duty to protect women in the blackout. *Auckland Star*, 24 Jul 41, p. 4

**312** *NZ Herald*, 23 Jun 41, p. 6

**313** *Zealandia*, 20 Mar 41, p. 4

**314** *Evening Post*, 12 Mar 41, p. 13

**315** *Press*, 19 Jun 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 31 May 41, p. 8

**316** *Press*, 18 Jun 41, p. 8

**317** *Auckland Star*, 27 Sep 41, p. 4 (photo)

**318** *NZ Herald*, 4 Jul 41, p. 6

**319** *Evening Post*, 9, 11, 15 Jul 41, pp. 8, 6, 8

**320** *Ibid.*, 7 Jul 41, p. 9

**321** *Ibid.*, 9 Jul 41, p. 8

**322** *Ibid.*, 12, 25 Nov 41, pp. 8, 8

**323** *NZ Herald*, 6 Dec 41, p. 13

**324** *Ibid.*, 8 Oct 41, p. 6

**325** *Ibid.*, 4 Oct 41, p. 8

- 326** *Ibid.*, 13, 14 Oct 41, pp. 9, 8
- 327** *Ibid.*, 10, 11 Nov 41, pp. 6, 6
- 328** *Ibid.*, 20 Nov 41, p. 6
- 329** *Ibid.*, 21 Nov 41, p. 4
- 330** *Ibid.*, 11 Dec 41, p. 8
- 331** *Evening Post*, 10 Nov 41, p. 8
- 332** *Ibid.*, 4 Dec 41, p. 10
- 333** *Press*, 22 Dec 41, p. 8
- 334** Report of pilot, 17 Dec 41, at 2120–2145 hours, IA 178/8
- 335** *Evening Post*, 5 Jun 41, p. 8
- 336** See p. 483
- 337** Semple to E. Davis, 4 Mar 41, IA 158/238/12, citing the consensus of the conference
- 338** Fraser to Semple, 8 Mar 41, IA 178/259, pt 1
- 339** E. Davis to Semple, 18 Feb 41, IA 158/238/12
- 340** Semple to Davis, 4 Mar 41, *ibid.*

**341** *Evening Post*, 19 Feb 41, p. 8

**342** *Ibid.*, 20 Feb 41, p. 8; *Dominion*, 20 Feb 41, p. 9

**343** Nash to Hislop, 6 Jun 41, IA 178/8

**344** Auckland Suburbs LRC to F. Jones, 25 May 41, IA 178/3/6; Westmere Labour Party Branch to Nash, 19 May 41, and NZ Locomotive Engineers, Firemen and Cleaners Association to Nash, 29 May 41, both IA 178/259, pt 1

**345** NZ Institute of Engineers to Nash, 28 May 41, IA 178/259, pt 1

**346** *Auckland Star*, 27 Aug 41, p. 5

**347** *Ibid.*, 1 May 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 1, 7, 9, 16 Apr 41, pp. 10, 10, 13, 10

**348** More regulations in late October caused property owners in vulnerable areas to install bucket pumps and to train people occupying buildings in their use.

**349** *Evening Post*, 8 Jan 41, p. 9

**350** Hunter Report to Semple, 30 Oct 41, IA 178/259, pt 1

**351** An interim report of the **Wellington** committee said that of 1558 buildings, from the Railway Station to Abel Smith Street and Buckle Street, only 13.5% would be of any value, and in the main would protect only their own occupants. If Japan entered the war, which could happen at any moment, there would be immediate demand for adequate protection and a frantic rush to achieve in a few weeks results which must necessarily occupy months; no data would be available for designing, and labour and

materials would be hopelessly inadequate. Report of **Wellington** committee, 29 Aug 41, IA 178/8

**352** J. S. Hunter to Semple, 30 Oct 41, IA 178/259, pt 1

**353** *NZ Herald*, 21 Nov 41, p. 6

**354** *Press*, 6 Dec 41, p. 4

**355** Report dated 13 Dec 41, of EPS conference, IA 178/259; *Evening Post*, 12 Dec 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 13 Dec 41, p. 10; *Press*, 13 Dec 41, p. 10

**356** *NZ Herald*, 13 Dec 41, p. 13

**357** *Ibid.*, 24 Dec 41, p. 6

**358** *Ibid.*, 15 Dec 41, p. 8

**359** *Ibid.*, p. 6

**360** J. Tyler, City Engineer, to J. S. Hunter, Dir Nat Service, 8 Jan 42, IA 178/3/6

**361** *NZ Herald*, 15, 16 Dec 41, pp. 8, 16, 26 Jan 42, p. 6

**362** *Ibid.*, 31 Dec 41, p. 6

**363** *Ibid.*, 17 Jan 42, p. 6

**364** *Ibid.*, 6 Jan 42, p. 4

**365** *Ibid.*, 20, 23, 31 Dec 41, pp. 13, 6, 6, 15 Jan 42, p. 9 (photo)

**366** These were at an old timber yard in Taranaki Street, Newtown Park, Basin Reserve, Salamanca Road, Grant Road quarry, Hobson Street gully, Aotea and Thorndon quays, Majoribanks Street and the National Art Gallery. *Dominion*, 22 Dec 41, p. 7

**367** *Ibid.*, 23 Dec 41, p. 4

**368** *Ibid.*, p. 6; *Truth*, 31 Dec 41, p. 7

**369** *NZ Herald*, 15 Dec 41, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 20 Dec 41, p. 5

**370** *Dominion*, 27 Dec 41, p. 6

**371** *Evening Post*, 13 Jan 42, p. 6

**372** *Press*, 13 Dec 41, p. 10

**373** *Ibid.*, 16 Dec 41, p. 8

**374** *Evening Post*, 20 Jan 42, p. 4

**375** *NZ Herald*, 14 Feb 42, p. 6

**376** *Press*, 29 Jan 42, p. 9

**377** *Otago Daily Times*, 15, 16, 30 Dec 41, pp. 4, 6, 4

**378** *NZ Herald*, 22, 27 Jan 42, pp. 6, 4

**379** *Ibid.*, 20 Dec 41, p. 13

**380** *Ibid.*, 17 Dec 41, p. 8

**381** *Wanganui Herald*, 7 Jan 42, p. 2

**382** Caro, Harold David, JP, OBE('50): b 1887; Mayor Hamilton 1938–53; chmn **Waikato** Patriotic Fund Bd 1939–54, Hospital Bd 1948–53

**383** *Ibid.*, 6 Jan 42, p. 8

**384** *Evening Post*, 13 Jan 42, p. 4

**385** *Press*, 10 Jan 42, p. 5

**386** *Ibid.*, 14 Jan 42, p. 3

**387** See pp. 510– 11

**388** 'To make provision for an air-raid shelter and the consequent reorganisation of floor space it has been decided to close the DIC Tearoom temporarily on Sat., February 21 .... When danger no longer looms so close to these shores and times become more normal, the DIC will, with confidence, re-open their Tearoom.' *Dominion*, 16 Feb 42, p. 3. 'Atwaters urgently require their basement for an air raid shelter and have to remove over 100 pianos ... each heavily reduced. This sacrifice is your gain'. *NZ Herald*, 31 Jan 42, p. 2, repeated until 12 Mar 42

**389** *Press*, 10 Mar 42, p. 4

**390** *NZ Herald*, 8 Jan 42, p. 6

**391** Cmsnr of Def Construction to Dir Nat Service, 23 Mar 42, IA 178/259, pt I; *Dominion*, 27 Mar 42, p. 4

**392** *Dominion*, 23 Apr 42, p. 4

**393** Dir Nat Service to Controller of Works, EPS, **Auckland**, 13 Nov 42, IA 178/3/6

**394** Dir Nat Service to Asst Under-Sec PWD, 2 Apr 43, *ibid.*, pt 2

**395** *NZ Herald*, 8 Jan 42, p. 6; see also p. 509

**396** *NZ Herald*, 18 Feb 3, 13 Mar 42, pp. 6, 4, 4; *Auckland Star*, 10 Mar 42, p. 3 (photo)

**397** *NZ Herald*, 8 Apr 42, p. 4

**398** Tyler, James (d 1952, *aet* 75): Auckland City Engineer 1930–44

**399** *NZ Herald*, 20 Jan 42, p. 4

**400** City Engineer to District Engineer PWD, 27 Jan 42, IA 178/3/6

**401** Engineer in Chief PWD to Dir Nat Service, 2 Feb 42, *ibid.*

**402** Dir Nat Service to Auck EPS, 5 Feb 42, *ibid.*; *NZ Herald*, 5 Feb 42, p. 6

**403** *NZ Herald*, 12, 19, 26 Feb 42, pp. 8, 9, 6; *Auckland Star*, 12, 24 Feb, 17 Mar 42, pp. 8, 3 (photo), 6

**404** Six between Wellesley and Bacon Streets; three at the intersection of Churchill Street and Black Road.



<sup>405</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11 Aug, 9 Jun, 4 Jul 42, pp. 6, 4, 3 (photo); *NZ Herald*, 17 Apr, 12 May, 1 Jul 42, pp. 4, 5 (photo), 4; *Evening Post*, 11 Apr 42, p. 6

<sup>406</sup> *NZ Herald*, 22 Oct 42, p. 4

<sup>407</sup> *Auckland Star*, 25 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Jun 42, p. 4

<sup>409</sup> *Evening Post*, 29 Jan 42, p. 8

<sup>410</sup> *Dominion*, 3, 5, 23 Feb 42, pp. 4 & 6, 6, 6

<sup>411</sup> *Evening Post*, 29 Jan 42, p. 8; *Dominion*, 3 Feb 42, p. 6. Among the first buildings so notified, on 20 January, were the AMP in Customhouse Quay, Brandon House and New Zealand Insurance in Featherston Street, the Hotel Waterloo, James Smith's and Kirkcaldie & Stains. IA 178/8/1

<sup>412</sup> *Dominion*, 12 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>413</sup> Clere, Frederick de Jersey (1856–1952): b **UK**; architect; Wgtn Diocesan architect 1883, to Wanganui Education Board 1883–8; member Institute of Structural Engineering **London**

<sup>414</sup> Anscombe, Edmund (1874–1948): architect; to OU Council and for **Dunedin** city buildings, designer Centennial Exhibition buildings

<sup>415</sup> *Dominion*, 3 Feb 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 29 Jan, 4 Feb 42, pp. 8, 8

<sup>416</sup> The Communist party held that deep bomb-proof shelters were the right of the people.

<sup>417</sup> *Evening Post*, 5, 11 Feb 42, pp. 8, 4

<sup>418</sup> *Dominion*, 5 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>419</sup> Bastings, Dr Lyndon (1893–1968): Senior Physicist Dom Physical Lab, **DSIR**; Research Dir Building Research Bureau of NZ; Wgtn EPS 1942–4

<sup>420</sup> In the *Evening Post*, 17 Feb 42, p. 4, a letter signed ‘Geologists’ challenged Bastings’s view and accepted Nimmo’s odds.

<sup>421</sup> *Dominion*, 12 Feb 42, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 12 Feb 42, p. 4

<sup>422</sup> *Evening Post*, 14 Feb 42, p. 8

<sup>423</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Feb 42, p. 6

<sup>424</sup> *Press*, 6 Feb 42, p. 4. ‘Parliament grounds now look like **Gallipoli** or a relief map of **New Guinea**, almost completely turned up by machinery into a succession of hills and gullies for construction of shelters for the public in case of raids. The engineers have been considerate enough to spare the pohutukawa trees which have been a feature of the grounds for many years, and the statues of Seddon and Ballance.’ Scholefield, Diary, 30 Mar 42. On the 24th, Scholefield had remarked that owing to the demand for cement for aviation runways at **Ohakea**, these shelters were to have very much lighter roofs than intended.

<sup>425</sup> *Dominion*, 11 Mar 42, p. 6

<sup>426</sup> *Evening Post*, 18 Apr 42, p. 8

<sup>427</sup> *Dominion*, 23 Feb 42, p. 6

**428** *Ibid.*, 5 Feb 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 11, 13, 19 Feb, 3, 16 Mar 42, pp. 4, 6, 8, 6, 4

**429** *Evening Post*, 23 Mar 42, p. 7

**430** *Ibid.*, 23 Jun 42, p. 5; *Dominion*, 30 Jun 42, p. 3

**431** *NZ Herald*, 22 Apr 42, p. 4

**432** *Ibid.*, 23 Sep 42, p. 2; *Dominion*, 30 Jun 42, p. 3; *Evening Post*, 12 Sep 42, p. 8

**433** *Dominion*, 3 Mar, 28 Apr 42, pp. 4, 4, 19 Aug 43; *Evening Post*, 23 Jun 42, p. 3

**434** *Evening Post*, 23 Jun 42, p. 3

**435** *Ibid.*, 12 Sep 42, p. 8

**436** *Press*, 10, 11, 25 Mar 42, pp. 4, 4, 4

**437** Andrews, Sir Ernest, Kt('50), CBE('46), JP (1873–1961): Chch city councillor 1918–50 including mayoralty; various Education Board appointments, including NZ Council of Education; local body posts, including founder & 1st Pres Sth Island Local Bodies Assn; District Controller EPS WWII

**438** *Star-Sun*, 31 Mar 42, p. 3

**439** *Press*, 12, 26, 27 May 42, pp. 4, 4

**440** *Ibid.*, 10, 21 Apr 42, pp. 4, 4; *Star-Sun*, 10, 22 Apr 42, pp. 3, 6

**441** *Press*, 12, 13, 26 May, 16 Jun, 18 Aug 42, pp. 4, 4, 4, 4, 4;  
*Star-Sun*, 25 May, 8 Sep 42, pp. 3 (photo), 2

**442** *Press*, 7 Oct 42, p. 2; *NZ Herald*, 14 Nov 42, p. 6

**443** *Evening Star*, 20 Jan 42, p. 8

**444** *Ibid.*, 24 Feb 42, p. 4

**445** *Evening Post*, 5 Mar 42, p. 6; *Press*, 9 Oct 42, p. 6

**446** *Evening Star*, 3, 16 Jul 42, pp. 3, 4

**447** *Press*, 12 Aug 42, p. 2

**448** *Evening Star*, 11 Sep 42, p. 2

**449** **Whangarei, Hamilton, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Tauranga, Gisborne, Napier, Hastings, Palmerston North, Lower Hutt, Petone, Nelson, Blenheim, Greymouth, Westport, Timaru, Invercargill and Bluff**

**450** **Nat Service Circular to EPS, No 48, 26 Jan 42; PWD Engineer in Chief to district engineers, 2 Mar 42, enclosing typical plans of a covered public shelter, constructed of timber, found satisfactory in Wellington. IA 178/259**

**451** *Wanganui Herald*, 5 Feb 42, p. 4

**452** *Evening Post*, 17, 19 Feb, 3 Mar 42, pp. 4, 6, 4

**453** *Star-Sun*, 21 Mar 42, p. 3

**454 See p. 495**

**455 Circular memo for education boards, secondary school boards, etc from Education Dept, 23 Jan 42, IA 178/247. The Department of Education controls the syllabuses and operation of secondary schools, each of which has an elected Board of Governors to supervise the administration of its school; primary schools are under the control of local Education Boards, with parents forming School Committees for individual administration.**

**456 Dir Educ in *Dominion*, 27 Feb 42, p. 8**

**457 *Auckland Star*, 31 Jan 42, p. 6**

**458 Telegram to Min Def from Headmasters' Assn, Auck, 17 Feb 42, IA 178/247; *NZ Herald*, 20 Feb 42, p. 6**

**459 Chief Warden to district wardens Auck, 24 Feb 42, IA 178/247; *NZ Herald*, 25 Feb 42, p. 9**

**460 *NZ Herald*, 31 Jan, 26 Feb 42, pp. 6, 9**

**461 *Ibid.*, 31 Jan, 3 Feb 42, pp.6, 4; 9 Mar 42, p. 4 (Hamilton); *Evening Post*, 19 Feb 42, p. 8 ( *Rongotai*)**

**462 *NZ Herald*, 7 Mar, 15 Apr 42, pp. 8, 2 (photo); *Auckland Star*, 13 Mar 42, p. 3 (photo)**

**463 *Auckland Star*, 3 Mar 42, p. 3**

**464 *Ibid.*, 16 Mar 42, p. 3; *NZ Herald*, 16 Mar 42, p. 3 (photo)**

**465 *NZ Herald*, 23 Mar 42, p. 4**

- 466 *Auckland Star*, 17 Apr 42, p. 4
- 467 Dir Educ to Nat Service, 21 Aug 42, IA 178/3/6
- 468 *Auckland Star*, 5 Aug 42, p. 6
- 469 *Dominion*, 12 Feb 42, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 17 Feb 42, p. 6
- 470 *Evening Post*, 23 Feb 42, p. 7; *Dominion*, 9 Mar 42, p. 6
- 471 *Dominion*, 27 Feb 42, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 24 Feb 42, p. 6
- 472 *Dominion*, 19, 21 Feb 42, pp. 8, 6
- 473 *Evening Post*, 7, 10, 19 Mar 42, pp. 8, 6, 6
- 474 *Ibid.*, 16 Jun 42, p. 4
- 475 *Dominion*, 9 Mar 42, p. 6
- 476 *Evening Post*, 9, 12 Mar 42, pp. 6, 6
- 477 *Ibid.*, 27 Feb, 20 Jun 42, pp. 4, 6 (photo)
- 478 *Press*, 19 Mar, 28 Jul 42, pp. 7, 4; *Star-Sun*, 14 Apr 42, p. 6
- 479 *Star-Sun*, 18 Jul 42, p. 6
- 480 *Press*, 30 Jul 42
- 481 Dir Educ Dept to Dir Nat Service Dept, and reply, 6 Aug 42,

482 *Evening Star*, 18 Feb 42, p. 7

483 *Ibid.*, 18 Mar 42, p. 7

484 *Ibid.*, 15 Apr 42, p. 4

485 See p. 525

486 *Press*, 3, 5 Feb 42, pp. 6, 6

487 *Dominion*, 10 Mar 42, p. 6

488 *Auckland Star*, 10 Mar 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 24 Mar 42, p. 4

489 *NZ Herald*, 3 Jul 42, p. 2

490 *Auckland Star*, 6 Mar 42, p. 3; *NZ Herald*, 9 Mar 42, p. 4

491 *NZ Herald*, 17 Apr 42, p. 4

492 Information from **Frances Porter of Wellington**

493 *Auckland Star*, 13 Aug 42, p. 3

494 *Ibid.*, 31 Dec 41, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 19 Feb 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 28 Feb 42, p. 8

495 *NZ Herald*, 19, 27 Dec 41, pp. 8, 6; See p. 495

496 Lovegrove, Claude James, OBE('54) (1897–1977): member



**Auck City Council 6 years, Electric Power Board 18 years (chmn 1948–51); Pres Electric Supply Authorities Assn 1951–5**

**497 Lovegrove to Allum, 16 Jan 42, IA 178/3/3; *NZ Herald*, 6, 14, 20 Jan 42, pp. 4, 6, 6**

**498 *NZ Herald*, 23 Feb 42, p. 2**

**499 Lovegrove to Allum, 26 Jan 42, IA 178/3/3**

**500 *Ibid.*, Report of Cmte**

**501 *NZ Herald*, 18 Feb, 2 Mar 42, pp. 8, 4**

**502 *Ibid.*, 12 Feb 42, p. 6**

**503 *Ibid.***

**504 *Ibid.*, 23 Feb 42, p. 6**

**505 *Ibid.*, 3 Mar 42, p. 4**

**506 *Ibid.***

**507 *Auckland Star*, 3 Mar 42, p. 6**

**508 *Press*, 5 Mar 42**

**509 *Evening Star*, 7 Mar 42**

**510 *NZ Herald*, 4 Mar 42**

**511** *Auckland Star*, 7 Mar 42, p. 5

**512** Auck Chamber of Commerce to Min Def, 17 Mar 42, IA 178/3/3

**513** *NZ Herald*, 24 Apr 42, p. 6

**514** Min Nat Service to Sec EPS *Auckland*, 7 May 42, IA 178/3/3

**515** See letter quoted on p. 536 as an example of nervousness in the *South Island*

**516** *NZ Herald*, 24 Aug 42, p. 4

**517** *Ibid.*, 11 Sep 42, p. 2

**518** *Evening Post*, 23 Apr 42, p. 8

**519** *Dominion*, 31 Jan, 24, 26 Feb 42, pp. 6, 4, 4

**520** *Evening Post*, 17 Feb 42, p. 6

**521** *Dominion*, 25 Feb 42, p. 4

**522** Greene, Brigadier Alfred, JP (1872–1950): b Aust; Salvation Army Chaplain NZEF 1914–20

**523** *Dominion*, 10 Apr 42, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 23 Apr 42, p. 8

**524** See p. 523

**525** *Evening Post*, 26 Jun 42, p. 3; *Dominion*, 27, 29 Jun 42, pp.

526 *Press*, 4 Nov 41, p. 8

527 Mrs O. Gill, Moncks Spur, **Christchurch**, to Min Nat Service, 1 Jan 42, IA 178/247

528 *Press*, 20, 23, 29 Jan, 6, 14 Feb 42, letters

529 *Ibid.*, 20, 29 Jan 42, pp. 8, 8

530 *Ibid.*, 30 Jan 42, p. 8

531 E. H. Andrews to M. Howard, 25 Mar 42, IA 178/2/4

532 *Ibid.*, EPS Bulletin No 2, Apr 42; *Press*, 19 Mar 42, p. 3

533 *Wanganui Herald*, 4, 5, 19 Mar 42, pp. 2, 4, 4; letter and card to author from Mrs G. Barry of Nixon Street, **Wanganui**, Sep 69

534 *Press*, 10 Mar 42, p. 3

535 *Evening Star*, 26 Mar 42

536 *Otago Daily Times*, 8 Apr 40, p. 6

537 *Dominion*, 4 May 46, p. 8

538 *Ibid.*, 12 Jan 42, p. 6

539 *Ibid.*, 27 May 42, p. 4

**540** '9 Jan 1942. To Dannevirke to inspect depository for storage of books and manuscripts .... 10 Jan 1942 (Saturday). Packing books for removal; also considerable quantity of manuscripts belonging to the Archives, notably the **New Zealand Company's** papers and what we have of provincial records. 20 Jan.... Packing of books for safe custody finished.' Scholefield, Diary

**541** Campbell, Sir John Logan (1817–1912): b **Scotland**, to NZ 1840; prominent in Auckland's commercial, educational, cultural life, Superintendent Auckland Province 1856

**542** *NZ Herald*, 16 May 42, pp. 6, 4 (photo)

**543** *Ibid.*, 18 Dec 41, p. 6, 30 Apr 42, p. 6

**544** *Otago Daily Times*, 16 Apr 42, p. 4

**545** *Evening Star*, 22 Jan 42, p. 4

**546** *Auckland Star*, 7 Mar 42, p. 5; *NZ Herald*, 7 Jan 42, p. 6; *Press*, 27 Jan 42, p. 4

**547** *Auckland Star*, 7 Mar 42, p. 5

**548** *NZ Herald*, 29 Nov 41, p. 10

**549** *Ibid.*, 18 Dec 41, p. 3

**550** *Evening Star*, 6, 7 Feb 42, pp. 6, 6

**551** *Auckland Star*, 7 Mar 42, p. 5

**552** *Press*, 24 Apr 42, p. 4

- 553 *Evening Post*, 11 Dec 41, p. 10
- 554 *NZ Herald*, 19 Dec 41, p. 6
- 555 *Ibid.*, 2 Jan 42, p. 4
- 556 *Press*, 20 Dec 41, p. 5
- 557 See pp. 497, 506–7
- 558 *Press*, 15, 16 Dec 41, pp. 4, 8
- 559 *Ibid.*, 14 Jan 42, p. 6
- 560 *Ibid.*, 12 Feb 42, p. 4: paper for pasting on windows, etc, cost 6 *d* a yard; heavy quality paper for rolling up, 1 *s* 1 *d* a yard; stiff board, removable in the daytime, 6 *s* a sheet 6ft by 3ft
- 561 *Ibid.*, 19, 21 Jan 42, pp. 4, 6
- 562 *Ibid.*, 24 Feb, 12 Mar 42, pp. 6, 6
- 563 *Ibid.*, 12 Mar, 8 Oct 42, pp. 6, 3
- 564 *NZ Herald*, 20 May 42, p. 4; *Press*, 8 Oct 42, p. 5
- 565 *Press*, 27 Feb 42, p. 4
- 566 *Evening Star*, 19 Jan 42, p. 4
- 567 *Ibid.*, 22 Jan 42, p. 6

568 *Ibid.*, 23 Jan 42, p. 2

569 *Ibid.*, 25 Mar 42, p. 4

570 *Evening Post*, 21 Jan 42, p. 6; till the end of January it would be 8.15 pm

571 *Press*, 7 Feb 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 24, 27 Feb 42, pp. 4, 4

572 *Press*, 14 Jan 42, p. 4

573 *Auckland Star*, 23 Jun 42, p. 4

574 *Press*, 28 Feb 42, p. 8

575 *Evening Post*, 24 Feb 42, p. 6; *Dominion*, 24 Feb 42, p. 6

576 *NZ Herald*, 7 Feb 42, p. 9

577 *Ibid.*, 22 May 42, p. 6

578 *Auckland Star*, 29 Jul 42, p. 6

579 See p. 359

580 *Evening Post*, 13 Jul 42, p. 6

581 *Ibid.*, 16, 18 Jul 42, pp. 6, 4

582 *Dominion*, 27 Jul 42, p. 4

583 *Evening Post*, 27 Jul 42, p. 6

584 *Auckland Star*, 2 Sep, 7 Oct 42, pp. 4, 4

585 Heffron, Hon Robert James (1890–1978): b NZ, to Aust 1921; MLA New South Wales 1930–68, Min Nat Emergency Service 1941–4, Education 1944–60, Premier 1959–64

586 *Auckland Star*, 12 Nov 42; *NZ Herald*, 4 Nov 42

587 *Evening Post*, 3 Sep 42, p. 3; *Dominion*, 7 Nov 42, p. 6

588 *NZ Herald*, 20, 24 Nov 42, pp. 2, 2; *Auckland Star* 17, 20 Nov 42, pp. 2, 2

589 *NZ Herald*, 17 Nov 42, p. 2; *Press*, 2 Jan 43, p. 4

590 *Auckland Star*, 8 Feb 43

591 *Press*, 12 Dec 42, p. 4

592 *Auckland Star*, 2 Jan 43, p. 3

593 *Ibid.*, 16 Feb 43, p. 4

594 *Dominion*, 19 Feb 43, p. 3

595 *Ibid.*, 8 Mar 43, p. 6

596 *Evening Star*, 20, 24 Mar 43, pp. 4, 2

597 *Auckland Star*, 31 May 43



- 598** Mayor Allum in *NZ Herald*, 3 Feb 42, p. 6
- 599** *NZ Herald*, 13, 15, 19, 23, 24 Dec 41, pp. 10, 9, 8, 6, 6
- 600** *Ibid.*, 23 Dec 41, p. 6
- 601** *Evening Star*, 10 Jan 42, p. 3; *Dominion*, 24 Jan 42, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 27 Jan 42, p. 7
- 602** *NZ Herald*, 23, 24 Dec 41, pp. 6, 6
- 603** *Ibid.*, 15, 24 Dec 41, pp. 9, 6
- 604** *Evening Post*, 6 Feb 42, p. 6
- 605** *Ibid.*, 10 Mar 42, p. 6
- 606** *Dominion*, 17 Apr 42, p. 4
- 607** *Evening Post*, 27 Apr 42, p. 4
- 608** Hampson-Tindale, V. E. (d 1964 *aet* 55): specialist in fire protection engineering; Fire Protection Organiser Wgtn EPS, chief exec officer nat EPS
- 609** *Evening Post*, 30 Jul 42, p. 6
- 610** *NZ Herald*, 7 Feb 42, p. 6
- 611** *Ibid.*, 20 Feb 42, p. 6
- 612** *Ibid.*, 10, 19 Jun 42, pp. 4, 2

- 613** *Auckland Star*, 9 Feb 42, p. 4
- 614** *Dominion*, 6 Mar. 29 Apr 42, pp. 6, 6; *Evening Post*, 28 Apr 42, p. 3; *Star-Sun*, 29 Apr 42, p. 6
- 615** *Dominion*, 6 Mar 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 31 Jan 42, p. 8; *Evening Star*, 4 Feb 42, p. 4
- 616** *Press*, 23 Mar 42, p. 3 (photo)
- 617** Scholefield, Diary, 31 Mar 42
- 618** Bullock, Mrs Marie Isobel (1918–82): playwright, author, actress; *NZ Listener staff* 1940–2
- 619** *Dominion*, 6 Mar 42, p. 6
- 620** *Evening Post*, 20 Apr 42, p. 4
- 621** *Ibid.*, 8 Apr 42, p. 4
- 622** *Dominion*, 26 Feb 42, p. 8; *Evening Post*, 5 Mar 42, p. 4
- 623** *Evening Post*, 23 Mar 42, pp. 8, 3
- 624** *Press*, 5 Jun 42, p. 3
- 625** *Dominion*, 28 Feb 42, p. 8
- 626** *Auckland Star*, 6 Mar 42, p. 6; *Dominion*, 6 Mar 42, p. 6
- 627** *Truth*, 22 Jul 42, p. 13

**628** *Ibid.*, 29 Jul 42, p. 13

**629** *Dominion*, 12 Aug 42, p. 8

**630** *In Print*, 21 Jan 42; *Auckland Star*, 9, 13 Feb 42, pp. 6, 6; *NZ Herald*, 13 Feb 42, p. 6; *Press*, 17 Feb 42, p. 8

**631** *NZ Herald*, 15 Apr 43, p. 4

**632** *Ibid.*, 5 Jun 42, p. 2

**633** *Ibid.*, 20 Jun 42, p. 4

**634** *Ibid.*, 16 Jun 42, p. 2

**635** *Press*, 9 Feb, 8 Oct 42, pp. 6, 6; *Evening Post*, 29 May 42, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 15 Aug 42, p. 6

**636** *Press*, 27 Jan 42, p. 6; *Star-Sun*, 30 Jan 42, p. 6

**637** *Press*, 5 Mar 42, p. 4

**638** *Ibid.*, 27 Apr 42, p. 4; *Star-Sun*, 28, 29 Apr 42, pp. 6, 6

**639** *Evening Star*, 4 Feb 42, p. 4

**640** *Otago Daily Times*, 8, 17 Jun 42, pp. 4, 4

**641** *Press*, 31 Jul 42, p. 4

**642** *Ibid.*, 30 Jul 42, p. 4

**643 Allan, Hon Andrew Henson, CBE('46), JP (1877–1963): Mayor Dunedin 1938–44**

**644 *Evening Star*, 12 Aug 42, p. 4**

**645 *Press*, 13 Aug 42, p. 4**

**646 *Ibid.*, 14 Aug 42, p. 6**

**647 *Ibid.*, 28 Aug, 11 Sep 42, pp. 6, 4**

**648 *Ibid.*, 22 Oct 42, p. 4**

**649 *Evening Post*, 14 Aug 42, p. 4**

**650 *Dominion*, 12 Aug 42, p. 6**

**651 *Evening Post*, 18 Aug 42, p. 4**

**652 *Ibid.* The US attack on **Guadalcanal**, after a good start, had suffered a sharp reverse with four cruisers lost on the night of 8–9 August, but this was not publicly known.**

