

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

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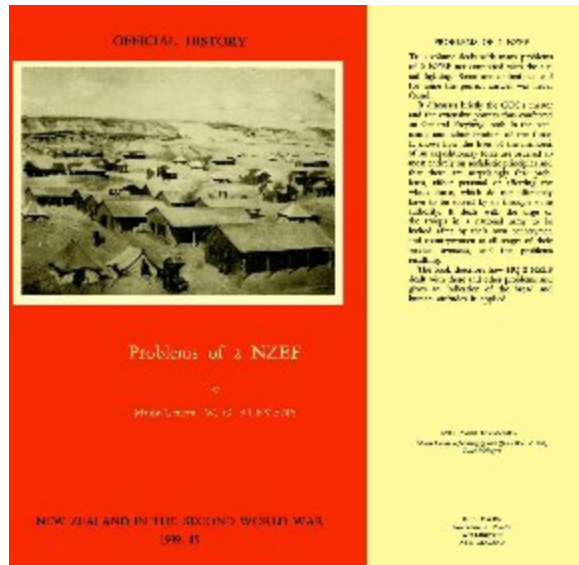
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Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg (right) and Brigadier W. G. Stevens in the Senio River area just before the final offensive

Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg (right) and Brigadier W. G. Stevens in the Senio River area just before the final offensive

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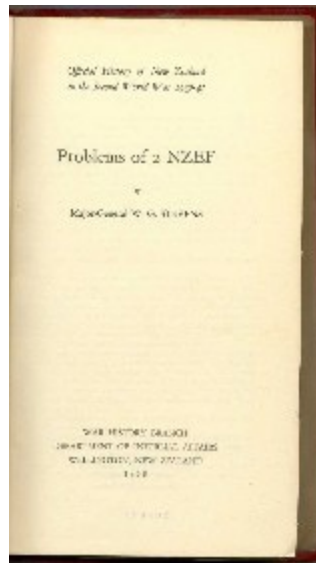
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Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-45

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PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[TITLE PAGE]



Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-45
Problems of 2 NZEF

Major-General W. G. STEVENS

WAR HISTORY BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

1958

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PREFACE

Preface

THIS volume differs from other volumes covering the history of 2 NZEF in the Mediterranean. First it deals with general administration, with no reference to any individual formation, unit or corps. Secondly, the author was intimately concerned with the subject matter of the volume, and is thus to some degree under post-war review himself.

Unfortunately I never kept a diary; but during 1945 I jotted down notes on various difficult or controversial points that had arisen in 2 NZEF in the earlier years. These were then elaborated as a result of conversations with other members of 2 NZEF, in particular when it appeared likely that some of us might be helping to form an expeditionary force for operations against Japan. By the time I returned to New Zealand in 1946 I had collected sufficient material to form an extensive precis; and it is mainly on that precis that this volume is based.

The volume is thus largely a personal report, despite its apparent anonymity.

However, I owe a great deal to the War History Branch, and in particular to the late Major-General Sir Howard Kippenberger, who at all times kept me on an even keel. The Branch in general answered many queries, and hunted out a mass of old papers and files, including the War Diaries of HQ 2 NZEF. I found these last most helpful, particularly those dealing with the early period when Headquarters was establishing itself. The compiler at that time was Captain A. C. Highet, and to him retrospectively I owe a lot.

Many people, too many to mention in detail, willingly answered questions on odd points, and others made helpful criticisms on various

parts of the draft volume. Major-General W. G. Gentry and Colonel A. S. Muir read the whole volume in draft and made extensive and helpful criticisms, so continuing into peace the invaluable advice and assistance they gave me during the war. To all I tender my grateful thanks.

The introductory chapter gives an outline of the volume, and explains the method followed.

On 22 November 1939 I was in the Savoy Hotel in **London** and was the first person to greet **Major-General Freyberg** when he came out of Mr Fraser's office, having just been offered and having just accepted the appointment of GOC. Six years later to the day I had the honour of proposing his health when he left us in **Florence**. It was a long association, and to say that it was an unforgettable one for me is an understatement. I could not have had a more considerate or lovable chief, one who was always so appreciative of what we tried to do for him, one who never said a harsh word. It was an honour and a privilege to serve him. This volume will show one aspect of the work of **2 NZEF**—an aspect in which the GOC's influence was as marked as elsewhere.

The work of HQ **2 NZEF** was intended, however indifferently, to make smooth the path of the field troops. For the ordinary New Zealand fighting soldiers I have an unbounded admiration. It was an honour to give them what assistance we could, even if only from the back rooms.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

THE intention of this volume is to discuss the administration of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force while overseas in sufficient detail to set out our problems and record our lessons, and in the hope that the lessons may be of some value for the future.

There is no glory in this volume, nothing to stir the blood. It deals with administration only and not with battles in the field. There are no references to operations, except in so far as these influenced the layout of the Expeditionary Force, or modified the activities of the administrative headquarters and of the base and line-of-communication units. The volume is not a history of the force, nor yet a treatise on military administration. It is an attempt to record the many non-operational problems that arose in a small national army, to show the way in which these problems were handled, and in some cases to suggest that the solutions we found were either right or wrong. In many cases, however, the pros and cons are set out as we saw them at the time, and the solution is left for the reader to find.

In discussing our problems it is inevitable that there should be mention of our mistakes, for it would be impossible to maintain that everything we did was correct.

Although the distinction should become clear early in the volume, it is perhaps advisable to say at this stage that the text deals with the activities of the Expeditionary Force as a whole, and not with those of **2 New Zealand Division alone. The Division was of course part of the force, indeed the greater part; but there was a part outside the Division, and the problems discussed herein affected both parts equally. Moreover there were many problems, such as some of those arising from our relations with British General Headquarters, or with the Government in**

New Zealand, that were independent of the activities of the Division alone. The Division had many problems of its own; but in the main these were the result of operations and are not touched on here. The custom grew up, especially in New Zealand, of alluding to the force in the **Mediterranean** as 'the Second Division'; but strictly speaking this was not correct. Its title was 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force, or **2 NZEF** for short.

It has been mentioned above that this is not a treatise on military administration. Neither is it an analysis of the soundness or otherwise of Field Service Regulations as they were from 1939 to 1945. On the whole the manuals stood the test of war, with such modifications as were made as the result of campaign lessons. The New Zealand Expeditionary Force was only one small part of the armies of the Commonwealth, and we accepted the basic principles of administration as decided in the War Office in **London**. We often made suggestions for improvement, sometimes were critical, and even frank in our criticism; but it was not within our powers to make changes in regulations that applied to all the armies that accepted British guidance.

The matters discussed here are those that came within the powers of New Zealand authorities to change or abolish at their will. Some came within the powers of the General Officer Commanding; others had to be referred to Army Headquarters or to the Government. All were New Zealand's business alone, and it rested with New Zealand to make such changes as were thought advisable.

The problems arose from the activities of a small national force – and here it should be remembered that the Expeditionary Force was only a temporary army, assembled for a special purpose. During the war it was hard to realise that militarily we had only an ephemeral existence, which would end with the end of the war. The force was a short-lived one, and its problems and their solutions must be considered in that light.

The problems and difficulties mentioned in this volume are those

which in one way or another came to be dealt with by the headquarters of the Expeditionary Force. All units, all services, all controlling authorities in the force – medical, pay, chaplains, public relations and so on – had troubles of their own in abundance; but the majority of these were smoothed out on their own level, so to speak, and never became true ‘NZEF’ problems. To take one example out of many – it will be found that there is little reference here to rations. Once it had been agreed that New Zealand forces would accept the normal British ration – a decision that had to be taken on Governmental level – future troubles were on the level of the service concerned, in this case the Army Service Corps. The ration never became a problem for the headquarters of the force and so hardly figures in the volume.

We tried to settle our problems overseas and not refer them to New Zealand. Sometimes the New Zealand authorities were a little, or more than a little, aghast at what we had done on our own authority; but on the whole they accepted our action without cavilling at it. Naturally our judgment improved as time went on. If one is so inclined, it is possible to obtain some cynical amusement from the serious way with which in 1940 we handled ‘problems’ that by 1945 we would have considered trivialities.

Most of the problems discussed herein were long-term ones. They emerged gradually, fluctuated in intensity, and persisted for long periods, even for the whole of the war. The decisions we took were not ‘snap’ ones – in fact it often took us a long time, including a period of trial and error, before we arrived at an answer, which in the end would be only the best answer we could find and not necessarily the perfect one. In these circumstances exact dates are of little importance, which will serve to explain the frequent use of such expressions as ‘in early 1941’ or ‘towards the end of 1944’.

The word ‘problem’ will occur with monotonous frequency in this volume, leading readers to think that all our lives at the headquarters of the Expeditionary Force were spent in competing with such things, or wrestling with an unending series of difficulties. It is perhaps

unfortunate after all that the volume is not a detailed history of the force; for if that were so it would be seen that most of our time was spent on day-to-day administration with no special difficulties, that everyone was carrying on steadily with normal work, and that there was from first to last between all concerned, whether in the force or outside it, what General Mark Clark calls 'the routine of friendly collaboration'.

¹ Perhaps the greatest lesson to be learnt from our experience is one that does not appear specifically elsewhere in the volume – that given a sense of unity and devotion to a common cause, there is no problem arising within a small national force that cannot be solved in amity.

The words 'New Zealand' are often used in the volume in a somewhat loose sense, not as referring to the geographical entity which is New Zealand, but to the authority in the country which at the moment was dealing with the problem under discussion and which might be either the Government or Army Headquarters.

It is realised that some of the points that are mentioned as creating problems have already been noted by the appropriate authorities, and have either been remedied in the years since the end of the war or have been marked down for future action; but this volume is a record of things as they were at the time and is unaffected by what has happened since.

In [Appendix I](#) will be found the Order of Battle of the Expeditionary Force as on 17 April 1941. At a later stage this will be analysed in some detail. At the moment attention must be drawn to the date of compilation, which was when the First Echelon had been overseas for a little over a year, and the Third Echelon for a little over six months. It will be seen that in addition to the units of the Division, shown in Serials 21 to 114, there were already a number of [2 NZEF](#) units, shown in Serials 1 to 15, a number of non-divisional units, shown in Serials 123 to 147, and a number of base and training units, shown in Serials 151 to 205. During the war there were changes in all groups of units, as will be seen by referring to [Appendix II](#), the Order of Battle as on 9 May

1945; but the separation into 2 NZEF, divisional, non-divisional, and base and training units persisted throughout the war.

It will thus be seen that to maintain the Division in the field as the spearhead of the Expeditionary Force required the services of many other units. One of the tendencies that will often be referred to in these pages will be the increasing desire of New Zealanders to be supported by other New Zealanders. As the war went on, so did more and more units spring up, all with the purpose of 'servicing' the fighting portion of the force. At the beginning we relied on the facilities provided by the **United Kingdom**. For a while in 1940, for instance, we did not even have a hospital of our own. At the end of the war we were nearly self-contained, and what is more, liked being self-contained. It has never been appreciated to what extent the fighting troops of the Division were maintained by their own countrymen in North Africa, and even more so in **Italy**.

There was a period, in late 1941, when there were as many troops outside the Division as inside it, i.e., the Division was only half the total force. For the greater part of the war, however, for every three men in the Division there were two outside it, i.e., the Division was three-fifths of the force. The Expeditionary Force as a whole reached a maximum in late 1941 with some 36,000 all ranks; but for most of the war it was about 32,000. A total of 76,000 all ranks passed through the force in its six years overseas.

To deal properly with the subject of this volume it is necessary to record a certain amount of history. In **Part I** therefore (

6) there will be found a brief narrative of the events from 1939 to 1946, including references to many problems. Part II (

17) sets out and discusses our main problems in more detail. There is inevitably some small amount of duplication, in that problems are often mentioned in [Part I](#) and later analysed in [Part II](#).

The last

chapter (18) attempts to summarise our lessons or conclusions.

As few abbreviations are used as is possible. Some names occur so often that it would be waste of space to spell them out in full every time. Such are 'Headquarters 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force' which figures as **HQ 2 NZEF**, and 'Headquarters 2nd New Zealand Division' which figures as **HQ 2 NZ Division** or **Divisional Headquarters**. A word of explanation may be given at this early point about the use of 'GHQ', meaning 'General Headquarters'. While we were in North Africa and **Syria** the supreme command was exercised by General Headquarters, Middle East Forces. In Italy the supreme command was exercised by General Headquarters, Central Mediterranean Force. The abbreviation 'GHQ' is used for whichever headquarters was controlling us at the time. If a differentiation is required, the abbreviations 'MEF' or 'CMF' are used in addition.

The word 'British' is confusing. It is not proposed here to attempt to analyse its exact meaning, which varies with the context. In some ways New Zealanders like to think of themselves as 'British' and of the Expeditionary Force as forming part of the 'British' forces; but on the other hand the term 'the British Army' has a meaning which implies troops from the **United Kingdom** only, or these troops together with colonial troops which are the financial responsibility of the **United Kingdom**. In the eyes of most foreigners, including Americans, the term 'British' implies someone from the **United Kingdom**. While in fact the term was seldom used in official parlance, it is employed in this volume partly as a measure of convenience to imply troops from the **United Kingdom**, or a headquarters staffed in the main with **United Kingdom** officers. The government of the country, however, is referred to as the **United Kingdom Government**, and not the **British Government**.

Throughout the volume the word 'we' is used repeatedly. Generally it means **HQ 2 NZEF**, from the standpoint of which the volume is written. Sometimes, however, it means New Zealanders as a body. It is hoped that the context will make it clear which meaning should be taken.

Lastly, it would be pointless to ignore the fact that the author was associated with HQ 2 NZEF throughout the war. It is hoped, however, that his personal views have been subordinated to the views of the force as a whole or to the realities of the situation.

¹ *Calculated Risk*, p. 405.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PART I

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PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 1 – 2 NZEF IS FORMED

CHAPTER 1

2 NZEF is Formed

THE depression of 1931, as was only to be expected, produced a severe curtailment in defence expenditure in New Zealand. The years immediately preceding – 1924 to 1930 – had luckily been fruitful ones, and had been marked by the sending to England of a comparatively large number of regular officers to attend courses of every kind, both general and specialised. At one point 10 per cent of regular officers were training in England. The training thus received was disseminated throughout the forces and, combined with the patriotic self-sacrifice of Territorial officers, served to keep the army alive during the years from 1931 onwards, but only just alive. The abolition of the compulsory training scheme, the reductions in staff, and the disfavour into which all things military fell, meant that nothing productive could be done, and that the machinery to run an army almost ceased to exist.

This state of affairs lasted for three or four years. The principal loss was that there was little or no chance for any constructive thinking, and for the planning that is required if ever it is likely that an expeditionary force will be despatched overseas. It is surprisingly hard to convince a government that planning is a necessity, and that the visible mobilisation of units is only the culminating point of many years of invisible planning. The lack of opportunity for constructive work was the most regrettable feature of the lean years.

However, by 1934 the international outlook was becoming steadily darker and this produced a slight improvement in the way in which the army was regarded. The army staff was able to take the first elementary steps towards planning for mobilisation. A beginning was made with inter-departmental consultations on such subjects as manpower, internal security and censorship, and the first draft of regulations for mobilisation was put together. It soon became clear that with the ever-increasing complexity of modern war it would be impossible for the army to go far until there was some degree of planning on a national scale,

and moreover that it would be impossible for the army to carry the whole load of preparing plans for the large number of government departments that would be involved. To start with there were not enough regular officers available; and, more important, the army was only one department among many and could not prescribe to other departments what they should do. Some slight degree of direction was received from the Government in late 1934. Army Headquarters was given a nebulous authority over other departments for war preparations, and consultation with other departments was increased; but it was still rather half-hearted.

In 1935 there was a change of government, the Labour Party coming into power. Expenditure on defence was against its past policy; but the Government showed considerable realism as the international situation deteriorated. During the years from 1936 onwards the air force was separated from the army and formed as a self-contained force under the guidance of an officer of the Royal Air Force. The army was given some small degree of encouragement and a little more money, although for the moment the air force was the favourite child; and, what was of importance to all arms and to the wider aspects of national readiness for war, an organisation was created similar to the Committee of Imperial Defence in Great Britain. In early 1937 the secretariat of this 'Organisation for National Security', as it was called, was set up in the Prime Minister's Department, where it was well placed to deal with the mass of departments whose activities in one way or another would concern the nation in time of war.

The activities of the Organisation for National Security are outside the scope of this volume; but among other work the formation of a strong inter-departmental Manpower Committee helped the army by devising a scheme whereby under compulsory service the calling-up procedure was the task of a civilian department, the army only receiving the men after such things as medical examinations and appeals were finished. There were other committees which not only helped the army directly but also served to impress on many departments that national

war was not just the task of the armed forces, and that those forces would need a great deal of help and co-operation.

Despite all the work that was done at great speed from 1936 onwards, the army was not so ready for war in 1939 as it had been in 1914, always making allowances for changed circumstances. It is easy to destroy, and the lean years had almost destroyed the army; but it is a slow business to reconstruct, and the three or four years before the war were not enough.

Part of the work of the Organisation for National Security was to keep in touch with those branches of the United Kingdom Government that were concerned with planning for war, and in particular with the Dominions Office,¹ through whose hands there passed the official communications between the governments of the **United Kingdom** and **New Zealand**. The **New Zealand Government**

¹ Now Commonwealth Relations Office.

was kept informed as a matter of normal procedure of the proceedings of all international conferences, discussions and conversations, and of all events of interest, either by periodic (and frequent) printed bulletins, or by day-to-day cables. There was thus in principle nothing different in the procedure in 1938 and 1939 from that in previous years; but the frequency and urgency of the communications gradually intensified until in the weeks preceding 3 September 1939 cables were arriving throughout the twenty-four hours at intervals that became progressively shorter. Such information contained in these cables as was the concern of other government departments was duly passed to them by the Organisation for National Security.

All members of Cabinet were assembled in **Wellington** in the beginning of September, and Cabinet was in effect in permanent session from the 1st onwards. The period of waiting for fateful news was a strain, not eased on the morning of 3 September by an irritable

argument concerning the exact New Zealand equivalent of 11 a.m. summer time in England. However, the right answer was discovered, and New Zealand entered the war at the same time as the **United Kingdom**, namely 9.30 p.m. local time.

Cabinet was in session from early on the evening of 3 September until dawn on the following day, passing emergency regulations to cover the action necessary in moving from peace to war, and among other messages informing the United Kingdom Government that New Zealand would be glad to receive suggestions regarding the methods by which she could best assist the common cause. The reply from the United Kingdom Government, received a few days later, while in some ways a diffident one, included the words, 'We therefore hope that New Zealand will be able to exert her full national effort, including the preparation of her forces with a view to the despatch of an expeditionary force'.¹ The New Zealand Government then indicated to the **United Kingdom** that it proposed to enlist a volunteer force for service in any part of the world, the First Echelon – so called – comprising about one-third of a division, plus certain additional units, to be taken into camp at an early date.

It will be noted that the term 'echelon' was used for this first portion of the Division, and was in due course applied to the other portions, which became known as the second and third echelons. The term, in its meaning of successive waves, had some background and appeared quite suitable. When the force went overseas, however, some confusion was caused by the fact that the extensive and important office concerned with all forms of record, including casualties, was known as 'Second Echelon'. This unit was a permanency, the name was in accordance with normal British military

¹ *Documents*, Vol. I, p. 18.

procedure, and it was desirable that the name should be retained. Towards the middle of 1940, when preparations were being made in Egypt for the reception of the Second Echelon of the Expeditionary

Force, i.e., the second contingent to sail, an attempt was made by headquarters overseas to abolish the term for the drafts coming from New Zealand and to use the term 'contingent' instead. However, the attempt was a failure, and we had to rely on context to make it clear which 'second echelon' we meant. Once all three contingents were overseas and welded into one force, the term as applied to contingents went into the background, and only came into the limelight again when the furlough scheme was being discussed in 1943. On occasion even today, as will be seen, it becomes necessary to say which 'second echelon' is meant.

It was on 6 September that Cabinet decided to mobilise a Special Force of 6600 men, to be organised as a brigade group, with staff for an overseas base and some elements of a divisional headquarters. Enlistments commenced on 12 September and on 3 October the men went into camp. Training was to be for three months; and if at the expiration of that time the force was not required, all ranks would be granted leave without pay until called up again. During September the Government decided to raise a full division for service overseas and the Special Force became the first of the three echelons in which the Division was to be raised and despatched. The public announcement that the Division was to go overseas was made by Mr Savage on 23 November.

Towards the end of September the United Kingdom Government proposed that each Dominion ([Canada](#), [Australia](#), New Zealand, and South Africa) should send a minister to [London](#) to consult on the war effort of their respective countries and on war matters generally. The Hon. P. Fraser therefore left New Zealand by air on 13 October, accompanied by a small staff, including a military adviser. The 13th was a Friday, the air route to England was in its infancy, and indeed the section between New Zealand and [Australia](#) was still in the stage of test flights only, so that perhaps it is not surprising that there was a large party to take farewell of the delegation in [Auckland](#) and to express the sincere hope that all would be well.

The delegation arrived in **London** on 27 October. During its visit it was arranged with the United Kingdom Government that the First Echelon should go to Egypt, which was to be the concentration area for the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. There was no difficulty in agreeing to this; but a difficulty did arise over the dates of departure. Shortage of transports and shortage of escorts dictated that the three 'groups' constituting the first Australian contingent, and the one 'group' constituting the first New Zealand contingent, should travel in two convoys, each of two groups, and separated by an interval of two months. The strategical situation necessitated the first Australian troops leaving at the end of December so as to relieve **United Kingdom** troops in Palestine. New Zealand was offered the alternative of supplying one of the two groups in the first convoy, or of waiting until the second convoy, in which case the first convoy would consist of Australian troops only.

All planning so far had been based on the First Echelon leaving New Zealand at the end of January 1940, by which time the three months' training specified and the final leave would be over. To send the force by the first convoy meant that it would be sailing a month earlier than had been expected. The alternative before it was not conveyed to the **New Zealand Government** until the end of November 1939, so that the time in which to make a decision was short. Nevertheless the Government decided to send the force by the first convoy, one of the reasons – if not the compelling reason – leading it to this decision being the desirability that New Zealand's first contingent should sail at the same time as that of **Australia**.

There had also been a difference of opinion with the United Kingdom Government regarding the adequacy of the escorts to be provided, especially across the **Tasman Sea**. At one point Mr Fraser said firmly that the First Echelon would not sail until a stronger escort was provided. A conversation with that realist, Mr Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, produced the answer, and the battleship **Ramillies** duly appeared in **Wellington** in time to act as escort. The New Zealand

Government of the day had shown concern about escorts in the First World War; and in the period between the wars the point had been recorded many times in state papers in England that escorts, probably stronger than normal, would be necessary for Dominion forces proceeding overseas. Nevertheless, when the occasion arose the point had either been lost sight of or had been minimised. It was not the only time during the Second World War that the **New Zealand Government showed concern over sea escorts.**

Concurrently with these matters Mr Fraser was in consultation with the United Kingdom Government over the question of a commander for the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, no New Zealand officer being thought suitable for the post. Soon after the outbreak of war **Major-General Freyberg, recalled from retirement, had offered his services to the **New Zealand Government**. He had been educated in New Zealand and had always kept up his connection with the country; but his military service had hitherto been with the British Army. Mr Fraser interviewed him soon after the delegation arrived in **London**, and after discussions with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and other persons who had a knowledge of **General Freyberg**, advised the **New Zealand Government** to offer the appointment of commander to him. The Government accepted this recommendation, and in turn **General Freyberg** accepted the appointment, the date being 22 November 1939. ¹ It was then hurriedly arranged that he should spend a short time in **France** with the British Expeditionary Force and should then fly to New Zealand, spending a few days in Egypt en route, and arriving in New Zealand before the First Echelon sailed.**

During the course of discussions in **London, which naturally ranged over a wide field, an incident took place that had unexpected consequences. At a conference at the War Office dealing with possible army contributions from the various Dominions, the War Office spokesman said that there was a shortage of technical engineer units, particularly those suitable for constructional work of any kind. The New Zealand military adviser remarked semi-jocularly that New Zealand had a**

forceful Minister of Public Works (the late Hon. R. Semple) who, he was sure, would just love to make some military use of all the wonderful mechanical equipment that he had been importing into New Zealand in the previous few years. No more was said at the time; but the remark must have been taken more seriously than it was meant, for in the course of the next twelve months New Zealand was asked to supply a number of non-divisional engineer units, and moreover complied with the request. We shall meet these units elsewhere in this volume.

Up to the end of November the one or two decisions referred to above had taken up the major part of the time of the delegation, and very few points of detail had been settled. At that point the military adviser left **London** on his way back to New Zealand, preceding Mr Fraser and the GOC by some ten days. His journey took him through Egypt, where he spent one night at **Alexandria**. He was somewhat embarrassed when he was met at the airport by senior staff officers of the British Army in Egypt and asked for decisions on a multitude of points – where we wanted to establish our training camp or camps, what equipment we would want, whether or not we would want special rations, whether we would want institutes to be provided by the British NAAFI – Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes – and so on. Even if the adviser had known the answers there was all too little time to settle the points, as he left on the next stage of his journey at 3 a.m. the following day; but in any case these points had not been settled at that stage, and all the adviser could do was to cable back to **London** to tell the GOC what points had been raised, so that if possible he should

¹ From now on **General Freyberg** is referred to as ‘the GOC’, i.e., General Officer Commanding.

settle them when he in turn passed through Egypt. The intentions of the army authorities in Egypt were most praiseworthy. They were anxious to do their best for us and had little time to arrange accordingly.

Before leaving England in early December, the GOC was in fact empowered by the **New Zealand Government** to make the arrangements for the reception, training, and welfare of **2 NZEF** in the initial stages. His main decision while in Egypt was to select sites at **Maadi** and **Helwan** for our base camps, **Maadi** being some six miles from **Cairo** and **Helwan** about fifteen. In making this decision he took into account the health of the troops and the suitability of the areas for training and recreation. Both sites were desert ones with a hard sandy surface, healthy and free from mosquitoes. In directions away from **Cairo** the desert was to all intents and purposes endless, with room to manoeuvre to one's heart's content with the satisfying knowledge that no one was being incommoded or dispossessed.

The GOC's selection was even better than he probably realised at the time, and both sites proved well chosen. As it happened, **Helwan** was little used by New Zealand troops, and after the middle of 1941 was handed over to the South African forces; but **Maadi** remained our base camp from first to last, a total period of over six years. By the end of that period, and indeed by the end of two or three years, it was as nearly the perfect base camp as is possible. However, in late 1939 and early 1940 it was merely an area in the desert, and everything remained to be done. During his visit, which lasted only four days, the GOC approved plans for water supply, sanitation, recreational buildings, hutting, and all the myriad items that go to the making of a large permanent camp. It was clear that not all this construction would be finished by the time the First Echelon arrived, so that a strict order of priority had to be drawn up, water supply and sanitation, for instance, being of greater importance than hutments, for which tents would provide an adequate temporary alternative.

Before leaving England the GOC had asked that a small advance party should be sent from New Zealand. A party numbering two officers and fifty other ranks for administrative duties duly arrived in Egypt in early January 1940, together with a party of some sixty all ranks for special courses in the various arms. At the same time some officers who

had been posted to the force in England travelled to Egypt and joined the advance party.

Mr Fraser, accompanied by the GOC, arrived in New Zealand on Christmas Day 1939. In the period since Mr Fraser had left New Zealand in the middle of October, preparations for the despatch of the First Echelon had gone on apace. The change in sailing dates caused some slight curtailment of training, for it was still desired to give the troops their full final leave. It was hoped, however, that the loss of training time in New Zealand would be compensated for by better training facilities with more modern equipment in Egypt. In addition, the camps vacated would be immediately available for the Second Echelon, and the fact that one draft had actually sailed would be an undoubted stimulus to recruiting. It may be noted that the 'more modern equipment' proved not to be available in Egypt for many weary months. The slowness of arrival of this equipment was the cause of some restiveness in the [New Zealand Government](#) later in 1940.

The GOC stayed in New Zealand until the departure of the First Echelon on 5 January 1940. In that period he paid a hurried visit to the main mobilisation camps. In Wellington he had a few short discussions with the senior members of the divisional staff; but there was no time to settle anything, and the many points to be decided by a newly-assembled staff in control of a newly-assembled force had to be left until they would all be together in Egypt.

Above all, the GOC had a series of discussions with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and other members of Cabinet, and laid the foundations of an understanding with the Government, and a trust by it in its Expeditionary Force commander, that was of inestimable advantage in the years that followed. If his short visit had achieved nothing else it would have been worth while many times over.

On his way out to New Zealand the GOC had prepared a series of notes on certain policy and administrative matters. As a result of his discussions with the Government, the notes were embodied into two

documents, one a charter given to him over the Prime Minister's signature, and the other a list of authorities granted to him, and signed by the Minister of Defence. These documents are analysed in

Chapter 7. It will be sufficient to say at this stage that they gave the GOC comprehensive powers, including authority to form new units and reorganise and alter establishments as he thought advisable, and to set up such administrative headquarters as might be necessary. The powers so given were of the first importance in the subsequent history of the Expeditionary Force.

Among other points discussed between the Government and the GOC was whether or not New Zealand troops should draw a ration greater than the normal British ration. The GOC recommended that we should adhere to the British ration, and his advice was accepted. As a result New Zealand troops drew the British ration without augmentation throughout the war, except for a brief period in **Maadi** in early 1940. The GOC had no occasion at any later date to use the special powers given him by the Government and there is no ground for the common belief that we drew an extra large ration.



The Mediterranean Theatre

It was obvious to all that the sailing of the First Echelon a month sooner than had been expected meant that a number of points had either been settled hastily or had not been settled at all. Army Headquarters had done magnificent work in getting the echelon away in time; but there were many gaps. It was decided therefore that the AA & QMG ¹ designate of the Division should stay in New Zealand for a further

few weeks and should then fly to Egypt and join the force there.

During this period many small points were settled, one being that the registered cable address for the Expeditionary Force should be 'Fernleaf Cairo'. At first it was thought that it might be necessary to have one for the Division also, and in this case the help of the Native Affairs Department (as it then was) was enlisted, in order that a suitable Maori word might be chosen. Its nomination was 'Kokiri', which the Maori dictionary defines as meaning 'dart, rush forward, charge; a body of men rushing forward'. With such a meaning that now appears prophetic, it is perhaps unfortunate that the address was never used, as in the end all cable communications emanated from and were addressed to the headquarters of the Expeditionary Force and not to the headquarters of the Division.

The state of affairs, as it appeared to the AA & QMG, may be indicated by one incident which took place during January 1940. The Treasury had been pressing Army Headquarters to give some estimate of army expenditure for 1940 – a natural request, but difficult to answer. However, the Quartermaster-General at Army Headquarters drew up an estimate under various headings such as pay, equipment, transportation, and so on. He then brought the estimate to the AA & QMG and asked for his comments, which were given to the best of that officer's ability. The AA & QMG then added that an additional item should be included, namely 'Cables, £1,000,000', the reason being that so much had perforce been left unsettled when the First Echelon sailed that it was inevitable that there would be a flood of cables passing between Army Headquarters and headquarters overseas. The remark was meant humorously, but with a measure of seriousness. In years to come, when the GOC was a bit aghast at the length of some cable that had been despatched, the same officer used to say, 'Never mind. Remember that there is always a million pounds on the estimates to cover this.'