**653 *Ibid.*, 8 Sep 42, p. 4**

**654 *Ibid.*, 24 Jul 42, p. 4**

**655 *Ibid.*, 10, 19 Sep 42, pp. 3, 9**

**656 *Ibid.*, 29 Aug 42, p. 9**

**657 *NZ Herald*, 14 Sep 42, p. 2**

**658 *Ibid.*, 23 Oct 42, p. 4**

**659 *Auckland Star*, 19 Nov 42, p. 6**

**660 *Dominion*, 9 Dec 42, p. 6**

**661 *Press*, 18 Nov 42**

**662 *Ibid.***

**663 *Ibid.*, 7 Nov 42, p. 4**

**664 *Ibid.*, 26 Nov 42, p. 4**

**665 *Evening Star*, 24 Nov 42, p. 2**

**666 *Press*, 27 Nov 42, p. 4**

**667 *NZ Herald*, 9 Dec 42, p. 2**

**668 *Ibid.*, 2 Jun 42, p. 4**

**669 *Star-Sun*, 6, 25, 26, 27 Feb 42, pp. 6 (photo), 6, 8, 6; *Press*, 19 Mar 42, p. 7; *Dominion*, 3, 7, 28 Feb 42, pp. 4, 6, 10; *Evening Post*, 10 Feb, 19 May 42, pp. 4, 4**

**670 *NZ Herald*, 9 Feb, 22 Jul 42, pp. 6, 4**

**671 *Evening Post*, 22 Jan 42, p. 6; *Press*, 24 Feb, 10 Mar 42, pp. 6, 8; *Star-Sun*, 16 Apr 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 6, 10, 14, 16, 27 Jul 42, pp. 4, 2, 2, 2, 2**

- 672 *Press*, 22 Apr 42, p. 4
- 673 *NZ Herald*, 10 Mar 42, p. 6
- 674 *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Apr 42, p. 2
- 675 *Evening Post*, 30 Apr 42, p. 6
- 676 *NZ Herald*, 1 May 42, p. 4
- 677 *Auckland Star*, 24 Aug 42, p. 4
- 678 *Wanganui Herald*, 30 Nov 42, p. 2
- 679 *NZ Herald*, 27 Dec 41, p. 6
- 680 *Press*, 23 Feb 42, p. 6
- 681 *Ibid.*, 7 Feb 42, p. 8
- 682 *Evening Post*, 23 Jan 42, p. 6
- 683 W. A. Bodkin, Min Civil Defence, *NZ Herald*, 5 Aug 42, p. 4
- 684 *Auckland Star*, 13 Feb 42 (photo); *Evening Post*, 27 Feb 42, p. 6; *Press*, 6, 12 Mar 42, pp. 6, 6; *Evening Star*, 4 Mar 42, p. 4
- 685 *Evening Star*, 25 Mar 42, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 4 May 42, p. 7
- 686 *Dominion*, 21 May 42, p. 4

**687** *Press*, 24 Jun 42, p. 4

**688** *NZ Herald*, 12 Feb, 3 Mar, 13 Apr 42, pp. 6, 4, 2 (photo); *Evening Post*, 11 Apr 42, p. 6

**689** *Auckland Star*, 18 Nov 42, p. 6

**690** *Dominion*, 18 May 42, p. 6

**691** *Ibid.*, 25 May 42, p. 4

**692** *Ibid.*

**693** *Star-Sun*, 15 Apr 42, p. 4; *Press*, 15 Jul 42, p. 4

**694** *NZ Herald*, 5 Aug 42, p. 4

**695** *Evening Post*, 26 Mar 42, p. 6; *Dominion*, 12 May 42, p. 4

**696** *NZ Herald*, 19 Feb, 4, 10 Apr 42, pp. 6, 4 (photo), 2 (photo); *Auckland Star*, 28 Feb 42, p. 5 (photos)

**697** *NZ Herald*, 5 Jun 42, p. 2

**698** *Press*, 28 Apr 42, p. 4

**699** Eade, *The End of the Beginning*, pp. 104–5; *Evening Post*, 11 May 42, p. 5

**700** eg, *Dominion*, 17, 21 Jan 42, pp. 7, 7; *Otago Daily Times*, 23 Apr 42, p. 5



701 *Press*, 16 Mar, 27 Oct 42, pp. 5, 3

702 *NZ Herald*, 15 Jan 42, p. 8; *Press*, 17 Jan 42, p. 8; *Evening Star*, 13 Mar 42, p. 2

703 *Press*, 14 Mar 42, p. 3 (photos)

704 *Ibid.*, 24 Mar 42, p. 4

705 *NZ Herald*, 17 Jun 42, p. 2; *Evening Post*, 25 Jul 42, p. 6

706 *Press*, 23 Sep 42, p. 2

707 *Ibid.*, 24 Nov 42, p. 4; *Dominion*, 25 Nov 42, p. 4

708 *Auckland Star*, 17 Nov, 11 Dec 42, pp. 4, 4

709 *Ibid.*, 25 Mar 43, p. 4

710 *Otago Daily Times*, 16 Dec 41, p. 4, 6 Jun 42, p. 6; *Press*, 27 Dec 41, p. 6, 29 Jan 42, p. 9; *Dominion*, 9 Jan 42, p. 4

711 *NZ Herald*, 26 Dec 41, p. 7

712 *Dominion*, 4 Dec 41, p. 8

713 *Ibid.*, 15 Dec 41, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 31 Jan 42, p. 9

714 *Otago Daily Times*, 6 Jun 42, p. 6

715 *Dominion*, 27 Feb 42, p. 6

**716** *Press*, 23, 27 Mar 42, pp. 3 (photo), 4

**717** *NZ Herald*, 14 Apr, 11 Aug 42, pp. 6, 4

**718** *Evening Post*, 27 Mar 42, p. 6 (Hutt Valley High School); *NZ Herald*, 21 Jul 42, p. 2 (Kaitaia District High School); *Star-Sun*, 20 Jun 42, p. 6 (Westport Technical High School)

**719** *Dominion*, 11 May 42, p. 4

**720** *Truth*, 29 Jul 42, p. 5; *Evening Post*, 27 Mar, 23 Apr 42, pp. 4, 6

**721** *NZ Herald*, 19 May 42, p. 2

**722** *Ibid.*, 13 Dec 41, p. 12, 6 Apr 42, p. 6; *Press*, 15 Jan 42, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 10 Mar 42, p. 8

**723** *NZ Herald*, 17 Apr 42, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 15 Jul 42, p. 4

**724** *Evening Star*, 21 May 42, p. 3

**725** *NZ Herald*, 24 Feb 42, p. 2

**726** *Ibid.*, 24, 27 Feb 42, pp. 4, 4; Allum to Dir Nat Service, 2 Mar 42, IA 178/273

**727** *Dominion*, 5 Jun 42, p. 6

**728** Memo from Nat Service Dept to Min, 6 May 42, and note by J. S. Hunter, 20 May 42, IA 178/273

**729** Note, 15 Jul 42, IA 178/273

- 730** Item sent to author by Mrs V. G. Grant of Balclutha in October 1969: it was worn on the belt holder of her gym frock and was 'compulsory' at a **Timaru** school.
- 731** *NZ Herald*, 2 Jun 42, p. 4
- 732** *Press*, 19 Jun 42, p. 6
- 733** *NZ Herald*, 6 Jul 42, p. 4, 10, 14 Jul 42, pp. 2, 2
- 734** *Ibid.*, 16, 27 Jul 42, pp. 2, 2
- 735** *Evening Post*, 21 Aug 42, p. 3
- 736** *Auckland Star*, 21, 26 Sep 42, pp. 4, 6
- 737** *Dominion*, 25 Nov 42, p. 4
- 738** *Evening Post*, 27 Jul 42, p. 6
- 739** *NZ Herald*, 13 Aug 42, p. 2
- 740** *Press*, 24 Aug, 3 Sep 42, pp. 4, 4
- 741** *Evening Post*, 24 Oct 42, p. 8
- 742** *Auckland Star*, 27 Nov 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 28 Nov 42, p. 8
- 743** *Dominion*, 14 Dec 42, p. 4
- 744** *NZ Herald*, 14 Nov 42, p. 6

<sup>745</sup> ***Dominion***, 16 Jan 43, p. 4; ***Auckland Star***, 20 Feb 43, p. 6

<sup>746</sup> ***Evening Post***, 27 Feb, 8 Apr 43, pp. 6, 3

<sup>747</sup> Note on IA 178/243; ***Evening Star***, 13 Apr 43, p. 4

<sup>748</sup> ***Evening Star***, 10 Jul 43, p. 4; ***Evening Post***, 9 Aug 43, p. 4

<sup>749</sup> Dir Civil Defence to Dir Educ, 18 Oct 43, IA 178/247/1

<sup>750</sup> ***Dominion***, 19 Jan 43, p. 2; ***Auckland Star***, 20 Mar 43, p. 5

<sup>751</sup> Dir Nat Service to Asst Under-Sec PWD, 2 Apr 43, IA 178/247/1

<sup>752</sup> Secretary, Wgtn Harbour Board to Dir Nat Service, and replies, 19, 25 Mar, 27 Aug, 7 Dec 43, IA 178/8/6

<sup>753</sup> CAS to Dir Nat Service, 4 Dec 42, IA 178/8/6

<sup>754</sup> ***Evening Post***, 16 Oct 43, p. 6

<sup>755</sup> ***Auckland Star***, 4 Dec 43, p. 4; ***Dominion***, 27 Apr 44, p. 4; ***Evening Post***, 13 Jun 44, p. 6

<sup>756</sup> ***Dominion***, 22 Oct 43, p. 4

<sup>757</sup> ***NZ Herald***, 12 Feb 44, p. 6

<sup>758</sup> ***Dominion***, 27 Apr 44, p. 4; ***Evening Post***, 13 Jun 44, p. 6

<sup>759</sup> ***Auckland Star***, 20, 21 Jun 44, pp. 4, 4

<sup>760</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Dec 44, p. 3

<sup>761</sup> *NZ Herald*, 9, 10 Mar 44, pp. 6, 4; *Auckland Star*, 11 Oct, 17 Nov 43, pp. 2, 6, 14 Jul 44, p. 3, 5 Feb 45, p. 4

<sup>762</sup> *Evening Post*, 6 Feb 45, p. 6

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Oct 70, p. 9

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 13 – RUSSIA AND THE WAR



## CHAPTER 13

### *Russia and the War*

AT the start of June 1941 it was thought that **Hitler's** next target would be **Suez**, menaced now from **Libya**, **Crete** and Vichy-held **Syria**, where German infiltration was reported. To forestall this, on 9 June Free French and British troops entered **Syria** and **Lebanon**, advanced steadily against mild resistance and on 23 June took **Damascus**.

Meanwhile there was speculation about relations between **Russia** and **Germany**. The Russo–Japanese neutrality pact in mid-April 1941 was seen as **Russia's** effort to secure its eastern borders in apprehension of trouble from the west, and Churchill in a speech on 9 April <sup>1</sup> suggested that **Hitler** might suddenly turn from the **Balkans** to seize the **Ukraine** granary and the Caucasian oil fields. A good many newspapers <sup>2</sup> had reports and comments on German and Russian activity, such as troop movements and diplomatic coolnesses, with Russian inscrutability mentioned fairly often. There were also suggestions that it might all be a German screen for a sudden strike elsewhere. The *Auckland Star* on 14 June warned that the apparent inactivity of **Germany** in relation to **Syria** was suspicious: where the Germans were not obviously active they were sometimes most dangerous. As the *Southland Times* of 11 June remarked, these were difficult days for newspaper readers, with facts, rumours and propaganda jostling together on the cable pages. The *New Zealand Herald* of 16 June, commenting on a new flood of speculation, said: 'Very wisely, people are no longer inclined to jump to the conclusion that the two thieves of East Europe are about to fall out.... people have reached the stage where only seeing is believing'. There was no suggestion that the **USSR** could be an ally useful to **Britain**; rather, its vulnerable resources were a danger. 'The only sort of eastern war that could possibly help the Allies is a long-drawn-out campaign', said the *Press* on 16 June, 'and then it is quite obvious, it would be **Russia**, not the west, that would be in need of support. A **Russia**, master in its own house and immobilising many units of the German Army, may well be the best Great Britain can hope for in the east.'

On 22 June 1941, when the German lightning was loosed against **Russia**, New Zealand was probably less surprised than the Russians, caught unmobilised, their aircraft destroyed on the ground. <sup>3</sup> **Moscow** reported Russian withdrawals and heavy German losses. These disasters were, of course, not explicit: **Britain** and the Commonwealth for a year had stood almost alone, losing heavily in the air, in the **Atlantic**, lately in **Cyrenaica**, **Greece** and **Crete**; any diversion, any respite, was heaven-sent. With little outside sympathy going to either **Russia** or **Germany**, **John Gunther** <sup>4</sup> could broadcast from **New York** that this was probably the most popular war in history. <sup>5</sup> New Zealand papers generally agreed that little could be expected of **Russia** militarily, and that **Germany** had attacked because it needed Russian resources for the decisive battle against **Britain**. Thereafter they differed in the details considered and in tone, ranging from an almost benign tolerance in the *Evening Post* to sharp scolding in the *Auckland Star*. Treaty-breaking, territory-grabbing **Russia**, said the *Star*, could now complain only that **Germany** had got its blow in first. **Germany's** large-scale expenditure of men and resources would help **Britain**, but it would be in the highest degree imprudent to pin faith on **Russia**, which has a poor record as an ally, and would, if victorious, spread the Communist plague throughout **Europe**. The best to be hoped for from the Russian–German conflict is that it will last long enough to exhaust them both.

The *New Zealand Herald* said that there could be no sympathy when thieves fell out and double-dealers came to blows. It was the British navy's blockade that had forced **Germany** to this colossal gamble which would give **Britain** well-earned and welcome respite. While **Russia** was in no sense **Britain's** ally, **London** and **Moscow** were joined in defence against the same aggressor; it was in **Britain's** interest to give the Soviet all possible support and German attempts to confuse the issue by talk of saving the world from Bolshevism should be rejected.

The *Press* had little sympathy for the present rulers of **Russia** whose short-sighted opportunism had brought this disaster on themselves, but 'a mad dog is not less dangerous because he bites someone who deserves

to be bitten', and **Hitler's** efforts to switch the war to a crusade against Bolshevism would be resisted. He had entered this new conflict to make use of his vast inactive army (260 divisions), to wrest from **Russia** sufficient booty to match the American supplies, in arms and materials, that could ultimately give Britain superiority. Meanwhile Russia's full engagement in the west would leave **Japan** with greater freedom in south-east **Asia**.

The *Otago Daily Times* wrote of **Russia** as a notoriously perfidious nation, doubting the worth of its enormous but ill-equipped forces; wrote of **Hitler's** idle armies, his need of resources, his need of quick success if this mid-summer adventure were not to turn, like Napoleon's, to dismal winter rout. Most observers, the *Southland Times* stated, believed that the Russian economy could not stand a war of endurance, but possibly the Red Army could be supported in a brief conflict, or could hold out long enough to deprive **Hitler** of the quick victory essential to his purpose. It speculated about Hess's <sup>6</sup> journey to **Scotland** in April 1941 to 'switch' the war against **Russia** and saw **Britain's** reply in the **Royal Air Force's** massive raids of the last 11 days. British people were not likely to regard the Russians as their allies in a war of liberation, and it was ironic that the admirable Finns were now ranged with **Germany** against the nation that had basely attacked their freedom.

Apart from stock generalities, the *Dominion* thought the new conflict 'a very valuable interposition in this most critical year', and that the possibilities were not easily calculable. The *Evening Post* on 23 June, warning that **Hitler's** chances against **Britain** in the next two years would be immensely improved by Russian supplies, said: 'that automatically converts **Russia** into **Britain's** co-operator. **Hitler** himself has driven **Russia** and **Britain** together. Even if they were at opposite ends of the Socialist–Capitalist scale—which they are not, since **Britain** today is classless—these two countries would still find themselves aiming at the same immediate goal, national freedom, and therefore compelled to help each other.... The paramount fact is that **Britain** and **Russia** must pull together.' **Hitler's** double somersault was aimed at the

sympathies of anti-Communists in the British Empire and the **United States**, but 'in this stark fight, anti-Communists and Communists should both forget yesterday and tomorrow; they should strike today.'

The *Post's* editorial was the only one among the main dailies on that Monday, 23 June to reflect Churchill's broadcast made on the night of 22 June. He had opposed Communism for 25 years, and would take back no word of it now, but he spoke, in his own heavy but moving way, of homely, hard-working people in 10 000 Russian villages threatened by the hideous onslaught of the German war machine, 'the dull, grim, docile, brutish masses of the Hun soldiery pouring on like a swarm of crawling locusts', under a sky full of German aircraft. He declared:

Any man or State who fights against Nazidom will have our aid. Any man or State who marches with **Hitler** is our foe.... It follows, therefore, that we shall give whatever help we can to **Russia** and the Russian people. <sup>7</sup>

By 24 June, most New Zealand papers were approving Churchill's lead. His 'prompt and realistic' statement should clarify the issues, said the *Southland Times*; it was probably his most sagacious utterance, said the *Dominion*. His qualities as statesman and orator were never more clearly revealed, said the *Press*, explaining that in view of **Russia's** past attacks on **Finland** and the Baltic states it was hardly surprising that some British papers and semi-official statements had at first assumed that **Britain** would be detached from the new conflict; but Churchill had grasped the essential reality, that 'any State or man who fights against National Socialism is Great Britain's ally.' **Hitler's** claim that he was the champion of **Europe** and civilisation against Bolshevism had served him in the past, but he should not be allowed to use the trick again. The *Evening Post* repeated the warning against anti-communist propaganda, while the *New Zealand Herald* attacked Bernard Shaw's rash statement that **Britain** and **America** could sit back and smile while Stalin smashed **Germany**; <sup>8</sup> the British could not count on stubborn Russian resistance, could not relax, but must seize the opportunity to increase their own attacks. This 'no slackening' note was also sounded by the *Otago Daily*

*Times*, the *Evening Post* and the *Press*. The *Otago Daily Times* accepted Churchill's principle: 'any man or state that fought against Hitler was our ally, while those that fought for Hitlerism were our foes. Expediency in this hour of crisis would sanction no other approach to the task of ridding mankind of the evil that is rooted in Germany.'

The *Auckland Star*, however, was not pleased with Churchill. Recalling that he was reported to have said, 'To save England, I'd pact with the Devil', the *Star* suggested that either his sense of the dramatic had for once played him false, or he was contemplating such a pact. If Mr Churchill wished to evoke sympathy for the Russian people he should have pointed out that they are unhappy beyond all other peoples in that they have to suffer the hideous onslaught of the Nazis after having suffered for a generation the hideous onslaughts of the Communists. There is, in fact, little in the way of hardship, deprivation and oppression that the Nazis could impose on the Russian masses that they — all except the members of the privileged bureaucracy—have not already experienced at the hands of their own tyrannical gangsters. <sup>9</sup>

Britain and Russia were both fighting Nazi Germany, but this was all that they had in common. It would be exceedingly dangerous to British unity and to resistance in occupied countries to allow the false impression that there was anything else. Next day the *Star* continued its attack. Churchill had not consulted the Dominions before making his declaration, nor had Fraser or Menzies <sup>10</sup> consulted their Parliaments before endorsing it. <sup>11</sup> New Zealand's Parliament and people should be fully consulted before any commitment which could involve their forces, and if there were any question of an alliance with Soviet Russia New Zealand's answer should be an emphatic 'No'. Russia was now fighting for the preservation of the Stalin regime, Britain and the Dominions had no obligations to the Soviet and its shifty policies; there was need for the utmost caution in Britain's dealings with the Kremlin. <sup>12</sup>

With these editorial presentations it is useful to consider the directions that the press had received through the Director of Publicity.

On 16 June, the British Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs gave the Dominion governments confidential information already issued to the press in **Britain**. In the event of war between **Germany** and **Russia**, hopes should not be raised of effective Soviet resistance, though **Germany's** long-term difficulties in trying to hold even part of **Russia** should be stressed. In no circumstances should **Russia** be called an ally, but merely another country attacked by **Hitler** despite treaty obligations, with which therefore **Britain** had a common interest against the aggressor. Any support for the **USSR** would be on account of that common interest, in no way implying ideological affinity. This advice was sent to editors on 18 June. <sup>13</sup>

Whatever subtleties and withholdings there were in official counsels in Whitehall and **Wellington** on the degree of co-operation that should exist between **Britain** and **Russia**—whether they were allies or merely shared an enemy—these fine distinctions were not grasped by most New Zealand readers of newspapers. They read, on 25 and 28 June, of Roosevelt pledging all possible aid to **Russia** and of British military and economic missions going to **Moscow** to ‘coordinate the common war effort’. <sup>14</sup> They read of Hugh Dalton <sup>15</sup> saying that the British Labour party opposed communism but ‘today the Red Army and the Red Air Force are our comrades in arms, they and we are out on the same errand—to crush the German war machine....’ <sup>16</sup> As noted already, the term ‘ally’ had been used by the *Press* and the *Otago Daily Times* on 24 June; the *Press*, examining the inner conflict of the situation, repeated it on 26 June:

Fear and detestation of Communism on social and religious grounds are deep rooted in the democracies—far more deep rooted than fear and detestation of Fascism, National Socialism and their variants. <sup>17</sup> For this reason and also because **Russia**, since the outbreak of war, has been guilty of numerous acts of unprovoked aggression, the democracies are embarrassed by their new ally.... [They] must remain resolute, cool and realistic. To deny that the situation... involves them in a conflict of ideas and loyalties would be foolish. But ... this is the dilemma the



German Government sought to create and will exploit ruthlessly. It is necessary to lay hold of one all-important truth, which is that a swift German victory over **Russia** will be a military and economic disaster to the democracies. By the iron logic of war, **Russia** is our ally and must be enabled to hold out.

Two days later the same paper, discussing the political difficulties inherent in the 'involuntary alliance', could see that Russian attacks on German bases in **Finland** during the past few days were self-defence of the same order as was the British attack on **Syria**. Deploring that **Britain** should be at war with **Finland**, lately so heroic, the leader added ' **Russia**'s departure in 1939 and 1940 from her previous policy of non-aggression was the result, not of a revival of Russian imperialism, but of fear of **Germany** and a desire to improve her strategic frontiers.' <sup>18</sup>

The idea that although sharing an enemy **Britain** and **Russia** were not allies was officially ended by the Anglo-Soviet agreement of 12 July 1941, for mutual assistance of all kinds in the war and for no separate peace. Nash, as Acting Prime Minister, welcomed it, saying that New Zealand had been consulted in the arrangement and that at this stage any obstacle to making common cause against the aggressor would be absurd; **Hitler** had succeeded by isolating his victims, striking them down singly in a series of victories that would have been impossible in the face of a collective peace system. Now other threatened nations might be encouraged to band together with **Russia** and the British Commonwealth. <sup>19</sup>

The treaty had no immediate relevance for New Zealand, though a few local Russophiles advocated establishing trade and diplomatic connections with **Russia**. It was the logical development of Churchill's declaration on 22 June. The *New Zealand Herald*, repeating his 'any man or State who fights against Nazism [ sic] will have our aid', said that the treaty put on **Britain** no more obligation than was already freely assumed without asking any return by Churchill, and was overwhelmingly endorsed by the Empire. Opposition to Communism was no barrier to helping **Russia** against the common enemy. As a precedent,



in 1914 most people repudiated the principles of Tsarist autocracy and loathed the system by which it was maintained, yet **Britain** and **Russia** fought as allies. Now, with an equally great difference in beliefs, they had combined in something less than a formal alliance against **Hitler's Germany**; to have done anything else would have cleared the way for Nazi world domination. <sup>20</sup>

The *Press* explained that the pact had little practical significance for distance and lack of surpluses made material assistance impractical; at present there could be only diplomatic and technical collaboration. Its real importance was that 'finally and unequivocally, it proclaims **Britain** and **Russia** to be allies, thereby removing the excuse for fruitless and dangerous controversy over the propriety of aiding a country which is nominally Communistic in political and economic structure.' The real obstacle to closer relations was not political creeds but **Russia's** aggression against **Poland**: if **Russia** would recognise the right of **Poland** to self-determination, the front against Hitlerism would acquire a unity it did not then possess. <sup>21</sup> The *Evening Post* was much warmer. The pact was an event to be heavily underlined, 'an object lesson on a tremendous scale of how two opposed "ideologies" act when confronted with the common danger of extinction.' Self-preservation was imperative, with qualities of immediacy above all other laws: 'different peoples with different ideas now fight the same fight for freedom.' <sup>22</sup>

The critical *Auckland Star*, pointing to the treaty's limited scope, was thankful for the absence of pretence and high-sounding preamble about long-standing friendship, fundamental identity of purpose, and joining hands to build a better world. It added, that until three weeks ago the Soviet was far more friendly with **Germany** than with **Britain**. The *Star* suggested raising volunteer forces, to fight in **Russia**, from those in **Britain** and the Dominions who had long professed keenness to help the Soviet; some in New Zealand had told military service appeal boards that they would take up arms only for such a purpose. The government might well consider helping them on their way. 'As a gesture it would not be without value and the financial commitment

would be small. It might turn out to be nil, for local Communist bellicosity is usually most impressive on paper.’ <sup>23</sup>

New Zealanders also read news from overseas. The cable news in the *Auckland Star* on 21 July included a **Sydney** item in which Federal Attorney-General W. M. Hughes, a strong anti-Communist, gave ‘stinging rebuke to people who would sooner be beaten by **Hitler** than saved by **Russia**’. Mr Hughes said:

A small section mainly composed of ‘the nicest people’ view the pact between **Russia** and **Britain** with grave concern. They see in **Russia** the menacing shape of Communism, and, gathering their robes about them, hasten to pass by on the other side. In their eyes it is better that Nazi-ism should win the war than that the Soviet armies should help to save us.... God save us from such narrow-minded, futile and treacherous counsels. I welcome an alliance with this great Power. I hail it with unbounded satisfaction. After Greece and **Crete**, **Germany**, as all the world knows, was preparing to attack **Suez**, the gateway to **India**, **Australia** and the **Far East**. The battle for **Suez** was to be the signal for an assault on **Singapore** by the other partner in the Axis. Then Germany swung her mighty war machine against **Russia**. We must make a supreme effort to take the utmost advantage of this Heaven-sent opportunity to strike at **Germany**.... If we let this chance slip, we may not get another. <sup>24</sup>

At the end of July a treaty was signed which attempted to unite the **USSR** and the Polish government-in-exile against **Germany**. It did not define borders but the **USSR** recognised that the territorial changes of 1939 had lost validity, while the Poles repudiated any agreement with a third power directed against **Russia**. The two governments established diplomatic relations and agreed to aid each other in the war. New Zealand papers approved, some even seeing post-war value in it, but the *Auckland Star* reminded that pacts had become as cheap as tram tickets. <sup>25</sup>

Only New Zealand’s Russophiles had even brief hopes that the Red

Army would hurl back the invaders. The majority, though dismayed, were scarcely surprised by the swiftness of the German advance, smashing to the Baltic, to **Leningrad**, across the **Ukraine**, and towards **Moscow**. Reports asserted that these gains were won against very heavy German losses, and made much of **Russia's** 'scorched earth' policy. Meanwhile the nightly bombings of **Britain** had eased, while reverses in **Libya** early in June heightened thankfulness that **Russia** was draining off pressure. **Russia**, absorbing the enemy, causing heavy losses and denying resources, obviously at enormous cost, became admirable. Moreover, it was rightly realised that **Hitler** wanted Russian supplies, notably of grain and oil, to achieve the conquest of **Britain**; **Russia's** survival became vital. Stories and pictures of Russians burning the harvest, slaughtering cattle and horses, destroying industrial plants and blowing up their much-valued great dam on the Dnieper, roused grateful respect, even in those who normally regarded **Russia** with suspicion and hostility.

'If the Russian armies are destroyed in the present campaign— an outcome which is not wildly improbable ... the Axis and its partners will be supreme from the coast of **France** to Behring Strait', said the *Press* gloomily on 2 July, adding: 'Only the Russian armies, and behind those armies the dogged patriotism of the Russian people stand between **Hitler** and conquests on a scale which would make the conquests of Caesar and Jenghis Khan and Napoleon seem relatively insignificant.' 'Today it is the Russians who say of the Germans: "They shall not pass"', wrote the *Evening Post* on 11 July. 'No opinions about **Russia's** yesterday, and no dread of **Russia's** tomorrow, need prevent the sincere wishes of freedom-lovers going forth to the **Russia** of today, standing like a giant dam against the surging might of the German flood.' Faith rather than calculation inspired hope that somehow Russian suppleness would defeat the German thrusts and that **Russia** would fill the military role vacated by **France**.

Smolensk, Kiev, **Odessa**: their battles lasted long enough for their names to become familiar. After six weeks of war, the *Press* stated that

from the fog of claims and counter-claims one undisputed fact emerged: on every important sector of their front Russian armies were counter-attacking. Also, **Hitler's** propaganda offensive, his anti-communist crusade, had failed. In Whitehall and in the United States some reactionaries and isolationists had tried to separate their interests from **Russia's**, and some Catholics had threatened the alliance with the wrath of God, but these were 'only the sputters of a damp squib'. <sup>26</sup> Its news-versifier, Whim-Wham (Allan Curnow), <sup>27</sup> wrote:

The Blitz hangs fire, the Armoured Cars and Tanks  
That should have sped  
To Moscow halt before a Traffic Sign,  
The Sign that said:  
"Road closed. No Fascist Vermin past this Line!"  
The Light shows Red. <sup>28</sup>

Towards the end of August, when Russian forces retreated across the Dnieper, leaving, it was claimed, most of the **Ukraine** 'a desert', *The Times* was quoted as saying that **Russia** was now bearing the main weight of the war, making voluntary sacrifices for the common cause of a type almost unknown in history. The scorched earth policy meant desolation over tens of thousands of square miles, homelessness and misery for hundreds of thousands of souls, inconceivable immolation of stored wealth and the fruits of painfully won progress. 'Though our own lot has been hard, we have not yet been called on to make such sacrifices. It must be our aim to repay them by every means in our power.' **Russia's** resistance was more tenacious than anything achieved in land warfare during the past two years. 'Her cause is our own. She can count on the undivided sympathy of the whole British people in the dark and dangerous period through which she is passing. This sympathy must be expressed in deeds, not words. We must afford her support in every field in which she stands in need.' <sup>29</sup>

When, early in September, the Germans struck at **Leningrad**, threatening to turn it into rubble, the *New Zealand Herald* threw away all reserve in praising the start of that remarkable siege:

**Paris**, a city not as populous as **Leningrad**, shrank back from the ordeal and opened its gates ... the former Slav capital of **Russia** is not shrinking at becoming Golgotha.... Once again the world is enrapt at Russian resolution, Russian determination, Russian doggedness. First they throw in that altar to industry ... the Dnieper dam. Now they stake their 'city of light', all the social and cultural advances so painfully made, and the shrine and home of Lenin's revolution— **Leningrad**.<sup>30</sup>

A little later, on 22 September, the *Herald* recalled that at the beginning of the war it was widely thought that if Stalin could hold out for three months he would have conferred inestimable benefit on the Allied cause. Now, although buffeted and bruised the Red armies have not been broken.... Their dogged spirit has earned the gratitude and admiration of the whole world.... But admiration and gratitude are not enough. In Britain and **America**, public opinion demands that the Red Armies be given more material support.... Apart from any higher motives, simple self-interest dictates 'all aid to the Soviet'.