However, despite haste, the first portion of the Expeditionary Force had sailed, and the scene changes to Egypt.

¹ Assistant Adjutant and Quartermaster-General.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 2 – THE FIRST YEAR OVERSEAS

CHAPTER 2

The First Year Overseas

IN the middle of February 1940 the First Echelon arrived in Maadi Camp, and for the first time the troops, together with brigade and divisional staffs, were assembled in one spot and could take stock. It was the first time that the divisional staff had been together. The staff officers knew each other, as they were all drawn from the regular forces; but their peacetime training had never included divisional staff-work by an integrated staff. Moreover, as indicated in

Chapter 1, it was only in the two or three years before the war that any life had come back into the army after the almost moribund period from 1931 onwards. The staff were thus inexperienced and had to learn their duties like anyone else, and that at the same time as the troops they were supposed to train.

Moreover, the staff did not know their commander nor he them. It is not unfair to say that at that time the GOC was still thinking of the British regular army, and despite the time that he had spent in New Zealand did not truly understand the New Zealand way of looking at things. For a month or so the routine prescribed was more that to be expected from British regular units. Commander and staff went through an awkward period of neither understanding the other. To some extent work suffered accordingly; but salvation lay in the common desire to work hard and give of one's best. By the middle of May commander and staff were coming to understand each other, and the influence of the GOC was beginning to produce that feeling of unity which, as much as anything, led to the triumphs of the years that followed; but it must be repeated that there was an awkward period at first.

Everyone took himself seriously, which was no doubt right and proper. The result was that a lot of effort went into things that in retrospect seem trivial – small points of dress and protocol, for instance. We had not learnt the judgment of what really matters that can only come with experience in the field.

Those first few months in **Maadi** can only be described as frenzied, certainly from the administrative standpoint. A group of partially-trained units was under the care of an inexperienced staff. Every form of administrative instruction had to be thought out and promulgated; every service had to disseminate a knowledge of its routine; every sort of deficiency had at least to be recorded; and while all the internal turmoil was going on in **Maadi** there was a steady series of cable discussions taking place with Army Headquarters in New Zealand. Divisional routine was new to both staff and units and had to be established by trial and

error. Units had to learn the importance of such apparently dull things as Second Echelon records. The staff had to listen to an unending wail about the lack of this and that, and how the war was to all intents and purposes lost already unless some unit received some particular item of stores at once. There was a shortage of nearly everything. Transport deficiencies were for the moment the most important, for we now realised that there were really not going to be any horses as in the First World War, and that motor transport of some sort was the only way of getting about, even for individuals – which explains the appearance among units of odd vehicles purchased on the **Cairo second-hand market.**

At an early date Headquarters discovered one unexpected deficiency – shorthand-typists. We had not realised how much shorthand-typing had become a woman's job, and how few men are fully qualified. Even if suitable clerks could be found, it generally transpired that the one thing they did not want to do in the army was clerical work. To the headquarters staff this was more than a joke, for it meant that all memoranda and instructions had to be written out in longhand, and then took longer to type than normal because some of the clerks were only one-finger typists. At this stage in the formation of the force this was a real drag on progress. The clerks we had worked manfully, but were woefully few in number.

****Maadi Camp** was far from finished, alike in accommodation, water supply, lighting or roading, Luckily the weather was pleasant, and at that stage we were prepared to put up with anything, so great was our keenness.**

To the civilian Egyptian contractor we were little lambs asking to be shorn. Even in one or two contracts affecting the whole camp, and effected with the assistance of the more experienced British authorities, we were badly sold, one example being the cinema contract for **Maadi and **Helwan** camps, and another the laundry contract. One can understand the wails of administrative officers when confronted with so-called ‘contractors’ who had not the slightest intention of adhering to**

their side of the contract, and who were past masters at the art of getting things so mixed up that they won out in the end by the sheer exhaustion of the other side. There were cases of contractors who agreed to terms apparently favourable to us for the sole purpose of getting a foot in the camp, and thereafter living on the pickings – the odd bits and pieces that could be scavenged from around the camp, the odd deal in cigarettes or more harmful items on the sideline, the odd item stolen from stores and so on. The fact that the staff officers concerned were incorruptible was incomprehensible to the Egyptian contractor, who was prepared if pressed to ‘come across’ with anything up to a motor car.

In the original plans drawn up by British headquarters, accommodation for the headquarters of the NZEF had been earmarked either in **Cairo or in **Maadi**, the ‘garden township’ located just on the **Cairo** side of **Maadi Camp**. To the surprise of the British headquarters, the GOC said that he intended to make his headquarters, both office space and living room, within **Maadi Camp**. The plans were therefore amended to include a number of office hutments, placed where there happened to be a slightly higher level in the camp. The site was soon known as ‘the hill’, generally with an epithet of some sort. Working conditions were not as good as they would have been outside the camp; but the GOC's decision was a wise one, and the first step had been taken to weld staff and troops together. The consciousness that ‘Div HQ’ was living in the same camp, with the same difficulties of indifferent accommodation and lighting, went far to stop the idea growing up of a gilded staff.**

In the early stages the office hutments were merely four walls and a roof, with open spaces where windows should have been. Tables and chairs were few in number, and lighting came from pressure paraffin lamps, of which there were also too few. It is perhaps small wonder that an appeal was made by one or two offices whose work was mainly indoors, of which Second Echelon (i.e., Records) was an example, to be allowed to move into proper office accommodation in **Maadi or **Cairo**. There they would find all the amenities of peacetime, including proper**

furniture and lighting. To refuse an application merely because it is thought that people should be uncomfortable in wartime would be silly; but in this case there was more in it than that, and supported by the GOC's decision about headquarters, we were firm that everyone should stay in the camp. With one exception all the administrative machinery of 2 NZEF in Egypt remained in **Maadi Camp** throughout, cheek by jowl with the troops they were maintaining. The only exception was the Chief Post Office, which after a year or so moved into warehouse accommodation in **Cairo** because it was clear that the handling of mails would be improved thereby.

Life in **Cairo**, including in this the life of the British troops in Egypt, was still very much on a peacetime basis, and it was often hard to realise that we were preparing to take our part in a great war. Everyone was kind to us, invitations came thick and fast, until the hospitality became embarrassing, and the more senior officers had to give serious thought to where they were heading. An unending round of parties was pleasant; but we had not come to Egypt for that.

With **Maadi** township our relations were inevitably close. It was controlled by the **Maadi Land Company**, a private company with a franchise from the Egyptian Government to develop what was basically a desert area, and very well it did it. The township was a garden city, thanks to water from the **Nile** – and it was here that our first contacts came, as **Maadi-Camp** drew its water initially through the company's pumping stations. We had other official contacts; but the best-known contact was an unofficial one coming from a welfare institute started by the residents within a few days of the arrival of our troops. This was the famous ‘**Maadi Tent**’ which started in that form on a site at the camp end of the township. It will be referred to again when we come to deal with welfare.

Our internal problems provided the greater part of our work during 1940; but at the same time we had to learn the British methods of command and administration, and to find our way through the mass of orders and instructions issued not only by Headquarters, British Troops

in Egypt (HQ BTE), but also by the comparatively new authority, General Headquarters, Middle East Forces (GHQ MEF). We were in almost every way dependent on the help of what was already a sorely-trying British staff. That help was freely and generously given. Some of our officers took to the association with the British units a bit too kindly. Officers of more than one unit were found wearing the 'caps, coloured' that belonged to the corresponding British corps, instead of the peaked hat or cap that alone were the head-dress of **2 NZEF**. One or two of our service heads became so closely linked up with their seniors in the British service as to allude to the latter as their 'commanding officers'. We had to tell them that they had only one commanding officer, namely the GOC. Without realising it, we were in fact taking some halting steps towards making the Expeditionary Force an entity.

By the end of March 1940 we had taken stock and had some idea where we were – not that our whereabouts, so to speak, was entirely satisfactory, particularly in manpower. The First Echelon had consisted in the main of one-third of a division, organised into units or recognised fractions of units. The only items in the echelon not forming part of a division were a base pay office, base records, both small in numbers, a party of twelve nurses, three **YMCA** staff, and a unit entitled a 'Base Depot'. The purpose of the first four of the above items was obvious. The Base Depot had been included by Army Headquarters because it was sure that we would in due course want some sort of base, and this particular unit was the only one with a suitable name that it could find in British war establishments. The idea was sound; but the unit numbered only 4 officers and 26 other ranks, and in itself was of little use. Further personnel for the unit were scheduled to travel with the Second and Third Echelons, due in May and September respectively; but it was soon clear that this one unit with the comprehensive title was not going to be the answer, and that we could not wait until September to form some stable base organisation. In the meantime the service units of the Division – signals, ASC, and medical – had to adapt themselves to the running of the camp, which meant that to some degree they were hampered in their proper training.

With each of the Second and Third Echelons it was intended to send a general hospital, and one or two other medical units were scheduled for future despatch; but with this exception the extent to which **2 NZEF** would be self-contained behind the Division had never been thought out. We had to set to work and make some sort of a plan; but the trouble was that we had no spare men, and none were due to arrive for many months. Each unit at the moment had a party of extra men with it entitled 'first reinforcements'; but sometimes it appeared that these had only a theoretical existence, as no one could separate them from the body of the unit. Even if they could be discovered, normal wastage in the unit soon absorbed them; and, in any case, they were intended as reinforcements to the unit and not as a pool for general purposes.

Even after only a month in **Maadi** it was clear that in due course we would want holding or training depots for reinforcements, unless we were to be dependent on British establishments. At this moment (March 1940) we were exactly in that position for we did not have even a hospital of our own, and our nurses worked in a British hospital. It would be waste of time to labour the point, for it was obvious that we would have to form our own depots, etc., even if only for the reason that New Zealanders would not be happy in British depots, and that our ideas of training did not necessarily coincide with those of the **United Kingdom**. We must also have a depot to look after men who were waiting to go back to New Zealand. Our pay, records, and postal units all needed setting up in a sound and substantial form in order to allow for expansion in the future.

The medical position was the immediate problem, as neither New Zealand staff nor New Zealand patients were happy in a British hospital. So we had to organise a hospital of our own from what can only be called bits and pieces. Our only field ambulance had to part with some of its personnel, and others were drawn from all over the echelon. So was formed our first hospital in the Grand Hotel in **Helwan**, a site that with some ups and downs and changes of title we retained to the last.

Negotiations to take over the hotel, discussions with the British authorities about costs, and the large amount of constructional work to be done took some months, and it was not until July that the hospital was ready to take patients. The question of costs was clouded for the reason that at the time we were not sure how the British authorities were to be reimbursed, always on the assumption that somehow or other New Zealand would bear the whole cost.

The first new unit to be formed officially by 2 NZEF overseas was 'HQ 2 NZEF Base', which appeared in orders on 4 April 1940. The 'Base Depot' was disbanded, and small separate sections were formed for Legal, Pay, Postal and other administrative duties, all to be the parents of some lusty children in the years to come. 'HQ Base' later became 'HQ Maadi Camp'.

Already we had had cause to be thankful for the extensive powers granted to the GOC, for we were able to disband units and form new ones and establish fresh administrative machinery without having to refer to New Zealand. Not for the only time during the war, the various British headquarters were envious of us.

On 30 March there was held a memorial service for the late Prime Minister, Mr Savage. Owing to a misunderstanding on our part, the service was first arranged for the Anglican cathedral; and it was only after a hurried cable to New Zealand that a last-minute change was made, and the service transferred to a Roman Catholic church in **Cairo.**

During April we held a series of conferences with COs and heads of corps to wrestle with a few problems that had arisen and which seemed urgent. Examples are extra-duty pay, hat badges, shoulder titles, and patches and head-dress. With extra-duty pay we were trying to rationalise a regulation which gave the pay to several tradesmen who did not figure in the force at all, and denied it to many hundreds who did. The point is dealt with in detail in

Chapter 8. Suffice it to say now that not only did we not find a good answer in 1940, but we never did at any stage.

The other items mentioned above concerned dress and engendered the outburst of emotion that always seems to arise over military insignia. The points are discussed further in

Chapter 17; but it may be said that here we had greater success, and did find an answer, which with some grumbling was accepted. To be fair, some of the points had officially been settled in New Zealand before the echelon sailed, and the revival of them was due to naughtiness in some units – or in all, for all shared in it to some degree.

As an example of taking things too seriously there may be mentioned the case of secrecy of paybooks. Soon after our arrival there was published an order in British General Orders to the effect that in a man's paybook there was to appear no reference to his unit, i.e., to the name and number of his battalion, field regiment, etc., the idea being to prevent the enemy from finding out from captured paybooks what British formations were figuring in the order of battle. Our paybooks offended against this order to the extent that they disclosed that the holder was a member of a New Zealand unit. After discussions with British Headquarters we agreed that our paybooks would have to be altered, and, with the Government's approval, went to the trouble of having thousands of new books printed in Egypt omitting any offending reference to New Zealand. It was a case of an absurdly strict adherence to the letter of the order, for of course nothing could prevent a New Zealand soldier from acknowledging his nation if captured; and, moreover, the addresses of next-of-kin were retained in the books, most of course being in New Zealand. The attempts that were made later in the war to disguise New Zealanders were quite ineffective, for there was always something that differentiated them from English, Scotch, Welsh or Irish. The action we took was then without justification and arose from our keen desire at the time to do everything that was right. Had the same point arisen a year or more later we would have ignored it.

In April 1940 we had our first application to return to New Zealand for compassionate reasons. The cases were difficult to handle as we were dependent on the aspects as put forward by the men; but after inquiries from other officers who might know the men and their circumstances we made the decision ourselves. Compassionate leave is discussed further in

Chapter 15.

The realisation that we were going to want men to form our base establishments, combined with the normal need for reinforcements – or ‘replacements’, which is a better word – for the Division, turned our attention to the size of future drafts from New Zealand. Strictly speaking, this was primarily the task of Army Headquarters and not ours; but naturally we were interested to know what we might receive, and there was a lot to be said for the two headquarters acting together. Reinforcement drafts are normally based on the losses to be expected among the troops in the theatre of war, and for this purpose there were compiled a series of ‘wastage tables’, which gave in the form of monthly percentages the losses that might be expected in the various arms of the service under varying conditions of combat. We took it on ourselves to obtain from the New Zealand Army Liaison Officer in [London](#) the latest War Office figures for the wastage tables, and then proceeded to work out what we thought we ought to get. At the same time Army Headquarters in New Zealand was working on the same task. At first the two sets of calculations did not agree. At one stage we were so confused ourselves that we had recourse to an actuary to do the calculations. In the end we came to agreement with New Zealand for the figures that were to apply to the first genuine reinforcement draft, the ‘Fourth Reinforcements’ so called, by which was meant the fourth contingent to leave New Zealand. The question of reinforcement drafts is dealt with further in

Chapter 13.

At an early stage (March 1940) the proposal was made from **Australia** that in due course an **Anzac Corps** should be formed, comprising two Australian divisions and the New Zealand division. In principle the proposal was approved by New Zealand and there for the moment the matter rested. It served to make us give some thought to the supply of corps troops, in which we would undoubtedly have to share – another unknown quantity in the future expansion of **2 NZEF**.