Here the *Herald*, like many British newspapers and speakers, especially from August onwards, mingled its salutation to Russian doggedness with pleas for assistance to maintain it. From the start, Stalin and Maisky,<sup>31</sup> the ambassador in **London**, had urged **Britain** to open a second front.<sup>32</sup>

The *Auckland Star*, its tone cooler than the *Herald's* but without the hostility of two months before, counselled against such importunings. **Hitler's** progress in three months was impressive; without deprecating **Russia's** resistance to date or discounting the probability that it would continue, all British people must wonder where the Nazis would be in another three months, for the Russian campaign was but a means towards destruction of the British Empire. It was natural to ask why **Britain** did not do more to help **Russia** in this extremity and in **London** there were public demands that the government should act to lighten the pressure on **Russia**. This advocacy overlooked the enormous demand for weapons from **Britain's** own forces, nor was there shipping enough for a landing in **Europe**. Britain's fight, to be effective, must be

in North Africa. The recapture of **Cyrenaica** and the occupation of **Tripoli** would be far from **Russia** but would have far-reaching consequences. <sup>33</sup>

**Norway, Dunkirk, Greece:** these could not be risked again. But air raids were intensified; a **Royal Air Force** wing, with a few New Zealanders in it, went to **Russia** <sup>34</sup> and British munitions, plus some from **America**, were sent both through the Persian Gulf and Iran and in convoys beset by ice and the **Norway**-based enemy to Archangel and Murmansk. There were public assurances, such as September's 'tank week' when all tanks made went to **Russia**, that all possible aid was being given but, as the *Press* said on 3 October: 'the obvious facts of the situation are against any optimistic view of the extent to which **Russia** can be helped with vital war supplies in the near future.' The initial difficulty was in transport; as well, American production was only beginning, and **Britain** needed all its own tanks.

It was hardly a substitute that, late in July, the 'V for Victory' campaign had been launched to quicken fighting hearts in enemy countries, to check collaboration and to worry garrison troops. 'V's were scrawled on walls and the morse signal, ... -, splendidly presented in **Beethoven's Fifth Symphony**, was tapped and whistled. Said Churchill on 19 July: 'The V sign is a symbol of the unconquerable will of the occupied territories and a portent of the fate awaiting Nazi tyranny. As long as the people of **Europe** continue to refuse all collaboration with the invader it is certain that his cause will perish and that **Europe** will be liberated.' <sup>35</sup> Goebbels promptly adopted the 'V' as a sign of belief in German victory. <sup>36</sup> In New Zealand it was just another slogan, appearing on cars, on official desks, in advertisements and offices, and *Truth* complained of 'Beethovenish fatuity while **Russia** staggers'. <sup>37</sup>

As German forces struck deeper, British opinion grew restless over **Russia's** bearing the brunt alone. This was particularly sharp among working-class voices. There was agitation against some members of the British government suspected of being so clouded by anti-Russian



prejudice that they could not bring themselves to help **Russia** enough to keep her in the fight as a serviceable ally, men such as Lieutenant-Colonel Moore-Brabazon,<sup>38</sup> Minister of Aircraft Production, who had hoped that the German and Russian armies would exterminate each other.<sup>39</sup>

In general, New Zealand papers, while noting this uneasiness,<sup>40</sup> saw the importance of **Russia** as a fighting ally, but accepted the restraints of distance; a second front was impossible.<sup>41</sup> The likelihood of Russian reverses setting **Japan** off on further adventures was not forgotten.<sup>42</sup> The New Zealand correspondent of September's *Round Table* said that expectation that a major Russian defeat would send **Japan** grabbing for spoils had caused New Zealand to draw closer to **America**.

It is generally recognised that the fate of peace in the **Pacific** area may be decided by the battles raging for **Leningrad**, **Moscow** and the **Ukraine**. Indeed, with the local press filled with news from the Nazi-Soviet war and also with news of the 'Far Eastern' situation, it is significant that the vast majority of readers seem primarily interested in the war news from the Russian front. Consciously or unconsciously New Zealanders seem to have a good grasp of the factors which may ultimately govern the issue of peace or war in the **Pacific** area, and the maximum aid to **Russia** is strongly supported by nearly all sections of the community.<sup>43</sup>

Apart from newspapers, what reaction was there to **Russia's** entry? The executives of several trade union bodies passed resolutions of support for **Russia**, while pledging full co-operation with their own government. The Wellington Trades and Labour Council also called on the workers of **Germany** and **Italy** to make common cause with workers in all other countries for the overthrow of the German and Italian dictators.<sup>44</sup> Longburn freezing workers, solemnly endorsing the utterances of Winston Churchill, sought all possible help for **Russia**, whose defeat would bring dire consequences to the working people of the whole world.<sup>45</sup> A few unions, such as the Canterbury Clothing Workers', whose president, **John Roberts**, was an ardent non-communist supporter of aid to **Russia**, sent fraternal greetings to their Russian counterparts



and received replies. <sup>46</sup> The Canterbury Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants proposed diplomatic and trade relations, and declared solidarity with Russian workers. <sup>47</sup> Wellington university students in an annual meeting carried with acclaim an expression of solidarity with the Soviet Union in its titanic struggle, and sent a telegram of salutation to heroic **Leningrad** and its student defenders. **Leningrad** University expressed deepest gratitude for this solidarity and confidence in victory. <sup>48</sup>

The Communist party, of course, found the whole situation transformed. Overnight, the imperialist war became a holy war. 'This is the decisive moment in world history,' declared the national secretariat on 23 June. Since defeat of **Russia** would mean the triumph of capitalist barbarism, while Russian success would mean a new era of socialism, speedy Russian victory was now the primary aim. Despite confidence in the **USSR's** mighty forces and the solidarity of workers everywhere, including **Germany**, there must be no complacency or inactivity. Communists should no longer oppose military measures for the defeat of **Germany**; they should also demand a full military alliance with the Soviet; they should maintain a resolute and vigilant struggle against the pro-Nazis and capitulators of the imperialist camp, who might still try to switch the war, and they should demand an end to prosecutions, the release of political prisoners and return of the *People's Voice*. <sup>49</sup>

New Zealand Communists now turned from what the *Standard* of 24 June had dubbed their 'senseless activities', and called for unstinted effort on all sides, for production committees throughout industry to improve efficiency, <sup>50</sup> and for collaboration between the party and the New Zealand Labour movement. Production committees increased, not solely in response to comradely pressure, achieving useful low-key improvement, but did not become a salient feature of industry; collaboration proposals were firmly rebuffed.

A joint declaration by the national executives of the Labour party and the Federation of Labour in October <sup>51</sup> called for redoubled efforts in field, factory and workshop as the only way to give maximum assistance

**to [Russia](#) in its magnificent fight against Hitlerism.**

**We unhesitatingly extend the same measure of assistance to the people of Soviet Russia as to the other nations that have been attacked by [Hitler](#)....**

**We are convinced that the most effective way to help [Russia](#) is by assisting to the maximum the [New Zealand Government](#)'s war effort.... The whole resources of the British Commonwealth are pooled to defeat Nazism.**

**Assistance to [Russia](#) or to any other country can only be achieved by co-ordinated effort on the part of the fighting forces plus the efforts of the workers in field, factory and workshop....**

**We endorse the statement made to the British Trade Union representative by M. Maisky, Soviet Ambassador in the United Kingdom, and also the message from the Moscow Women's Conference that the best way to help Soviet Russia is to work harder and produce more in every sphere of economic activity.**

**The only way to assist Soviet Russia is to help to build up and fully equip our New Zealand forces, to increase the production of goods and services in New Zealand; and to do everything in our power to bring the country's war effort up to the highest possible level.**

**New Zealanders could help Soviet Russia, Great Britain, the other Dominions and themselves by working harder at their everyday jobs, to produce more food, more wool, coal and timber, 'more of all kinds of useful commodities', and make more use of ships by turning them round more quickly.**

**All this was directing pro-Russian fervour into existing channels, making help to [Russia](#) part of broadly increased effort, not a new and special target. Official Labour went on to stress that its approval of [Russia](#)'s fighting valour did not extend to local Communists. Suggestions for common action with the New Zealand Communist party**

had been carefully considered but rejected. For two years the British Commonwealth had borne the brunt of a titanic struggle, all sections working together with the sole exception of the Communist party. In September 1939 that party had declared resistance to Hitlerism; a little later, without consulting the rank and file, it had declared the war 'imperialist', thereafter using every means to obstruct and weaken the war effort, unmoved by the sufferings of the British people. When Russia was attacked, this policy was reversed, again without consulting the rank and file. The Communist party had thus shown 'its irresponsible and unstable character', while, unlike the Labour movement, its policy was not determined by democratic methods or with reference to the needs and purposes of the people of New Zealand. The Labour movement concluded that no useful purpose could be served by collaboration or association in any way with the Communist party or its subsidiary organisations.

The statement has been quoted fully because it explains clearly the distinction held right through New Zealand between goodwill towards fighting **Russia** and distaste both for the Stalin regime and for local Communists in their new-found zeal for the war, distaste expressed with equal force by a trade union leader such as Arthur Cook,<sup>52</sup> and a Presbyterian such as the Rev Gladstone Hughes.<sup>53</sup> Although the Trades Council of **Auckland**, followed by those of **Gisborne** and **New Plymouth**, disapproved of the Labour statement,<sup>54</sup> the statement was confirmed strongly by the Federation of Labour's conference in April 1942 where Angus McLagan said to local Communists 'Get into the war effort and show us that you are sincere, and after you have shown us we might take up a different attitude towards you.'<sup>55</sup>

Despite these snubs, the New Zealand Communist party did its best to associate itself with Labour at large in the war effort. In November 1941 it advocated a united Labour movement, full support of the Anglo-Russian alliance, and the uniting of **Pacific** peoples against aggression; real intensification of New Zealand's war effort, with an end to inefficiency and waste in production, plus fullest democratic rights for

the people, democracy within the armed forces and maintenance of the best possible living standards for workers and farmers. <sup>56</sup> In May 1942, an enlarged session of the National Committee again resolved to stiffen the war effort by strengthening the labour movement. The working class should establish fraternal relations with other working people, particularly the farmers, wholehearted support going to their demands for higher guaranteed prices, along with increasing effort to win the support of trade unionists. Success for Labour in the coming election was a prominent aim, to provide the most favourable conditions for the growth of a wide people's movement, for working class unity and political understanding, and acceleration of a total war effort. <sup>57</sup>

Enthusiasm for **Russia's** resistance caused a number of non-Communists to join the new Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**. At its inaugural meeting on 22 July 1941 in **Wellington**, chaired by W. E. Barnard, the Speaker of the House and president of the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs, representatives of cultural groups and business and professional people were addressed by H. Atmore, <sup>58</sup> Independent member for **Nelson**, who had taken a leading part in its formation. A provisional executive was set up, comprising, besides Atmore and Barnard, Mrs C. Stewart, <sup>59</sup> Mrs J. H. Stables, <sup>60</sup> Rev P. **Paris**, Rev W. S. Rollings <sup>61</sup> and C. G. Scrimgeour. <sup>62</sup> It was to organise other branches into a country-wide body, publicising various aspects of Russian affairs, improving morale and widening support for the Anglo-Russian alliance through the promotion of cultural, diplomatic and economic relations. A letter to Nash as Acting Prime Minister suggested diplomatic relations and trade with **Russia**, and the offer of any surplus goods not needed by **Britain** or the Commonwealth. <sup>63</sup>

That sympathetic interest in **Russia** now extended far beyond the usual dedicated supporters was made clear by the Society's reception. Early in August 1941, with Smolensk and Kiev still holding out, **Wellington's** Town Hall was filled for its first public meeting. The Red Flag was unfurled, the Internationale was played on the grand organ, after the National Anthem, and the meeting sent its greetings and

admiration to the people of **Russia** in their magnificent struggle. A Professor of Education, W. H. Gould, spoke of the need to offset **Hitler's** anti-Bolshevik crusade, Percy Paris denied that Russians were godless, claiming rather that they were deeply and incurably religious and were now saying to the so-called religious nations. 'You show me your faith and I will show you my works'. Scrimgeour said that **Russia** was **Britain's** greatest ally, without whom thousands more New Zealanders might already have been killed or captured. Atmore criticised criticism based on ignorance, and suggested that in the work of the Society, as in other social fields, New Zealand might lead the world. <sup>64</sup>

At Christchurch on 20 August the Civic Theatre was so crammed that an overflow meeting was arranged in the adjacent Council Chambers. The Mayor presided over speeches from Atmore, John Roberts, the local union leader who had visited **Russia** in 1939, and Winston Rhodes, <sup>65</sup> a leftist university lecturer. Greetings and admiration were sent to **Russia**, and the New Zealand government was asked to initiate diplomatic and trade relations. <sup>66</sup> On 8 September in **Dunedin** the new gospel was received by an enthusiastic meeting of about 2000. <sup>67</sup>

New Zealand was not, however, swept off its feet. At Auckland, an Aid to Russia Committee which sprang up at the end of June was denied access to halls. At the same time the Rationalist Society, which for years had held Sunday evening lectures and discussions in the Strand Theatre, was turned from this meeting place on City Council instructions. <sup>68</sup> The decision of the Mayor and town clerk in refusing the Town Hall to the Aid to Russia Committee was dubiously upheld in a Council meeting, the Mayor using his casting vote after a councillor who had spoken for granting it had left early. <sup>69</sup> The protests of the groups concerned were reinforced by the New Zealand Freedom Association. Its president, R. M. Algie, said that he found himself identified with people whose views he regularly opposed, but his Association fought consistently for free speech, not only for itself but for anyone prepared to exercise it within the law, as an inalienable British right. <sup>70</sup> The

*Auckland Star*, though far from Russophile, also reproved: 'It would appear that the hall was refused because half the council disapproved of what they believed the speakers intended to say. That can scarcely be defended.'<sup>71</sup> On Sunday 24 August, in the Domain, some 3000–4000 people heard Aid to **Russia** speakers from Labour organisations and the Communist party, plus John A. Lee, speaking in front of the Red Flag, flanked by the Union Jack and the New Zealand Ensign.<sup>72</sup> Meanwhile it was decided that the Aid to Russia Committee would again apply for the Town Hall, under the auspices of the more acceptable national Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**.<sup>73</sup> On 4 September, while fighting flared at **Leningrad**, 3000 Aucklanders met in the Town Hall. They heard Professor W. A. Sewell<sup>74</sup> read Maisky's thanks for the message from **Wellington's** meeting, then point out that while Churchill welcomed **Russia** as an ally, there were those to whom victory for Bolshevism was worse than victory for Nazism, those who hoped that **Germany** and **Russia** would destroy each other, and others who grudgingly accepted **Russia's** aid. He himself believed that while **Russia** lacked democratic traditions, it had organisations and human qualities making for a future with a creative ideal, and he hoped that New Zealand and **Russia**, despite imperfections on both sides, could help each other towards a better social order. Atmore explained **Russia's** course since 1917; Dr Alexander Hodge, a prominent Baptist, and Rev Percy Paris explained that there was much religion in **Russia**: Roy Stanley,<sup>75</sup> unionist and Communist, explained that the purges of 1937 had got rid of the Fifth Column in **Russia** and urged that the truth about **Russia** should be spread, that there should be closer trade and diplomatic relations and a definite western front. Contributions for expenses totalled £111.<sup>76</sup>

Branches of the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia** were established in many centres, large and small, including places such as Karapiro, **Waihi**, Seacliff, **Gisborne** and **Te Aroha**,<sup>77</sup> and some sustained their activity. After the first enthusiasm, meetings were much smaller; they were not rallies, but routine lectures and discussions on various aspects of Russian life.<sup>78</sup> By March 1942, in Hastings and its district there were 60 members; on 19 February, 30 people, despite heavy rain,



came to a lecture and discussions on the constitution of the **USSR**, and on 2 March 'a fair number' heard the headmaster of Havelock North school speak on education in **Russia**, while the chairman of the Town Board presided. <sup>79</sup> The Society also produced pamphlets: for instance, *How the Soviet People Live and Work* by Margaret Jordan, a Lancashire mill girl who had spent eight years in **Russia** during the Thirties. This pamphlet, its 16 pages introduced by 'Uncle Scrim', was the third 'and most informative' up to mid-October 1941. <sup>80</sup>

Although the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia** included a number of respected citizens, besides its more notorious intellectuals and unionists, it was eyed askance by the establishment. For instance, the Wellington City Council turned down a request by the Thorndon branch to show a Russian film at a theatre on the evening of Sunday 12 October 1941. Councillor W. Appleton <sup>81</sup> thought that the Russian film (which none of the Council had seen) was being used for propaganda. The Society could have the hall for lecture purposes, but propaganda was another matter. Though **Russia** was **Britain's** friend today, they had to look further ahead: he was also against the showing of pictures on Sunday. Councillor R. A. Wright <sup>82</sup> agreed with him.

What is this society? Who are these people? **Russia** today is our ally and we are in sympathy with the fight **Russia** is making, but there is an element in the community that seems to be using the fact that **Russia** is our ally for other purposes altogether, and they have to be watched very closely.... Let them run the picture in the ordinary way and if it is a good picture people will go to see it. We want to be extremely cautious in what we are doing. We know nothing about the picture and nothing about the people who are running the organisation.

Here the signatories to the letter were named, and Councillor Wright conceded that one, a well known Justice of the Peace, seemed to be all right. Councillor J. D. Sievwright <sup>83</sup> objected to pictures on Sunday but said, 'I am in favour of **Russia**. **Russia** has turned over; **Russia** is capitalistic. They are paying the working man in **Russia** today according to the quality of his work.' Councillor R. H. Nimmo's suggestion of a



preview was not taken up, and in the end it was decided that a 'March of Time' film could be shown. The voting was 7:7, and the Mayor gave his casting vote for showing it.<sup>84</sup> It would take the American invasion to bring New Zealand to any general acceptance of films on Sunday.

The trade unionist Aid to Russia Committee which aroused the free speech issue at **Auckland** had counterparts in **Wellington** and a few other places, but **John Roberts** of **Canterbury**, who proposed such committees in about 16 districts, was disappointed by the response, save among the miners of the **West Coast**.<sup>85</sup> In November 1941 the Federation of Labour appealed for money to provide an ambulance in **Russia**, but contributions were modest: by the end of March 1942 they totalled only £277 2 s.<sup>86</sup>

The Catholic Church's hostility to the new alliance matched Communist party enthusiasm. Catholic pages had held many attacks on the villainy and duplicity of godless **Russia** and the fatuity or worse of those insufficiently aware thereof, such as the British government.<sup>87</sup> *Zealandia*, on 3 July 1941, could not allow the ugly facts of past years to be forgotten in Churchill's flights of rhetoric. The Church agreed with all forms of government and all civil institutions 'provided that they safeguard the rights of God and the Christian conscience', but **Russia** for 24 years had sought to root out religion of every kind and all emotions and traditions in which human hearts had hitherto and everywhere found inspiration; 'the immense driving energy of the State is used to kill the soul of freedom and make man an animal and a slave.' The late Holy Father Pius XI had stressed in 1936 that 'The first peril, the greatest and the most general, is certainly Communism in all its forms.' Russian people were in fact more to be pitied than damned, because they had endured a terrorism beside which the infamies of Ivan the Terrible paled into insignificance.

If then our political spokesmen have it in mind so to aid **Russia** in its combat as to place this tyranny firmer in the saddle, then we deserve and shall receive the censure of future generations. To aid Soviet Russia

even against our common foe is to invite the curse of God upon ourselves.

To those who say that **Germany's** victory over **Russia** would mean our defeat, we would reply that it is better to go down in honour because of our allegiance to God than to stand victorious in the world after selling ourselves to the devil. <sup>88</sup>

A further article said: 'the lies, perfidy and persecution of the Nazis should in no wise blind us to the greater crimes of Bolshevist Russia. ... What virtue is to be denied **Hitler** and bestowed on the bloodthirsty Georgian bandit who loved the Russian peasantry so intensely as to put to death over 800 000 of them and starve by deliberate famine another 3 000 000? How can any wise leader forget these things? How shall we? Why should we?' <sup>89</sup>

Other pages in the same issue described the wretched lives of Russian women, denied the consolations of religion, the security of permanent marriage, the joy of caring for their own children, 'forced to pass their lives in the monotonous grind of a factory where the constant beat, beat, beat of machinery can spell madness to those temperamentally unsuited for it.' Abortions were common and children were often abandoned to the cold charity of the State, or to the streets, where for crimes such as robbery 12-year-olds met the same punishments, even death, as hardened criminals. <sup>90</sup> On 10 July and again on 21 August, *Zealandia* exposed the 'loyalty' of Communists in **Britain** and New Zealand, which was not to their own country but to the Comintern: those who for two years had opposed and jeopardised the war effort now cried aloud for aid to **Russia**.

There was strong Catholic disapproval of the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**, whose respectable members increased the danger of its propaganda. Behind this sudden cultural enthusiasm, *Zealandia* perceived the building of a wider communist front, using four sorts of people: Communists, small in number, but in key control; fellow-travellers, usually middle-class intellectuals such as professors,

clergymen, politicians and in general people susceptible to public acclaim, who followed directions unquestioningly; 'stooges', whose names had publicity value, used as decoys and to tone down extremists; innocents providing, for various misinformed reasons, the mass of support and on whom the other three classes exerted a proselytising influence. <sup>91</sup>

The *New Zealand Tablet* was equally critical. On 30 July it allowed that stark realism might demand that the Russian people be afforded all reasonable aid in their fight. That, however, did not make it necessary for politicians or press to whitewash the unspeakable tyranny which had dominated **Russia** for 24 years, or to ignore the openly professed aims of the godless system that sought to extend its sway over the whole earth. As for the newly formed Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**, there was nothing in cultural, diplomatic or economic fields to be learned from **Russia**. 'Do we need further instruction in the art of State-slavery by studying the Red brand of trade unionism, social security or new education?' What need was there to know about a system which had an OGPU station in every factory, more political prisoners than in the rest of the world put together, rigid censorship, purges and mass arrests as part of daily life? What had New Zealand to learn from a country which boasted that it was moving from agrarianism to industrialism? 'One of the most glaring weaknesses of **Labour Party** politicians in this country is that they are industrially-minded. They look to **Russia** for inspiration when they should be looking to Portugal and Eire.' The *Tablet* recalled a warning it had given in December 1938: so long as **Russia** was dominated by a poisonous social system, just so long would the counter-poisons of totalitarianism continue to penetrate further into the world. It concluded:

Today what we need is not a blind acceptance of the stupid idea that all is well with **Russia** and that her Government is one with which we can and should ally ourselves, but that while being thankful that **Hitler's** preoccupation with **Russia** is giving us a much needed breathing space, we should work and pray for the liberation of the Russian people from

the physical degeneration and moral putrefaction which the Red regime had imposed upon them. <sup>92</sup>

On 6 August the *Tablet* claimed that British Catholic sources were speaking in the same vein, though the phrases quoted were much milder, and on 27 August 1941, in an article called 'The Other Foe', assailed the wave of sentimental propaganda deceiving hundreds of ordinary people whose lack of judgment resulted from their so-called education. The Nazi attack on **Russia**, while advantageous militarily, had almost unnoticed created a serious new danger to New Zealand: people were being hoodwinked as to the ultimate aims of atheistic Russian communism, which included the overthrow, through accredited agents waiting for the right moment, of the government of the country, replacing it with a government submissive in all things to **Moscow**. No Catholic could view without uneasiness the facilities being given to such advance guards of Moscow as the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**. <sup>93</sup>

The Rev D. N. H. Gascoigne, <sup>94</sup> a leading figure in Roman Catholic education, drew firm distinction between military aid to **Russia**, which was proper, and any acceptance of Russian materialism. Materialism, denial of the supernatural, was the supreme evil; in its womb was conceived Nazism and Communism and no man could say what other fantastic 'isms' it would produce; the mere crushing of one form of it would not help mankind out of the present clogging morass, and it must have no place at the peace tables. Materialism had seeped into education and its infiltration into the minds of sincere men who would claim to be Christians had been clearly shown during the last few weeks, in the spectacle of men in responsible positions advocating closer relations with the country which more than any other had exiled God and Christianity. Lest it might sound unpatriotic to speak anything against **Russia**, he firmly linked himself with the unchallengeable Churchill who would unsay no word of 25 years' opposition to Communism. It was right, however, at the present moment, to expend all energies in crushing the monster, Nazism. <sup>95</sup>

In reply, W. E. Barnard, supported by several others whose letters were not printed, wrote that without Russian aid the war would probably not be won, and the general gratitude which the mass of New Zealand people was showing towards the Russian people was well deserved. 'It has nothing to do with materialism; it has much to do with the saving of the lives of thousands of New Zealand boys, and of our country and nation as a whole'; victory, which probably could not be won without the might of **Russia**, would incidentally save the Catholic Church. This was not a time for criticism, but rather for words of good cheer, which British, if not New Zealand, leaders did not hesitate to give. 'In common with other members of the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**, I take off my hat to the Russian people as they fight for their country—and for ours.'

96

Though there was no public government comment on this Catholic criticism, the Director of Publicity on 8 July warned *Zealandia* that phrases such as 'bloodthirsty Georgian bandit' must not be applied to Stalin; and on 4 September he also warned the editor of the *New Zealand Tablet*.<sup>97</sup> Several Labour bodies wrote to the government in protest,<sup>98</sup> while the West Coast Trades Council drew the attention of the Federation of Labour to 'these seditious and subversive press statements', and called on the government to apply the laws relating to such offences evenly or else repeal such laws altogether, pointing out that other men were serving lengthy prison sentences for saying or printing a great deal less.<sup>99</sup>

These admonitions by no means silenced official Catholic hostility, but though articles highly critical of **Russia** continued to appear, their tone was quieter, and there appeared a few statements from overseas leaders who did not feel that they compromised their Church by accepting the alliance. Thus *Zealandia* on 18 September gave the views of the Rev Dr John C. Heenan,<sup>100</sup> broadcasting to the **United States**: it was absurd to talk of Christian civilisation as though its fruits could be enjoyed only by practising Christians; already the Allies were pledged to help **China**, which was not a Christian country. The moral code of

Christianity was of universal application; all should work out their own salvation, and as some devils were exorcised by suffering, so it was possible that the sufferings of war would restore to **Russia** the Christian inheritance once its proud possession. Two months later, the Archbishop of Liverpool <sup>101</sup> declared that while opposition to Communism must be rigidly uncompromising, **Britain** and **Russia** were fighting to end the terrorism darkening the globe; **Russia** was its latest victim, and were Nazism to triumph all knew the fate that would befall Christian churches and schools. <sup>102</sup>

However, there was still strong criticism of **Russia** and Communism, much of it drawn from overseas publications. For instance, the *Tablet* on 22 April 1942 quoted **Britain's Catholic Times** as accepting the Russian alliance as a political and unpalatable fact and aid to **Russia** as a military necessity, but regretting the hypocrisy of whitewashing 'one of the greatest aggressors and bloodiest dictatorships in the world.' Again, on 13 May 1942, extracts from the *London Catholic Herald* warned admirers of Bolshevism that they were building a huge concentration camp in which they and their children would be imprisoned, in the service of despotism and the machine. 'We must be opposed to Bolshevism as it is, because Bolshevism as it is is the crown of the post-Reformation errors, as is also Nazism.... Of course, we pay tribute to the courage of the Russian people and... acknowledge the truth that the Bolshevik ideal is more soundly based than some of us had supposed.' <sup>103</sup>

New Zealand's government was fairly circumspect in praise of the Russian resistance. On 6 August 1941, Atmore asked Nash, as Acting Prime Minister, to consider sending from the people of New Zealand a message of good will and hearty congratulations to the people of **Russia** on the magnificently promising fight that they were making. Such a message would be a 'timely gesture of recognition' of the tremendous value of **Russia's** sacrifice of lives and resources in its co-operation in the battle for freedom, co-operation which must save the lives of young men of New Zealand, **Britain** and the Allies generally, and which was



saving **Britain** from heavier bombing. Nash replied that the government associated itself with the Prime Minister and people of Great Britain in appreciating the magnificent fight being made by the Russian armies and would, on an appropriate occasion, send a suitable message. <sup>104</sup>

Later in the same session J. A. Lee asked the Prime Minister 'Whether he considers the time is now appropriate for the House to express to the people of the U.S.S.R. its high appreciation of the valiant struggle which the people of Soviet Russia are making against Fascism.' Lee added that the House of Commons recently had cheered a reference by Churchill to the Russian resistance. Fraser answered that it was proposed to ask the House by appropriate resolution to express appreciation of the part played by all the Allies, including **Russia**, 'the people of which are so heroically facing such tremendous odds.' <sup>105</sup>

The sending of such a message is not indexed in the *Parliamentary Debates*, but on 9 July 1942 Sullivan reminded the House that, on the motion of the Prime Minister, a resolution had been adopted and forwarded to the proper quarter, expressing the appreciation of New Zealand at the magnificent achievements and heroism of the Russian people in the mighty struggle for world freedom. <sup>106</sup>

As the weeks and months passed, besides day-by-day news from the Russian front and comment thereon, newspapers were sprinkled with information about **Russia**, some of local origin, some from overseas. In general, **Russia's** fighting spirit was highly praised, there was guarded approval of some aspects of its regime and re-appraisal of some past misdeeds. Notably, the 1939 pact with **Germany**, previously so villainous, was now seen as a device to gain much-needed time and as the result of British suspicions and go-slow policy in negotiating a defence agreement; seizures in **Poland** and the Baltic states were justifiable defence moves. <sup>107</sup> Churchmen, led by Dr Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury, found a new spirit of religious toleration in hitherto godless **Russia**, and elements of effective Christianity in Communism. <sup>108</sup> Joseph Davies, <sup>109</sup> former American Ambassador in **Russia**, as quoted in an American periodical, declared that the purges



and treason trials of 1937–8, which had horrified the world, had in fact removed potential quislings, the present absence of betrayals proving Stalin's amazing foresight. <sup>110</sup> Articles on **Russia's** young fighting generals began to appear from overseas sources. <sup>111</sup>

Notable among the enthusiastic reports and widely published were several by Ralph Ingersoll, <sup>112</sup> editor of the **New York PM**, who had recently visited **Russia**. <sup>113</sup> These described such features as the defence of **Moscow**; Soviet strategy (giving ground in order to preserve its army and to keep on inflicting casualties); the scorched earth policy; transportation of industry away from war zones; the need for supplies from the Western Allies; Russian morale and discipline (for example, no roads clogged with refugees); some Russian virtues (notably racial tolerance) and Russian limitations, such as ignorance about the rest of the world. The reliability or otherwise of Russian communiques was assessed, and there was an hour-long interview with 'straightforward' Stalin. **Russia's** deep-rooted distrust of **Britain** and **America** was examined, with the conclusion that the Soviet government believed that those countries wanted to defeat **Hitler**, but only after the Soviet had been destroyed. There were statements which many were glad to hear: 'There will be a Russian army intact in the field and under present management a year from today.' <sup>114</sup> Or, ' **Russia** has long since given up the idea of revolutionising the world over night. There is universal scorn in **Russia** for the recent activities of the American and British Communist parties which, the Russians feel, made asses of themselves for years.' <sup>115</sup> Another Ingersoll article explained that Russian society was by no means classless, but privilege was based on ability, with engineers as the new aristocrats, and that the revolution had set free scores of millions for the hundreds of thousands whose opportunities were curtailed. <sup>116</sup> Repeatedly it was stated that the past was past, it was the present and the future that mattered. The resistance of the Russian armies and people was itself a justification: if their system was as objectionable as had been believed, would they fight so hard for it? <sup>117</sup> There were also hopes that **Russia**, purged by suffering and benignly influenced by wartime contact with the democracies, might emerge from

the conflict liberalised and mellowed. <sup>118</sup>

The worth of **Russia's** fight was confirmed by statements such as that of New Zealand's new air chief, Commodore R. V. Goddard, early in December that, with the German air force busy in **Russia**, British factories could speed up production unhampered, so that **Britain's** air force at least equalled and probably exceeded that of **Germany** considerably earlier than could have been expected but for the fighting in **Russia**. <sup>119</sup> Perhaps the seal of respectability was a cable to Maisky in **London** that the Dominion Council of the RSA 'records its profound admiration for the magnificent resistance of our Russian ally to the onslaught of the common enemy, and confidently looks forward with all our Allies to a crowning victory.' <sup>120</sup>

Despite all the talk of German losses, the Russian retreat was obvious, and New Zealanders drew what comfort they could from remembering Napoleon. When on 21 July 1941 the Germans claimed Smolensk, about 200 miles west of **Moscow**, the *Press* said that it must be assumed that the fall of **Moscow** was on the cards, adding that **Moscow** had no strategic value, it was only a city in the middle of a great plain; if Russian morale and transport and administration could survive the loss of the capital, 'the story of 1812 will be repeated in its essentials'. In fact, the lines east of Smolensk held, and during August the main German drive was towards **Leningrad**, and across the Crimea and **Ukraine**. Between 20–2 September, New Zealanders read that Kiev was 'occupied' or 'evacuated' with no immediate mention of several hundred thousand Russians encircled there. <sup>121</sup> Early in October the drive on **Moscow** was resumed. Minhinnick showed punter **Hitler** proffering a swastika-decked shirt to bookmaker Mars: "Moscow Push" for der Vin—und I poot der shirt on it', with 'Russian winter' already darkening one corner of the cartoon. <sup>122</sup> News of attack and counterattack swayed on through November, while in the south Kharkov was taken late in October and Rostov on 19 November.

On 27 November the *New Zealand Herald* summarised the moves on

**Moscow**: at the start the German commander von Bock <sup>123</sup> had covered 400 miles in a few weeks, then was held for more than two months by Marshal Timoshenko <sup>124</sup> around Smolensk in one continuous and bloody battle. On 2 October, Bock drove afresh, gaining another 150 miles, then bogging down still 60 to 100 miles short of **Moscow**; now he was trying again, but with lessening returns. 'The miracle in all this has been the maintenance of Russian morale. Surely few armies could have endured so much and still be capable of resistance, and—more than resistance—of fighting back.' Now that the Russian winter had arrived there might be a comparative pause while reinforcements and supplies were building up, aided by aircraft and tanks and motor vehicles from **Britain** and **America**.

Three days later, mounting American–Japanese tension was shouldered from the headlines with news that Rostov, 'gateway to the Caucasus', was recaptured. **Russia** had not waited for the spring, German armies were falling back through the **Ukraine**, withdrawing from **Moscow**. From 8 December when war burst into the **Pacific** with a succession of disasters, the Russian counter-attack, coupled with the British drive across North Africa to reach **Benghazi** on Christmas Eve, gave comforting balance. On 22 December the *Press*, while pointing out that in comparison to the huge area overrun by the invasion the territorial gains of the Russians were insignificant, stated that the retreat of German armies along the whole front was 'the most important recent development in the war situation', relieving vital areas and restoring unity to the Russian armies. The German High Command, said the *Press*, had in its over-belated assault on **Moscow** made its first real blunder in the war.

By the end of January 1942, only the Russian news gave comfort. Rommel had struck back, retaking **Benghazi** on 28 January, and New Zealanders had to balance **Russia's** gains against **Japan's**. The former lost nothing in presentation, so much so that there was criticism of **Russia** for not tackling **Japan** as well. The *New Zealand Herald* said on 9 December that since **Britain**, at the Soviet's request, had declared war

on **Finland**, **Hungary** and **Romania**, it would be strange indeed if **Russia** did not repay the obligation. When Litvinoff <sup>125</sup> thereafter declared that **Russia** would concentrate on **Germany**, the *Auckland Star* on 18 December thought that being fully engaged with **Germany**, the fundamental Russian enemy, was probably the decisive reason for **Russia**'s inactivity in the **Pacific**, though air and submarine support would be particularly helpful at this time. The *Press* noted disappointment in **Britain** and the **United States**. **Russia** alone could strike at **Japan** itself, and with Russian help the democracies could probably bring **Japan** to its knees in months. But the decision was not unexpected: Russian losses had been appalling, and **Britain**'s unwillingness to open a second front in **Europe** must affect **Russia**'s reaction to suggestions that **Japan** should be compelled to fight in **Siberia**. <sup>126</sup> The *Evening Post* thought that **Russia** might have good military reasons for avoiding a further war and must be the judge of her own ability to fight on two fronts: any New Zealanders who wished for a Russian diversion to save themselves from possible Japanese bombs should remember the bomb-stricken lives of Russians within **Hitler**'s reach. But a few days later, as **Japan**'s attack widened, the *Post* reflected hopefully on Japanese vulnerability, and the chance of further surprises. <sup>127</sup> The *Otago Daily Times* considered the Soviet's refusal of new commitments, because of traditional suspicion of the West and recent preoccupation with **Germany**, to be shortsighted in the strategic sense. It thought that in time **Russia** would be persuaded to recognise this; meanwhile it should be remembered that so far **Russia** was fighting not in a disinterested cause, but in its own defence. <sup>128</sup>

Previously, only workers and leftists had looked to **Russia** as a model. Now Churchill, warning against disunity after **Singapore**, pointed to **Russia** which in dire straits had kept its unity, kept its leaders and struck back. He was echoed by the *Evening Post*—'In the one country, **Russia**, where he found no quislings or defeatists, **Hitler** has been beaten back.' <sup>129</sup> An article likened Stalin's order to attack, when the Germans were battering at the gates of **Moscow**, to Foch at the Marne; <sup>130</sup> Fraser said that the Russians' tenacious and indomitable fight was a stimulus

to all.

Over-confidence in the strength of **Russia** probably reached its extreme expression in the *Evening Post* on 28 February: 'The only war front on which the Allies can look with any satisfaction is also the only front whose results could liquidate Hitlerism within the limits of the present year... on the Russian front the European war could be won outright between now and December.' The *Auckland* on 5 March was more realistic. Soviet forces had shown a 'recuperative ability and a fighting spirit which compel a wondering admiration', but though they had had the initiative for many weeks Kharkov, Kursk, Smolensk and Novgorod were still in enemy hands, **Leningrad** was still besieged. The *Press* a month later summed up the winter's achievements: the Russians had kept the Germans fully extended, and had made deep salients in the front, which meant that the Germans also held forward strong points. The magnification in the public mind of Russian gains, and the widespread impression that the Germans were on the run, were in part wishful thinking, but some news reports, notably by the **BBC** had been over-emphatic, including recent talk of imaginary pincer movements and cities about to fall. In plain fact, while the Russians had greatly improved their December positions, every advance had been costly and at no stage had German withdrawal hinted at a rout. The Russian inability to take Rzhev, Orel, Kharkov and Taganrog, all of whose impending fall had been constantly suggested for the last two months, showed clearly that they had not enough men or material to attempt more than slow attrition. <sup>131</sup>

April 1942 passed with reports of hard fighting for at best small gains, the Germans still holding the key positions, Smolensk, Kharkov and most of the Crimea, springboards for the offensive that was already rumbling. Early in May, as the expected thrust began, the *New Zealand Herald* sang its last panegyric over the winter campaign: the phrase ' **Russia's** glory' was not Churchillian extravagance but a title justly conferred and honourably earned, that would never wither or grow old. From 22 June till December, the raw Red Army had withstood the

assault of the mightiest military machine and given ground, given hundreds of miles, but kept cohesion, kept its lines unbroken. The first electric sign of its swift recuperation was on 28 November when Timoshenko's columns recaptured Rostov, lost a week earlier. There, German troops for the first time since 1918 were forced into disorderly retreat; and on 7 December, in the approaches to **Moscow**, they gave up the vast battle begun two months earlier. The push continued, slowly; the German line was twisted and in places bitten into for as much as 150 miles. The Germans had been repulsed on the grand scale, with losses that would contribute much to their final undoing. 'Let that proud Russian record be remembered in the great trial of strength now impending. It is an assurance and a guarantee. It is **Russia's** glory.' <sup>132</sup>

Now in the black summer of 1942, the Russians were forced back from the Kharkov approaches, from the Kerch peninsula, from the Don bend; gallant Sevastopol fell at the end of June, Rostov on 28 July, opening the way to the Caucasus, and the Germans pressed on to **Stalingrad**. Rommel drove the 8th Army back into Egypt, British losses there and in **Singapore** precluding the second front urgently requested by **Russia**. In the **Pacific** there was no good news until the Coral Sea and Midway battles of May and June. Amid these disasters, on 12 June the signing of a 20-year Anglo– Russian Alliance was announced, renewing pledges against a separate peace, promising co-operation after the war, and claiming 'full understanding' on the urgent task of creating a second front in **Europe** in 1942. <sup>133</sup> Leading papers welcomed the treaty mainly as a sign of improvement in Allied relations with **Russia**, which they noted had been cooler in recent months with complaints of idle armies on one hand, and of secretiveness on the other. If Russian impatience for a second front had eased, clamour in **Britain** and New Zealand for hasty Anglo–American intervention was unnecessary. Post-war cooperation, though an admirable intention, was far away and beset with difficulties. What mattered were the short-term aspects of the treaty: good understanding between fighting allies. <sup>134</sup>

On 22 June, with the Russian war a year old, the *New Zealand*



*Herald* wrote:

The United Nations salute **Russia** today with admiration and gratitude for the magnificent fight the Soviet has made against the main Axis forces for 12 months past. It is not too much to say that the dour defence of the Red Armies last summer and autumn, and their counter-offensive sustained all through the rigours of winter on the steppes, saved the Allied cause.

Recalling the outlines of the war, the *Herald* praised Timoshenko and the triumph of Russian morale, and continued:

M. Stalin personifies that morale. He is the Joffre or Haig <sup>135</sup> of this war, imperturbable, unshaken by retreat and seeming disaster, a man of cool brain and iron nerve.... All the world owes the Russian soldiers and workers a great debt.... Somehow that debt must be paid and it must be paid now.... The Allies... have undertaken to open a second front in **Europe** this year. The hope and prayer is that they will be able to move in time and in sufficient force.

The other main dailies did not produce such salutations on this anniversary, but in **Auckland**, **Wellington** and **Dunedin** the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia** held well supported and well reported public rallies, those on the platforms including Labour members, representatives of churches and of unions, and Communist party members.

The need for a second front before **Russia** was crushed out of the battle continued, as the summer campaign mounted, to be anxiously considered by papers, such as the *Evening Star* on 24 June: 'Can we do more to help the Russians? Dare we let them struggle much longer without affording the untold relief... {of} a second front in **Europe**?' Always there was awareness that the second front must be sound, there could be no more Norways or Dunkirks, but too much delay could be fatal. 'The possibility that the Soviet forces, so stubbornly enduring, will yet wear the Germans down, remains, but there is now less ground for



hoping for it', wrote the *Auckland Star* on 15 July. The desirability of a second front had never been doubted, the Allies were committed to it. 'It is a question of when and where. The need for it now is extreme. Will the **United Nations** make the attempt? They have to weigh its cost, under present conditions, against the cost of the indefinitely long war which would probably be the consequence of a German victory over **Russia**.' Ten days later the *Star* stated that the situation in **Russia** had deteriorated 'in a shocking degree', and again on 27 and 31 July urged strongly that unless **Russia** were soon relieved the war must last much longer. Meanwhile the *Press*, discussing various attitudes towards a second front, quoted an apposite and deadly Chinese newspaper comment: 'There's plenty of noise on the staircase but nobody comes down', and warned that if events did not soon dispel the present bewilderment of the Allied peoples, they would face a major crisis in morale. <sup>136</sup> The *New Zealand Herald* on 23 July said that there was too much talk about limitless Russian manpower and resources. German advances were depriving **Russia** of food, of industry, and were threatening oil. 'The Allies may not be fully ready, they may have to risk paying a high price, but some substantial attempt should be made to divert a considerable part of the deadly Axis concentration at present directed against **Russia**.... They must throw everything they can muster into the balance to prevent it tipping further.' A week later, the *Herald* described ' **Russia** at Bay' with a warmth that a year earlier could have come only from a communist pen. It recalled the response to Stalin's broadcast of 3 July 1941, <sup>137</sup> which response confounded the expectations of those who thought that the terrible rigours of the Soviet experiment, the miseries attendant on collectivisation, the ruthless purges of the Red Army and the Communist party, would cause the regime to dissolve under invasion. The Russians had rallied to their leader; the upsurge of national spirit, inspired by the passionate belief of a new generation in their revolutionary experiment, had been proof against terrible losses and retreats, even those caused by the blunders of Russian generals. Traditionally, the humble folk of **Russia** had always fought invaders with almost religious fervour. Now ruler and people appeared identified. In spite of their past hatred of collectivisation the

peasants gave no help to **Hitler**, though they left most of the earth-scorching to the Army. The Red Army had fought a dogged retreat—its men were the best rear-guard fighters in the world—and in their extremity they expected help from the West. There would be heavy hearts in the Red Army if the difficulties of a second front in 1942 proved insuperable. Keeping **Hitler** from the Caucasus would keep him from the Persian Gulf and prevent the **Middle East**, bridgeway between two continents, from falling to the enemy of civilisation. <sup>138</sup>

The experimental Dieppe raid of 19 August 1942, though its failure was minimised at the time, lessened the calls for a second front. The Germans drove on. Headlines on 12 August said that Maikop oilfield was a blazing inferno; Baku was threatened, Stalingrad was expected to fall. In Stalingrad, explained the *New Zealand Herald* on 28 August, political, moral and industrial forces were combined in a symbol which the indomitable spirit of **Russia** was fighting passionately to uphold. A fortnight later the *Herald*, looking forward eagerly to the respite of winter, said that it was now too late for a major offensive against **Moscow** or against Baku, while Rommel in the desert had probably been short of reinforcements because of heavy demands by von Bock; ‘For all this, the Allies have to thank the dour defenders of **Stalingrad**.’ <sup>139</sup> **Stalingrad** news became the first that very many New Zealanders looked at when they opened their newspapers. Fighting in the streets was reported about 21 September, with comment from **New York** that one of the war’s great climaxes was ending, that **Stalingrad**’s fall would be as important and as dismal a milestone as the fall of **France**. <sup>140</sup> But a month later, headlines were proclaiming, ‘Stalingrad Still Stands’. The closer the Germans approached the city, the tougher became the resistance of the Russian army and workers, wrote the *Auckland Star*: their spirit and their sacrifice in this war’s ‘Verdun’ had so far enabled the city to stand, despite the German’s overwhelming superiority in aircraft and tanks that should have enabled them to drive into the city by sheer weight of equipment. In the greatest battle of the war to date the Russians had confounded German expectations of a decisive victory; **Russia**’s heavy losses, however, would mean that ‘the brunt of the

fighting must in future be borne by **Britain** and the United States'. <sup>141</sup>

Apart from cable news and comment, which was plentiful and which stressed that Russians were inspired by deep rooted patriotism, much older than Communism, overseas articles appeared on various aspects of Russian life, such as one from a *Daily Herald* correspondent that included a sympathetic portrayal of Red Army commissars. Puzzled Englishmen, amid tales of Russian heroism, were asking if these stories were mere propaganda, or, if true, were Russians ordinary people, or mechanical supermen or slaves, careless of death because of an anthill discipline that regulated every reaction? The answer given was that, despite a few bad patches as in all armies, the general level of courage was amazingly high. Russians were the most human of human beings, full of vitality and candour and loving a joke, but like **Oliver Cromwell's** Ironsides, they knew what they fought for and loved what they knew. 'And if they don't it is the fault of the Army Political Department and there is likely to be a devil of a row about it.' Army commissars in all ranks, part chaplains, part welfare officers, part pep-talk men, who went over the top with the rest, could inspire waverers to become heroes, not insensible to danger but in Plato's sense of knowing when and when not to be afraid. This was in curious contrast to the haphazard system of pep-boosting in the British Army but was by no means alien to British long-term tradition and character. <sup>142</sup>

Other articles, such as one from the *The Times* quoted by the *Press* on 23 December 1942, said also that Red Army soldiers fought with greater spirit because they knew of the great material progress their country had made in the last 15 years. Such references are merely indicative of the mass of information and misinformation on **Russia** passed about in print and conversation, making it easy for many willing New Zealanders to think that a valuable ally in a tight place was less black than formerly painted.

In this climate, it was not surprising that in 1942 **Russia's** national day, 7 November, was saluted in various ways. There were editorials in

many newspapers, Russian flags were flown on public buildings along with the New Zealand Ensign, and some even appeared on business premises. <sup>143</sup> **Auckland's** Mayor presided over a meeting of 2000 called by the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**, with speakers from all the political parties. <sup>144</sup> In Wellington, at a governmental morning tea attended by consuls, legislators, civic and military leaders, the Prime Minister expressed New Zealand's high appreciation of the tremendous sacrifices and fighting spirit of the **USSR**, with special mention of grim determination and desperate valour shown at **Stalingrad**. He added that from his own knowledge of Churchill and Roosevelt he was certain of their strong determination to strike in support of **Russia**. He announced that £25,000 from New Zealand's patriotic funds was going to **Russia** for medical assistance. <sup>145</sup>

From 23 October **Alamein** and Rommel's retreat, plus United States troops landing in North Africa on 9 November, captured the headlines, but a few weeks later came the astounding news that the Russians had again turned from defence to attack, both north-west and south-west of **Stalingrad**, and that the Germans were retreating 'helter-skelter'. On 26 November newspapers told that the Red Army was within sight of the greatest victory of the war: **Stalingrad** had been relieved after three months' siege, and Russian pincers, more



REPLY PAID

In his broadcast, Mr. Churchill revealed that when he was leaving the Kremlin in August he promised to send M. Stalin a telegram when he had decisively defeated Rommel at Egypt. M. Stalin promised to send him a telegram when the Russians had made their counter-offensive. Both these messages had been sent and thankfully received.

REPLY PAID

than 100 miles west of the city, were closing in on about 300 000 Germans. On 1 December, Minhinnick showed the exchange of happy news: a beaming Stalin held a telegram, 'Pommelled Rommel. Winston', while a beaming Churchill held another, 'Socked Bock. Joe'. <sup>146</sup>

By Christmas, the Russians were attacking from north of **Moscow** to the Caucasus, the **Eighth Army** was again in **Benghazi**, the Japanese were effectively crushed in **Guadalcanal**, and in New Zealand fire-watching was ended. A buoyant, confident spirit was abroad in the crowds, commented the *New Zealand Herald* on 26 December, in marked contrast to the atmosphere of last Christmas. Newspapers, in end-of-the-year summaries and forecasts, gave their highest tributes to **Russia**. Thus the *Press* on 31 December 1942:

... it is safe to say that public opinion has been cheered and inspired by nothing else as it has been by the long, resourceful, obdurate resistance at **Stalingrad**... and by the series of counter-offensives which now threaten [the enemy]... with immense losses and, perhaps, irreparable defeat.... The time for the United Nations to strike home has come.

As Russian advances continued early in 1943, editors and others began to look afresh at the problems inherent in post-war collaboration with **Russia**. At a large meeting called by the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia** in **Christchurch**, W. E. Barnard said, 'It is not enough to treat the Soviet Union as a good, brave and faithful ally in time of war, to be dropped in peace. It must become a permanent friend of the British Empire.' <sup>147</sup> But, as the *New Zealand Herald* explained on 5 February, despite the 20-year treaty and assurances by statesmen that in the post-war world collaboration with **Russia** would be essential, there were in the British Empire and the **United States** people who feared the consequences of Russian victory in **Europe**, and there were Russians who feared that some interests among the Allies hoped for a permanent weakening of both **Germany** and **Russia**. Misunderstandings with **Russia** were not new, but **Germany** could be held in check only by military alliance: failure to achieve this in 1939 had led to the attack on **Poland**.

Good relations depended on an understanding, free from bias, of Russian problems and achievements. 'An eventual Russian invasion of Germany may have certain undesirable consequences', but both **Britain** and **Russia** were mainly concerned to prevent any future attack by **Germany** on the peace of the world. There would, however, be difficulties over **Poland**, the Baltic states and Soviet influence in the **Balkans**, which would require the Allies to consult fully with **Russia** and **Russia** to abandon suspicion of the West.

This from the *Herald*, which had been the most warmly pro-Russian daily paper for eighteen months, indicated that the old-established cracks were waiting to re-open. The 25th anniversary of the Red Army's foundation (23 February 1943) was marked on Sunday 21 February by mayor-presided meetings of the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia** and by a broadcast from the Prime Minister. This blended the now familiar tributes to dauntless Russians with references to **Britain** as the rock fortress after **Dunkirk**, and to New Zealanders in **Greece**, **Crete**, **Libya** and **Tripoli**, concluding with phrases on post-war friendship and a peace settlement worthy of all who fought for it. <sup>148</sup>

In March–May 1943 hard fighting in **Tunisia** competed with the Russian theatre where, as in the spring of 1942, the Russian drive waned before heightened German pressure. Kharkov, lately repossessed, was lost again by 16 March and there was renewed protest from **Moscow** on the absence of a second front. The Russians, said the *New Zealand Herald* on 12 March, argued not unreasonably that, 'the latest German counter stroke could not have been made if the Allies had been actively engaging the enemy in the west.' A few days later, this paper also remarked that the demand within the British Empire for a second front varied with the fortunes of war on the steppes: **Russia's** difficulties had to be patent and present to produce sympathetic reaction; 'only when the danger is clearly marked on military maps does the demand for a second front go up.' <sup>149</sup> The *Auckland Star* also, having pointed out that Axis forces were vastly larger in **Russia** than in **Africa**, said that the latest developments again emphasised the great need to relieve **Russia**



On the other hand, optimistic if vague hopes that the war might be over before very long awakened old anxieties about **Poland**. It was said not infrequently that things would be very bad after the war unless real understanding with **Russia** were reached under the binding pressure of a common enemy; and there were warnings against the Allies being diverted into quarrelling while **Hitler** was undefeated. **America's** Vice-President was reported on 9 March 1943 as saying that a third world war appeared to be inevitable unless the Western democracies and **Russia** reached a satisfactory understanding before the present conflict ended. The *Evening Post*, commenting on this, urged that there should be no diversion from the war itself: everywhere the friends of Nazism hoped for the breakup of the Anglo-American-Russian confederacy: **Russia's** accusation that the Western Allies did not do enough to take off the weight of German attack, and their retort that the Russian press did not sufficiently acknowledge Allied material help, stood ready-made for manipulation by Axis mischief-makers. <sup>151</sup> The *Evening Star* also deplored premature American concern over attitudes that **Russia** might take at the peace tables, plus fears that **Britain** might concede the Baltic states and Bessarabia to **Russia**. The *Evening Star* held that if **Russia** insisted on control of these territories neither **Britain** nor **America** could prevent it, so that the question was, in essence, academic. 'The Allies have enough troubles to go on with without making new ones now.... There has been too much mutual distrust in the past.' <sup>152</sup>

Russian-Polish distrust, from various causes, was simmering early in 1943, but it was brought to an overflow boil in April by Goebbels's revelation of mass graves in the Katyn forest near Smolensk allegedly of thousands of Polish officers taken prisoner by the Russians in September 1939. They had been retained in camps when the ordinary Polish soldiers were freed, and had since disappeared. **Russia** refused proposals to have these graves, in German-held territory, investigated by the **Red Cross**, and relations between **Russia** and the Polish government in **London** were broken off. Pro-Russians and others could see Goebbels



trying to split the Allies, while Moscow, dismissing the charges as fabrication by the hangmen of **Berlin**, at no time gave fully satisfactory explanations. <sup>153</sup>

New Zealand newspapers looked at both sides but were mainly concerned that the breach should be closed; dissension must not weaken the Allied war effort, or complicate post-war problems. The *New Zealand Herald* said that the source of the allegations was tainted and the breach must at all costs be healed; the process would call for wisdom all round, plus moderation from the Poles and patience and understanding from **Russia**, which must remember that the rights of small countries were among the first things for which the war was being fought. <sup>154</sup> The *Press* held that it was futile to defer tackling Russo-Polish problems till the war had been won; the spirit of wartime collaboration could make easier solutions essential to an equitable conclusion of the war. <sup>155</sup>

Fears that **Russia** would ride rough-shod over **Poland** were to persist, darkening with the abortive **Warsaw** rising in August 1944, <sup>156</sup> darkening still more after the falling-away from agreement at **Yalta** early in 1945. <sup>157</sup> At the world's end New Zealand papers from time to time pleaded for reason, wisdom and dexterity in the war's leaders. Meanwhile, Western relations with **Russia** were eased when on 22 May 1943 the Communist International, with its target of world revolution, dissolved itself as out of date; a dissolution that Roosevelt and Churchill had wanted, which Stalin now called timely and which the West welcomed as evidence of Russian good will.

Early in July 1943 the Germans launched their summer offensive where it was expected, in the Kursk salient north of Kharkov. It failed, and within a few days the Russians were moving west, taking Orel, Belgorod, Kharkov, Taganrog, the Donbas area and Smolensk before the end of September. On 10 July the Allies landed in **Sicily**, and on 3 September were to invade **Italy**. These Mediterranean moves captured the news columns, but the *New Zealand Herald* on 21 July reminded that:

Successes in **Italy** should not be allowed to obscure the fact that a

far weightier contest is proceeding in **Russia**.... This summer for the first time the Russian pack has been able to hold the German forwards. More than that, it is now pushing them back over their own line.

In mid-August the *Herald*, without referring to Polish problems but remarking **Russia's** absence from the current **Quebec** conference, said that it had been clear for some time that the Soviet and the democracies were not working in full accord. The main cause of this coolness was the latter's failure to open a substantial second front, for which the military case was undeniable. The Russians could hardly be blamed for thinking that their allies should do more, but **Britain** and **America** would not withhold their fire a moment longer than necessary. Churchill had said that it was always difficult for the elephant to understand the manoeuvres of the whale: the Soviet did not sufficiently realise the huge expenditure of power in the never-ending battle of the **Atlantic**, did not sufficiently acknowledge the mighty in-flow of Anglo-American material, and undervalued bombing attacks on **Europe**. Further, while requiring the democracies to declare war on all *its* enemies, **Russia** persisted in neutrality with **Japan**, though if American bombers could work from its eastern territories they could soon crush **Japan's** flimsy cities. 'In fact', concluded **Russia's** New Zealand champion, 'the Russians have at least as much need to show understanding as the democracies.' These had made 'the fullest and frankest disclosures of their plans to their great fighting ally; are they not entitled in return to the removal of Russian secretiveness and suspicion?' <sup>158</sup> At the same time the *Otago Daily Times* claimed that the Russians, although 'in their present mood of sacrificial exaltation' they might not recognise it, had been greatly helped by the Allies, not only with material but by the German fear of impending invasion which 'must have been a potent and perhaps the predominant force in hastening the German withdrawals.' <sup>159</sup>

A few days before the foreign ministers of the three powers at last met together in **Moscow** in October 1943, the *Auckland Star* discussed the conflict presented by Russian affairs. It praised the glowing achievements of the Soviet armies, won at colossal cost; the Russians

were fighting for themselves, but the direct consequence of their struggle was that **Britain** and the **United States** had gained priceless time in which to bring their forces to bear. They would be ‘churlishly unimaginative if they did not feel a lively sense of gratitude’, and a marked change had come into people’s feeling: they wanted to believe, as before they had not, that the barriers which divided them from the Russian people were not substantial, that they had been broken down, and that the way was clear for full scale collaboration in peace. It was therefore chilling that *Pravda* had dismissed as ‘absurd assumptions of chatterboxes’ suggestions that **Russia**’s frontiers and the future of the Baltic states would be discussed at the forthcoming conference. Clearly the Soviet meant to have complete freedom of action in eastern **Europe**, rejecting the principles of self-determination on which post-war collaboration with **Britain** and **America** would have to be based. The Russians had evidently made up their minds against collaboration that was not on their own terms. <sup>160</sup>

At about the same time, the *New Zealand Herald* again set out the roots of difference. ‘Marshal Stalin keeps informing the democracies that, if they are to work together in the future, they must fight together in the present.’ The demand for a second front powerful enough to divert 60 German divisions from **Russia** was kept in the forefront by the Soviet, which grudged all force spent against **Japan**, did not appreciate the cost and necessity of the **Atlantic** battle and gave only modest value to the bombing and **Mediterranean** campaigns. Exasperation at the stubbornness and blindness of this continental outlook would be eased if the losses suffered by the Soviet over 28 months were realised. **Britain** and **America** understandably wished to avoid the blood-baths of a 1914–18 onslaught, preferring to expend money and machines. **Russia**, having no choice, had to spend men as well as material—spend them ruinously.

Until the democracies prove their willingness to take up a larger share of the land battle, Russian suspicion will remain—the cruel and, as we know, unworthy suspicion that she is being left to exhaust herself while the Anglo–Saxons conserve their strength against the peace

conference.... The Russians argue that if they ... are left to win the war they cannot be debarred from framing the peace ... to guarantee their security in single-handed defence. The logic of this argument from the Russian viewpoint cannot be gainsaid, even if it leaves out so much that is militarily and politically relevant.

The *Herald* hoped that Eden <sup>161</sup> and Hull had brought the necessary assurances to **Moscow**. <sup>162</sup>

The conferences, firstly of foreign ministers in **Moscow** in October 1943, then of the Big Three leaders at **Teheran** a month later, appeared reassuring. There was much cordiality; collaboration was to be improved by consultative councils, strategy to be co-ordinated and, most important for the public, it was stated from **Teheran**: 'We reached complete agreement as to the scope and timing of operations that will be undertaken from the east, from the west and from the south.' <sup>163</sup> Polish problems apparently were shelved. It was made known that relations between the **USSR** and the Polish government in **London** had been resumed a little earlier, but there was no public statement on **Poland**, and though in fact an agreement of sorts was reached on the approximate future frontiers of **Poland**, the question of Polish government was not tackled. There was in New Zealand general satisfaction that co-operation extending into peacetime was promised, but it was realised that agreement so far was only on broad principles and would have to face the trials of practical application. 'The foundation has been laid. The structure must now be erected', said the *New Zealand Herald* on 7 December. Many would think that there should have been more specific declarations on political questions, for if military victory was guaranteed, the more reason to draft the shape of the peace. 'Instead the world is put off with fine sounding generalities. Principles are stated but not their application.'