In the latter part of April, ending on Anzac Day, there was held the first full-scale exercise, in which the whole of the First Echelon took part. During the exercise the divisional staff, especially the administrative staff, found themselves in a dual role. On the one side were their duties as staff of the Division, necessitating their constant attention to movements in the field and to the immediate needs of the fighting troops. On the other side were all the general administrative matters piling up in **Maadi**, nothing to do with the exercise, but needing immediate attention. An example was the plan for the reception and location of the Second Echelon, an event which among other things would involve fresh construction at **Helwan Camp** and the transfer of part of the First Echelon from **Maadi** to **Helwan**. All the time there were arriving from New Zealand a stream of cables, many requiring a speedy answer. There were many knotty expeditionary force problems, for it must be said that we were in the process of establishing a body of ‘case law’ for domestic issues of a most varied nature. During the exercise some of the staff spent a lot of time tearing backwards and forwards between the exercise area and their offices in **Maadi**. It was not a very satisfactory situation.

By the end of April a mock embargo was placed on the use of the word ‘essential’ at **Divisional Headquarters**; for day after day commanding officers and service heads came into Headquarters and declared vigorously that their need of the moment was ‘absolutely essential’, and that their activities would come to a dead stop unless

they received the item at once. We used to maintain that true essentials were surprisingly few. Many months later, when we were taking the first steps to form a mobile bath unit, the staff officer concerned, in a memorandum on the subject to the chief administrative officer, said: 'In this case I think you will agree that for the proper functioning of the unit, a supply of water is highly desirable if not essential'. He had the last word.

So far welfare had not caused us any concern. The number of troops was not great and did not for the moment strain the amenities provided by various welfare organisations in **Cairo** and **Maadi**, and by the **YMCA** and **NAAFI** institutes in **Maadi Camp**. Egypt was a new land to the New Zealander, and its marked difference from anything most of the men had ever seen before generated a curiosity and interest which in themselves helped to pass the time when off duty. The equally marked irritations of Egypt arose later on.

The cinema contract in **Maadi Camp** has already been mentioned as one of the matters we had not handled too well. The troops showed their opinion on one occasion by pushing over the end of the building, not a difficult thing to do as it was flimsy. We tried to put pressure on the contractor to show better films, and while as time went on there was an improvement and a second contractor was allowed into the camp, the cinema arrangements were among our poorer efforts.

We were aware that there was in New Zealand a National Patriotic Fund, but up to this time (March and April 1940) we knew nothing about its administration, nor for what it could be used. We then discovered that a Commissioner would be leaving with the Second Echelon, and that in the meantime the senior **YMCA** secretary was acting in his place. In a first discussion with the secretary it transpired that his instructions left him a free hand to determine whether or not to spend money on any special welfare feature, and that in fact he had power to decide what was or was not desirable. There seemed to us to be dangers in this authority, which would take away from the GOC the right to make what he thought were the most suitable arrangements for the welfare of his

troops. Our opinion was passed on to New Zealand; but the course of events eclipsed this particular problem for the time being. Our immediate needs, which were small, were met by a grant from the acting Commissioner.

By May 1940 certain weaknesses in officers had become apparent, in a few cases in comparatively senior ones. For the first time we heard the appeal that appointments should be found for these officers with units outside the Division – reasonable enough at first sight, but with some potential dangers, for which see

Chapter 12.

In the middle of May Divisional Headquarters made an attempt to get some order into the mass of instructions that had been issued since we arrived. A series of what were called 'special circulars' were issued, containing in summarised form all the major matters that had formed the subject of any orders to date. In effect they formed Administrative Standing Orders while in Egypt. The circulars summarised orders on (*inter alia*) accounting for stores, pay and regimental funds, postal, records, relations with Egyptians, maintenance of mechanical transport, leave, dress and clothing, supplies, courts martial, and matters especially affecting officers – a mixed bag. The idea was a noble one, and the problem tackled in this way – the dissemination of orders in an easy way – was one of the most intractable throughout the war. It is discussed further in

Chapter 17.

During May the course of the war had for the first time influenced the action taken by units. The collapse of **France** and the possible entry of **Italy** into the war brought us a bit closer to reality. We practised dispersal of tents and transport to minimise loss from bombing; and one or two units were under orders for internal security duties in **Cairo**, in particular in areas where Italian property existed. We were quite thrilled.

The Second Echelon sailed at the beginning of May; but on the 15th we were told by cable from **London** that the convoy including our contingent was being diverted to **Capetown** en route to the **United Kingdom**. Some degree of turmoil followed. Part of the First Echelon had already moved to **Helwan Camp** to make room for the Second in **Maadi**, and we were caught in mid-air. Any further moves were cancelled. Then for a while we waited to see what was going to happen to the Second Echelon, and in particular how long it was likely to remain in England.

At the beginning of June Italy entered the war, and such small operational moves as had been arranged for us were put into effect. Among other action, we had to adopt a blackout in **Maadi Camp**, arranged in hutments by a combination of shutters and exterior curtains. Many of the hutments were still without electric light and were using paraffin lamps. With all doors and windows shut, and in increasingly hot weather, the temperature inside became wellnigh insupportable. There was a second appeal from the Records staff to be allowed to move into **Cairo**; but we were adamant.

By the first week in June it became clear that the stay of the Second Echelon in England, after its arrival later in the month, would be longer than at first thought. The impending collapse of **France** would leave England open to invasion, and the echelon might well find itself engaged in active operations before its normal training could be completed. The GOC decided therefore first, that certain staff and service officers should go to England to assist the echelon, and then that he should go himself. The First Echelon had had over three

months' training in Egypt and could well be left with a reduced staff to control it, especially as the chance of active operations was then remote. The Second Echelon was comparatively untrained. It was in any case desirable that both echelons should come under the same guidance. In the long run, moreover, it was now by no means certain where the final concentration of **2 NZEF** would take place. It was possible that the First Echelon would join the Second instead of the other way about, although it must be said that the United Kingdom Government was definite throughout that the Second Echelon would ultimately come to Egypt.

The GOC left for England on 17 June. During this month an Australian division was moved from Palestine and accommodated in **Helwan Camp**, and the First Echelon was again concentrated in **Maadi**. The difficulties of cable communication and the fact that the GOC was for some time immersed in detailed control in England meant that to some degree the First Echelon went its own way, and we found later on that the two echelons had amassed somewhat different volumes of 'case law'. It was an example of the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of running a force in two equal portions in two widely separated theatres of war. Headquarters in Egypt was still cabling New Zealand almost daily about some still-unsettled point. Once or twice we found that a similar cable had gone from England on the same point. Altogether it was a confusing time, only supportable because after a month or so the probability of the Second Echelon coming to Egypt increased and the separation was seen to be of limited duration.

In July **2 NZEF** in Egypt helped to form what was first called the Long Range Patrol, but better known by its later name of **Long Range Desert Group**. In the beginning we were supposed merely to be lending men from the Divisional Cavalry, **27 (Machine Gun) Battalion** and **7 Anti-Tank Regiment** so that they could get experience and later come back to their units. It soon became obvious that the training of the patrol would take a long time, and that at the end of the training the men would be highly skilled in a specialised type of operation. A request

later on for the return of the men created a minor crisis, as will appear later in this chapter.

We were asked in July to make some thousands of dummy tanks and lorries – or trucks, as we were beginning to call the vehicles. The dummies were to be made out of scrim and light battens, roughly painted with designs which would deceive observers from a distance and particularly from the air. They were to be placed in the front areas in the **Western Desert**, a term which now began to assume some importance. Our engineers who supervised the task gave a fine example of mass production. It took four days to make the plans, and thereafter gangs of men worked all round the clock and the job was finished within the time of seven days that had been prescribed.

By August the Government in New Zealand was becoming restive about the equipment of the force; but the fact was that we were doing better than **United Kingdom** units in the area, the British authorities concerned being, as always, most generous to the troops from the Commonwealth. At this time our issues of equipment had to be handled in a manner almost the same as in peacetime, i.e., they had to be checked and signed for, the arrangement with the United Kingdom Government being that our initial issues were to be paid for at actual value. The issues would have gone smoothly if the enemy had not intervened and started operations before we had finished. As it happened, units were moving away from **Maadi** while issues were still going on, and altogether it was not the nice, clean transaction we would have wished for.

During August and September most of the First Echelon moved out on to the lines of communication in the **Western Desert** from just outside **Alexandria** for two hundred miles westwards. Meanwhile, back at **Maadi Camp** we were preparing to receive the Third Echelon; and owing to signs of advance on the part of the Italian troops in North Africa, the balance of importance, as far as **2 NZEF** was concerned, was swinging over from England and the Second Echelon to North Africa and the combined First and Third Echelons.

In September it was decided to form an Officer Cadet Training Unit (OCTU) of our own. A suitable officer was chosen as OC and a site arranged within [Maadi Camp](#). At that point British Headquarters in Egypt heard of our proposals and put forward a plea that we should make use of its facilities, attaching some New Zealand staff if we wished. We accepted this offer; and thereafter for some years our cadets went to British OCTUs. The pros and cons of this action are discussed further in

Chapter 13.

In the middle of September the GOC arrived back from England. Towards the end of the month the Third Echelon arrived from New Zealand and was accommodated in **Maadi Camp**, the First Echelon being away in the **Western Desert**. The Second Echelon was now scheduled to arrive in Egypt towards the end of the year, so that the concentration of the Division was becoming something more than an academic point.

It was a matter for satisfaction that the GOC and his staff were again in one place instead of in two; but now a major problem had to be faced, namely the administrative control of the Expeditionary Force as a whole. The arrival with the Third Echelon of the first of a series of non-divisional units, the steady increase in base requirements if not in base units, the likelihood that before long the Division would move away into a theatre of war, and the need to have some one fixed point from which to keep in touch with New Zealand – all these indicated that the staff of the Division could not at the same time look after the administration of the whole force. Towards the end of September, therefore, the AA & QMG at the time removed himself with a small staff from **Divisional Headquarters** and formed a separate ‘Headquarters 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force’ which was so entitled. With effect from 1 October 1940 the separation became official. Headquarters New Zealand Division remained responsible for all matters affecting operations of the Division and for the administration of the Division in the field. Headquarters 2 NZEF became responsible for the training and organisation of the force as a whole, for base establishments and line-of-communication units, including the non-divisional engineers, for the domestic administration of the force – promotions, pay, welfare, publicity, legal affairs and so on – and for communicating with New Zealand. Many heads of services became part of the new headquarters – medical, chaplains, legal, pay, among others. The administrative head was entitled ‘Officer in Charge of Administration’ or ‘OICA’ for short. The newly-formed ‘HQ Base’ became directly responsible for **Maadi Camp**.

The Third Echelon had been greeted with a flood of orders and circulars, embodying everything that the First Echelon had absorbed during its six months in Egypt. It had to be brought into the picture, and we did our best to cushion the stunning effect of such a mass of words by explanatory talks; but one way and another we probably overdid it, for when later on the Second Echelon arrived, there was no time to tell it anything before it went off to Greece, and it must be admitted that it seemed to get on very well. This question of the distribution of orders is mentioned again in

Chapter 17.

With the Third Echelon arrived a **Broadcasting Unit**, the first 'organ of publicity' that we had received. So far we had no proper war correspondent and had been forced to make a temporary appointment from among our own personnel. The Government had decided to keep the appointment of correspondents under its own control, and not to allow direct representatives of the press. Naturally this decision had caused some heart-burning in New Zealand, one of the results being a long delay before any appointment was made at all. It will be seen later that it was the middle of 1941 before this was straightened out.

Towards the end of October HQ **2 NZEF** moved into a new block of offices, which turned out to be over a hornet's nest. For some days the staff, including OICA, were slaying hornets, much to the delight of the troops at large. It was not a very auspicious start for the new headquarters, although it may have been prophetic.

The Division now started to concentrate at **Helwan Camp**, the Australians having moved out into the **Western Desert**. The Third Echelon was intact; but in recent months the First Echelon, as already mentioned, had been employed on duties that had absorbed it almost entirely. Quite naturally the GOC now wanted to concentrate the two echelons in preparation for the arrival of the Second Echelon from England. Advanced parties of this echelon were already arriving.

There were great troubles in getting back our detached units. At one stage it nearly became a matter between Governments, as the GOC felt compelled to inform our own Government of the troubles he was having, and to ask for its support. In the end GHQ released the troops; but the affair left some irritation in both British and New Zealand headquarters. It was not the last time that this sort of trouble was to occur. The problem is discussed at greater length in

Chapter 11. It will be enough to say here that while one's sympathies must go to the sorely-tried British headquarters which was wrestling with problems of a magnitude that we did not perhaps appreciate, this concentration of our troops, the first we had had, was essential in the true meaning of the word.

By this time we had received a few real reinforcements and were able to go on with the formation of base units. We were also able to form the Long Range Patrol as a separate unit with its own establishment instead of looking on it as a detached part of the Divisional Cavalry. It was the first non-divisional unit we formed overseas, and in many ways the most notable.

At the end of October, partly as a result of the controversy over the return of our detached troops, the GOC issued an instruction that was to have far-reaching effects, namely that the primary role of our reinforcements must be to keep the Division up to full establishment, and that until this was done no troops would be available for duties outside the Expeditionary Force. It thus transpired that in the years to come the New Zealand Division was more often than not nearer to full establishment than any other Allied division, and its value as a fighting formation was much increased thereby. There were times when we did not have enough men to fill the gaps – late 1942 was an instance – and there were times also when we felt compelled to help GHQ to our own detriment; but on the whole the principle was adhered to throughout. British Headquarters had to find men for a myriad administrative duties – duties which were of advantage to the New Zealand Division among others – and many times it cast envious eyes on our pool of reinforcements at [Maadi](#), especially as on occasion the men would be in depots for weeks or months at a time waiting to go forward when required. Further attention is given to this point in

Chapter 11.

While the Australians were at **Helwan** our attention had been drawn to a photographic identity card which their troops carried in the back of their paybooks. We gave some thought to adopting this idea ourselves, particularly as there had already been many cases of theft of paybooks in Egypt, the suspicion being that they would later be used by spies as proof of their identity. The Australians were most co-operative, and even offered to lend us their personnel to carry out the work. However, we decided against it, one of our reasons being that we thought the war had already gone on for a long time, and that there would be too much work involved in making up the leeway. The decision may have been right, but the reason was weak. Our war diary says that various difficulties precluded the adoption of the system 'at this late stage' – November 1940!

In November the GOC felt it right to offer a word of caution to the Government about the increasing number of non-divisional engineer units, for we had just been advised of the formation of two additional companies. It appeared to us that the Government was overdoing it in this field, and that the manpower of the country would be unduly strained thereby. At the time, moreover, the Division had not been in action, and no one knew what the future would bring forth.

With the exception of some service troops, including signals and ASC, no New Zealanders took part in the first Libyan campaign in December 1940 and later; but the enemy was captured in such unexpectedly large numbers that the pre-campaign arrangements to guard prisoners broke down, and we had to come to the help of GHQ and supply men for guards. Some scores of reinforcements found themselves attached to prisoner-of-war camps at various points in the desert near **Cairo**. The duty lasted for a few months until the prisoners could be moved out of Egypt to England, **Canada**, and elsewhere. The incident is of no great importance in itself; but it serves to show that when it came to the point, despite brave words, we had to help in what may be called

the communal duties of the army at large.

Following on the brief campaign in **France** in May–June 1940, a committee had been set up in England to report on the campaign and to make recommendations for alterations in tactics, arms, equipment, and organisation. In December the report came into our hands in Egypt, and the GOC decided that we should adopt some of the proposals. Headquarters had a short but intensive series of discussions with senior officers of the various arms and services in **2 NZEF**, followed by calculations on manpower and the preparation of detailed proposals for New Zealand; for while the GOC had the powers to make what alterations he thought desirable, we had to get the men from the homeland and had to give New Zealand notice when it was proposed to make any marked changes in the numbers of the various arms. As it happened the work was abortive, for the Division moved to **Greece** before finality had been reached; and when the **Greece** and **Crete** campaigns were over the picture had changed and the GOC had his own ideas about the future. It was not to be the last time that planning for future reorganisation was to go for nothing.

Towards the end of 1940 and early in 1941 there were several small additions to the administrative machinery of **2 NZEF**. An archivist was appointed in the hope that our historical records would be in good order at the end of the war, and in the hope also that regimental war diaries would be of more use than after the First World War. An official artist was provisionally appointed, pending further discussions with New Zealand. A concert party was formed, soon to be known as the 'Kiwis' and to achieve a notable reputation. A club with a comprehensive range of activities was opened in **Cairo** for the use of all ranks.

Throughout our time in Egypt, after what may be called the 'honeymoon' period of the first few months, there had been complaints from the troops about the service given by the Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes (the **NAAFI**) which at that time were our only fully-stocked army canteens. The Australians ran their own canteen service, as had been seen during the time the Australian division had been in

Helwan Camp in August and September 1940. Human nature being what it is, our troops decided at once that the Australian system was better than ours; but even without this belief, there were sufficient grounds for an inquiry into the two systems. A special committee was appointed, therefore, to investigate the Australian system. After a visit to the Australian camps in Palestine, the committee recommended that **2 NZEF** should, with certain reservations, continue to use **NAAFI**, and should not set up its own organisation. This investigation is discussed further in

Chapter 16; but it may be said here that the decision, while correct in principle, did not take enough account of the fondness of the New Zealander for his home products, and to that extent was short-sighted. As will be seen, in the end we did have our own organisation.

One somewhat thorny problem was finally settled in the beginning of 1941, namely the number and denominations of chaplains. The Senior Chaplain had travelled to England with the Second Echelon and did not arrive in Egypt until late in 1940, which will explain the delay. Both numbers and denominations of chaplains were settled without much difficulty; and while numbers increased as the war went on, the basic principle covering the denominations stood the test. Details are given in

Chapter 8.

In December 1940 and January 1941 we received our first full reinforcement draft – the first and second sections of the 4th Reinforcements – and the manpower situation was good. The third and last section of the 4th Reinforcements did not arrive until March, and included several more non-divisional units. With it travelled the third of our hospitals, so completing our medical arrangements for the time being.

The steady stream of arrivals and departures at [Suez](#) led us at the end of 1940 to form a Port Detachment of our own there to speed up transit through the port, or at the least to act as a New Zealand liaison mission with the British movement staff.

In February the units of the Second Echelon started arriving in Egypt from England, having been delayed about two months beyond our earlier expectations. The echelon went to [Helwan Camp](#), where now the whole Division was assembled. It appeared that before long great events would happen.

At this point attention is drawn to [Appendix I](#), which gives the Order of Battle of [2 NZEF](#) as at 17 April 1941, but in effect as it was in early March, when the Division was on its way to [Greece](#).

Serial numbers 1 to 15 show the various ‘organs’ of [2 NZEF](#) as a whole that existed at the time. The ‘2 Echelon’ is of course the expanded Records Office.

Serial numbers 21 to 114 call for no comment in this volume. They comprise the units of a normal division at the time, with one or two small additions.

Serial numbers 123 to 147 show the somewhat extensive number of non-divisional units. Most of these had been formed in New Zealand at the request of the United Kingdom Government. They included three forestry companies, which had gone to England, were still serving there,

and were unlikely to have any closer association with **2 NZEF** in the **Mediterranean**. The patrols of the **Long Range Desert Group** and the **Mobile Surgical Unit** and **Mobile Dental Section** had been formed overseas by **2 NZEF**.

Serials 151 to 205 constituted our base organisation, most of the units being in **Maadi Camp** – obvious exceptions being the hospitals. It looks an impressive tail to have collected in a year, and like all similar tails must be prepared to stand up to criticism. Further attention is given to this in

Chapter 9. For the present it will be enough to say that the general idea of our forming a self-contained base camp was never in any doubt. It met with the approval of all members of the force – a conscious approval from formation and unit commanders, and an unconscious one from junior officers and other ranks who, it is certain, would have been aghast if forced to make use of a camp staffed by other than New Zealanders.

Most of the units of the Division were organised according to British war establishments, although a number had small additions, perhaps only a man or two, to strengthen some aspect to which New Zealanders paid extra attention. The same applied to non-divisional units. All the rest, without exception, had war establishments drawn up by HQ **2 NZEF**. After a brief attempt to make use of copies of the printed British war establishments in such cases where they were applicable, Headquarters decided that it would be just as easy to issue our own throughout, as in any case there were never enough copies of the British publication. The task of compiling and amending war establishments, and later reproducing and distributing them, was one of the most onerous in the work of Headquarters.

The organisation of the base layout had been the task of HQ **2 NZEF**, which had thus justified its existence by leaving the divisional staff free to concentrate on matters affecting the operations of the Division.

And so by the middle of March 1941, **2 NZEF** was already organised almost as a small separate army, and the Division was ready to take the field.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 3 – THE FIRST THREE CAMPAIGNS

CHAPTER 3

The First Three Campaigns

DISCUSSIONS about the despatch of the Division to **Greece** commenced on the inter-governmental level towards the end of February 1941, and concurrently had formed the subject of many interviews and conferences between the GOC and GHQ. The strictest secrecy was imposed on all who were concerned in the proposals, a more stringent secrecy even than the normal to be expected prior to important operations. Such cables as passed between the GOC and the **New Zealand Government** were handled at **Divisional Headquarters**, and the contents were not made known to **HQ 2 NZEF**.

The Officer in Charge of Administration and heads of services were frequent visitors to **Divisional Headquarters** at **Helwan** and were aware that a move was in the air; but they were not given any details, and for quite a while were not aware of the destination. It must be remembered that this was the first operation to be undertaken by the Division, and was moreover an unusual one, involving the final stages of a concentration in Egypt, a sea journey, a landing, albeit an unopposed one and in a friendly country, and an advance through mountainous terrain to a defensive position. It is small wonder if neither the GOC nor the staff of **Divisional Headquarters** had time to think about what moves, if any, should take place among base and line-of-communication troops, although the obvious need for medical attention did lead to one hospital being included in the troops to move. The divisional staff was working at high pressure to complete arrangements for the move, not made any easier by the late arrival of units of the Second Echelon, many of which did not reach **Helwan** until the move to **Greece** had started.

On the part of **HQ 2 NZEF**, it must be said that OICA had not fully appreciated the position nor fully grasped his duties, and was content to be largely a passive onlooker. Headquarters had not realised that if the fighting portion of our little army took the field, there must be some effect on all portions of the force responsible in any way for

maintenance in the broadest meaning of the term. The move had started before Headquarters woke up to its responsibilities and made some small administrative arrangements for moving certain advanced offices to Greece.

As it turned out the Greek campaign was over so quickly that the breakdown in support was not noticed. However, the lesson was learnt, and thereafter HQ 2 NZEF was alive to its responsibilities.

The details of the move to Greece included the move of Divisional Headquarters at an early stage. It was a difficult position for it. Obviously the sooner the staff were complete in the new theatre of operations the better, as reconnaissance in its broadest sense was urgently required; but behind them in Egypt the units of the Second Echelon would still be arriving, and the bulk of the Division would still be waiting to move. Normally the arrangement would be to divide headquarters into an advanced and a rear element, the latter remaining at the starting point or the despatching end; and this was done on many occasions in the future. In this case it was decided that Divisional Headquarters must move as a complete unit; and as a solution, or at least a partial solution, it was arranged for HQ 2 NZEF, such as it was at the time, to move to Helwan and act as Rear Divisional Headquarters. Unfortunately HQ 2 NZEF consisted only of OICA and one officer, Headquarters had no transport of its own, and OICA had not even a car. Moreover, Divisional Headquarters moved out lock, stock and barrel, leaving not so much as a sheet of paper. Orders for the move of units to Greece were coming in often at intervals of an hour or so; orders for the move from Suez to Helwan of Second Echelon units were arriving concurrently, and to cap it all part of the 4th Reinforcements arrived from New Zealand during the same period. All these moves were under the control of the British movement staff, that being one aspect of military administration over which 2 NZEF had at that time no control. The movement staff was unaffected by the confusion caused to 2 NZEF with all these moves going on at one time, and we had to sort it out as best we could. Luckily, Headquarters Maadi Camp was now functioning

to some effect and was able to take over a lot of the burden; and somehow or other the various moves took place without a mix-up. It was a difficult period.

As soon as this turmoil was over, we began to think what would have to be done about the New Zealand line of communication. As a first measure, the Officer Commanding Maadi Camp, the Deputy Director (i.e., the head) of our Medical Services, and OICA went over to **Greece** by air under somewhat uncomfortable conditions. The air as a means of transport was still in its infancy, and the passage was arranged with some difficulty, partly due to the lack of understanding shown by GHQ of the separate identity of **2 NZEF**. In Athens the party found a liaison officer, left there by **Divisional Headquarters**, and not far away a camp containing those personnel who had been 'left out of battle' as a reserve for eventualities. As soon as transport could be arranged – and this was difficult, for no one had any spare vehicles – the party went forward to **Divisional Headquarters**, which was then in front of **Mount Olympus**.

The arrival of the party coincided with the first warnings of the later collapse of the front farther to the west, and nobody from the GOC downwards was in a position to talk about what might or should happen in **Athens** or farther back; and, moreover, at that moment did not much care. Operations near at hand took precedence. After staying one night, it became clear that the best service the party could render was to get out of the road and go back again, at least as far as **Athens**. On the way back the party spent a day with our hospital, which appeared to be sited too far forward, even if the front was stable. It was fast getting into a dangerous position, and in the end had to be abandoned after all patients had been evacuated.

On return to **Athens** the party carried out a reconnaissance of the surrounding countryside, with a view to finding sites for hospitals, depots, etc. – in fact, for the camp that at later stages we called our **Advanced Base** – but the reconnaissance was conducted with the feeling, which became stronger almost hourly, that the fate of the Greek campaign was already decided, and that no more troops would be put

into **Greece**. Then there came news of the enemy advance towards Egypt and the investment of **Tobruk**, and activities in North Africa began to take precedence over anything the party could do in **Greece**. Some experience had been gained for future campaigns, so with a few notes to show for its visit, the party went back to Egypt after a total stay of about a week.

Towards the end of April, the Greek campaign being over, 6 Infantry Brigade arrived back in Egypt together with other smaller units. The remainder of the Division moved from **Greece** to **Crete**. It was clear from the very first that for some time at least **Crete** was going to be no place for any line-of-communication units, even a hospital, and there was never any question of our setting up any sort of **2 NZEF** establishment there.

Early in May the Adjutant-General arrived from New Zealand for discussions with HQ **2 NZEF**. About the same time there arrived from England a small military mission, headed by General Sir Guy Williams, and entrusted with the task of visiting all Dominions and consulting with them on their war effort. On reaching **Cairo** the mission heard of the imminent arrival of the Prime Minister of New Zealand and so decided to wait and see him before going farther.

The Prime Minister arrived in the middle of May, at a moment when the German attack on **Crete** was imminent. He wished to go to **Crete** at once, but was dissuaded if not definitely stopped by a combination of the British Ambassador to Egypt, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Air Officer Commanding. While waiting to see the outcome of the fighting, the Prime Minister started a series of talks with General Williams and with HQ **2 NZEF**. There were many matters to discuss, and the presence of the Prime Minister, keyed up as he was by the intensity of the war situation, helped to settle on the spot many things that might otherwise have dragged on for months. The long delay about war correspondents was ended on the spot, the Prime Minister remarking that they did not appear to have been handling it at all well in New Zealand, and

authorising certain appointments at once. Other points were referred to New Zealand, with his recommendation for immediate approval.

As a basis for discussion with the Dominions, General Williams had brought with him copies of an exhaustive long-term plan for the future organisation of the armies of the Commonwealth, known as Field Force Committee Organisation Plan 36 – short title FFC 36. Part 12 of this plan applied to the New Zealand Forces. It was most detailed; but it is sufficient to say that it proposed that New Zealand should form first an Army Tank Brigade and ancillaries (workshops, field ambulance, etc.), secondly a number of corps units, with the intention that the Division would join with the Australian divisions to form an **Anzac Corps**, and thirdly a number of line-of-communication and base units to help take some of the burden off the **United Kingdom**. In sum, it meant an addition to the strength of the Expeditionary Force of roughly 6000 men.

The Adjutant-General and OICA first examined the suggestions, which raised many problems, not least that of manpower. They were then discussed with the Prime Minister and General Williams. The evacuation from **Crete** was completed by the first days of June, and the GOC then joined in the discussions. The losses on **Crete**, and in **Greece** too, had been heavy, which complicated the long-term plans for manpower. While the discussions were going on, the Division concentrated again in **Helwan**.

In general the Prime Minister was favourable to the proposals; but in this case official approval had to wait until his return to New Zealand. His visit was both helpful and fruitful, coming as it did just after the two trying campaigns in **Greece** and **Crete**.

The campaigns had caused many internal problems. To start with, unit records had either been lost or were inadequate, which meant that it was some time before casualties could be given in exact detail. Second Echelon (i.e., Records) was powerless in itself, and had to depend on information given by units. The degree of reliance that could be placed

on unit reports varied. Some units took great care, and even held what amounted to courts of inquiry before reporting a man as killed or prisoner of war. Others were not so careful; but it was impossible to be insistent with units that had just undergone a shattering experience and had possibly lost part or the whole of their administrative staff. Sometimes the reports showed such a degree of improbability that Second Echelon had to query them; and indeed as time went on Second Echelon waited for a double check before advising New Zealand. It was thus most unfortunate that the air mail to New Zealand made it possible for next-of-kin to receive letters of condolence from members of a unit before the cable from Second Echelon had even reached Base Records in **Wellington**. This was even more unfortunate in cases where it later transpired that the casualty was not as given in the letter. Men believed killed either turned up again or were found to be prisoners of war, and so on. The distress caused can be imagined, and led to criticism of Base Records and Second Echelon. The criticism was undeserved; but the problem was a difficult one to solve. We subsequently laid it down in orders that no one was to write a letter of condolence until fourteen days after the casualty had been reported to Second Echelon, and at a later date until the casualty had appeared in the *NZEF Times*; but it is doubtful if the order was ever observed. As it happened we never again had losses that caused such administrative disorganisation in units, so that the accuracy of unit reports to Second Echelon was higher. After the entry of **Japan** into the war the airmail service either stopped or was limited in volume for some time. The difficulty will always remain, however, now that air mails have come to stay.

The loss of unit records meant that it was some time before promotions could be satisfactorily arranged, which meant in turn that for some time pay could be given only for the ranks held before the campaigns.

Other ranks are clothed entirely from army issues and replacement of clothing and necessaries presented no difficulties, although sometimes there was a delay owing to shortage of stocks. Officers were

almost entirely responsible for their own clothing, for which purpose they drew an annual upkeep grant in cash. Losses due to enemy action, however, were replaceable by special grants, and were considered as over and above normal wear and tear. In average circumstances, claims for losses in action were not numerous, as they arose from individual incidents. In the **Greece** and **Crete** campaigns, however, nearly all officers had lost something, and many had lost everything except what they were wearing. Human nature being what it is, we had to have some sort of itemised claim and had to be sure that the loss was due to enemy action and not to negligence. A small screening committee of three was set up, the president and one of the members being officers who had served in the campaigns. The investigations took some weeks; but interim payments were made at once, and were adjusted when the claim had been cleared by the committee. The Prime Minister had told us to be generous, and full replacement value was paid for losses. It is too much to claim that everyone was satisfied, but the task was handled as sympathetically as was possible.

Our pool of reinforcements was large enough to make units up to establishment again; but the numbers then remaining in depots were on the low side. However, the flow from New Zealand was steady, for one draft arrived in the middle of May and another in July. Provided our next casualties were delayed for a while, or were not as abnormal as the recent ones had been, all would be well.