The *Press*, on 3 November, noted that after the enemy's unconditional surrender, until a 'system of general security' to embrace 'all peace-loving States' could be established, the Allies promised to consult with a view to joint action, and to use their military forces only

for organising international peace and security and only after joint consultation, but not necessarily agreement. While approving the heightened collaboration, the *Press* saw that the old problem of sovereign rights, with a nation's claim finally to judge what these demand and warrant, was raised by the very formula designed to solve it. After Teheran, this paper held that **Russia's** absence from **Cairo** a few days earlier, where **Britain**, the **United States** and **China** had planned for the **Pacific**, showed that **Russia** did not intend to enter the war against **Japan**, but it must be supposed that **Russia** at **Teheran** was in agreement with **Cairo** discussions. **Teheran** therefore promised 'total settlement, after total victory'. <sup>164</sup>

**Russia's** national day in 1943 was not celebrated with medical funds or State morning tea, but a government message was sent to **Moscow** of heartfelt admiration for the high courage and military skill of the **USSR**, of pride in sharing this victory of free men, and of belief that wartime unity must be extended and confirmed in peace. Nash, as Deputy Prime Minister, also made a warm statement about inspired people and leaders, who out of unparalleled hardship turned what seemed certain defeat into certain victory; the great example of **Russia's** working people, who, on short commons, gave their intelligence, muscles and spirit to save that which they prized, had special mention, with hopes that New Zealand would do likewise in the difficult days of transition to peace. <sup>165</sup> At Auckland, the Trades Council held a rally in the Town Hall that raised £1, 100 to buy sheepskins for Red Army winter clothing. Sir Ernest Davis, who had already contributed 250 skins from his own farm, hoping to encourage other sheepfarmers, gave £100. King Koroki <sup>166</sup> gave £50, as did the Auckland Communist party and **Waihi's** Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**. Several Auckland trade unions each gave £25. <sup>167</sup>

At Christchurch a public meeting in Sydenham Park, with trade unionist **John Roberts** of the Society for Closer Relations with **Russia** presiding, collected £27 and recorded its belief that the Soviet people, who had marched from the bondage and misery of Tsarism to the freedom and happiness of socialism, must after the war take the lead in

building a world where neither bondage nor war would have a place. <sup>168</sup>

With guilt about the second front eased by the **Teheran** declaration and finally assuaged by the invasion of **Normandy** in June 1944, the newspapers continued to comment on Russian advances and strategy, and occasionally to worry about **Russia's** attitude towards self-determination, the **Balkan** states and **Poland**. In mid-February Stalin soothed some uneasiness by saying that **Russia** had no intention of expanding into central or western **Europe** but that its strategic needs required territorial and political readjustments in eastern **Europe**, on which it would insist. He spoke of readiness to come to terms with Mikolajczyk's <sup>169</sup> Polish government and to hand over administration of Polish territories west of the Curzon Line as soon as they were free of the enemy. <sup>170</sup>

This was warmly greeted by the *Evening Post*. The 'Bolshevik bogey' invading western **Europe**, flaunted by **Hitler** and his henchmen, had no substance. Events of the last dozen years, which could now be viewed in some historical perspective, confirmed that Stalin and most present-day Russians were realists. They did not, like Trotsky, <sup>171</sup> desire to impose the Russian system 'willy-nilly on the rest of the world', but sought an independent **Russia** taking its proper place. The need for military defence, the first essential of such a policy, explained territorial adjustments secured in anticipation of **Hitler's** invasion. Readiness to come to terms with Mikolajczyk's government and to hand over liberated territory at least indicated willingness to discuss the problem amicably. 'Stalin's "sense of realities" should not preclude a settlement satisfactory to both nations.' Independence recently granted to the Soviet's 16 republics, enabling them to have their own army formations and to deal directly with foreign powers, <sup>172</sup> was seen by the *Post* as reflecting Stalin's perception that spiritual unity, the distinctive feature of the British Commonwealth, was more enduring than political unity imposed by force. Other papers were silent on this occasion but the *Post's* hopefulness exemplified the anxiety, albeit fitful, of many New Zealanders to believe that **Russia** would prove an ally not only strong in



battle but reasonable in victory.

As during the past two years a sprinkling of articles, mainly originating overseas, told of Soviet effort—for example, how half-starved workers at **Leningrad** held on and won <sup>173</sup>— and of Soviet leaders, several glorifying Stalin. <sup>174</sup> There were a few articles and speeches regretting world publicity given to reports of coolness and suspicion between **Russia** and the Western Allies. For instance, in May, Frank Milner, <sup>175</sup> Rector of Waitaki Boys' High School, speaking of the necessity for post-war friendship with **Russia**, disapproved of some recent American utterances: such phrases as 'the Russians are not playing the game' did not help international relations and he was surprised at a great paper like the *New York Times* printing 'such piffle'. He reminded that German propaganda was trying to drive a wedge between **Russia** and the West. <sup>176</sup> There were also reminders, giving the numbers of tanks, trucks, aircraft, etc, of the British and **United States** aid that had helped **Russia's** advances. Sidney Holland spoke in these terms during April, <sup>177</sup> and Churchill's account of Imperial aid, reported on 12 May, stimulated reports and comments on both British and American aid.

Meanwhile the deep ground swell against Communism as such persisted, expressed for instance in *Straight Furrow*: 'Let us remember that the stubborn resistance of the Russians no more justifies Communism than the stupendous assault of the Germans justifies Nazism'. <sup>178</sup>

In the event, on 13 April 1944 it was announced that New Zealand was to exchange a ministerial representative with **Russia**, being the last of the British Dominions and the last of **Russia's** allies to make this move. <sup>179</sup> Behind the announcement lay nearly three years of diplomatic manoeuvring, official delays and minor public interest. <sup>180</sup> On 22 April the name of the new minister to **Moscow** was announced, C. W. Boswell, the 58-year-old former schoolteacher and Labour member of Parliament for the Bay of Islands from 1938–43. It was claimed that he was well fitted to express New Zealand's feelings of good will towards the government of the **USSR** and to discuss social and economic subjects,



with special interest in educational and cultural matters.<sup>181</sup> The appointment was greeted with some scepticism<sup>182</sup> and there was a flurry of interest over the proposed scale of furnishings proposed for the legation building—seen by Sidney Holland as ‘such a wicked waste of public money’.<sup>183</sup>

The mission in **Moscow** operated until 1950 when it was discontinued. Boswell, the first minister, reported fully on his impressions of **Moscow** and the aspects of Russian life in which as a longstanding Labour party member he had a special interest.<sup>184</sup> Efforts to initiate trade, particularly in primary products, were frustrated largely because the little surplus from what was committed to the **United Kingdom** was allocated through the International Emergency Food Council to a group of countries that did not include **Russia**.<sup>185</sup> Although, both in the House<sup>186</sup> and out of it,<sup>187</sup> there were complaints that Boswell sent no useful information and served no worthwhile purpose, he in fact reported copiously on the Russian scene; the Prime Minister, however, did not publicise his comments. It is for a future diplomatic historian to assess the long-term significance to New Zealand of this first, war-inspired, mission to **Moscow**.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eade, Charles, *The Unrelenting Struggle*, p. 102

<sup>2</sup> *Southland Times*, 12 Apr, 11 Jun 41; *NZ Herald*, 15, 17 Apr, 10 May, 11, 13, 16 Jun 41, pp. 7, 9, 9, 7, 8, editorial; *Press*, 17 Apr, 4, 16 Jun 41, pp. 7, 6, editorial; *Dominion*, 10 Mar, 15 Apr, 12 May, 16, 17 Jun 41, pp. 7, editorial, 7, 7, 6 & 9; *Otago Daily Times*, 31 May, 4, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21 Jun 41, pp. 9, editorial, 9, 4, 5, 7, 9; *Auckland Star*, 14, 16 Jun 41, pp. 7, 6; *Evening Post*, 12, 16 Jun 41, pp. 8, 7

<sup>3</sup> The greater part of the Russian air force was wiped out in the first few days; the Russians lost thousands of tanks; hundreds of thousands of, perhaps as many as a million, Russian soldiers were taken prisoner in a series of spectacular encirclements during the first fortnight, and by the second week of July some

German generals thought the war as good as won. Werth, Alexander, *Russia at War 1941–1945*, p. 137

<sup>4</sup> Gunther, John (1901–70): writer, journalist, war correspondent; b **USA**; war correspondent **London** 1941; with General Eisenhower's HQ, to British Eighth Army and invasion of **Sicily** 1943

<sup>5</sup> *NZ Herald*, 23 Jun 41

<sup>6</sup> Hess, Rudolph (1894–): Deputy Leader of the Nazi Party 1933–41; flew **Scotland** 1941, interned, sentenced life imprisonment for war crimes 1946

<sup>7</sup> *Evening Post*, 23 Jun 41, p. 7

<sup>8</sup> *NZ Herald*, 24 Jun 41, p. 7

<sup>9</sup> *Auckland Star*, 24 Jun 41

<sup>10</sup> Menzies, Rt Hon Sir Robert, Kt('63), PC('57), CH('51) (1894–1978): member Aust HoR 1934–66, PM 1939–41, 1949–66, Min External Aff 1960–1

<sup>11</sup> Fraser, in England at the time, said that within two minutes of Churchill's broadcast he cabled his government, asking it to endorse this policy, and in a few hours received a pledge of full support. *NZ Herald*, 27 Jun 41, p. 8

<sup>12</sup> *Auckland Star*, 25 Jun 41

<sup>13</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap V, p. 1, quoting SSDA to UKHC, 16 Jun 41, D14

<sup>14</sup> *Evening Post*, 25, 28 Jun 41, pp. 7, 9

**15 Dalton, Edward Hugh John Neale, Baron Dalton ('60), Forest and Frith, Co. Paletine of [Durham](#) (1887–1962): barrister, economist, Cabinet Minister, author; MP (Lab) 1924–31, 1935–59; barrister, war service, university posts in economics 1914–31; chmn National Exec Lab party 1936–7; Min Economic Warfare 1940–2, Pres Bd Trade 1942–5, other ministerial posts to 1950s**

**16 [Evening Post](#), 30 Jun 41, p. 7**

**17 For example: On the morning of Monday 23 June 1941 in the Railway Department a fellow-clerk asked the author 'What do you think of the news?' Thinking it quite trite and obvious that having anyone else in the fight on our side was a gain, I said that it seemed the best for months. He replied 'It's terrible! I'd rather go to prison than fight with them. They're not Christians.'**

**18 [Press](#), 28 Jun 41**

**19 [Evening Post](#), 14 Jul 41, p. 8**

**20 [NZ Herald](#), 15 Jul 41**

**21 [Press](#), 15 Jul 41**

**22 [Evening Post](#), 14 Jul 41**

**23 [Auckland Star](#), 14 Jul 41**

**24 *Ibid.*, 21 Jul 41, p. 8**

**25 [Auckland Star](#), 2 Aug 41**

**26** *Press*, 4 Aug 41

**27** Curnow, Thomas Allan Munro (1911–): poet, university lecturer, playwright, literary journalist

**28** *Press*, 9 Aug 41, p. 8

**29** Quoted by *Evening Post*, 23 Aug 41, p. 9

**30** *NZ Herald*, 5 Sep 41

**31** Maisky, Ivan Michaelovich (1884–1975): diplomatic service **London** 1925–7, **Tokyo** 1927–9, **Finland** 1929–32; Amb Britain 1932–43; Asst Commissar Foreign Aff 1943–6

**32** Nicolson, p. 188: 'I go to see Maisky at the Soviet Embassy.... He is worried at our inability to help. We have sent thirty-six aeroplanes and pilots. What is that? In July Stalin wrote to Churchill asking for a diversion in **France**. In September he wrote again saying that if we did not draw off some of the German divisions, **Russia** would be in a bad way. He begged us to give him 25 to 30 divisions either at Murmansk or in Caucasus. We had refused. We were now reconsidering our refusal.'

**33** *Auckland Star*, 20 Sep 41

**34** *Press*, 17 Sep 41, p. 7; *NZ Herald*, 12 Nov 41, p. 9; *Dominion*, 26 Nov 41, p. 5 (photo)

**35** *Press*, 21 Jul 41, p. 6

**36** *Ibid.*, 22 Jul 41, p. 7

**37** *Truth*, 23 Jul 41, p. 1

**38 Moore-Brabazon, John Theodore Cuthbert, 1st Baron Brabazon of Tara ('42), of Sandwich, PC, GBE, MC (1884–1964): pioneer motorist & aviator, with innumerable positions in these fields; Min Transport 1940–1, Aircraft Production 1941–2**

**39 *Press*, 4 Sep 41, p. 5, reporting the *UK Daily Herald***

**40 *Ibid.*, 26 Aug 41, p. 7; *Evening Post*, 20 Sep 41, p. 8; *NZ Herald*, 13 Oct 41, p. 8; *Truth*, 24 Sep, 8 Nov 41, pp. 2, 31**

**41 *Evening Post*, 19 Aug, 10 Oct 41; *Press*, 12 Sep, 14, 28 Oct 41; *NZ Herald*, 25 Oct 41; *Otago Daily Times*, 8 Nov 41**

**42 *Auckland Star*, 27 Sep 41; *Standard*, 27 Nov 41, p. 1**

**43 *Round Table*, vol 32, p. 190**

**44 *Evening Post*, 26 Jun 41, p. 10**

**45 *Ibid.*, 27 Jun 41, p. 8**

**46 *Standard*, 9 Oct 41, p. 6**

**47 *Press*, 30 Jul 41, p. 6**

**48 *Evening Post*, 5 Jul 41, p. 8; *Press*, 10 Sep 41, p. 6**

**49 See p. 62**

**50 *In Print*, 12 Nov 41, 15 Apr 42**

**51 *Standard*, 23 Oct 41, p. 1, and leaflet, nd**

**52 Cook, Hon Arthur, MLC: Gen Sec NZ Workers Union 18 years to retirement 1942; elected by FoL to be its rep at Trade Union Congress in UK 1943, presumed lost when ship taking him there was torpedoed off the Azores**

**53 *Standard*, 12 Feb 42, p. 12; *Auckland Star*, 3 Jul 41, p. 9**

**54 *In Print*, 26 Nov, 3, 17 Dec 41, pp. 1, 5, 2**

**55 *Standard*, 16 Apr 42, p. 2**

**56 *In Print*, 12 Nov 41**

**57 *Otago Daily Times*, 13 May 42, p. 2**

**58 Atmore, Hon Harry (1870–1946): MP (Lib, Indep) Nelson 1911–14, 1922–; Min Educ 1923–31**

**59 Stewart, Mrs Catherine Campbell Sword: b Scotland 1881, to NZ 1921; MP (Lab) Wgtn West 1938–43**

**60 Stables, Mrs Margaret May, JP (1873–1957): b Ireland, to NZ 1874; lifelong social worker, Save-the-Children Fund of London since 1921, kitchen named after her in Saratov (USSR) for work done; member London Council, Pres Fund, Wgtn; Dom chmn CORSO; 1st woman in NZ to sit on bench in court 1948**

**61 Rollings, Rev William Swift (d 1944 aet 73): b Aust, to NZ 1913; Pres Baptist Union 1922–3**

**62 Scrimgeour, Colin Graham (1903–): Methodist Min from 1923; began broadcasting 1930, Director 1ZB 1934–6, Controller Commercial Broadcasting 1936–44; TV, radio administrator Aust, China, 1945–59; ret NZ 1968, TV consultant from 1969**

<sup>63</sup> *Dominion*, 23 Jul 41, p. 8

<sup>64</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Aug 41, p. 11

<sup>65</sup> Rhodes, Harold Winston (1905–): b Aust; lecturer then Prof English CUC 1933–70; Nat Pres NZ–USSR Soc

<sup>66</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Aug 41, p. 11

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Sep 41, p. 6

<sup>68</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11, 12 Jul 41, pp. 3, 6; *Evening Post*, 30 Jul 41, p. 11; *In Print*, 17 Sep 41

<sup>69</sup> *Truth*, 20 Aug 41, p. 23

<sup>70</sup> *Auckland Star*, 1 Aug 41, p. 2

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Aug 41

<sup>72</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Aug 41, p. 7

<sup>73</sup> *Auckland Star*, 21 Aug 41, p. 8

<sup>74</sup> Sewell, Professor William Arthur (1903–72): b UK; senior lecturer Cape Town Univ 1926–32, Prof English Auck 1934–46; chairs of English in Greece, Turkey, Lebanon 1946ff; 1st Prof English Waikato Univ 1965–9

<sup>75</sup> Stanley, Roy (d 1964 *aet* 65): former Sec Auck & NZ Carpenters Unions

<sup>76</sup> *Auckland Star*, 5 Sep 41, p. 2



<sup>77</sup> *In Print*, 5, 12 Nov 41; *Otago Daily Times*, 10 Nov 41, p. 10

<sup>78</sup> *eg*, *Press*, 4 Mar 42, p. 7

<sup>79</sup> *In Print*, 18 Mar 42

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Oct 41

<sup>81</sup> **Appleton, Sir William, Kt('50) (1889–1958): accountant and company director; Wgtn Hospital Board 1923–9, Harbour Board 1938–50 (& chmn), City Council 1931–44; Mayor of Wellington 1944–50**

<sup>82</sup> **Wright, Hon Robert Alexander (d 1947 *aet* 84): printer & publisher; MP (Nat) Wgtn 1908–11, Wgtn Suburbs 1914–38, Min Education 1926–8; Wgtn City Council from 1913; Mayor of Wellington 1921–5**

<sup>83</sup> **Siewwright, James Dickson, JP (d 1947 *aet* 85): b Scotland, to NZ 1870; former journalist; Wgtn City Council from 1941**

<sup>84</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Oct 41, p. 8

<sup>85</sup> *Standard*, 16 Apr 42, p. 2

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Apr 42, p. 11

<sup>87</sup> *eg*, *Zealandia*, 12 Dec 40, p. 1, 9 Jan, 20 Feb, 24 Apr, 1 May 41, pp. 4, 4, 4, 1; *NZ Tablet*, 28 May, 18 Jun 41, pp. 9, 3–4 & 11

<sup>88</sup> *Zealandia*, 3 Jul 41, p. 4

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Aug 41, p. 4

<sup>92</sup> *NZ Tablet*, 30 Jul 41, p. 5

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Aug 41, p. 5

<sup>94</sup> Gascoigne, Dr Noel Hamlyn (1910–80): Roman Catholic educ specialist; ordained 1935, Dir Catholic Educ (NZ) 1939; Port Chaplain Wgtn from 1939; on scholarship to Catholic Univ Washington USA 1950; curate **Palmerston North** 1952–4; Seatoun Presbytery Wgtn 1954–68

<sup>95</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Aug 41, p. 7

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Aug 41, p. 6

<sup>97</sup> C & P 3/5, vol 3, pp. 2–3

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Grey River Argus*, 20 Aug 41

<sup>100</sup> Heenan, His Eminence Cardinal John Carmel (1905–75): Archbishop Westminster from 1963

<sup>101</sup> Downey, Richard (1881–1953): b **Ireland**; vice-rector Liverpool Catholic Seminary; Archbishop Liverpool from 1928

<sup>102</sup> *Zealandia*, 20 Nov 41, p. 1

<sup>103</sup> *NZ Tablet*, 13 May 42, p. 17

<sup>104</sup> *NZPD*, vol 259, p. 737

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, vol 260, p. 1251. The date of this exchange is not obvious, as it is recorded, undated, in 'Addendum'. It must have been after 13 September 1941 when Fraser returned from abroad. The session closed on 17 October and Parliament was prorogued on 29 October.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, vol 261, p. 526

<sup>107</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 Jul, 14 Aug 41, pp. 8, 11

<sup>108</sup> *Dominion*, 8 Oct 41, p. 8

<sup>109</sup> Davies, Joseph Edward (1876–1958): US diplomat; Amb Russia 1936–8, *Belgium* & Min Luxembourg 1938–9; special envoy of Roosevelt with rank of ambassador to confer with Marshal Stalin May–June 1943, and of Truman to confer with Churchill June 1945; special adviser to President and Sec State, with rank of ambassador, at *Potsdam* Conference 1945

<sup>110</sup> *Press*, 1 Nov 41, p. 9

<sup>111</sup> eg, *ibid.*, 22 Jul 41, p. 6

<sup>112</sup> Ingersoll, Ralph McArthur (1900–): journalist and press mngr; Vice-Pres, Gen Mngr *Time Inc* 1935–8; overseas service 1943–5 on staffs Field Marshal Montgomery, Gen Bradley

<sup>113</sup> *NZ Herald*, *Evening Post*, *Otago Daily Times*, 3–11 Nov 41, *passim*

<sup>114</sup> *NZ Herald*, 5 Nov 41, p. 9; *Evening Post*, 4 Nov 41, p. 6

<sup>115</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 Nov 41, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 11 Nov 41, p. 9

<sup>116</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Nov 41, p. 15

<sup>117</sup> This argument persisted. For instance, R. M. Macfarlane, Labour member for Christchurch South, said in March 1944: 'we must realise that the Russians have something to fight for. There must be something in the material improvement of society in **Russia** to cause the Russians to wage such a magnificent fight.' *NZPD*, vol 264, p. 327

<sup>118</sup> *Dominion*, 29 Nov 41, p. 10

<sup>119</sup> *Evening Post*, 3 Dec 41, p. 11

<sup>120</sup> *NZ Herald*, 1 Nov 41, p. 10

<sup>121</sup> Werth, p. 203, says that the Germans claimed 665 000 prisoners, while Russian statistics reduce them to 175 000; 'One cannot help suspecting that the truth must lie somewhere half way between the Russian and German figures.'

<sup>122</sup> *NZ Herald*, 8 Oct 41, p. 8

<sup>123</sup> Bock, Field Marshal Fedor von (1880–1945): commanded German Army Group Centre June–December 1941, April–July 1942 after replacement, then dismissed

<sup>124</sup> Timoshenko, Marshal Semyon Konstantinovich (1895–1970): Russian army officer; C-in-C Western (Central) Front July–November 1941; in charge operations South-western & Southern fronts 1941–2, Northern 1943, 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian 1944

<sup>125</sup> Litvinoff, Maxim Maximovitch (1876–1951): Russian diplomat; Foreign Office Russia from 1918; Foreign Min 1930–9; Ambassador USA, Min Cuba 1941–3; Deputy Commissar Foreign Affairs 1943–6

<sup>126</sup> *Press*, 15 Dec 41

<sup>127</sup> *Evening Post*, 15, 19 Dec 41

<sup>128</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Dec 41

<sup>129</sup> *Evening Post*, 16 Feb 42

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4. Foch, commander-in-chief of the Allied Forces in France, in 1918 at the Marne in a precarious position, ordered advance. A corps commander protested that his men were tired out. Foch replied, 'So are the Germans. Attack!'

<sup>131</sup> *Press*, 7 Apr 42

<sup>132</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 May 42

<sup>133</sup> The *Evening Post* on 12 June 1942 remarked that 19 out of 20 readers would assume that this meant large-scale landings in Europe within the year, but it could also mean 1000-bomber raids or a series of commando attacks

<sup>134</sup> *Press*, 13 Jun 42; *NZ Herald*, 13 Jun 42; *Auckland Star*, 12 Jun 42; *Otago Daily Times*, 13 Jun 42

<sup>135</sup> French and British commanders-in-chief, France, 1915–16

<sup>136</sup> *Press*, 16 Jul 42

**137** In this speech Stalin told of large territories lost under **Germany's** surprise attack, claiming that **Germany** had paid heavily for them and promising that this invader, like Napoleon and Kaiser Wilhelm, would be defeated. He stressed that this was a life and death national struggle, a war for the fatherland, against enslavement, to which everything must be subordinated; all effort must be put forth and everything of use removed or destroyed in the path of the enemy. It gave the bewildered Russian people a great sense of direction and purpose.

**138** *NZ Herald*, 1 Aug 42

**139** *Ibid.*, 11 Sep 42

**140** *Ibid.*, 21 Sep 42, p. 3

**141** *Auckland Star*, 21 Oct 42

**142** *Ibid.*, 29 Oct 42, p. 4

**143** *Press*, 9 Nov 42, p. 6; *Otago Daily Times*, 9 Nov 42, p. 2

**144** *Auckland Star*, 9 Nov 42, p. 4

**145** *Evening Post*, 7 Nov 42, p. 8

**146** *NZ Herald*, 1 Dec 42

**147** *Press*, 14 Jan 43, p. 4

**148** *Dominion*, 22 Feb 43, p. 4

**149** *NZ Herald*, 16 Mar 43

<sup>150</sup> *Auckland Star*, 12 Mar 43

<sup>151</sup> *Evening Post*, 10 Mar 43

<sup>152</sup> *Evening Star*, 22 Mar 43

<sup>153</sup> Werth, pp. 584–8, 598–604. In June 1945 New Zealand papers quoted a *Stockholm* paper, which claimed Schellenberg, a lieutenant of Himmler, as its source, saying that the Katyn graves were a Nazi fake: bodies from German concentration camps were dressed in Polish uniforms and taken there.

*Auckland Star*, 28 Jun 45, p. 5. However the findings of a German investigation in April 1943, that the bodies were indeed those of Polish officers, were generally accepted. Michel, Henri, *The Second World War*, p. 482. Thus the *Evening Post* on 26 April 1980 (p. 8) reported that two solemn requiem masses in *Wellington* on 27 April would mark the 40th Anniversary of the Katyn Forest massacre of 14 500 Polish prisoners-of-war by Soviet forces.

<sup>154</sup> *NZ Herald*, 28 Apr 43

<sup>155</sup> *Press*, 30 Apr 43

<sup>156</sup> See p. 1219

<sup>157</sup> See p. 1245

<sup>158</sup> *NZ Herald*, 16 Aug 43: it repeated some of these arguments on 2 Sep 43

<sup>159</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 25 Aug 43. Werth, pp. 672–4, says that Stalin told Eden in October 1943 that he did not ignore the fact that the *threat* of a second front had in the summer of 1943 pinned down some 25 German divisions in *France* besides the 10 or 12 tied up in *Italy*. After crushing the German offensive at



**Kursk in July 1943 the Soviet no longer regarded the second front as vital to its survival.**

**<sup>160</sup> *Auckland Star*, 16 Oct 43**

**<sup>161</sup> Eden, Robert Anthony, 1st Earl of Avon ('61), KG('54), PC, MC (1897–1977): English statesman; Sec State For Aff 1935–8, Dom Aff 1939–40, War 1940, For Aff 1940–5; Leader HoC 1942–5; Sec State For Aff & Deputy PM 1951–5; PM & 1st Lord Treasury 1955–7**

**<sup>162</sup> *NZ Herald*, 20 Oct 43**

**<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Dec 43, p. 3**

**<sup>164</sup> *Press*, 6 Dec 43**

**<sup>165</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 Nov 43, p. 5**

**<sup>166</sup> Koroki, Te Wherowhero (1912–66): 5th Maori King, hereditary high chief of **Waikato****

**<sup>167</sup> *Auckland Star*, 5, 8 Nov 43, pp. 4, 4; *NZ Herald*, 8 Nov 43, p. 4**

**<sup>168</sup> *Press*, 8 Nov 43, p. 4**

**<sup>169</sup> Mikolajczyk, Stanislaw (b 1901): acting Vice-Pres Polish National Council London to 1941; Deputy PM, Min Home Affairs 1941–3; PM 1943–4; Vice-Premier 1945–7; Pres International Peasants Union 1948**

**<sup>170</sup> *Evening Post*, 21 Feb 44, p. 5**

**171 Trotsky, Leon [Lev Davidovitch Bronshteyn] (1879–1940): Russian revolutionary; co-organiser with Lenin of 1917 November Revolution, Commissar for Foreign Affairs in new govt; resigned after signing Treaty of **Brest–Litovsk** with **Germany**; Commissar Military and Naval Affairs 1922ff, instrumental in organising Red Army and restoring navy; ousted by Stalin from Politburo 1926; expelled from **Russia** 1929; assassinated in Mexico 1940**

**172 *Evening Post*, 2 Feb 44, p. 6**

**173 *Standard*, 9 Mar 44, p. 3**

**174 *Ibid.*, 13 Jan 44, p. 7; *NZ Herald*, 10 Feb, 16 Mar 44, pp. 3, 3**

**175 Milner, Frank (1875–1944): Rector Waitaki BHS from 1906**

**176 *Press*, 5 May 44, p. 6**

**177 *Ibid.*, 12 Apr 44, p. 2**

**178 *Straight Furrow*, 15 Apr 44, p. 33**

**179 National Executive NZ Society for Closer Relations with **Russia**, *Evening Post*, 22 Jul 44, p. 6**

**180 See War History Narrative, ‘NZ and **Europe**’, p. 38ff**

**181 *Evening Post*, 22 Apr 44, p. 8**

**182 eg, *NZ Herald*, 24 Apr 44; *Evening Post*, 24 Apr 44**

**183 *Press*, 13 Jul 44, p. 4; *Dominion*, 15 Jul 44, p. 8**

**184** See WHN, 'NZ and **Europe**', pp. 49–50

**185** *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 67, 70–3

**186** *NZPD*, vol 268, p. 141

**187** *NZ Herald*, 25 Jun 45

---

# THE HOME FRONT VOLUME I

## CHAPTER 14 – THE AMERICAN INVASION

## CHAPTER 14

### *The American Invasion*

FROM the start of the war New Zealand's government had looked to **America** as the bulwark against **Japan**, though some American diplomacy had scarcely encouraged this attitude. The public, less well informed, generally believed that Japanese aggression would be met and held by American might. Both the public and the best informed circles were astounded by the boldness and disaster of Pearl Harbour, dismayed by the blitzkrieg that followed and further dismayed by the slowness of **America's** response. <sup>1</sup> At the end of January 1942, when there was news of American forces in **Ireland**, the *Press* approved this both as attention to a notable danger-spot and evidence of far-flung strength, <sup>2</sup> but the *New Zealand Herald* fumed that **America**, having provoked the Japanese war, was leaving the **Pacific** peoples to stew in it. <sup>3</sup>

On 12 February, under such headings as 'Americans in New Zealand—US Naval Force at **Wellington**' and 'Vanguard Arrives—US Sailors in **Wellington**', newspapers gave prominence to a **London** paper's feature despatch from a press correspondent with an American naval force that had come to **Wellington**. This correspondent had been with the aircraft-carriers that had attacked Japanese installations in the Marshall and Gilbert islands, then in mid-**Pacific** had transferred to another naval unit which had landed thousands of men at various islands, 'nailed down hard' outposts of defence and communication, and 'had already won the battle of access to the south-west **Pacific**'. Men who landed at **Wellington** from a United States destroyer, the article went on, found it difficult to spend money: hotels gave free meals and everywhere they went they were invited into homes, while great relief was expressed that an American force had arrived at the Antipodes to strengthen the Allied left wing in the **Pacific**. <sup>4</sup>

This ship, however, was but a lone visitor. On 17 February, with **Singapore** lost, the Prime Minister cabled to **Britain**, for transmission to Roosevelt, strong strategic arguments for strengthening New Zealand

and **Fiji**:

If **Fiji** falls then New Zealand becomes even more essential. If they both fall, the prospect of adequately conducting from the **United States** effective operations in the Mid- and South-West **Pacific** areas seems to us to become exceedingly thin.... We are definitely of the opinion that it is essential for the successful prosecution of the war in the **Pacific** that New Zealand must become a main base area and must be equipped and defended as such. <sup>5</sup>

The obvious difficulty of bringing the New Zealand Division back, plus standing acceptance of its task in the **Middle East**, checked pressure for its return at both government and public levels. Churchill was very anxious to keep the New Zealanders, and accordingly on 5 March asked Roosevelt to send a division to New Zealand, on condition that the NZEF remained in Egypt. <sup>6</sup> On 10 March Fraser learned that this plea had been successful and that the United States, besides sending two divisions to **Australia**, would send one to New Zealand, leaving in the next two months, a move more thrifty both in time and shipping than returning New Zealand's own men. <sup>7</sup> This was warmly welcomed, though Fraser expressed some fear lest such help be too little and too late, also that there was both at home and in the Division a growing sense that their place was now in the **Pacific**, a feeling which would increase when it became known that **Australia** had retrieved many of its troops. <sup>8</sup> Roosevelt cabled on 24 March that 'we are straining every effort' to send the forces at the earliest possible moment and efforts would be made to increase both men and equipment. <sup>9</sup>

All this of course was completely hidden from the New Zealand public, but known events and information built up awareness of **America**'s limitations. Acceptance of the situation was summarised by the *Press* on 11 March: 'In spite of American mass production and mass mobilisation, the **United Nations** have not enough men, aeroplanes and munitions to stage war-winning offensives east and west at once. The decision to concentrate on **Germany** and **Italy** was not capricious or short-sighted but inevitable.' At the same time a less patient attitude



towards American slowness was displayed by a cartoon in the *Auckland Star*. 'Living Statuary, or Straining at the Leash' showed a statue of two tortoises hitched to a chariot and tightly reined in by Roosevelt in classic ungarb as a charioteer; the plinth bore the words, 'American aid to the Pacific'.<sup>10</sup> Beside it appeared an account of horrors at **Hong Kong**.