The Commissioner of the National Patriotic Fund had arrived from England with the later units of the Second Echelon; but it was only in May, when the crisis in **Crete** was at its height, that the question of responsibility for welfare was tackled. The difference of opinion that arose, and the various aspects of the question, are discussed in

Chapter 16. In the end an authoritative welfare committee was set up to advise the GOC, the Commissioner being a member; and while each side adhered to its own opinion, the committee was effective and the results were satisfactory to the troops, which after all is what really mattered. There were irritating incidents in the years that followed, but nothing that could not either be ignored or dealt with.

In June 1941 there was started a newspaper for **2 NZEF**, entitled *NZEF Times*. It was issued free to the troops and continued until the very end of 1945. From the first it was a 'news' paper only and its columns were not open to correspondents, nor after a while were there any leading articles. While perhaps the results were not as 'snappy' as the contents of other army papers, we did avoid a lot of heart-burning and a lot of the difficult, semi-disciplinary problems that arose when papers published letters from contributors.

The campaigns in **Greece** and **Crete** established a sentimental attachment between **Greece** and New Zealand. The GOC therefore offered to find a team from **2 NZEF** to train what Greek forces were still available in Egypt or the Levant. It was at first a welcome task to undertake to help a gallant ally; but owing to the Greek national pastime of politics, **2 NZEF** lived to regret the action it had taken. The results were frustrating, and a political crisis always seemed to be just round the corner. We carried on with this task until late in 1943.

Towards the end of June 1941 the impersonal title of 'HQ 2 NZEF Base' was officially changed to 'HQ Maadi Camp'. Then in August General Headquarters laid it down that in future all Dominion units were to carry an indication of their country as part of the unit title. It was understandable that with Australian, New Zealand, South African and Indian forces in the area in addition to **United Kingdom** forces, there was bound to be some duplication of unit and formation numbers, and there had in fact been cases of confusion over the identity of units. Thereafter, all New Zealand units had 'NZ' after the number if one existed, or in front of the title otherwise, e.g., 4 NZ Field Regiment, 18

NZ Battalion, NZ Maadi Camp. It should be remembered that at this time the Division was known as 'the NZ Division' without any number. The change to '2 NZ Division' came in 1942, as will be recounted in its place.

In the year or more that had elapsed since our arrival in Egypt, certain weaknesses had emerged in the postal set-up. So important did we consider this service that we asked for a senior officer of the Post and Telegraph Department to be sent out from New Zealand to investigate and report. This officer arrived in the middle of August, spent two months in North Africa, and recommended certain changes, which were duly made.

In August and September 1941 official approval came from New Zealand for the formation of the Army Tank Brigade and most of the corps and line-of-communication units. Headquarters **2 NZEF had then to set to work, in constant cable communication with Army Headquarters, to settle war establishments, arrange who was to command the new units and what proportion of officers was to be found by New Zealand and by **2 NZEF**, select officers to return to New Zealand to help in the formation of the units, establish in consultation with GHQ the order of priority of the corps and line-of-communication units, and discuss each unit with the appropriate head of the arm or service in **2 NZEF**. Some of these aspects of the work conflicted with others. General Headquarters' ideas on order of priority often did not coincide with the wishes of the **2 NZEF** officers at the head of the branch affected, many of whom, being human, wanted their own particular unit or units raised in the order. There was a constant struggle to prevent the absurd position arising that all were equal and all should be formed at the same time. Once or twice all past work had to be scrapped and a fresh start made. Most senior officers in **2 NZEF** wanted all the officers to come from the force; but quite rightly Army Headquarters maintained that with new units such as these, which were to be formed in New Zealand, Army Headquarters itself was the controlling authority and must leave some vacancies for officers in New Zealand who had not yet served overseas. Analysis of the **United Kingdom** war establishments led us to**

make some changes as the result of our own experience; and this in turn meant that fresh establishments had to be made out and promulgated. It was a busy time.

In mid-September the Division, after refitting and training at **Helwan** and up to establishment again, moved out into the **Western Desert**. This time close contact was maintained from the outset between the Division and base establishments, and between **Divisional Headquarters** and **HQ 2 NZEF**. In fact this contact was never lost again throughout the war. Admittedly this time the line of communication was by road, without the break of a sea journey, and contact was easy to maintain. Up to the beginning of the Libyan campaign in mid-November it took only some six to eight hours to travel by road from **Maadi** to **Divisional Headquarters** at **Baggush**.

During September and October 1941 the **New Zealand Government** showed considerable interest in the operations proposed for the near future, including in this considerable anxiety over the support, both mechanised and in the air, likely to be given to the Division. After all, the Division had just taken part in two reverses. The Government made inquiries from both the GOC and the United Kingdom Government. The position of the former, faced with a request to comment on the plan produced by his military superiors, was a difficult one; but before sending his reply to New Zealand, he submitted it to the Commander-in-Chief, and with good will on both sides a satisfactory wording was found – one which while answering the queries made from New Zealand did not violate secrecy. One of the cables from the United Kingdom Government on the subject, after giving figures of the strength of certain arms – aircraft, tanks, and guns – goes on to say: ‘All the above is of fateful secrecy. War Cabinet here have declined to be informed of the date of the offensive.’

The adjective ‘fateful’ carries the mark of a well-known hand. The intimation about the War Cabinet was a delicate way of stopping any insistence from the **New Zealand Government**.

We had been warned some months earlier that there would be a General Election in New Zealand during 1941, the existing parliament ending its statutory period towards the end of the year. In the middle of October two senior civil servants arrived from New Zealand to make the arrangements for voting among the troops; but two days after they arrived, advice was received from New Zealand that the election was postponed, as the life of parliament had been extended by arrangement between the parties. The civil servants went on to make some investigations and formulated plans which were of value two years later when the election did take place.

Towards the end of

Chapter 2 above it was stated that three forestry companies were serving in the **United Kingdom**, and that their association with **2 NZEF** in the **Mediterranean** could only be slight. In October 1941 official approval was given from New Zealand to a state of affairs already in existence, and the companies were removed from **2 NZEF** and placed under the New Zealand Military Liaison Officer in **London**. The liaison officer was visiting **2 NZEF** about this time, in company with the High Commissioner in **London**, and was able to settle personally the details of the change in control.

During October the first party of women's services arrived from New Zealand and was posted to the New Zealand Forces Club in **Cairo** for welfare duties.

About this time we had the first marriage between members of the Expeditionary Force, in this case an officer and a nurse. There followed a long discussion whether or not the lady should be sent back to New Zealand after the marriage. The GOC for once referred the problem to the Government. It then apparently caused much argument in New Zealand, and finally had to be taken to War Cabinet. In the end, but not until after many months, we were told that married nurses were to be allowed to continue with their service.

At the point when in late November the Division took the field again the replacement position was excellent. During the year we had received fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh reinforcements, some 28,000 all ranks. The net losses in **Greece** and **Crete** were some 5800. There had been, in addition, losses for sickness and compassionate leave amounting in the aggregate to many thousands; but the result was to leave us with sufficient reinforcements for a year's wastage at the rates prevailing at the time – always assuming that losses in prisoners of war would be normal and not as in **Greece** and **Crete**. We had been told that the 8th Reinforcements would be leaving New Zealand in December. We felt that we must play fair, and when the campaign started were seriously considering telling New Zealand that we could do without one draft,

probably the 9th Reinforcements, the composition of which had already been settled between us. The men intended for the draft could then have been used for capital expenditure, i.e., could be used for some of the new units then being formed under FFC 36.

But the enemy – a new enemy this time – again played a part. **Japan** entered the war in December, and we received no more reinforcements until January 1943. Moreover, this alarming addition to our enemies stopped the formation of any corps and line-of-communication units; and while the formation of the Army Tank Brigade continued, the brigade was now intended very firmly for home defence and was retained in New Zealand. To all intents and purposes the work of the previous months on FFC 36 had gone for nothing. We could only shrug our shoulders and look on it as a pleasant exercise.

In the general collapse of plans there disappeared the last attempt to form an **Anzac Corps**. The idea had been alive all through 1941, and the corps had even existed for a brief period in **Greece**. In November we were only awaiting the release of one Australian division from **Tobruk** to go on with the integration of the formations. In early 1942, however, all except one Australian division went back to **Australia**, neither country could go on with the formation of corps troops, and the idea was dropped for good ¹

While we did not realise it at the time, mid-November 1941 was our high-water mark in strength. Our numbers were some 36,000, of whom half were outside the Division. We never reached that figure again, our maximum thereafter being some 34,000 and our average about 32,000.

During the year there had been a slow but steady addition to the number of base and line-of-communication units. We now had three rest homes (medical units), one each for officers, women's services, and other ranks. The medical position had been further improved by the formation of our own Casualty Clearing Station, a much-needed link between field ambulances and base hospitals, and by the formation of a depot for medical stores. We had thought it better to keep the punishment of our

troops as much as possible under our own control and so had formed a **Field Punishment Centre in Maadi Camp**. The time had come when we felt we must play our part in the early care of burial places, and so we formed a **Graves Registration and Inquiry Unit**, the work of which was the first step in a chain that would end with the **Imperial War Graves Commission**. The unit worked within the general Allied framework, was allotted an area of country to work over, and looked after all Allied graves in the area. Also, to work within a GHQ pool we formed a **New Zealand Censor Section**; but in this case the section, while carrying out whatever duties were allotted to it by GHQ, did in fact censor all the New Zealand mails.

In October, in order to help GHQ with the forthcoming campaign, we formed a group of small line-of-communication and corps units – signals and ASC, and the staff for an ambulance train. They lasted until the campaign was finally over in the spring of 1942, after which they were disbanded for the time being. One or two were later re-formed.

The whole of the mass of administrative detail with which Headquarters had had to wrestle during the year had been handled by a quite insufficient number of shorthand-typists, of whom there was a continuing dearth. It was still difficult also to get good clerks; but this deficiency showed signs of easing with the increasing number of men unfit for service in the field.

During December 1941 we had to try to conduct the voting for a by-election in New Zealand. It was not our first nor, indeed, our last; but it came at a time when the Division was fighting in **Cyrenaica**. The Government had to be told that only about half of those entitled to vote could possibly do so.

Towards the end of the year we succeeded in coming to a satisfactory arrangement with Army Headquarters over the difficult problem of compassionate leave, and as a result issued the first of a series of instructions on the subject. The problem is discussed in

Chapter 15.

From the purely administrative standpoint the campaign in **Libya** in November–December 1941 created no special problems for HQ **2 NZEF** and was handled as normal routine. For one thing the campaign, as far as the Division was concerned, lasted only three weeks. For another the Division, less one brigade, came straight back to the area in the **Western Desert** from which it had moved out. While losses were regrettably and even tragically heavy, the disorganisation in units was not as great as in **Greece** or **Crete**, and our reinforcements were plentiful enough to replace losses at once. By this time, moreover, the various parts of HQ **2 NZEF** knew their work much better.

Had the campaign continued, however, there might have been a brief crisis over the forward despatch of reinforcements, for an investigation made by HQ **2 NZEF** on 24 November (a week after the campaign started) showed that the Army authorities had not made any allowance for New Zealand reinforcements to be sent after the Division. We would, of course, have made our own arrangements had the need arisen. It was another lesson for the future – that we would be better advised to look after ourselves.

The one unfortunate feature in the casualties was that the number of prisoners of war was still high – higher than in **Greece**, but not quite so high as in **Crete**. While over half the wounded return to duty in due course, prisoners of war are a total loss. Our reinforcement position had thus worsened somewhat compared with the estimate made before the campaign; and after units had been made up to establishment it appeared that we had enough reinforcements to keep the Division going only until August 1942. It had been intended that we should form one of the corps units overseas – a medium artillery regiment – but this idea was now abandoned, and GHQ was told that we could not form any more units, no matter how small.

In January 1942 we were told by Army Headquarters that we could expect no more reinforcements for an indefinite period.

Towards the end of 1941 we obtained authority from New Zealand to purchase a printing plant, as an alternative to having one sent out from there. Suitable plant was bought in **Cairo**, a **Printing Unit** formed, and the first issue of printed orders distributed in January 1942. The printed word is always easier to read than the cyclostyled one, and everyone welcomed the new departure.

The second group of women's services arrived in January, this time for work in the hospitals.

The situation about shoulder titles was finally settled in January 1942. For some little while we had been experimenting with a cloth strip bearing the words 'New Zealand' in white on a black background, and stitched on the point of the shoulder. This did not get over the problem of removal for washing, and subsequent re-stitching, but a sudden brainwave by one officer produced the idea of a looped title which could be slipped over the shoulder strap which formed a part of all types of uniform. The idea was a success; and after a first issue had been manufactured in Egypt, supplies were drawn from New Zealand.

After about a month in the **Western Desert** the Division moved to the **Suez Canal** near **Ismailia**, arriving there in the middle of January. The intention was that after training for a while in the Canal Zone the whole Division would move to **Syria**. One brigade group later went back to **Libya** for temporary duty in Army reserve.

At the beginning of February a party from the Division joined with other troops (British and South African) in internal security measures in **Cairo**, these including sealing off the Royal Palace while the King of Egypt was brought to see reason.

For the first time some care had to be taken over the morale of the force, not on account of any of its experiences overseas, but because there was a strong, and natural, feeling among the troops that their place was back in New Zealand defending the homeland. This feeling was accentuated when it became known that two-thirds of the Australian

forces were going back to **Australia**, and still further accentuated when somehow or other it became known that **United States** troops were to be stationed in New Zealand. The GOC took special steps to explain to all ranks the strategical reasons that made it advisable that the Division should remain in the **Middle East**, and little by little the feeling died down. The most affected were the non-divisional units stationed in areas away from the rest of the force. The companies were always widely spread out and always felt more cut off from home affairs than the greater assemblage in the Division. In this case, as at intervals throughout their service, we thought it advisable to take some additional steps to impress on them that they were not forgotten, and were just as much part of the Expeditionary Force as anyone else.

The move of the Division to **Syria** in March 1942 was the cause of the first change of communications for **2 NZEF**. For over six months we had looked westwards to the **Western Desert**, and during rest or training periods there had never been more than 250 miles between **Maadi** and the bulk of the Division. No intermediate link was necessary. In Syria, however, it was intended that the Division would be dispersed from front to rear over a distance of more than 150 miles, commencing at the north on the Turkish frontier. **Divisional Headquarters** at **Baalbek** would be some 500 miles from **Maadi**, the rest of the Division being farther away still. It appeared, moreover, that the Division was likely to be there for some time, as it was now in general reserve for a role in the future unspecified at the moment, but with the possibility of an advance to the north into **Turkey**. The view at the time was that the Libyan war would be finally won without our Division taking part.

That being the case, our attention had now to be directed to the east and north instead of to the west. Two hospitals were moved, one to **Nazareth** and one close to **Beirut**. The Convalescent Depot went to the sea-coast in Palestine near a village called **Kfar Vitkin**. For the first time we formed an 'advanced base' known under that title, and intended to be a **Maadi Camp** in miniature. It was located in Palestine in a one-time Australian camp on the coast near the Convalescent Depot at **Kfar**

Vitkin. It was to be large enough to hold one month's reinforcements on the highest scale of wastage, about 900 all ranks. The Division was to draw its reinforcements from Advanced Base, which in turn would draw on **Maadi**. Moreover, men discharged from convalescent depot or hospital in Palestine or **Syria** would go to Advanced Base and not all the way back to **Maadi**. All this was intended to keep the maintenance machinery reasonably close to the Division, so that losses in men could be speedily made up. For similar reasons our postal corps formed an advanced post office in **Beirut**, and pay, records, and ordnance set up small branches in Advanced Base.

It was briefly considered whether or not we should close down in **Maadi**, and indeed in Egypt altogether, and concentrate in Palestine and **Syria**. Our communications to New Zealand still ran through Egypt, however, and the future moves of the Division were by no means firm, so that the idea was never given serious thought.

It is of interest at this stage to look at the locations of the non-divisional engineer units. The railway construction and railway operating groups had been working for some months in the **Western Desert** and **Libya**, where they had made their mark in the construction and operating of the extension of the railway towards **Tobruk**. One of the Army Troops companies was spread out all over the **Western Desert** with its headquarters in **Alexandria**. The other Army Troops company was away down on the **Red Sea** coast of Egypt, developing a small port called **Safaga**. The Mechanical Equipment Company was in bits and pieces from the Western Desert to **Transjordan**. All these units were for operational purposes under GHQ control, and HQ **2 NZEF** had no part in deciding on their locations; but we did try to persuade GHQ to keep them more concentrated, for as New Zealanders they liked to be close to their fellow nationals. In early March 1942, entirely for their benefit, we formed a second Mobile Dental Unit; for it would supply a service that they could not get from the British medical establishments on which they were largely dependent.

In March the strayed brigade came back finally from **Libya** and in

April went on to join the Division in **Syria**. The change in surroundings and climate was of great benefit to all ranks. Probably never before had the members of the Division appreciated the joy to be obtained from green fields and trees and running water.

Having taken note of our reinforcement position – not for the first time – GHQ asked us in March to form a parachute battalion, saying kindly that such work would be most suitable for the New Zealanders' characteristics of initiative and dash. The request was refused, and GHQ was again told that we could form no more units of any kind, and would in fact be glad to have back the men from such few specially formed GHQ units as remained – mostly signals and ASC. To them our attitude must have seemed selfish; but we were determined to keep our pool of reinforcements at a substantial figure. By so doing we could continue to keep the Division up to full establishment and so, in our opinion, help the common cause as much as if we dissipated our effort in a number of oddments.

In early 1942 we received a plaintive wail from the head of the **NAAFI** in the **Middle East**. Our units drew their supplies of canteen stores from this source, and at intervals paid the outstanding accounts; but the disorganisation in **Greece** and **Crete**, and the losses in the recent Libyan campaign, meant either that records had been lost or that the officers who had made the purchases were either killed or prisoners. The correspondence between the **NAAFI** and units had dragged on for months. The blame was by no means all ours, as there had been disorganisation in **NAAFI** also, for it had shared in the catastrophes in **Greece** and **Crete**. The total sum involved ran into many thousands of pounds. In the end we appointed a special investigator, a lawyer, to examine the **NAAFI** claims, both sides agreeing to accept his arbitration; and after a few months he gave his decisions and the accounts were settled.

In April 1942 **2 NZEF** co-operated with Army Headquarters by sending back a party of 46 officers and 140 other ranks to help with the

formation and training of the home defence forces and of the force intended for the **Pacific**. Their loss was felt by **2 NZEF**; but for the moment the need of the home country was at least as great as ours. It should be borne in mind that the **New Zealand Government** was showing remarkable restraint in not insisting on the return of the force to New Zealand.

Advantage was taken of the lull in early 1942 to circulate all the more senior officers and obtain their views on the question – a long-term one – of the final repatriation to New Zealand. On the face of it such a thought at that time appeared premature; but the problem was not an easy one, and merited some attention. The opinions of the officers were collated and, together with some comments from the GOC, were sent back to New Zealand. As far as we were concerned the problem was then put into the back of our minds.

Our women's services were the cause of one or two problems about this time. The first was that they were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain themselves in clothing under the arrangements in force, which were in the main that they were given an initial issue and thereafter an annual monetary grant with which to maintain the issue. For the new auxiliary services the annual grant was quite insufficient; and for all the services, including the nurses, the usefulness of the grant was dependent on the availability of suitable army stores or civilian shops. While Cairo was near at hand goods were readily obtainable, although rising costs were playing their part; but it was not certain that a great city would be available indefinitely. In addition, the existing types of outdoor uniform worn by the nurses had not proved entirely satisfactory for the rough usage they were receiving. A series of discussions was held, and the decision was to increase army issues. In the long run the uniforms of the auxiliary services were almost completely issued from store. The nurses' outdoor uniforms were gradually changed over from white to khaki.

A more difficult problem was that of marriages of members of the force to civilians, or to members of other armies. The real complication came from mixed marriages, i.e., marriages of men to Egyptians,

Armenians, or other nationalities not purely European. The problem is discussed at length in

Chapter 15. It is enough to say here that it began to give trouble about the end of 1941, and was the most irritating problem with which HQ 2 NZEF had to deal throughout the war.

During April 1942 steps were taken to reduce the strength of the training staffs and of the various depots in **Maadi**, the reason being that reinforcements had stopped and that depot staffs would in all likelihood be needed for duty in the field. Depots were either disbanded or were reduced in number by amalgamations.

Our gentle sparring with GHQ about the non-divisional engineer units took a new turn about this time, when to our slight dismay it emerged that some of the units were in part the financial responsibility of the **United Kingdom**, and thus were not a complete 100 percent New Zealand contribution. New Zealand was responsible for pay, uniform, and pensions; the **United Kingdom** was responsible for equipment and stores. Headquarters 2 NZEF had not been told of this by anyone in New Zealand; and indeed at this time we were still in the dark about the financial arrangements for the force itself.



Central and Eastern Mediterranean
Central and Eastern Mediterranean

In April and May we received our first draft of exchanged prisoners of war. Except for a number of permanently unfit men, the draft was in the

main 'protected personnel', i.e., medical or chaplains. After much cabled communication with New Zealand, it was decided to send them back home. While legally there was no objection to their resuming service, the policy adopted by the **United Kingdom** was that it was undesirable that they should serve again on the same front as that on which they had been captured. With this we concurred.

The period from the beginning of March to the beginning of June was a pleasant one for the whole force. The area in which the Division was resting was a complete change from the desert and was packed full of interest. The rest and the freedom from casualties was a relief to all ranks. Stormy days lay ahead, with yet one more crisis and with heavy casualties; but the Division entered on the campaign in good heart and with renewed determination.

¹ As it happened, the Australian Government had decided against the proposal in August 1941.—Long, *Greece, Crete and Syria* (Australian war history), p. 542.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 4 – DEFEAT AND VICTORY

CHAPTER 4

Defeat and Victory

THE enemy attacked in **Libya** towards the end of May 1942 and by the middle of June showed signs of being victorious. In order to reinforce the Eighth Army the Division was warned on 14 June to prepare to move back to the **Western Desert**. The move started on the 15th and was spectacular in its speed, the whole Division being in its new position within ten days. It was at once obvious that a grim battle lay ahead, that defence of Egypt took precedence over any other plans, and that the Division was finished with **Syria** for at least some time to come.

In those circumstances, the decision was taken to close down **Advanced Base** and the other small administrative offices in **Palestine** and **Lebanon** and withdraw personnel to **Maadi**. **Advanced Base** closed officially before the end of June. There was no question of re-establishing it elsewhere, as by that time the Division was already fighting in an area closer to Egypt than ever before, and further withdrawals seemed likely. The medical establishments in the **Levant** were left where they were for the moment – one hospital in **Nazareth** and one in **Beirut**, and the Convalescent Depot at **Kfar Vitkin** – but after a short delay the **Nazareth** hospital was moved to the vicinity of the **Suez Canal**. The Convalescent Depot and the hospital in **Beirut** remained in their positions, partly because the areas were good ones and partly because, in the case of the hospital at least, the location fitted in with the general layout of all Allied hospitals. This point is mentioned here in view of later dissensions, to be narrated in their place.

The campaign started sensationally, not to say tragically, by the GOC being wounded and flown back to hospital at **Helwan**. Another officer was at once appointed to command the Division; but, as it happened, the GOC's wound was not severe enough for him to hand over what might be called ' **2 NZEF**' matters, and he continued in his capacity as commander of the force as a whole.

By the beginning of July the crisis had spread back from the **Western Desert** to Egypt itself, where hasty preparations had to be made for the worst, namely a failure of the Eighth Army to hold the enemy on the line then reached, stretching from the **Qattara Depression** to the sea and only 60 miles from **Alexandria**. The immediate crisis lasted for two or three days, until it was seen that the enemy was not going to storm the Delta; but bitter defensive battles still faced the Allied troops, with an uncertain outcome. It behoved base and line-of-communication headquarters to plan for an unfavourable outcome.

So, in common with other sedentary offices, **HQ 2 NZEF** and all the associated offices – medical, pay, records, etc. – had to prepare to move back either to the line of the **Suez Canal**, or even farther. General Headquarters had made plans to withdraw to southern Palestine and agreed that, if circumstances became bad enough to warrant this move, **HQ 2 NZEF** should move with it and be accommodated in the same area. A small reconnaissance party went off to Palestine and, pending its return, plans were drawn up for the move. Like all sedentary headquarters we had accumulated files. The first thing to do was to reduce the quantity, so there was a series of bonfires – and a splendid excuse was provided for failure in future years to trace some communication – ‘destroyed during the crisis in July 1942’. The move was planned to take place in two or three stages, the various parties being at so many hours’ notice.

At the same time preparations were made to defend **Maadi Camp** itself, and exercises were held to ensure that the mixed collection of troops were ready for the unexpected. There were rumours of the possibility of a parachute attack, or at least of a parachute raid, and this was taken into account.

Concurrently with these activities, a drastic comb-out was then started in **Maadi** in order to swell the numbers of reinforcements, every man of whom was going to be needed. Staffs were reduced all round, depots further amalgamated or disbanded, and a fine-tooth comb dragged

through all our base establishments. We had to be firm with a much-harried GHQ and insist on the return of some small parties away on guard duties. One bright spot was the discovery that practically all the men then serving at **Maadi** had seen at least some amount of field service. The exceptions were nearly all due to medical unfitness. There was no ground for the common belief that there were hundreds of total *embusqués* in **Maadi Camp**. During July and August the total employed in **Maadi** was much reduced; and to set an example, part of the staffs of **HQ 2 NZEF** and **HQ Maadi Camp** were amalgamated, and then later on the two headquarters were integrated under one commander.

A trying problem during this period was what to do with our women's services and, even more difficult, what to do with the wives of members of **2 NZEF**, of whom, of one sort and another, there were now some scores. Some behaved admirably; others were hysterical and wellnigh lived on the doorstep of Headquarters in **Maadi**. Plans were drawn up for the evacuation of all women, whether serving members or wives, to South Africa; and while the service women waited for the point when there would be real danger, the wives were put under pressure to accept evacuation without delay. A number, especially those with children, accepted the offer of immediate repatriation to New Zealand via the Union of South Africa – where, as it happened, they had to wait for some months, and created their own little crop of work for the conducting officer and the kindly people of the country. The New Zealand Government had agreed without hesitation to bear all the costs of this move.

As the month of July came to an end, it became progressively clearer that the danger of invasion of Egypt was passing. The period of notice under which Headquarters and the women's services had been placed was gradually extended until it became unnecessary to have any notice at all; but the plans were kept up to date for some months.

The losses during June and July had been tragic, especially in senior officers. They hit home to all at **Maadi** all the more vividly because the Division was now so close that it could be reached in two or three hours.

It was gratifying that we were in a position to replace most of the casualties and keep the Division for the moment in fair strength even if not up to establishment. One infantry brigade had so many casualties that it was withdrawn to **Maadi** for reforming and refitting. This same brigade was later chosen for turning over to armour and was out of action for the rest of the fighting in North Africa.

At the earliest possible date parties were sent back from the Division on leave and were accommodated in **Maadi Camp**. Special arrangements were made to ensure that it was a real spell for the men. They were immediately given fresh clothes and placed in a remote area with no set routine at all, provided with messing facilities which gave them meals individually at any time they liked, and issued free with beer when they felt like it. The result was that they did have a rest, and in the main kept away from **Cairo**.

At one stage during the crisis GHQ planned to take the despatch of reinforcements for all formations into its own hands, for the quite good reason that congestion of the roads and tracks forward was becoming insupportable. This meant that if our Division wanted reinforcements, first Eighth Army and then GHQ would have to agree; and presumably if the moment in their opinion was not propitious, or if our demand came low in the order of priority, would not agree. We had to concur with the principle, but showed no enthusiasm for the scheme; and it was lucky that the front stabilised and the machinery was little used. It was just as well, as it is certain that if the Division had called for reinforcements, no excuse such as that GHQ would not agree would have been accepted by either the Divisional Commander or by formation and unit commanders.

Towards the end of May we had been asked by GHQ to take part in a scheme designed to make the enemy believe that there were more formed bodies of fighting troops in the **Middle East** than actually existed. Our part would be to give formation and unit numbers to the units in **Maadi Camp** and to rename the camp itself as a New Zealand

division. The scheme, named **CASCADE**, had a certain fascination, and we agreed to play. We had to consult Army Headquarters to be provided with numbers for units, numbering throughout the war being a New Zealand responsibility. In the end **Maadi Camp** was entitled 'Sixth New Zealand Division' (6 NZ Division), the camp works section 25 NZ Field Company, the infantry training depot **9 NZ Infantry Brigade**, the camp hospital 23 NZ Field Ambulance and so on. A fresh vehicle sign, a kiwi, was brought into use for the units of the new division. The scheme was effective by the end of June and continued with some modifications until late 1944. Our contribution was only a part of the whole, which applied to **United Kingdom** and South African units also. It was of some value, for an Allied order of battle captured from the enemy after **Alamein** showed many of the shadow units as in existence and overestimated the Allied strength by about a third.

The introduction of this scheme meant that a number would have to be allotted to our real division. In the Order of Battle of the country's forces kept at Army Headquarters it had always been known as the **Second Division**; but the number had never been used in the **Middle East**, where it was known simply as the New Zealand Division. Concurrently with **CASCADE** we adopted the title **Second New Zealand Division** (2 NZ Division). The change was effective as from 29 June and quickly became known and used by all concerned.

It is mentioned above that a vehicle sign of a kiwi was used by the so-called 6 NZ Division. The **Second Division** – the real division – had from the first used a fernleaf, having inherited it from the New Zealand Division of the 1914–18 war. Hitherto no special vehicle sign had been used by HQ **2 NZEF** nor by the non-divisional units. For the latter we had experimented with a black fernleaf on a white background, the reverse of the normal; but this was not very clever, for optical illusion often made it difficult to appreciate the difference. So now we grasped the nettle, and after trying out on sample vehicles such things as mako sharks, tikis, and Mount Cook, settled on the Southern Cross for all NZEF and non-divisional units – the Cross as on the national flag, red

stars with a narrow white edging on a dark-blue background.

By the middle of August the real strain was over, and we were beginning to think about future offensives, helped by the information from New Zealand that the Government would be prepared to send us a draft of reinforcements later in the year. There followed an exchange of cables with New Zealand about the constitution of the draft, the main point at issue being whether Army Headquarters should send out the Army Tank Brigade – or one or more of its battalions – as formed units, or whether the equivalent number of men should come as unorganised reinforcements. If the former alternative were adopted, one infantry brigade overseas would be broken up, and the proposed turnover of another to armour would be cancelled. The Army Tank Brigade had been approved as part of FFC 36 in the latter half of 1941. Since then the Division had had a lot of experience, both good and bad, with armour, and the GOC now had his own ideas about what was wanted – a more mobile, harder hitting ‘armoured brigade’ as opposed to the less aggressive ‘army tank brigade’. Authorities in New Zealand showed a natural desire to send the units out to us unbroken. Both parties to the discussion were careful not to tread on the other's corns; but in the end the GOC's views, put forward firmly but respectfully, carried the day. The draft came to us with one formed tank battalion only, the rest being individual men; and even this one unit was broken up soon after arrival and the men merged into the new armoured brigade. The arrival of the draft will be mentioned later.