At the end of April, the cabled report of a broadcast by Nash in **Washington** was misinterpreted by **Auckland** papers to produce, under the caption 'the Yanks are Coming', news that American aircraft, equipment and reinforcements were heading for New Zealand.<sup>11</sup> During May, strange uniforms began gradually to appear in hotels and streets at **Auckland** and **Wellington**, and anyone connected with defence construction or the building trade knew that heavy concentrations of men and equipment were preparing new camps around **Auckland** and up the coast from **Wellington**, work that in one phase or another would continue for months. Apart from cookhouses, ablution blocks, mess rooms, recreation halls, staff and administration buildings and assorted huts, basic amenities were needed: roads, paths, sewers, water and electricity supplies, and vehicle parks. Most of the men lived in tents brought from the **United States** but local carpenters put in wooden floors and railings to which the ropes were fastened.<sup>12</sup>

In the **Wellington** area, on open coast land near **Paekakariki**, now Queen Elizabeth Park, a large camp was rushed up in about six weeks, and there was another at Pahautahanui. Between them these could hold nearly 21 700 men, and there were smaller camps housing 4860 at the Hutt Racecourse, Kaiwharawhara Park, Anderson and Central Parks. At **Auckland**, a scatter of camps at Mechanics Bay, at Victoria, Cambria and Waikaraka parks, at Tamaki, Mangere Crossing and Western Springs, would accommodate 29 500 in all. At Masterton, the only provincial centre that became a garrison town, 2400 Marines from the **Solomons** would come to recuperate. Hospitals were built, 19 in all, to take 9400 patients. In **Auckland** at Cornwall Park a large military hospital appeared; at Avondale and at Hobson Park there were naval

mobile hospitals; at Silverstream, **Wellington**, a New Zealand Army convalescent home became a major hospital. <sup>13</sup>

Towards the end of May 1942, Vice-Admiral Ghormley's Headquarters South Pacific were set up in **Auckland**, and the first substantial batch of American troops arrived there, to be quartered at **Papakura**. <sup>14</sup> On 14 June USS *Wakefield* brought several thousand Marines to **Wellington** (an event of course not mentioned in the press), and this came to be regarded locally as the beginning of the 'invasion'. In his diary G. H. Scholefield had already, since 24 May, noted increasing numbers of Americans, precursors of this arrival. He also speculated about the impact they would have on social life in such areas as feminine company, Sunday entertainment and a foreign law being operated within New Zealand through the visitors' military police. The *Listener* also, on 29 May, had reflected that New Zealand would accommodate thousands of overseas troops and that soldiers always lead unnatural lives, passing violently from excitement to boredom, seldom escaping some friction with civilians. Some friction could be expected in New Zealand.

... eighty per cent of the soldiers, sailors and airmen quartered among us were, until the other day, civilians themselves. They *are* ourselves, socially, whether they come from **Canterbury**, N.Z., or from Colorado, U.S.A.... they are still interested in most of the things that we ourselves are interested in, and do not wish to be regarded either as toughs or as innocents abroad. They are not mercenaries or brigands, but patriot companies of ordinary citizens called to the defence of their normal way of life. <sup>15</sup>

When the *Listener* canvassed views on Americanising Sunday entertainment, some thought that democratic Americans would be unwilling to interfere with the customs of a host country, others advised the provision of many activities—sports, concerts, lectures and discussions besides mere entertainment—to make the visitors really at home and to learn from them. <sup>16</sup> On 12 and 19 June the *Listener* printed interviews with American nurses and other material which made it clear that Americans were already frequenting Service clubs and

private homes. For these June issues prosecution was contemplated but not pursued,<sup>17</sup> and the *Listener* ceased to mention Americans, though recipes for lemon and pumpkin pies, waffles and doughnuts appeared on 2 July.

Since April the Pacific Command had insisted that no mention of American forces in New Zealand or the Pacific be published<sup>18</sup> and this ban was officially, if not effectively, upheld for five months after the June arrivals. But though no announcements or welcomes could be published, Americans were immediately noticed, with varied feelings in which curiosity, enthusiasm and excitement were widespread. Many New Zealanders did not envisage New Zealand being attacked by Japan and to them the American presence was not so much a direct protective measure as part of Pacific strategy. Many were merely unconcerned, and some, seeing a lot more troops about, and foreign at that, felt a vague alarm. Others felt relief: people anxiously aware of Japan's momentum were comforted that New Zealand was considered a base worth defending; they felt more important, almost cherished. 'The Americans are here' were words to ease the minds of parents, of old ladies, of anyone burdened with imagination or information. The war was going badly: Sevastopol was falling, so was Tobruk, with Rommel driving on to Egypt; Burma was lost, the Japanese were working south through Papua, and Sydney harbour had been raided at the beginning of June. Happier news was emerging on the extent of American success in the Coral Sea during May and at Midway, just fought, news which brightened the aura of the young men in green khaki.

The first public parade, though quite unadvertised, drew massive crowds. America's own flag-honouring day, 14 June, had by various extensions become in 1942 'United Nations Day', to be celebrated with prayers and parades throughout Allied countries.<sup>19</sup> Auckland's parade was a few days late, on 18 June. Vice-Admiral Ghormley took the salute, a large group of Americans headed the march and crowds in Queen Street were, it was said, larger than ever before 'not excepting the last three visits of Royalty.'<sup>20</sup> There can be little doubt what the thousands

who streamed in by tram and bus and train had come to see, though American troops were not mentioned in the papers.

The young men had cheerful smiles (improved by good teeth), their manners were courteous, some were ready to chat with men and matrons as well as girls, and they were disarmingly ignorant. Giving information often induces a disposition to give more, and a polite street inquiry opened many a door, though a few nervous ladies felt that an advance had been made if a Marine asked the way to Karangahape Road or Courtenay Place.

The visitors could not be left standing in the streets, even if they could not be mentioned in the newspapers. Enthusiasm, gratitude, curiosity, friendliness, sex-hunger and lion-hunting impulses, guided in part by the Friendship Group of the British and American Cooperation Society (founded in 1939), swept the first comers into a surge of home hospitality.<sup>21</sup> The Service clubs already operating gave hearty welcomes—many extending their premises and activities. **Wellington's** ANA (Army, Navy, Air Force) club, for instance, decided in mid-June to move its weekend dances to the Town Hall where girls would grace the occasion with long dresses in place of the short ones usual at soldiers' dances.<sup>22</sup> New clubs also appeared. The British and American Co-operation Society in **Wellington**, in conjunction with patriotic authorities, had by mid-July transformed a large restaurant<sup>23</sup> into the Allied Services Club. It welcomed all Services, but was specially directed towards Americans, with its cafeteria stressing grills, salads, ice-cream, doughnuts and coffee. It ran an information and home hospitality bureau which, besides providing local and travel information, invited the visitors to register, listing their interests, and tried to match these against the offers of hospitality that came in from near and far. Many did not need formal hospitality: they could find their own way, readily making dates with girls whom they met in milk bars, restaurants, shops, the clubs and through friendship chains.

Few New Zealanders knew much about **America** except what they had acquired through films and magazines such as *Life* and *Look*, a view

neither precise nor balanced. In more earnest readers this was augmented, mainly by Mark Twain, Sinclair Lewis, perhaps H. L. Mencken, by Saroyan, Dos Passos, Steinbeck and Thomas Wolfe. Americans knew even less about New Zealand; many thought it an off-shore piece of **Australia**, full of grass-skirted natives, sheep and geysers, and governed by Churchill. Some anxious to mend their ignorance, asked their hosts embarrassing questions: what was the population of **Auckland** or **Wellington** or **Palmerston North**, how many sheep, how many cattle? How much timber was milled, how much meat and butter exported? To make for ease and interest all round, in September 1942 the Internal Affairs Department produced 50 000 copies of *Meet New Zealand*, a cheerful, 36-page booklet, informal and informative,<sup>24</sup> in which *Yearbook* statistics and the ethos of New Zealand were related to things American; the mysteries of tea, scones, money, drinking hours and customs, Maoris, Sundays, Social Security, some slang, horse racing and road rules were briefly revealed. For the more curious there was a booklist. Also, copies of a current centennial publication, *Making New Zealand*, a well-produced pictorial series surveying many aspects of the past hundred years, were sent to all **United States** camps.<sup>25</sup>

The press silence was broken, or rather punctured, when Fraser, broadcasting from **Washington** on 31 August, spoke of courteous and well disciplined American forces in New Zealand solidifying the already strong bonds between the two countries.<sup>26</sup> Fraser's words were followed on 3 September by a British official wireless message that in New Zealand big camps had been specially built for American troops and two big base hospitals were being established. The cat seeming to be out of the bag, newspapers began to print welcoming articles,<sup>27</sup> but from **Honolulu** early in September came directions to Admiral Ghormley that no information on American forces should be released by cable, mail or press before being passed by **Pearl Harbour**<sup>28</sup> and silence closed in again. The *New Zealand Herald* on 3 October explained the situation: 'It is still not permitted to make any reference in overseas letters to the presence in New Zealand of visiting forces. When in **Washington** the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, referred to the presence of certain forces in

New Zealand and this was also referred to in a British official wireless message. The prohibition on references in letters still exists, however, representations to this effect having been made by other authorities subsequent to the two announcements mentioned.'

The very next day the *New Zealand Herald* had an article on how the flower-giving habit of visiting American servicemen was improving the trade of florists, while explanations of American insignia appeared on 10 October. To newsmen the suppression must have seemed even more pointless as they printed the statement of H. L. Stimson,<sup>29</sup> the American Secretary for War, at a press conference in mid-October, that American forces were in New Zealand.<sup>30</sup> At last, on 20 November, the *United States* naval authorities advised the Director of Publicity that information on the presence of their troops could be published subject to censorship by the Chief Naval Censor at *Auckland*.<sup>31</sup> This release was first given to the papers at *Auckland*, where on the 21st one paper described an early disembarkation, and the other had a column of folksy appreciation, plus photographs of the earlier parade. Further south the papers took their new liberty more coolly: accounts of Thanksgiving celebrations at the end of November were their first use of it. Early December brought forth several descriptive articles and interviews.<sup>32</sup>

In general, all the early publicity approved quiet-spoken young men, modest, inquiring, generous, lovers of home and peace, but roused now to defend freedom and see the job through. They liked almost everything about New Zealand, it appeared, except the coffee and the shortage of night-life and of 'Scotch'; they were confused by 'teas' and licensing laws but the people were 'nice folks'. Their views on Sundays, eating-houses and mutton were not mentioned.

Naturally this publicity widened desire to welcome the visitors and to meet them. From many towns, some in the *South Island*, invitations were forwarded through local government and patriotic committees to the hospitality bureaus: Silverstream hospital made notable use of these offers, nearly 400 patients visiting private homes over Christmas in



1942 and about 3000 during 1943. <sup>33</sup> Some Americans travelled far, as private guests, guests of local patriotic committees and as plain travellers. **Christchurch** received its first party early in January; in June, **Dunedin**'s first group, 25 convalescent Marines, were reported overwhelmed with southern hospitality and more were to follow. <sup>34</sup> **Rotorua** was popular, and mountain resorts drew some visitors. Parties went to the Maori settlement at **Ngaruawahia** run by Te Puea Herangi, who combined hospitality with firm and skilful handling of race relations. <sup>35</sup> In holiday places and in small towns, American uniforms and voices attracted curious and willing attention. But relatively few moved from their North Island stations.

The American Red Cross was much concerned with entertainment. Each camp had its hostess to arrange dances, bringing in parties of girls, carefully recruited, as partners. **Red Cross** officials, mainly women, organised five American Red Cross clubs: two in **Auckland**, one being for officers on rest leave, the other for **United States** servicemen in general, in part of the Auckland Hotel; one at Warkworth, one at **Masterton**, and one in the Hotel Cecil near Wellington's railway station which, because its premises were large, received New Zealanders as well. These clubs offered lounges, breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks, sleeping billets, showers, and pressing and mending facilities. They were open for long hours, they had space for games as well as the ubiquitous dances, and the food was Americanised. Their permanent staffs were helped by volunteer groups of women enlisted through all kinds of organisations; for instance the Hotel Cecil, open from 7 am till midnight, had 1872 women on its rosters, for domestic work and canteen and dance duty. <sup>36</sup>

In spite of the information bureaus and hospitality offered through them, the main channels for acquaintance with civilians, apart from street and shop encounters, were the dances. In all the clubs, teams of girls drawn in through all sorts of patriotic, cultural, sporting and business associations, but always supposedly the 'right type', were organised in groups as partners. It was a general rule that a girl should not refuse any serviceman one dance—after one dance, if she didn't like



him, she could make excuses. <sup>37</sup> It was expected that chosen strangers would be taken home to meet parents and friends, leading to home hospitality, persisting friendships and decorous happiness all round.

At Auckland, American numbers fluctuated in a stream of arrivals and departures, <sup>38</sup> which heightened the troop-town atmosphere, whereas many Marines were stationed near **Wellington** for several months. Many of the latter found local friends, thus solving the problem of what to do with liberty, others became drearily familiar with the city's resources, or lack of them. The earthquakes of June and August 1942 made things worse, putting several thousand cinema seats out of use for months, while the Town Hall was not restored till the end of 1943. For those who did not like dancing there was little to do; one such man told a reporter there had been no new films for weeks, he could not get a beer after 6 o'clock, there was no vaudeville, no tepid baths and the only gymnasium was hopelessly overcrowded. <sup>39</sup> When the bars closed, apart from getting a meal, going to the pictures or sitting around in a Service club, there was, for the non-dancing man without local friends, whether he came from Illinois or the King Country, nothing but walking the streets. The need for a sizeable night-time sports centre, attracting spectators as well as activists, New Zealanders as well as Americans, was obvious and was discussed, <sup>40</sup> but not till mid-1943, in **Wellington**, was a start made towards converting an old Wakefield Street building, crammed with stores, into a miniature, all-Services sports stadium seating about 500, for basketball, boxing, badminton, etc. This did not open till November, but next door to it an old skating rink, re-floored, opened in September and proved very popular. <sup>41</sup>

The American invasion made at least a passing dint in the New Zealand Sunday. Early in 1942 it could be said that, while only a small number of New Zealanders spent much of Sunday in prayer and many prayed not at all, there were very few counter-attractions. There were no public sports, bars and restaurants were closed and only an occasional milk-bar or grill-room offered any food; libraries were closed, there were no films, and petrol restrictions cut back outings and picnics. Churches

and local councils, unmoved by the boredom of New Zealand soldiers, had stood firmly against any erosion of the righteous inactivity of Sunday, but during April reports came from **Australia** of pressure for some relaxation, for a few films and dance halls. <sup>42</sup> Allum, Mayor of **Auckland**, led the way on 13 May: the probable arrival of American soldiers and sailors some time in the future made it necessary to overhaul existing arrangements for Sunday entertainment of the armed forces; opportunities for healthy recreation would be provided on Sunday afternoons and picture theatres would be open in the evening, outside church hours, to servicemen. <sup>43</sup> One by one, the towns near camps arranged for more grill-rooms and milk-bars to be open, and in the evenings one or two cinemas to which each serviceman might take one civilian companion. They were generally well filled and it was noticed that even on a fine Sunday evening there were now few troops on their seemingly endless and aimless promenade of the streets. <sup>44</sup> Wellington soon had matinees as well, catering for those whose leave ended early in the evening, <sup>45</sup> but not till May 1943 did **Auckland** follow suit. <sup>46</sup> As time passed, some demobilised soldiers facing dreary Sundays felt aggrieved: why, asked ' **Middle East**' in April 1943, were only current servicemen admitted to Sunday pictures? <sup>47</sup> Some non-service activities were affected by the change in the sabbath climate: several **Hamilton** bowling clubs decided to open their greens on Sunday afternoons, <sup>48</sup> and at **Dunedin**, students could play tennis on the university courts. <sup>49</sup>

To the newcomers, prices were confusing and so was money: a dollar was worth 6 s 1 d; 41 cents exchanged for half a crown, 16 cents for a shilling. They were used to tipping and many were in a spend-easy mood. Their ignorance and affluence reinforced the view that a fool and his money are soon parted and deserve to be. Probably most traders were honest, but among liquor vendors, taxi drivers, restaurateurs and shopkeepers there were many who sought more than their due, ranging from heavy 'takes' for after-hours or adulterated liquor to a few cents on a pair of socks or changing a dollar at the rate of 6 s, less the penny. There were prosecutions for overcharging and shortchanging, but much would not be detected.

Some children set out to make what they could from the strangers. Shoe-shining was unknown, but at the enquiries of Marines and sailors, some barbers offered 6 d shines in their chairs. Then, although shoe polish was scarce, a crop of boys, mainly primary school age, appeared on the streets, plying brushes and hoping for tips, 'with all the energy and cheekiness of modern youth.'<sup>50</sup> At first there was approval of this youthful enterprise,<sup>51</sup> but it soon appeared less industrious than predatory, described as 'glorified cadging and a real racket' by the police who sometimes confiscated the gear, which would later be returned to parents on the understanding that there would be no more shoe-shining. Shortly before Christmas 1942, the Wellington City Council decreed that the bootblacks must keep off the public streets but could make arrangements in shops or on other private property.<sup>52</sup> Some youngsters did not make even the pretence of offering a service but pestered Americans outright for money, 'souvenirs', and some, hunting in groups, were cheeky and persistent.<sup>53</sup> Begging by adults, usually alcoholics, was firmly discouraged by two or three months in prison.<sup>54</sup>

Many taxi drivers, as well as accepting tips, found it only too easy to overcharge Americans who were ignorant, fuddled or exuberant. After their first month Scholefield wrote: 'At last a taxi driver has been punished for shameless stin[g]ing of the American marines. He charged £2 10 s for a 16 s drive. He was fined £10 and now has his license cancelled by the City Council to the general public satisfaction.'<sup>55</sup> There were other prosecutions, and it may be assumed that the abuse was widespread. To conserve petrol there were zoning rules but for sufficient money these could be broken: in **Auckland**, drivers taking servicemen to Warkworth charged £2 for the trip there, £2 for the return, and £2 in case they were fined for going outside their zoning area.<sup>56</sup> New Zealanders frequently complained that with Americans around they themselves had no chance of getting a taxi. On the other hand taxi men occasionally complained that they were sometimes threatened and robbed by American fares, some of whom, if refused, would dint a door, smash a window or bash the driver.<sup>57</sup>

Americans in their quest for liquor were sold various brews at high prices, or in some cases were defrauded with vinegar, water or tea. All aspects of the sly grog trade—such as illicit distilling, overpriced after-hours sales of normal liquor by publicans, over-priced drinking in unlicensed places, and furtive sales, by various means, of dubious wines and spirits—were greatly increased by the American presence. The business of grubby apartment houses, with rooms let by the hour, also increased, though checked by the attentions of vice squads and military police. <sup>58</sup>

The American presence added to the accommodation problem. In both **Auckland** and **Wellington** several hotels were taken over as residential quarters for military and naval staff, and other hotels were more heavily booked than usual. Some officers, posted for weeks or months, acquired flats, often used only at weekends, paying rents that were beyond the means of New Zealanders, both civilians and soldiers. This sharpened the housing shortage a little and anti-American feeling rather more. <sup>59</sup>

American demands created or stimulated various enterprises. Laundry and dry-cleaning services, with while-you-wait pressing, multiplied. Trinket jewellery sold as fast as it could be produced, along with souvenirs using paua shell, native woods and so-called Maori decorations. <sup>60</sup> More eating-places appeared, some attempting the visitors' style of coffee; popcorn, formerly sold only at fairs and amusement parks, became common, making up for the disappearance of other sweets. <sup>61</sup> The practice of giving flowers caused a florists' boom and rising prices: roses were especially favoured <sup>62</sup> and nurserymen reported a big increase in rose cultivation. <sup>63</sup> Advertisers applied the word 'American' liberally to cosmetics, jackets, coats, shoes, neck-wear and other items, mainly for women: ' **New York**' and ' **California**' were also popular terms.

In all, during two years about 100 000 Americans were in New Zealand, <sup>64</sup> mostly centred on **Auckland** and **Wellington**, some for a few

days or weeks, some for several months. It was too long and too many for the first enthusiasm to last. As with any troops, not all were unassuming and decorous. Inevitably they had the arrogance of a big nation towards a smaller, less sophisticated one. That arrogance was increased by their having more money to spend than had most New Zealanders and their belief that they were saving New Zealand from the Japanese. Feeling was not sweetened on the one hand by those New Zealanders who seized any chance to make a quick dollar, nor on the other by the sight of (and talk about) girls, some already wives or fiancées, at the beck and call of the intruders.

Many New Zealanders found it difficult to stomach the idea that **America** had saved them from the Japanese. They held that there was only one war, and **Britain** and New Zealand and the rest of the Commonwealth had been fighting it for two years previously; that **America** came into the war when attacked by **Japan** and used New Zealand as a base because this suited American strategy. Further, there need have been no talk of saving New Zealand if its own Division had been brought back, as **Australia's** three divisions were, to defend the homeland,<sup>65</sup> but both Roosevelt and Churchill wanted it kept in a theatre where it had done extremely well.

When Nash late in February 1943 was reported to have said in **Washington** that New Zealand was willing to grant the United States permanent use of air and naval bases in New Zealand as part of a mutual defence system in the **Pacific**, there was some indignation: New Zealand should have heard about this decision, which affected every living and future New Zealander, before it was announced by Nash from the States, said the *Auckland Star*. Was the British government content that New Zealand should look to the **United States** rather than **Britain** for defence? Such arrangements would mean that New Zealand forces would be complementary to American rather than British forces, and would have to be reorganised accordingly.<sup>66</sup>

A spate of letters followed. One read: '... when I went overseas ...our object was to keep New Zealand for the New Zealanders', but Nash would

fend off one set of foreign powers only to admit in peace another foreign power to what would inevitably be suzerainty over our external policy and, by the inexorable march of necessity, over our internal affairs as well. <sup>67</sup> Another was surprised that a good neighbour who came to help in an emergency should move in permanently. <sup>68</sup> Another was sharper: ‘It seems that whatever **America** wants in the **Pacific** is hers for the taking—and that before she has delivered the goods, for we still have the Japanese menace alarmingly entrenched after a year’s fighting.... their part in “saving New Zealand” is only incidental to **United States** defence and development aims in this area.’ <sup>69</sup> One thought Nash too indiscreet to be trusted to represent New Zealand abroad; <sup>70</sup> another wrote that many American politicians saw in the war opportunity to spread their country’s influence, even at the expense of their allies, and with indecent haste were urging their government to acquire permanent bases. ‘My brother... died so that we may remain British. All our boys overseas are fighting for the same reason.’ <sup>71</sup>

Another commended the *Star* for affording discussion ‘when in other quarters all criticism is being suppressed’, and believed that most New Zealanders and especially soldiers would welcome the proposal. In fairness to those American guests whose behaviour and modesty had commended them to us as friends, as well as to our own forces and our kinsmen in Great Britain, ‘we cannot allow the notion to be spread about that we feel ourselves to be urgently in need of “protection” and that for this purpose we desire, or are even willing, to accept a foreign suzerainty over our affairs.’ New Zealand felt committed to assisting **America** in the event of its becoming embroiled in war with **Japan** and to this end had supplied large quantities of food, labour and building materials, suspending its own urgent building programme, yet the impression seemed current that indebtedness to **America** was increasing daily. It would be no less than honest ‘if we demand to know what is going on and where we stand today.’ <sup>72</sup>

There were voices on the other side. One declared that ‘thousands of dinkum New Zealanders’ would welcome a permanent United States



naval base:... we are only a tiny people against **Japan's** teeming millions... Thank God for a friendly and powerful Uncle Sam.... Without him we should be part of the "Co-prosperity Sphere" today—no doubt about that.' <sup>73</sup> 'Gratitude' wrote: 'In our dire need we appealed to **America** for help, to which she most nobly responded, by sending loads of equipment and many thousands of her gallant sons, many of whom have paid the supreme sacrifice. Where is our Christian spirit, our brotherhood of man, our gratitude, if after the war we begrudge a home to the men who have so valiantly protected us. We cry out that our country needs a larger population. Who are more entitled to live with us in New Zealand than those who have saved us?' <sup>74</sup> Another held that it would be to our benefit to have some Americans always with us: 'I say "Thank you **America**, and God bless you"' <sup>75</sup> 'Travelled Britisher' was ashamed of local narrow-mindedness: 'Many who really love New Zealand would welcome here those whose slogan is progress, and who would raise the standard of living in this very backward country, and teach us lessons in real freedom, efficiency, organisation, loyalty and in manners, personal fastidiousness and culture.' <sup>76</sup>

In the House on 8 March 1943, F. W. Doidge drew attention to recent reports of an American senator saying that aerodromes in New Zealand had been built using lend-lease funds and that the **United States** should not relinquish them after the war. He pointed out that many powerful American papers did not like New Zealand and constantly attacked **Britain**, naming the Hearst press, *Time* and *Fortune*, and the *Chicago Tribune* which had lately said that after the war another star, representing New Zealand, would be added to the Stars and Stripes. Although New Zealand had great regard for the **United States** people and their President, and great appreciation of their assistance and was very glad to have **America** as an ally, people must remember that 'that country came into the war because she had to when she was attacked.' **Britain** would always be the Motherland, and 'we will never for one moment agree that on New Zealand soil any flag shall fly other than our own and the Union Jack.' <sup>77</sup> **Sir Apirana Ngata** also pressed the question of post-war use of **Pacific** bases and Fraser assured the House that no



such proposals had been made by the **United States** government. <sup>78</sup> On 10 March Fraser referred to statements by Sumner Welles <sup>79</sup> and **Cordell Hull**, published and broadcast that day, concerning belief that means of international security should be adopted in future so that the **Pacific** would be kept safe for all law-abiding and peaceful nations. But Fraser said that there had been no conversations between the **United States** and New Zealand about military or naval bases in the **Pacific**. He believed that the President of the **United States** was incapable of a mean action, or of fostering any arbitrary, unjust or tyrannical policy. There had been in the American press certain remarks that would have been better unsaid, notably by the 'atrocious' *Chicago Tribune*, but these had been effectively answered in **America**. Nash, questioned in the **United States** by newspapers about post-war bases, had said that New Zealand would be quite prepared to discuss any matter of that kind on a reciprocal basis. 'But the idea of coming into New Zealand for the purpose of establishing a base here has never crossed the minds of the American Government or people.' <sup>80</sup> A month later, on returning from **America**, Nash in an interview made it clear that no statement by him had committed New Zealand to granting the permanent use of any of its bases to the **United States** or any other power. <sup>81</sup>

Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt's week-long visit at the end of August 1943, when American troop numbers here were near their peak, gave a timely boost to their morale. It also warmed New Zealand feeling generally towards the great ally. Her plain, straightforward bearing, her interest and warmth and her well-expressed regard for New Zealand induced cordiality even in the disenchanted. She was not a political power, her stress was always on the women's area, but she was the President's Lady and a strong personality.

As New Zealand became an American base, administration grew and material poured in as well as men. This meant taking over offices and storage space, and building a great deal more of the latter, mainly on the outskirts of **Auckland** and **Wellington**. It also required labour, principally in **Auckland**, which was the main base. The Americans

offered higher pay, and jobs were keenly sought by typists and office girls and women drivers on whom 'working for the Americans' conferred prestige as well as cash, and by watersiders, drivers, storemen and labourers to whom the pay, with massive overtime at mounting rates, was remarkable, let alone the chance of acquiring a few goods as bounty.

At Auckland, waterside work for the Americans increased so much that

it represented one-third of the rest of New Zealand, including civilian vessels at **Auckland**. The shortage of labour at that port was mainly overcome by the registration of non-union labour through the Man-power authorities and the employment of Civil Servants and other forty-hour-week workers during week-ends and night shifts. The difficulty was further accentuated at that port due to the requirements of labour for stores off the wharf controlled by the **United States** authorities. It was quite frequent for over 2000 non-unionists to be employed each day in addition to approximately 1800 unionists.... At other ports the shortage of labour was not so acute.... <sup>82</sup>

To make sure of enough labour whenever it was needed, the American Army Transport Service, through direct negotiations with the **Auckland** branch of the New Zealand Waterside Workers Union, made an agreement, effective from 9 November 1942, to pay men working on Army and **Navy** vessels an extra shilling an hour above the normal rates. This applied only at **Auckland** <sup>83</sup> and only to those vessels, not to others under the control of the United States War Shipping Administration. <sup>84</sup> This bonus subsumed various award concessions such as 2 *d* or 3 *d* an hour more for handling explosives, dirt money or work in freezers, and it provided that work should continue in rain. <sup>85</sup>

Cargo and stores work at ports, done in shifts, was better paid than similar unskilled work elsewhere, especially for night shifts and at weekends. Whereas an ordinary day on the wharves, 8 am to 5 pm at 3 s 2 *d* an hour, would earn 25 s 4 *d*, a week-day night shift, 11 pm to 7 am

at 6 s an hour, was worth 48 s plus a hot meal, and all work from 6 pm on Saturday night to 7 am on Monday morning was at 7 s 4 d an hour.

<sup>86</sup> From the wharf, goods were trucked to stores, maybe miles away, and held there till needed, often in a hurry, at various camps or hospitals, or on an island-bound ship. All this meant much sorting and re-handling.

Regular members of the waterfront union were not involved as much as were casuals in overlong hours, sometimes 20 hours on end. Men in all kinds of jobs (for there were no able-bodied unemployed by June 1942) who at the outset volunteered to lend a helping, albeit well-paid, hand to the war effort with extra work soon found that they were on to a very good thing. When they could not induce Manpower officers to release them full time, many simply ignored Manpower directions; others contrived to do night shifts preceding days off or half days; others turned up at their normal jobs so tired as to be useless. The *New Zealand Herald* reported that these men included tramways employees, civil servants, freezing workers, office staffs and men in practically all trades.

Police constables have formed a large section of the spare-time workers in American stores. Action was taken by the police authorities with a view to preventing the constables from sharing in the wages paid by the Americans, but the men have continued. This indicates that the inducement offered for men in regular employment to work for the Americans is strong enough to overshadow preventive action by employers. Representations have been made to official quarters to have the position rectified. <sup>87</sup>

Employers complained that 'working for the Americans' produced widespread industrial troubles, ranging from absenteeism to restlessness and discontent. <sup>88</sup>

The number of casual workers involved increased as 1943 wore on, while officials worried over the effect both on stabilisation and production. Dismay was heightened in June, when study of the small print in the Lend-Lease Agreement signed 10 months earlier revealed

that, except for administrative personnel, these unruly wages were not a hand-out from **America's** cornucopia but were, under reverse lend-lease, paid by New Zealand. The Secretary of Labour wrote in July: '... had it been made known to the late Mr Coates and myself when we visited **Auckland** last November that wage costs were a charge against lease-lend, we would, I think, have been in a different position and could have requested closer control over the wages paid.' <sup>89</sup> With an election in a few months, there was no wish to draw general attention to this confusion. Not till January 1944, when the American withdrawal was beginning, was it made public 'in a reprint of a speech by Mr Nash' that 'instead of being the bounty of a wealthy "Uncle Sam", the payments have had the effect of raising New Zealand war costs and are a burden on all classes of the community.' <sup>90</sup>

The history of the Waterfront Control Commission comments that the watersiders and most New Zealanders felt that Americans were fools to pay so much. It was thought that the American ships were a good thing and that as they would not last long the men ought to get as much as possible out of them. The growth of this attitude was due in the main to the actions of the Americans themselves. The lavish way in which money was squandered on unnecessary labour, top wages paid to sinecure holders, the employment of incompetent men in responsible positions, was most unwise. Some unreliable men were employed as foremen and any man sacked by the Waterfront Control Commission could at once be employed at higher pay; 'In two cases men dismissed for drunkenness on the job were taken over by the Americans.' In such circumstances, slack work was common, as was belief that all wharf workers were getting tremendous wages all the time. <sup>91</sup>

In October 1943 there was a conference of the unions concerned, the Federation of Labour, the Waterfront Control Commission and the **Labour Department**, with the American authorities; <sup>92</sup> as the **Dominion** noted three months later, no official statement was made. <sup>93</sup> **Baker** states that, after negotiations, 'some improvement followed, but the position was never completely satisfactory. The damage had been done—

existing employees were receiving the higher rates of pay. Dissatisfaction somewhere was inevitable.’<sup>94</sup> For casual labour, negotiations achieved some cut-back in the application of overtime rates. In April 1944 an *Auckland Star* article, amended by the American censor in consultation with the **Labour Department**, claimed that the present policy of the **United States** authorities was to comply with the rates and conditions of awards, and that the old days when unskilled labourers could amass well over £20 a week were now a memory, though work in capacities not covered by awards was paid at agreed rates, accepted by New Zealand officials.<sup>95</sup>

Some aspects of the situation were shown in an article written for the *New Zealand Herald* on 3 March 1944 and suppressed by the American censor, the Secretary of Labour and the Director of Publicity, in concert, as likely to affect industrial relations and impede the war effort. By an agreement between the **Labour Department**, the relevant unions, and the Americans on 2 February, effective from 25 February, workers called for casual night-time store jobs were to be paid at ordinary shift rates, 3 s 2 d an hour, plus 3 s bonus for the night shift, not overtime rates at 6 s 4 d an hour. This was not understood by 300 men who answered a night call for stores work at Sylvia Park. They arrived in trucks, found they were to receive about half of what they expected, refused to work and were trucked back to town; but on the next two nights the required number turned up. An official of the **Auckland Builders and General Labourers Union** said that the government’s intention to stop day workers in essential industry also doing night work for the Americans at overtime rates while permanent labourers were on lower rates had much to commend it. He added that ‘many office workers report for work after hours at Sylvia Park, including some prominent manpower officials who prosecute workers for absenteeism during the daytime whilst at the same time endeavouring to conserve their energy for another night’s work at remunerative pay for the Americans....’<sup>96</sup>

Shipbuilding was a field in which New Zealanders worked notably for

**Americans without attracting the public attention given to unskilled casual labour on wharves, or even to well-paid typists. Regulations, amended as needed, provided for the overtime and pay rates of defence workers; Manpower decisions and transfers governed who did what. This work is discussed among the other achievements of the war-extended shipbuilding industry; <sup>97</sup> for security reasons it had little publicity until late in 1944. Repairs to American vehicles and machinery were other labours that were not publicised. In workshops among the buildings that sprawled over several acres on the west bank of the Tamaki, **Auckland**, near the railway line, skilled New Zealanders turned out a stream of renovated jeeps, trucks, tanks, bulldozers, heavy and light machinery. Their work won the approval of American technicians, stood the test of further **Pacific** service, and saved much material. <sup>98</sup>**

**Not all Americans were courteous and inquiring. Some were so simply sure that they were the top nation saving New Zealand that it was easy to expect girls to welcome them with homage as heroes; many girls unconcerned with strategy, for whom men were the mainspring of life, were ready to comply. American public relations authorities gave tactful but vague advice in a General Order posted on all **United States** bulletin boards and published by many newspapers early in December 1942:**

- 1. When organisations arrive in New Zealand they will find themselves in a friendly and interesting country where preceding units have established an enviable record for good conduct and military bearing, which must be continued by all officers and men.**
- 2. You will find the country depleted of its young men. They are absent on military duty in the New Zealand Army, which has proven itself on the field of battle in this and the first world war as one of the “fightingest” organisations in the world. In Greece, **Crete**, and in Egypt they fought and are fighting our battles in our war, and not only as soldiers but as individuals they and their people merit our highest respect and affection.**
- 3. To the end that we may grow to understand better these admirable and generous-hearted people in this pleasing wholesome little country, I ask that the officers and men under my command endeavour to maintain in their relationship with New Zealanders the**



highest and best traditions of our country and the Corps we represent. Let us not be laggard in meeting and returning the open-hearted hospitality tended to us on all sides, and resolve to keep to the high standards which we in decency and honour are expected to maintain.

99

Late in 1942 any young woman would have agreed that New Zealand was depleted of its young men. The last large ballot of single men had been taken in August 1941, and 21-year-olds were regularly drained towards overseas service. Thousands of Grade II and III men were in home service camps, plus the 18–20-year-olds; while among the **Air Force** volunteers many under 21 were, with their parents' consent, leaving to finish their training overseas. After March 1942 ballots sifted through married men with children, reaching the 40-year-olds by November. Between October 1942 and the following March about 20 000 men in the **Army** alone left New Zealand for the **Middle East** and the **Pacific**.

There were thousands of young girls without boy-friends, young wives and fiancées whose men had been away for two years or even three. There were many others attached, some firmly, some lightly, to men tucked away in New Zealand camps, or relegated to industry, perhaps working long hours and lacking the glamour of uniform. At all levels, girls with well-appointed homes and indulgent parents, girls earning £2 a week, were feeling the pinch: the lack of fun, admiration, excitement and sex, let alone the yearning to love and be loved. They were, especially the younger ones, in varying degrees vulnerable.

On this man-denuded scene, made more grey by petrol and travel restrictions, blackouts and shortages, came the well-garbed Americans in their thousands. 'There were so many of them,' sighed an 18-year-old redhead of 1942, 30 years later, recalling the sudden wealth of escorts, the burst of warmth and vitality that flowed out from Service clubs and street encounters into the suburbs. There was immediate appreciation of American manners: they rose to their feet as if on springs when a woman approached; hats were doffed, even in lifts; seats were offered in trams, or skilfully pushed in at tables; elbows were held protectively as streets were crossed. In talk they were cheerful and easy; their agile



**'ma'ams' and 'sirs' gratified the elders, girls found them wittier and less serious than New Zealanders. The American habit of hyperbole helped the effect; troops away from home often have a dash and verve that would surprise their own folk, and even stock-in-trade conversation, if from **Chicago** or **Seattle** or **St Louis**, seemed brighter for being unfamiliar.**

**These charms were augmented by money. American pay rates were higher than New Zealanders', <sup>100</sup> and many coming from the islands and due to return there had substantial amounts of back pay and every intention of spending it. For a 'date', a posy of flowers might be sent, the young man might bring sweets or chocolates, he would certainly be lavish with cigarettes; a sheaf of roses or other flowers might arrive a day or so after a pleasant evening or as a 'thank-you' to a hostess. There were meals at hotels, and rooms for private entertainment; liquor was somehow acquired, there were taxis, one went places. It was fun to dress up and be admired, fun to talk with the girls at work about one's American and his buddies, fun to flourish cigarettes and gum, perhaps parade a slight accent. It was exciting to be squired by men from far away, whose place back home would lose nothing and possibly gain much in the telling. With such largesse suddenly replacing Saturday nights at the pictures with the girl-friends, it was small wonder that some young women were swept off their feet. The routine question 'May I see you home?' was offered on the slightest pretext or none at all. Some accepted brush-offs with cheerful nonchalance, others were persistent or resentful.**

**Americans were responsible for a good many broken engagements and understandings, and not a few marriages likewise. It was easy, in the climate of war, for a girl intending merely casual friendship to find herself in deep water emotionally, with the distant fiancé seeming remote and unreal. Many a New Zealander in **Italy** or **Egypt** or **Canada** or **Waiouru** waited for letters, then read the one that told him all was over, or else heard obliquely that his girl was going out with a Yank. Such news wounded and angered not only the man himself, but his friends,**

and there was enough of it to cause padres and officers some concern: it was bad for morale. On 14 June 1943 the heads of churches, on 'official information', made a united appeal to wives and fiancées: if life was difficult for them, it was still harder for their men, and getting bad news while powerless to intervene could cause many a nervous collapse; women had the power, by their faithful courage, to send their men into battle gallant and high-hearted or to break their morale by callous forgetfulness; campaigns were being lost or won not only in the **Middle East** or the **Pacific** but in New Zealand and in our own souls. <sup>101</sup> A student newspaper, writing about returning New Zealanders who found allied servicemen cozily ensconced, was severe: 'Any married or engaged woman who cannot wait till a man returns from overseas to settle her emotional problems has about as much stability as a prostitute.' <sup>102</sup>

Americans of course were not the only ones taking over the girls at home; civilians reserved in essential industry had their share. Both roused the ire of the long-service men who returned on furlough in July 1943, some to meet coldness or requests for divorce, others to be amazed at conduct that had grown commonplace. A weekly paper that in March had remarked, 'Daylight lovemaking in side-streets is now a common spectacle in **Auckland** and **Wellington**', <sup>103</sup> was less urbane in August:

Men returned to **Auckland** and **Wellington** have had their eyes opened to sights they thought they had left behind in **Cairo**— girls peddling their bodies from darkened doorways and cheap dance halls; so-called "socialites" dining and drinking at fashionable hotels with visiting servicemen and displaying an unrefined technique veering from Dick Turpin banditry to Du Barry harlotry. <sup>104</sup>

It would probably not be wrong to say that if some girls were tarty little dollar-diggers, many more were recklessly enchanted into uncritical acceptance of the lads from the big, rich, go-ahead nation; most were in nowise affected. There were, of course, deep and enduring attachments: 1396 women married Americans in New Zealand, <sup>105</sup> let alone the unknown others who in due course followed fiancés to the States; though a proportion of these marriages foundered early, they were not

alone in this. Often there was no question of marriage, but there was pleasure, sincerity and compassion in knowing men lonely in heart and futureless in war. Despite all the ardour of words and youth, many a girl, as the grey ships slid away, knew that whether he lived or died she would never see that man again. From the end of 1943 New Zealanders were beginning to return from overseas and more were being released from home service. But there are probably many mothers and grandmothers of New Zealanders who still have a place in their hearts for Brad or Joe from **California** or Illinois, fathers and grandfathers of Americans who remember a girl gay or lovely at **Wellington** or **Auckland** or **Whangarei**, memories to balance those of crowded leave trains and grey coffee.

Inevitably there were fights. The troops of two nations, on leave, were jammed into towns, overcrowding pubs, eating-houses and all public places. There were genuine likings and friendships between Yanks and Kiwis, there was cheerful badinage in bars, there were no persisting feuds, as of gangs. Military police in various uniforms constantly patrolled, alert to catch trouble in the bud; but confrontations could arise in a moment when small incidents touched off deeper irritations.

The visitors were troops, numerous and transitory, looking for pleasure and excitement between spells of boredom and danger, but there was very little entertainment or activity for them. Apart from the Australians in their corner, it was obvious that the **Pacific** war was the Americans' affair: it was easy for them to forget that New Zealand's Division was pulling its weight elsewhere and had done so for three years, easy for New Zealanders to think that their Division was worth more than a great many big-mouthed Americans. New Zealanders were irked by American affluence; the girls 'crazy' over Americans were far more conspicuous than the many whose interest was friendly but decorous, <sup>106</sup> or the many who were not involved at all; and 'nigger', uttered by a Southerner to or about a Maori, could be a fighting word.

All these irritations were exacerbated by boredom and booze, especially by bad booze. Turned from the bars at 6 o'clock, those

Americans and New Zealanders not absorbed by Service clubs, the homes of friends, dance halls or the pictures, took to the streets armed with assorted liquors and next morning the streets would be littered with broken glass, 'It is strong, fightable stuff, provocative of trouble, and has caused trouble,' stated the *Evening Post*. <sup>107</sup>

This was saying as much as could be said of such trouble, for, although there were reports from **Australia** of brawls between Australian and **United States** servicemen, <sup>108</sup> New Zealand censorship suppressed such local reports as subversive statements likely to prejudice relations between His Majesty's subjects and those of a friendly foreign state. Offences by New Zealand servicemen in which civilians were not concerned were usually handled by military police and courts, and on 8 April 1943 regulations granted American authorities exclusive jurisdiction in criminal charges against members of the American armed forces, although any offences against civilians would, except for security reasons, be tried in open court. <sup>109</sup> Presumably through an early censorship slip, the *Press* on 27 November 1942 revealed an **Auckland** coroner's report that an American soldier, felled by an unknown Maori in a drunken street brawl on 15 October, died later of a fractured skull. On some other occasions reports of trials of civilians involved in such clashes might briefly mention 'a disturbance', 'an affray' or 'a skirmish' between New Zealanders and visiting servicemen. An article in a weekly paper during February 1943 was not repeated by other papers. This 'Shots in Shortland Street' stated that in the early hours of 10 February an altercation in **Auckland** between New Zealand and American servicemen over women flared into bottle throwing and 'several scarcely playful bouts of fisticuffs', subsided for a few moments while reinforcements were whistled up, then 'according to an onlooker' pistols were drawn and it appeared that two men were wounded though on which side was not clear. <sup>110</sup>

The most celebrated incident of this sort was **Wellington's** 'Battle of Manners Street' on Saturday 3 April 1943. It apparently began with a confrontation between Southern Marines and Maoris, a crowd gathered,

largely from nearby Service clubs, and a general fracas developed. Reports were that several men had been killed and more sent to hospital. <sup>111</sup> This was denied by an *Evening Post* article on 8 April—‘no man is in hospital and none in worse condition’—and by the police next day. ‘There was certainly a bit of a skirmish’, stated the Commissioner. It had started in a lane and was quickly handled by the police and provosts from various Services. The crowd was dispersed, but another gathered again and was in turn dispersed. Later in the evening, a further little group started an argument and was yet again dispersed. One New Zealand civilian was arrested and dealt with by the court, <sup>112</sup> one New Zealand serviceman was arrested and dealt with by his own officers, no **United States** serviceman was arrested or charged.

‘There was not a single person injured, much less taken to hospital or killed, as rumour has it’, said the Police Commissioner, reproving rumour-mongers. He warned that in future civilians who incited servicemen to fight would be treated very firmly by the police, regardless of age or sex, while similar firm action would be taken by the Services against any of their own men concerned. <sup>113</sup>

The *New Zealand Herald* remarked that official suppression of facts had bred grotesque rumours. If the eventual plain and straightforward account of what had actually happened had been made public at the time there would have been no scope for the distorted version. The Commissioner was probably not responsible for the original suppression, for as an experienced police officer he would realise the sterilising effect of plain truth and the contrary result of denying publicity to facts which could not possibly affect national security. <sup>114</sup> The *New Zealand Observer* on 14 April also disapproved of ‘futile secrecy’.

Police at the time were concerned to keep the peace and, by playing down excitement, avoid vendetta repetition. In post-war calm a police sergeant remembers the ‘action’ as fierce: provost corps from all Services turned out, together with the civil police. **United States** Marine provosts had wagons into which they tossed anyone who had been coshed. But the action was short and sharp: the police made no reports

and laid no charges; persons taken into custody were servicemen and were delivered directly to the appropriate Service. He remembered the cause of the trouble as a fracas between reinforcements for the **Maori Battalion** and Marines who had befriended some Maori girls. <sup>115</sup>

Several less publicised mêlées were referred to in court reports. For instance, on the afternoon of 26 April 1943 at a boxing tourney in the Basin Reserve, **Wellington**, two New Zealand soldiers and others started a general disturbance, stated the police. ‘The trouble seemed to start with a little bit of jealousy between these men and overseas servicemen.’ A general fight took place in which a policeman was knocked down and kicked, and plain clothes men helped the constables. The two local soldiers were convicted of obstructing the police. <sup>116</sup>

There was a ‘serious affray’ in an amusement park in **Auckland’s Queen Street** on the evening of 3 May 1943 between Maoris and American sailors, in which a Maori and a Negro were both stabbed, the latter seriously; a Maori who had incited others to fight was sent to prison for two weeks. <sup>117</sup> On 21 June at **Wellington** in two separate incidents, large crowds collected about two civilians who challenged passing Americans, calling on everyone to ‘come and fight the Yanks’. Both men were fined, the magistrate warning of future gaol sentences for an offence that was becoming far too common. <sup>118</sup> In Auckland a few months later, a reputable man with a deep-seated matrimonial grudge against Americans was fined for similar action. <sup>119</sup> A report in *Truth* on 13 October 1943, headlined ‘Battle Royal with Police’, sounded like mere skylarking by a few American sailors at **Napier**, but the next week’s issue told of four Marines ‘running amok’ and breaking windows in **Otaki** before being overpowered by Maoris. Presumably there were other such incidents which did not reach the press.

Jury verdicts early in 1944 were further signs that the welcome was cooling. Two Auckland killings in which Americans were involved were dismissed as justifiable homicides: a 19-year-old New Zealand soldier shot an American soldier with whom he had been drinking and who had



made a homosexual suggestion to him,<sup>120</sup> and a man killed his wife with a hammer after she told him that she loved an American and would go away with him.<sup>121</sup> These unusual verdicts prompted several newspaper comments, some questioning the jury system,<sup>122</sup> another claiming that many people in discussing the second case found the verdict 'a just and proper one'.<sup>123</sup>

Considering how many Americans there were, newspaper references were scanty, for over them brooded the anxious, many-angled censorship. To begin with, on 24 June 1942 Admiral Ghormley proposed that all press copy, photographs and films on allied nations' military activities in the South Pacific, including New Zealand, should be censored at American Naval Headquarters, **Auckland**, adding that this would not affect the general New Zealand censorship already established at **Wellington**.<sup>124</sup> This was an unacceptable intrusion on sovereignty.<sup>125</sup> The Director of Publicity, J. T. Paul, answered that **Wellington** was the chief centre of activity, that the censor in **Wellington** was the 'final arbiter', and that as the 'closest liaison' was necessary between him and the American Naval Command's censorship, it would be valuable to have a representative of the latter in **Wellington**.<sup>126</sup>

As stated earlier,<sup>127</sup> the official press situation was maintained somewhat imperfectly till 20 November 1942. On 17 October of that year Paul summarised events in a memorandum:

Leaving aside the announcement which came from **America** many months ago that the vanguard of an American force had arrived in New Zealand, which in plain fact was the visit of an American Cruiser [in February 1942],<sup>128</sup> the most definite reference to United States forces in New Zealand was contained in a broadcast from the **United States** by the Prime Minister of New Zealand.<sup>129</sup>

This was made with the full concurrence of the Office of Public Relations United States Navy, and a copy of the following communication was addressed to the Publicity Officer, New Zealand Legation, on August 28:—



**This is to verify that there is no objection to the mention of the fact that **United States** sailors and marines are present in New Zealand, as this is a matter of common knowledge. The United States Army Authorities on the other hand wish no reference to be made to the presence of their troops.**

**It was then emphasised that there should be no publication beyond general terms and no published reference to numbers of troops, ships, units, or personnel.**

**Prior to Mr Fraser's broadcast several published references had been made in the American press to the presence of **United States** troops in New Zealand. Many more have since been made, the latest being yesterday when Mr Stimson, Secretary for War, announced <sup>130</sup> that American forces are now stationed in New Zealand. In addition to this Mr Stimson said that substantial United States Army forces were now in the **New Hebrides, Fiji**, and other points where their presence was undisclosed previously .... In view of this, the task of preventing press publication in New Zealand is not only impossible, but it borders on the absurd.**

**For a period of almost six months I have endeavoured ... to have the position in New Zealand clarified. I have urged that the established and tested principles relating to publicity covering our own troops should be applied in all material particulars to United States troop movements. I have suggested that there should be no published references whatever to the movements of United States troops, to the numbers, to any ships, units, or to personnel, without the concurrence of the United States Public Relations Officer and Censor in **Auckland**. The invariable reply has been that no authority for release can be given in New Zealand and that everything has to be released on authority from Pearl Harbour. This reply was again reiterated yesterday by Lieutenant-Commander Gifford, Acting Public Relations Officer in Auckland, following the receipt of Mr Stimson's references.**

**In view of these latest references, including the second cable in the**

press this morning relating to the publication of a United States edition of the booklet 'Meet New Zealand', it appears to me unwise, unnecessary, and certainly most confusing, if not indeed worse, to continue the endeavour to limit safe published references within New Zealand. I therefore urge that with proper safeguards the question of publishing general references to the presence of American servicemen in New Zealand, including photographs, should now be permitted.

Paul referred to articles in the *Washington Star* of 22 August and in *Newsweek* of 31 August, describing New Zealand hospitality and the building of camps for Americans, and concluded:

I most strongly urge that in view of the above facts the present position cannot be allowed to continue. The press of New Zealand should not be expected to accept an arrangement which prohibits publication of events occurring within New Zealand and allows newspapers outside the country full liberty of publication.... common sense demands an immediate reversal of the present unsatisfactory and untenable position.

131

The United States Naval Censor at *Auckland* worried over transgressions and himself reproved some newspapers that had referred to individuals of the forces in their social columns. These papers asked the Director of Publicity if there were one or two censorships in New Zealand, and the Director asked the Naval Censor to refer evasions to him. <sup>132</sup> After 20 November, when information on United States forces could be published, subject to *United States* naval censorship, the appointment of an assistant naval censor at *Wellington* was completed, to speed up the release of domestic copy, but material for overseas had to be cleared at *Auckland* and some had to be referred to *Pearl Harbour*. <sup>133</sup>

Basically, the American view was that all domestic copy mentioning Americans must be submitted to American censorship, each case to be judged on its own merits. For many routine references this seemed to newspaper men an irksome intrusion on their trade. To an extent the Director of Publicity agreed with them, and he tried continually to

establish with the Americans a code of what might and might not be released, with areas of editorial responsibility, conniving meanwhile at uncensored publication of obviously innocent references, while such terms as 'Allied' or 'visiting' servicemen evaded the issue and were fully understood by readers. There could, of course, be no mention of numbers, units, high ranking officers, camp locations, arrivals or departures, equipment or training.

On 11 June 1943, **South Pacific Command** instructed that, due to progress in the campaign and the increasing security of New Zealand, censorship could be more liberal with a view to promoting the interest and co-operation of the New Zealand public. As the presence here of Marines was by then well known, they need no longer be merely 'US servicemen', while photographs and news items of the activities usually associated with the training of troops and of general interest might appear, subject to the usual security limitation and 'subject, of course, to censorship to prevent writers from failing to observe proper security instructions.' <sup>134</sup>

This liberalisation had in fact been anticipated. Even the Chief Naval Censor at **Auckland** realised the impracticability, especially after victory was assured at **Guadalcanal**, of pretending that thousands of interesting and visible visitors did not exist. In the *New Zealand Herald*, not a rebellious paper, photographs and accounts of Americans eating Thanksgiving dinners, inspecting Maori carvings at **Rotorua** and entertaining orphans had appeared before New Year. <sup>135</sup> There had been descriptions of the streamlined efficiency of naval barracks on 10 December 1942, of an Army camp two days later, of a naval hospital on the 29th; on 30 December, of the recent Spartan experiences of a combat unit from the US **Marine Corps** on an intensive training course, firing live ammunition over the rugged country beyond New Zealand's largest inland camp, sleeping in bivouac tents thirty inches high, 'small enough to be heated with a candle', and eating two meals a day. One suspects that this was the sort of thing that **South Pacific Command** had in mind on 11 June 1943.

The Chief Naval Censor expected more publicity but still wanted all copy mentioning **United States** troops in any way to be submitted for censorship. Some newsmen dutifully complied, others, sure that they themselves could avoid security pitfalls, did not proffer routine minor references. Paul, a former journalist, saw the practical difficulties and in announcing the liberalisation of 11 June he had written: 'In large measure the principle of editorial censorship within the regulations and these directions will operate.'<sup>136</sup> Frequently, complaints of papers encroaching on and usurping **United States** authority were made by the Chief Naval Censor to Paul, who with one hand soothed the irate American and with the other shook a cautioning finger at the careless editor, saying that security was not the only consideration, it was also necessary to preserve good relations; but very rarely did he find that these complaints justified a restraining order obliging an editor to submit all such references to censorship. It would, he explained to the Solicitor-General, 'be impossible for newspapers to conduct their business and give the necessary publicity to **United States** troops in New Zealand if every item, social and other, was to be submitted to **United States** censorship and later released by my office.'<sup>137</sup> With this attitude the Naval Attaché in **Wellington** agreed.<sup>138</sup>

Occasionally outright mistakes occurred, as when the arrival of an American major-general (in company with **Lieutenant-General Freyberg**) was published in the *New Zealand Herald*,<sup>139</sup> or when Marines included their rank and units in lost property advertisements.<sup>140</sup> But security as such was not the only angle. New Zealand's censorship concerning Americans was also dominated by a 1942 addition to the definition of a subversive statement: one intended or likely to prejudice the relations between His Majesty's subjects and a friendly foreign state or the subjects of any such state.<sup>141</sup> The zeal of J. T. Paul in administering this elastic-sided clause was heavily reinforced by the Chief Naval Censor at **Auckland**, whose authority was guided by occasional directives from South Pacific Command, and whose perception of his responsibility, both for security and for publicity policy, was very wide. In the latter area, there were clashes when **United States** servicemen,

involved indirectly in court cases, were mentioned unfavourably. Newspapers held that they had a right to publish what was said in open court, that such publicity was part of the newspaper service and of the system of justice. A few instances show the clash of values. Several of these occurred before the liberalisation of June 1943, but already some newspapers, and to some extent the Director of Publicity, had taken the line that non-military references need not be referred to American censors.

In March 1943 in a case of petty theft, it was stated that New Zealanders working at a **Marine Corps** store had been given goods and that Marines took goods away. The magistrate, J. H. Luxford, referring to the allegedly loose system at these stores, said that he would like to hear a sworn statement on it by a responsible officer of the Corps, adding, 'I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that so many **Auckland** homes are using **United States** goods. It is a sort of Uncle Sam's largesse.' <sup>142</sup> The *Auckland Star's* chief reporter, when taxed by the Naval Censor with this impropriety, said that his paper would continue to print court proceedings unless expressly forbidden by the Director of Publicity. The Chief Naval Censor then asked Paul that all references to American forces, in court or elsewhere, be submitted to censorship, New Zealand or American. <sup>143</sup> Paul replied that in practice he allowed co-operative newspapers to use discretion: **United States** troops were in so many parts of New Zealand from time to time that it would not be possible to have every news mention of them censored before publication. He added that it would be preferable to decide on definite directives to be observed with mutual co-operation. <sup>144</sup> In June, reporting two suits for matrimonial damages in which Marines were involved, *Truth* gave prominence to a judge's comment that no one could excuse a man who took advantage of a serviceman's absence to start a relationship with his wife and commit adultery with her. <sup>145</sup> The Chief Naval Censor complained of 'very flagrant violation' in not submitting such stories for censorship.

While it is not contended that such publicity should at present be totally suppressed, the dictates of good judgement as well as good taste demand

that the prominence of such copy be minimized. This newspaper had no right whatever to mention the names of Marines, the fact that the one in **Auckland** was a Shore Patrol officer, or any of the sordid details which were apparently published for the express purpose of creating ill will between our peoples.... it is earnestly requested that the matter be severely and summarily dealt with. <sup>146</sup>

Paul replied with both firmness and sense: 'I do not agree that the names of Marines appearing in our Courts should be suppressed unless there exists an ample security reason in any particular case .... Personally I think the articles should have been submitted, but if the result of such submission would have been to delete what is described as "sordid details", then I am afraid both the United States censorship and the New Zealand censorship is [ sic] heading for trouble.' Deletion by censorship of the judge's comment 'could not be justified'. The only effective treatment would be suppression of any reference to the case, but that again could not be contemplated.

The plain fact is that censorship of Supreme Court proceedings, unless imperative for security reasons, would be highly improper and contrary to public interest.

Looking at the whole question dispassionately, it is inconceivable that episodes of this character should not occur. Given similar circumstances in any country, and with any troops—our own, of course, included—irregularities of this character are unavoidable. If this position were reversed and New Zealand troops were in **America**, the general standard of conduct of those troops and American women would be very similar. This must also be said— if two similar cases, arising out of the circumstances described, occurred in **America**, a certain class of American newspaper would make much more of them than has been made by "N.Z. Truth". <sup>147</sup>

The Naval Censor replied that Paul's views on Supreme Court censorship were most interesting and that in the main he agreed: 'We must always consider, however, that the demands of wartime censorship might



conceivably be of greater importance to the war effort, and therefore to the welfare of the **United Nations** and their peoples, even than the statement of a Supreme Court Justice, if such a statement either compromised the security or jeopardized the amicable relations of our allies and ourselves. To such extremes, even one wearing the robes of judicial privilege should not be permitted to go.’ <sup>148</sup>

The Censor’s anxious protection of **America** in all fields was further shown in his response to some cultural evaluations, headed ‘Nation or Colony?’, in the *New Zealand Observer*. After briefly reporting a lecture in which a literary American officer had discussed the need to develop a specifically New Zealand culture the editor, R. B. Bell, <sup>149</sup> while agreeing, added that the problem was complex and needed time. **America** faced the same difficulties and, though older and much larger, ‘has not yet produced a writer, musician or artist of the very first rank.... It has, of course, produced a number of very good writers, musicians and artists. I mean simply that, in the great hierarchy of the world’s imaginative geniuses, **America** does not exist. Nor could anything else be expected.’ <sup>150</sup>

The *Observer*’s editor regularly failed to submit copy for censorship. He had now added insult to injury, and the Naval Censor was indignant: ‘As pointed out previously ... Mr Bell is actually usurping the prerogative of American censorship, which is contrary to your regulations and to ours.’ Further, the article ‘contains statements regarding American culture which appear to be both untrue and uncalled for. After viewing with pride the bust of the poet Longfellow in **Westminster Abbey**, I could not help but feel pride in the fact that England had recognised the attainments of a truly great American poet. It was with equal pride that numerous pictures by American artists were viewed in the **National Gallery** and Tate’s Gallery in **London**. Courses in American literature are given at **Oxford**, all of which seems to negative the statements of R.D.B. [ sic]’ <sup>151</sup>

Although a restraining order had already been placed on this editor obliging him to submit all copy concerning Americans to the American



censors, it was decided to take no action in this instance. Later, in December, to the Chief Naval Censor's great satisfaction, he was convicted and fined for a breach of censorship in a brief oracular statement on 27 October that an **Auckland** pilot might soon bring the first Mosquito from England to New Zealand. <sup>152</sup> On 24 December the Chief Naval Censor noted with satisfaction that the *Observer* was now adopting a friendly policy. <sup>153</sup>

Various issues continued, mainly over small matters. The Americans had long been reluctant to define what could or could not be published but at length, with their agreement, the Director of Publicity on 3 November 1943 issued a list of topics which could not be mentioned without clearance by the Director of Publicity or the United States Censors acting on his behalf. Besides the obvious military silences—names, rank, movements of senior officers, strengths, movements of units, equipment, casualties, malarial control—these included letters or interviews with any **United States** serviceman; proceedings before any **United States** courts or boards in New Zealand; local court proceedings in which **United States** servicemen were witnesses or parties, if evidence given by or concerning them was reported or **United States** military matters mentioned. 'The important topic of right relationships' was left to editorial judgment, guided by public safety regulations, especially that of a subversive statement being one intended or likely to prejudice relations between New Zealanders and Americans; editors were earnestly requested to submit any doubtful items to censorship. <sup>154</sup>

The restriction on New Zealand court reporting drew protest from A. G. Henderson, <sup>155</sup> editor of the *Christchurch Star-Sun*, as unwarranted interference with the established rights of the press, representing the public. 'I do not believe', he wrote, 'that relations between New Zealanders and Americans are prejudiced by publication of evidence in the courts, but I am certain that relations are prejudiced by the widespread belief that American offenders escape virtually without punishment. As you know, a story that gets into circulation by word of mouth loses nothing in the telling and the only counter to exaggeration

is the publication of the truth.’ <sup>156</sup>

An *Observer* editorial remarked that some topics discussed overseas did not appear in New Zealand, which apparently ‘allows itself to be a convenient doormat for any autocratic jackboot that may come along’, hinted at fresh restrictions, and concluded: ‘Why mention the presence of **United States** forces at all? Now you see them, now you don’t. It’s dangerous to talk. And the public isn’t nearly as interested as it was.’ <sup>157</sup> This caused the Chief Naval Censor to wonder on 21 November whether censorship itself should not have been among the prohibited subjects.

Predictably, *Truth* strongly objected to the court curbing. ‘Since we are neither a subject people nor an enemy occupied country, and we are not [are we not] entitled to expect that our American allies will not invoke the power of censorship as a substitute for decent democratic measures of discipline and control of their servicemen and the inculcation of courtesy and consideration of our way of life’ <sup>158</sup> In December, when a magistrate dismissed two women who, after misconduct with Americans, sought separation and maintenance orders against their husbands, *Truth*’s headlines and details yielded little to the November restrictions: ‘Sick soldier returns to find wife gone crazy with American servicemen’ and ‘No help from this Court—Wives who “kick up heels” with US servicemen’, etc. <sup>159</sup>

Apart from protest and prosecution, the Chief Naval Censor was armed with ability to release news in favour of docile papers, a weapon probably more telling in the long run. Thus the *Auckland Star*, which had challenged censorship, complained that news was consistently given first to the *New Zealand Herald*. <sup>160</sup> It may have been this pressure which induced the *Star* to become ‘friendly and co-operative’ so that the year closed with gift giving and high cordiality. <sup>161</sup>

As the war moved north, and as from early 1944 the American tide ebbed in New Zealand, censorship tensions relaxed. An incident in March measured the gentler mood. The production of a play, ‘A Yank in **Remuera**’ by Professor Sewell of Auckland University, was amiably

postponed after tactful suggestions (stemming from the Solicitor-General through Paul, who both remained in the background) that if this play, presenting loose and irresponsible behaviour by American soldiers, reached the States, it would distress many parents who had lately lost sons at **Tarawa** and other places. <sup>162</sup>

While American authorities in New Zealand were perturbed by reports on the less admirable though quite inevitable aspects of their troops, and editors were irked by censorship with its blunting excisions and delays, New Zealand war correspondents and the Director of Publicity joined the editors in frustration over the limitations and delays that American security imposed on news about New Zealanders in the **Pacific**. In May 1944 the United States Command, in refusing to employ the **Royal New Zealand Air Force** north of the equator, spelled out clearly that New Zealand was not to acquire a claim to any say in the Marshall and Caroline islands after the war, <sup>163</sup> but some flattening of New Zealand's fighting role was discerned a good deal earlier. Doubtless this was caused by military expediency no less than political foresight: New Zealand's forces were too small on their own for anything but limited actions, and it was awkward to fit them in with other units. In July 1942 Ghormley had decided that as **America** had sufficient amphibious troops of its own, New Zealanders would garrison places already held or captured. <sup>164</sup> The government did not desire this sheltered role <sup>165</sup> and the public, unaware of Ghormley's decision, waited between fear and hope for the Third Division to 'get cracking'. It remained safe and silent in **New Caledonia** and **Tonga** and Norfolk Island till the latter part of 1943, and then was assigned only minor operations.

Meanwhile a more active part was being taken by the **RNZAF**, but correspondents had to clear their stories with American headquarters, and there was no gratifying harvest of quick-fire publicity. Much of the earlier work was by bomber-reconnaissance aircraft, scouting for ships and submarines, whose routine, monotonous, necessary vigilance was effectively described from time to time. <sup>166</sup> There were tributes to hard-working ground-crews, alert in both dust and mud, and praise from

Americans for reliability and navigation: occasionally these aircraft were attacked by the Japanese, and occasionally they bombed a submarine, but there was little to mention in communiqués and the chief enemy was boredom. Nor was it very exciting when the Minister of Defence on 16 December 1942 announced: 'This is an historical occasion.... I am at liberty to disclose that the R.N.Z.A.F. has taken a further forward step in the operational zone ... and has recently been engaged in active operations against the Japanese.'<sup>167</sup> New Zealand fighters and fighter bombers were active in the **Solomons** and shared for months in the regular attacks that wore down the great base **Rabaul** between mid-June 1943 and February 1944, destroying in all 99 Japanese aircraft.<sup>168</sup> Their 'bag', always important in air-war publicity, was given in sundry encounters, under such headings as 'Furious Dog-fights' or 'Rabaul Pounded', but these releases were isolated and, despite issues of praise by American admirals, New Zealanders had little general vision of the contribution some 15 000 of their total 55 000 airmen were making in the **Pacific**.<sup>169</sup>

Similarly, although New Zealand corvettes and minesweepers were active on patrol and convoy duty, and though there were reports on both their strikes and losses, their work was in the main silently accepted, and most of the public would have been surprised to hear that there were 5000 New Zealand navy men in the **Pacific**.<sup>170</sup>

In June 1943, New Zealand fighter aircraft claimed their first Zeros in several actions, on which some fairly meagre publicity was released, with comments from the Prime Minister, on 17 June. But a more detailed article and an interview, plus photograph, with four of these pilots on their return soon after to New Zealand, published in the *Auckland Star* of 22 and 24 June, which were not submitted to American censorship, brought severe rebuke<sup>171</sup> to the Director of Publicity. While admitting error, Paul pleaded almost wistfully that it was excellent publicity and that it was necessary to emphasise the exploits of our airmen, not omitting the glamour and thrills, in order to attract potential pilots to the **Air Force**, where recruits were all

volunteers. <sup>172</sup> He also gave several instances where reports of New Zealand activities in the South Pacific had emerged from headquarters censoring up to three months late and out of date. <sup>173</sup> It transpired that as the operational story behind the interview had already been passed by Censorship in **Noumea** further American censoring in New Zealand was not called for. <sup>174</sup>

The *Observer* hinted at newspaper gossip about this time in its attack on 'saw-dust Caesars whose morbid pleasure is to pollute the Well of Truth, by arbitrarily and unnecessarily prohibiting the publication of facts.... the prohibitions imposed by both American and New Zealand censors go beyond endurable limits. A case in point is the current hamstringing of the war correspondents in the South **Pacific**', who were said to be gnawing their nails. <sup>175</sup>

New Zealand's first ground action in the **Pacific** was cloaked in a lengthy news delay. At the end of August 1943 most of 3 NZ Division moved from **New Caledonia** to **Guadalcanal**, then on in mid-September to mopping-up work on **Vella Lavella** which American forces, by-passing heavily defended **Kolombangara**, had found lightly defended and had attacked successfully on 15 August. Vella Lavella was officially declared secure on 9 October, and the Japanese had evacuated **Kolombangara** by 6 October. Not till 13 October did a communiqué from Admiral Halsey authorise release of news 'that New Zealand forces in **Vella Lavella** have been in contact with the enemy and have played a major role in the taking of this island.' <sup>176</sup>

The *Dominion*'s editorial on 12 October had hoped that an adequate official news service from the headquarters of New Zealand's Pacific Division would not be long delayed, pointing out that the Prime Minister on 28 September had announced that New Zealand troops had moved to a 'forward area', but the move to the **Solomons** had already been told in letters home. 'It seemed extraordinary that the official announcement had to be delayed so long that private letters were ahead of it.' On 8 October, the Minister of Defence had made it known that New Zealand

troops had been in action against the Japanese, suffering certain casualties, after which the 'blanket descended again, and, up to the moment of writing, no further information is to hand. All that has been allowed to come direct to the public from **Guadalcanal** are a few descriptive accounts, most of them written some time ago, of special training for the move, together with details of the landing operations and complimentary references to our troops by Allied commanders. The public will expect much more than this, and, within reasonable considerations of security, much more should be given—and with much greater celerity. **Australia** is receiving a splendid official news service from New Guinea, a service which undoubtedly has stirred and inspired the public. The people of this country will look for similar enlightenment, and will not be satisfied with a series of colourless ministerial announcements, which by their brevity and ambiguity, are calculated to cause speculation and rumour.' <sup>177</sup>

Next day Nash hinted that this reticence was imposed by America: while the government was willing and anxious to let everyone know what our men were doing, the wishes of those in charge of the operations must be considered. <sup>178</sup> Later on the same day the Prime Minister announced Halsey's communiqué. The two subsequent actions by New Zealanders, in the **Treasury Islands** beginning on 27 October and in the **Green Islands** on 15 February 1944, were each announced within two or three days.

After the first month or so of 1944 it was clear to the man in the pub, the woman in the street, that the Americans were leaving. The retreat began from **Wellington**. Buildings were quickly diverted to other purposes, easing some acute pressures. Silverstream Hospital, vacated in April, received many of **Wellington's** long-term patients, who had been rusticated in **Otaki's** health camp. <sup>179</sup> The naval hospital at Avondale, whose architects had envisaged its future use as a school, was snatched for this use amid **Auckland's** mounting school population. <sup>180</sup> A rest camp at Western Springs became a transit housing settlement, desperately needed. <sup>181</sup> Six Rotorua guest houses reverted to normal use.



<sup>182</sup> Camps and stores, said the Commissioner of Defence Construction James Fletcher, were a reservoir of building materials for the houses demanded by queues of ex-servicemen and others. Camps were systematically demolished, beginning with **Paekakariki**, to provide quantities of re-planed seasoned timber, doors, plumbing fittings, roofing, piping and electrical wiring. Small huts could go to farmers, helping the production drive; large ones were moved to become warehouses, school halls and classrooms. <sup>183</sup> Some are still in service after 35 years.

Hotels, florists, milk bars, restaurants, jewellers and curio shops found business slack; the overtime bonanza ended; the sly grog trade and its associated evils declined; <sup>184</sup> civilians found cinema seats and taxis available. Many girls said, in effect, 'That was fun, but New Zealand boys are for real', though some would remember the golden years with the nostalgia of the long-gone; some treasured photographs, wrote letters, waited for mail. The 1396 brides waited for transport to the States, and some waited in vain. Most of the men were gone by mid-year, and the administration thinned out. Finally on 26 October 1944 over the last bastion, the naval base at Auckland, the American flag was lowered. The invasion was over.

v. r. ward, government printer, wellington, new zealand—1986

---

<sup>1</sup> See p. 330ff

<sup>2</sup> *Press*, 30 Jan 42

<sup>3</sup> *NZ Herald*, 29 Jan 42; See p. 334ff

<sup>4</sup> *Press*, 12 Feb 42, p. 5

<sup>5</sup> *Documents Relating to New Zealand's Participation in the Second World War* (hereinafter *Documents*), vol III, pp. 226–7



<sup>6</sup> Wood, p. 225

<sup>7</sup> *Documents*, vol III, p. 235

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 242–5. This last factor was lessened by a press censorship direction on 8 April to treat the Australian return quietly. Wood, p. 225

<sup>9</sup> *Documents*, vol III, p. 249

<sup>10</sup> *Auckland Star*, 11 Mar 42, by J. C. H.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Apr 42, p. 3; WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap 7, pp. 6–7

<sup>12</sup> *Evening Post*, 5 May 43, p. 4

<sup>13</sup> War History Narrative, 'Americans in New Zealand', p. 5

<sup>14</sup> Wood, p. 243; *Documents*, vol III, pp. 261–2

<sup>15</sup> *NZ Listener*, 29 May 42, p. 4

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap VII, p. 5

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1

<sup>19</sup> *NZ Herald*, 13 Jun 42, p. 6

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Jun 42, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 8 Sep 42, p. 4

<sup>21</sup> *Evening Post*, 9 Sep 42, p. 4; *Dominion*, 22 Jun 42, p. 2

<sup>22</sup> *Evening Post*, 19 Jun 42, p. 6

<sup>23</sup> The Waldorf, then closed because of labour and other shortages, on the site of the present Manners Street post office.

<sup>24</sup> It was drafted by Dr J. C. Beaglehole, at that time Historical Adviser to the Department of Internal Affairs.

<sup>25</sup> WHN, 'Americans in New Zealand', p. 8. Stemming from *Meet New Zealand*, Internal Affairs produced a more ambitious, well-illustrated book, *Introduction to New Zealand*, directed towards middle-brow Americans in general rather than the GI. Many chapters were contributed by experts, the whole edited by Dr Beaglehole and decorated with drawings by the artists Mervyn Taylor and George Woods. It was drafted during 1943, but as printing staff was severely depleted it was not finally issued till 1945. Meanwhile in 1944 F. L. W. Wood's *Understanding New Zealand*, a lively discussion angled towards American enlightenment, had been published in **New York**.

<sup>26</sup> The *Auckland Star* on 1 Sep remarked that when our political leaders were abroad their published utterances were often more informative and interesting than when they were at home.

<sup>27</sup> *Dominion*, 7 Sep 42, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 8 Sep 42, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 9 Sep 42, p. 5; *Evening Post*, 7, 9, 11 Sep 42, pp. 4, 4, 4

<sup>28</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap VII, p. 7

<sup>29</sup> Stimson, Henry Lewis (1867–1950): US Sec War 1911–13, 1940–5; Sec State 1929–33

<sup>30</sup> See p. 649

- <sup>31</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap VII, pp. 10–11
- <sup>32</sup> *NZ Herald*, 2 Dec 42, pp. 2, 4; *Press*, 5 Dec 42, p. 4
- <sup>33</sup> WHN, 'Americans in New Zealand', pp. 9–10
- <sup>34</sup> *Star–Sun*, 8 Jan 43, p. 4; *Evening Star*, 21 Jun 43, p. 2; *Otago Daily Times*, 16 Jul 43, p. 2
- <sup>35</sup> King, Michael, *Te Puea, a biography*, pp. 212–14
- <sup>36</sup> *Truth*, 26 May 43, p. 17; *NZ Herald*, 16 Nov, 2, 5, 19 Dec 42, pp. 2, 2, 8, 6; *Observer*, 20 Jan 43, p. 15; *Dominion*, 6 Mar 43, p. 6; *Evening Post*, 4 Mar 43, p. 3
- <sup>37</sup> *NZ Listener*, 19 Jun 42, p. 9
- <sup>38</sup> WHN, 'Americans in New Zealand', p. 4
- <sup>39</sup> *Auckland Star*, 25 May 43, p. 2
- <sup>40</sup> *Evening Post*, 11 May, 5 Jun 43, pp. 3, 4
- <sup>41</sup> *Dominion*, 11, 16, 23, 27 Sep, 22 Oct 43, pp. 6, 4, 6, 4, 4
- <sup>42</sup> *NZ Herald*, 18, 29 Apr 42, pp. 7, 2
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 26 May 42, pp. 6, 2
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Jul 42, p. 2
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Nov 42, p. 6

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 May 43, p. 2

<sup>47</sup> *Auckland Star*, 21 Apr 43, p. 2

<sup>48</sup> *NZ Herald*, 3 Jun 42, p. 2

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Dec 42, p. 4

<sup>50</sup> *Dominion*, 19 Jan 43, p. 4; *Evening Post*, 23 Dec 42, p. 3

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Oct 42, p. 4

<sup>52</sup> *Evening Post*, 25 Feb 43, p. 4

<sup>53</sup> *Auckland Star*, 20 Aug 42, p. 4; *Dominion*, 10 Dec 42, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 14 Dec 42, p. 2; Norman B. Harvey's story *Any Old Dollars*, Mister tells of Yank-hunting by tough but still likeable 1 1-year-olds.

<sup>54</sup> *Evening Post*, 20 May 43, p. 6

<sup>55</sup> Scholefield, Diary, 14 Jul 42; *NZ Herald*, 17 Dec 42, p. 2; *Evening Post*, 8, 11 Sep 42, pp. 4, 3

<sup>56</sup> *Auckland Star*, 5 Jul 44, p. 4

<sup>57</sup> *Evening Post*, 9, 10, 11 Aug 43, pp. 3, 3, 3; *NZ Observer*, 18 Aug 43, p. 9; *Dominion*, 22 Oct 43, p. 4

<sup>58</sup> See pp. 1035, 1049

<sup>59</sup> *Auckland Star*, 26 Oct 43, p. 2

**60** *Ibid.*, 9 Oct 43, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 16 Jul 43, p. 2

**61** *Dominion*, 15 Jan 43, p. 4

**62** The song 'Give me one dozen roses, Put my heart in beside them...' was current.

**63** *Auckland Star*, 8 Aug 44, p. 6

**64** WHN, 'Americans in New Zealand', p. 4

**65** For example, Hon J. Cumming MLC (1941–52) on 25 February 1943: 'A lot of our people do not seem to "cotton on" to the American servicemen here; they think that we should have our own soldiers back here and that the other fellows should be sent over to take their place. We know that at the present moment that cannot be done.' *NZPD*, vol 262, p. 22

**66** *Auckland Star*, 26 Feb 43

**67** *Ibid.*, p. 2

**68** *Ibid.*, 27 Feb 43, p. 4

**69** *Ibid.*, 1 Mar 43, p. 2

**70** *Ibid.*

**71** *Ibid.*, 3 Mar 43, p. 2

**72** *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Mar 43, p. 2

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 Mar 43, p. 2

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *NZPD*, vol 262, pp. 221–2

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235

<sup>79</sup> Welles, Sumner (1892–1961): Sec US Embassy Tokyo 1915–17; other diplomatic posts to 1933; Asst Sec State 1933–7, Under-Sec State 1937–43; special rep President to report on conditions **Europe** 1940; State Dept rep American Red Cross 1941; accompanied Roosevelt Atlantic Charter meeting 1941

<sup>80</sup> *NZPD*, vol 262, pp. 321–3

<sup>81</sup> *Evening Post*, 7 Apr 43, p. 3

<sup>82</sup> *A to J*1945, H-45, p. 6 (Report of Waterfront Control Commission); See p. 442ff

<sup>83</sup> At Wellington for more than a year American Marines loaded and discharged American ships. The main body of Marines left late in 1943 and from early 1944 **United States** vessels were worked smoothly by civilians. *A to J* 1945, H-45, p. 8

<sup>84</sup> *WHN*, ‘The Waterfront’, pp. 200–1, 206–7

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 206–7; *Standard*, 21 Oct 43, p. 6; *Dominion*, 2 Apr

**43, p. 6, 11 Jan 44, p. 4**

**<sup>86</sup> *Standard*, 21 Oct 43, p. 6; see also p. 437**

**<sup>87</sup> *NZ Herald*, 15 Oct 43, p. 4**

**<sup>88</sup> *Dominion*, 14 Oct 43, p. 4; *Auckland Star*, 14 Oct 43, p. 6; *NZ Herald*, 15 Oct 43, p. 4**

**<sup>89</sup> *Baker*, p. 478**

**<sup>90</sup> *Dominion*, 11 Jan 44, p. 4**

**<sup>91</sup> WHN, 'Waterfront Control Commission', pp. 208–10**

**<sup>92</sup> *Auckland Star*, 15 Oct 43, p. 6; *Dominion*, 14 Oct 43, p. 4; *NZ Herald*, 15, 18 Oct 43, pp. 4, 4**

**<sup>93</sup> *Dominion*, 11 Jan 44, p. 4**

**<sup>94</sup> *Baker*, p. 478**

**<sup>95</sup> *Auckland Star*, 17 Apr 44, p. 5; Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 15 Apr 44, PM 25/2/3**

**<sup>96</sup> Article dated 3 Mar 44 and related correspondence, PM 25/2/3**

**<sup>97</sup> See p. 737**

**<sup>98</sup> *Auckland Star*, 20 Aug 45, p. 4**

**<sup>99</sup> *Evening Post*, 8 Dec 42, p. 3**



**100** The Marine private's basic pay was \$50 a month, increased by 20% on foreign service, so in New Zealand it was \$60, ie £18 5 s, whereas a New Zealand private, at 7 s 6 d a day, drew £10 10 s in four weeks. The American system of badges and bonuses for merit in training courses considerably improved the pay of the more expert. *Evening Post*, 5 May 43, p. 5

**101** *Evening Post*, 14 Jun 43, p. 4

**102** *Craccum*, 28 Jul 43

**103** *NZ Observer*, 17 Mar 43, p. 4

**104** *Ibid.*, 4 Aug 43, p. 9

**105** *Yearbook*, 1947–49, p. 56

**106** Planters Peanuts and Camel cigarettes sent in some **Middle East** parcels were often enjoyed without qualm.

**107** *Evening Post*, 10 Apr 43, p. 4; cf p. 1014

**108** *NZ Herald*, 11 Dec 42, p. 4

**109** *Evening Post*, 9 Apr 43, p. 3

**110** *NZ Observer*, 17 Feb 43, p. 12

**111** eg, *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, A. H. McLintock (ed), vol III, p. 87, gives an eye witness account of 'the ugliest riot in New Zealand history', a battle lasting four hours with more than 1000 US and local troops plus civilians involved, two Americans killed and many injured, all starting from Southern Marines refusing to let Maori servicemen drink at the Allied Services

club. It should be noted that Service clubs did not serve liquor. Moreover, a more recent account, based on Army records in the **National Archives**, denies Maori involvement. A few merchant seamen, drunk and bent on 'cleaning up' visiting servicemen, began a series of fights in which American marines and sailors, local servicemen and seamen tangled, without deaths or serious injuries. *Evening Post*, 31 Dec 83, p. 6

<sup>112</sup> A young man was fined £2 for being drunk and disorderly; he had incited a crowd in Cuba Street about 11.20 pm on Saturday 3 April 'when a large crowd had congregated and there was trouble with members of the armed forces.' *Ibid.*, 5 Apr 43, p. 3. This was obviously after the main 'action'.

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*, 10 Apr 43, p. 3. This report appeared in most papers.

<sup>114</sup> *NZ Herald*, 10 Apr 42

<sup>115</sup> Author's note of interview with Sergeant Franklyn, PRO Police HQ, 7 Sep 73

<sup>116</sup> *Evening Post*, 27 Apr 43, p. 3

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 May 43, p. 3

<sup>118</sup> *Evening Post*, 22 Jun 43, p. 3

<sup>119</sup> *Auckland Star*, 2 Nov 43, p. 4

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 May 44, p. 6

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 May 44, p. 6

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May, 2, 3 Jun 44, pp. 4, 4, 4

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 May 44, p. 4

<sup>124</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap 7, p. 2, quoting Ghormley's memorandum

<sup>125</sup> As the Solicitor-General later reminded the Director of Publicity 'The United States censor has no status as such in New Zealand. You can, if you choose, appoint him or nominate him as a person acting on your behalf.' Solicitor-Gen to Dir Publicity, 29 Oct 43, PM 25/2/2

<sup>126</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap VII, p. 4, quoting Dir Publicity to US Naval Attaché, 26 Jun 42

<sup>127</sup> See p. 624

<sup>128</sup> See pp. 621– 2

<sup>129</sup> See p. 627

<sup>130</sup> See p. 628

<sup>131</sup> Paul Papers, Box 413

<sup>132</sup> WHN, 'Censorship of the Press', chap VII, pp. 8–9

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11. A year later, in November 1943, another assistant naval censor was appointed, at **Dunedin**.

<sup>134</sup> Commander South Pacific to CO Naval Operations Base, **Auckland**, 11 Jun 43, PM 25/2/2

<sup>135</sup> *NZ Herald*, 27 Nov, 5, 26 Dec 42, pp. 5, 4, 7

- 136** Dir Publicity, memo to editors, 21 Jun 43, PM 25/2/2
- 137** Dir Publicity to Solicitor-Gen, 6 Jul 43, *ibid.*
- 138** US Naval Attaché to CO Naval Operations Base, Auck, 28 Jun 43, *ibid.*
- 139** *NZ Herald*, 21 Jun 43, pp. 2, 4
- 140** *Auckland Star*, 18 Jun 43, p. 1
- 141** This clause was in the original public safety regulations of 1939, omitted in the revised version of February 1940 (1940/26) and reinstated on 4 March 1942 (1942/53)
- 142** *Auckland Star*, 9 Mar 43, p. 4
- 143** Chief Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 10 Mar 43, PM 25/2/2
- 144** Dir Publicity to Chief Naval Censor, 24 Mar 43, *ibid.*
- 145** *Truth*, 2 Jun 43, p. 2
- 146** Chief Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 7 Jun 43, PM 25/2/2
- 147** Dir Publicity to US Naval Attaché, 11 Jun 43, *ibid.*
- 148** Chief Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 19 Jun 43, *ibid.*
- 149** **Bell, Robert Brown** (1888–1969): 50 years' newspaper work including parliamentary press gallery, advertising mngr *Dominion*, Managing Dir *Ashburton Guardian*, *Timaru Post*, Editor/Managing Dir *New Zealand Observer*, delegate to 4th

**Imperial Press Conf, London 1930, exec member NZ Newspaper Proprietors' Assn 1927–30; exec member NZRSA 1919–25, Cnty provincial Pres 1922–5; Pres Sth Cnty Chamber Commerce 1926–7**

**150 NZ Observer, 2 Jun 43, p. 5**

**151 Chief Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 10 Jun 43, PM 25/2/2**

**152 NZ Herald, 9, 16 Dec 43, pp. 2, 7; NZ Observer, 27 Oct 43, p. 4**

**153 Chief Naval Censor to J. T. Paul, 24 Dec 43, PM 25/2/3**

**154 Dir Publicity, memo to editors, 3 Nov 43, PM 25/2/3**

**155 Henderson, Alexander Gunn (1875–1960): journalist/editor: chmn NZPA 1929–30; Editor Christchurch Star–Sun 1935–45**

**156 Editor, Star–Sun to Dir Publicity, 4 Nov 43 (copy), PM 25/2/3**

**157 NZ Observer, 17 Nov 43, p. 4**

**158 Editor, Truth to Dir Publicity (copy), 30 Nov 43, PM 25/2/3**

**159 Truth, 8, 22 Dec 43, pp. 13, 5**

**160 Dir Publicity, note for record, 5 May 43, PM 25/2/2**

**161 Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 8 Dec 43, Chief Reporter, Auckland Star to Naval Censor, 24 Dec 43, PM 25/2/3**

**162** Dir Publicity to Naval Censor, 28 Mar, and reply 1 Apr 44, *ibid.*

**163** Lissington, P. M., *New Zealand and the United States 1840–1944*, p. 69

**164** *Documents*, vol III, p. 351

**165** ‘... it would be neither wise nor proper to allow the offensive against the Japanese in the South Pacific to be conducted entirely by Americans without substantial British collaboration,’ wrote Fraser on 4 December 1942 (*ibid.*, vol II, p. 148), and on 7 May 1943, ‘I believe it to be of the greatest political importance that when the time comes to start offensive operations against **Japan**, the British elements in the **United Nations**’ forces in the **Pacific** should be as strong as possible.’ (*ibid.*, p. 196) Again, on 18 March 1943 he told Parliament: ‘It is important that our voice will carry weight both now and in the future as far as the **Pacific** is concerned, and that we should win the right to be heard with respect. We cannot do that if we scuttle out of our responsibilities in the **Pacific**.’ *NZPD*, vol 262, p. 496

**166** eg, *NZ Herald*, 7 Dec 42, p. 2, 12 Jan 43, p. 5; *Wanganui Herald*, 9 Dec 42, p. 5; *Star–Sun*, 14 Apr 43, p.-5; *Evening Post*, 8 May 43, p. 6; *Dominion*, 5 Feb 44, p. 6. These reports have been noticed in several papers at about these dates

**167** *Evening Post*, 17 Dec 42, p. 5

**168** *Kay, Chronology*, p. 96

**169** Ross, Squadron-Leader J. M. S., *Royal New Zealand Air Force*, p. vii

**170** Gillespie, O. A., *The Pacific*, p. 110

**171 Chief Naval Censor to Dir Publicity, 24 Jun 43, CO US Naval Base, Auck, to Dir Publicity, 27 Jun 43, PM 25/2/3**

**172 Dir Publicity to Chief Naval Censor, 25 Jun 43, *ibid.***

**173 Dir Publicity to CO US Naval Base, Auck, 7 Jul 43, *ibid.***

**174 Memo, Lt F. E. Taplin to Naval Attaché, [Wellington](#), 6 Jul 43, *ibid.***

**175 *NZ Observer*, 7 Jul 43, p. 5**

**176 *Evening Post*, 13 Oct 43, p. 6**

**177 *Dominion*, 12 Oct 43**

**178 *Ibid.*, 13 Oct 43, p. 4**

**179 *Ibid.*, 17 Apr 44, p. 4**

**180 *Auckland Star*, 8 Jun 44, p. 4**

**181 *Ibid.*, 26 Jun 44, p. 6**

**182 *Ibid.*, 20 Jun 44, p. 6**

**183 *Ibid.*, 27 May, 2, 26 Jun 44, pp. 6, 6, 2**

**184 *NZ Herald*, 17 Apr 44, p. 2**

---