The changeover of the infantry brigade to armour was only a minor problem to HQ **2 NZEF**. It was in the main a case of new equipment and training, the equipment being drawn from **United Kingdom** depots when available and the training being handled by the brigade commander. After all, the whole formation was out of the line and engaged on this one task. Almost the only action taken by Headquarters was to form a new corps in the Expeditionary Force, the ‘Armoured Corps’, to transfer to this corps the Divisional Cavalry, which hitherto had been a corps on its own, and to turn the one-time battalions of the brigade into

armoured regiments.

In September, despite the reinforcement position, we felt compelled to co-operate with GHQ to the extent of helping it out with staff for rear duties. Our agreement to this was dependent upon our running an organised area with our own staff, instead of lending officers and men as individuals for duties in odd posts. In the end we staffed an Area Headquarters in the Canal Zone. During the discussions GHQ pointed out that if we were to contribute to base and line-of-communications staff at the same rate as did the [United Kingdom](#), we would have to find 502 officers and 2566 other ranks. There were some fallacies in this argument, which will be dealt with in

Chapter 11; but it is probably true that we were not doing enough.

Supplying the personnel for this area staff meant that we were down to the bone as far as men were concerned. The Division was reasonably strong, but depots were to all intents and purposes empty. It was fortunate that the next draft to arrive promised to be exceptionally well trained, for the personnel had been under arms in New Zealand for most of the year.

During the period from August to October there was the usual crop of problems, big and little, irritating and amusing, but luckily not of the first order. It transpired, for instance, that it was doubtful if the members of our women's services were governed by the ordinary military law. We did not expect any disciplinary troubles, and our concern was more from the standpoint of their position *vis-à-vis* other troops; but it was advisable that all should be in order. The position was doubtful within New Zealand also. In the end, after an exchange of cables, special Emergency Regulations were passed in New Zealand and all was well.

The first six weeks of the campaign that started at **Alamein** on 23 October 1942 created no special work for HQ **2 NZEF**. Admittedly the Division was getting steadily farther away, and this time it was clear that there was not going to be any more withdrawal, but that the advance was going to continue. The Division rested for some weeks after crossing the Libyan border, and this enabled administrative contact to be maintained and such reinforcements as we could find sent forward. From early December onwards, however, contact became more difficult. The Division was then beyond **Benghazi**, and was shortly to swing round far beyond **El Agheila**. Road transport for either men or stores from **Maadi** to the Division became an impossibility and we had to start making use of sea transport from **Alexandria** to **Benghazi**. To help in this we formed another port detachment to work at **Benghazi**, as again we found that a small party of our own was of advantage in speeding up the forward despatch of men or stores. From the middle of December to the end of January we were practically out of touch, as by that time the

distance even from **Benghazi** to the Division was beyond the economic use of MT. In fact, at that stage the whole Eighth Army had cut itself adrift from contact with the rear and was depending on the early capture of **Tripoli**. Such road transport as did go forward from **Benghazi** was confined to carrying the barest essentials of rations and ammunition to tide over the period until **Tripoli** had been taken. It was captured in the last week in January.

At that point a new situation arose. The Division was continuing under the Eighth Army and so would be advancing still farther westwards, quite beyond any contact with depots in Egypt. For the second time, therefore, it was decided to form an Advanced Base, to be located near **Tripoli**, and to hold reinforcements sent from Egypt by sea. (By this time the 8th Reinforcements had arrived.) The port detachment from **Benghazi** moved to **Tripoli**; a site in a pleasantly rural area called **Suani Ben Adem** was found for Advanced Base; a wing of the Convalescent Depot was set up near by; and the GOC considered that it was time we had a hospital of our own behind the Division's line of advance. At this time our hospitals were still at **Helwan**, in the **Suez Canal** zone, and at **Beirut**. It was this last hospital that we wished to move.

General Headquarters objected strongly to the move and, owing to its control of rail and sea transport, was in a position to block it. The locations of our hospitals were governed by two factors: first, the wish of New Zealanders to be treated in their own hospitals (and therefore always to have one hospital readily accessible to men from the Division), and second, the general distribution of all Allied hospitals so as to meet the needs of the army at large. We attached the greater importance to the first of these factors, GHQ to the second; and in this case the two factors were in conflict, as GHQ had already moved a sufficient number of hospitals to suitable positions for the Eighth Army. General Headquarters maintained, moreover, that by the time the hospital was functioning in its new area (presumably near **Tripoli**) the campaign would be over. However, the GOC was firm and pointed out that we had

not had a hospital of our own anywhere near the Division since the campaign started in October 1942. With very bad grace, GHQ agreed to the move. General Headquarters was right in its contention, as the hospital was not functioning fully until the latter half of April, the campaign ended in early May, and the Division left on its return to Egypt shortly afterwards.

At that point we were able to make the *amende honorable* and agree that both hospital and Convalescent Depot should stay in the area during the campaign in **Sicily**, in which the Division played no part. The hospital remained there until September, cut off from all other New Zealand units, so that in the end we did feel that we had played our part in the common cause.

To go back to the point after the capture of **Tripoli** – Advanced Base was established during February 1943 and, for the second time, intermediate offices were opened for such things as pay, records, and postal duties. Casualties in this campaign had been low, lower than our estimates, and much lower than in any previous fighting; but we continued to hold the equivalent of one month's wastage in the depot at Advanced Base. Reinforcements were sent forward from there in our own transport, but once or twice we helped GHQ by using reinforcement drafts to drive convoys of MT vehicles intended as replacements for losses. Even from **Tripoli** forward distances were great, and at its limit just short of **Tunis** the Division was some 500 miles from Advanced Base. The only comfort was that very soon the advance must stop.

For the moment a return must be made to the latter months of 1942. During this period we had further discussions with Army Headquarters about compassionate leave, a problem that was becoming increasingly acute with the years. Many little points were cleared up and in the end we were satisfied that the best possible was being done in New Zealand to investigate the cases and report on them. In February 1943 a fresh issue of the instructions on the subject was promulgated, a copy being in **Appendix IX**.

Towards the end of 1942 the British Army formed the new corps of [Electrical and Mechanical Engineers](#), taking away from the old Ordnance Corps that portion which dealt with such technicalities. After only slight hesitation we recommended to New Zealand that we should follow suit, and the recommendation was approved. The change became effective in December 1942.

As 1942 had gone on, the manpower position had become progressively more acute. At Maadi we did our best to maintain the comb-out and, what was more difficult, to resist the only too frequent requests for more men for this and that. The time for luxuries had for the moment ceased to be. It so happened that in December the GOC agreed to the formation of another unit within the Division, aimed at improving the amenities for the troops. It was only a field bakery section and the numbers were small, 37 all ranks; but to the careworn accountants of manpower at HQ [2 NZEF](#) it resembled the famous last straw. For once the Officer in Charge of Administration had to warn the GOC that if this sort of thing went on there would shortly be no more troops to do the fighting. The unit, of course, did excellent service, but in principle its formation just at that time was questionable.

In January 1943 the problem of the marginally unfit man became acute. It is dealt with in more detail in

Chapter 15. Here it will be enough to say that we had to set up a special standing committee to review cases, and at the same time appointed a full-time officer to do nothing else except look after affected cases and ensure that men had work that was productive and not merely time-filling.

In January the 8th Reinforcements arrived, some 5500 strong. Never was any draft more welcome throughout the war. The draft was well trained and could be handed over to active units with less training overseas than was usual. It was speedily absorbed, as our numbers were low.

In March 1943 the Eighth Army advancing from the south was joined to the Allied army coming from the west (**Algeria**) and control of the combined forces passed to General Eisenhower, who had his headquarters in **Algiers**. This meant that censorship of war correspondents' despatches was done there instead of in **Cairo**. We sent one correspondent there as liaison officer. From the beginning we had difficulties, for the reason that the headquarters in **Algiers** had had no experience of Dominion troops and would not allow them a separate identity. There was some acerbity, and a degree of plain speaking, and in the end our despatches were cleared with reasonable speed. We had by this time established such a good understanding with General Headquarters, **Middle East**, that it was irritating to have to start all over again. It was, however, not the last time that we had to assert our separate identity.

As soon as the victory at **Alamein** was seen to be certain, i.e., in December 1942, the Australians withdrew their remaining division for service in the **Pacific**. Naturally there was a recrudescence of the uneasy feeling in **2 NZEF** that our place was in New Zealand; but the troops were now advancing victoriously, the tide of the war had turned, even in the **Pacific**, and the feeling died down quickly.

After the withdrawal of the Australian forces HQ **2 NZEF** offered to look after **Australia's** interests, so to speak. We had already made the

Australians free of our clubs. Now we said that we would handle any parties of exchanged or escaped prisoners. There was always a sprinkling of Australians about, both in North Africa and in **Italy**, and it gave us pleasure to look after them.

March 1943 produced the beginning of an exchange of cables with New Zealand about a General Election, which now seemed likely to take place later in the year. It was agreed that in due course New Zealand would send out someone with the necessary instructions and authority to handle the voting; and then for the moment the matter was put aside.

Since Japan had entered the war in December 1941 the only mails to and from New Zealand had been carried by sea, a sad blow to those who had become accustomed to air mails. During 1942, however, postal authorities in the countries concerned – **United States, United Kingdom, Egypt, and New Zealand** – had arranged for the introduction of an airgraph service – microfilmed air letter-cards – and this was started to and from New Zealand in March 1943. At the outset, troops had to be rationed to only one card a week; but it was at least something, and meant that an answer to a letter could be received in a matter of weeks instead of months.

During March there were other discussions with New Zealand on manpower, which was now becoming a problem in New Zealand too. After careful examination, and taking a bit of a chance on the future, **HQ 2 NZEF** agreed to a delay of two months in the sailing of the next draft, the 9th Reinforcements. It had been intended to despatch it in March; but it did not sail until mid-May.

Advanced Base had its teething troubles, as was only to be expected. One arose out of our desire to be helpful to British Headquarters, in this case Rear Headquarters of the Eighth Army. With some hesitation Advanced Base had agreed to lend men for guard duties, the understanding being that the men were to be given back as soon as they were wanted for a draft to the Division; but it always seemed to happen that the moment when we wanted them was an awkward one for Army

Headquarters, and there were appeals to be allowed to retain them for a further period. Then there would be an argument embarrassing to both sides; but we had to be firm and get the men back.

For some weeks before the beginning of March 1943 we had known that the Minister of Defence was proposing to visit the Expeditionary Force. The time first suggested for his visit was unsuitable for the Division, which was just beginning (mid-March) one of its outstanding operations, the outflanking of the **Mareth** line; but the Minister decided to adhere to his plans and arrive on the original date, but confine his activities to that portion of the Expeditionary Force not engaged in **Tunisia**. He would then go to England, engage in part of his business there, and later come back to see the Division at a more suitable time. He arrived initially on 16 March and stayed until 3 April, visiting all the camps and units in Egypt, together with some of the non-divisional units in the **Western Desert** and in **Syria** and Palestine.

From the start the policy was for the Minister to talk freely to the men and so get an opinion on their real feelings. At the end of each day he would tell Headquarters what questions he had been asked, and what matters appeared to be troubling the men. He would then be given an answer if one was known. Otherwise, Headquarters would engage to investigate the query. It was gratifying that there were few complaints, and even fewer real grievances, and that most of the matters raised with the Minister referred to happenings in New Zealand and not in the Expeditionary Force.

At this time (March–April 1943) our non-divisional units were spread out from **Tunisia** to **Beirut**. The Railway Construction Group had been moved complete to Palestine and **Lebanon**, where it was extending the railway line up the coast from **Acre** in Palestine to **Beirut** in **Lebanon**. The Railway Operating Group was again running the trains as far as **Tobruk**. The artillery **Survey Battery**, after a spell in both **Transjordan** and **Syria** on ordinary survey work, had at last joined the Division and was carrying out artillery duties. One Army Troops company was in the **Western Desert**, mostly engaged on improving the water supply; one had

moved from the small port of [Safaga](#) on the [Red Sea](#) to [Benghazi](#), where it was helping to get the port back into full running order. The [Mechanical Equipment Company](#) was strewn out over a good part of [Libya](#).

Even the opening up of [Tripoli](#) had not led to the abandonment of [Benghazi](#), and we had to re-form the Port Detachment at the latter port.

It was not until April that we received the full details of the financial arrangements between the [United Kingdom](#) and New Zealand Governments under which the Expeditionary Force was operating. It was, in brief, that first a lump sum should be paid for initial equipment; second, a lump sum should be paid to cover maintenance up to 31 July 1942; and third, there should be a monthly payment of a fixed sum for maintenance after 1 August 1942. We now felt a bit surer of our ground when dealing with British authorities. Had it not been for the generosity and forbearance of these authorities, we might often have found ourselves in difficulties. This is further mentioned in

Chapter 11.

The Minister of Defence arrived back in North Africa on 27 April, but this time went direct to the Division. It was now right up against the last mountain defences of **Tunis** and was not very active, so that the Minister was able to see most of the units. He stayed there about a week and then came back to Egypt, visiting one or two units in **Libya** en route. He left us finally on 14 May.

Towards the end of May the Division started on its long journey by road back to **Maadi**, some 1800 miles away. Advanced Base was closed on 23 May, and with the exception of the medical units mentioned on **page 58**, all our administrative units were withdrawn to Egypt. In preparation for the return of the Division, **Maadi Camp** was cleared of a number of the depots, which moved to Puttick Camp at **Mena**, some miles away near the Pyramids. **Helwan** was no longer available, having long ago become the main South African base. **Maadi** was so much the New Zealand home that the Division preferred to pack itself closely in there, rather than go to an area elsewhere in Egypt. For those who were badly in need of recuperation, a leave camp was started at **Alexandria**.

During the Minister's visit discussions had taken place on a scheme for furlough for long-service personnel, following on some cabled communications with New Zealand. The broad principles had been established, and the proposals had been further considered in the weeks following the Minister's departure. Any scheme was dependent on the Division being freed from an operational role, which was now the position. It had previously been made clear to GHQ that the Division would not be available for the next campaign, the invasion of **Sicily**, planning for which had been going on for some time.

The way was now clear, for the first time for over two years, for the Expeditionary Force to turn its attention to matters unconnected with fighting.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 5 – TOWARDS ROME

CHAPTER 5

Towards Rome

AS soon as the Division had settled down in **Maadi**, all concerned had to concentrate on the furlough scheme without delay. The broad idea was to release as many of the first three echelons as could be spared and for whom shipping was available; but the governing factor was to be the efficiency of the force. A certain degree of dislocation was inevitable, the permissible degree being comparatively high in view of the long battle experience of the Division and the consequent high standard of training. In the end it was possible for the GOC to agree to the release of some 6000 all ranks, the battle-worthiness of the Division still remaining at a good level.

The conferences and discussions that followed within the force, and the cables that passed between Headquarters and New Zealand, had all to be concentrated into a few days, everyone working at the greatest pressure. The New Zealand Government had already made preliminary arrangements with the United Kingdom Government about shipping, so that when a suitable vessel, the *Nieuw Amsterdam*, was offered it had to be accepted without hesitation, although its arrival was sooner than we had expected, and much sooner than we would have preferred. The arrangements for the selection of the men and, even more difficult, for the selection of those officers and NCOs who could be spared, meant round-the-clock working for the staff concerned.

The instructions for this scheme, the code-name for which was **Ruapehu**, were issued piecemeal as fast as some aspect or aspects could be determined, which made it a scrappy business. Had we waited, however, until all the points had been determined before issuing any instructions, the scheme would never have commenced at all. There were seventeen instructions altogether, one being given in **Appendix VII**.

The Division did not return to **Maadi** until the end of May, and the draft sailed for New Zealand on 15 June. The staff concerned with

making the arrangements may be pardoned for following up the embarkation with a sigh of relief and a mild celebration.

The code-name for the first draft had been taken from a notable geographical feature in the **North Island** bearing a Maori name. For the next following draft we intended to turn to the **South Island**, and in fact the name chosen was Wakatipu. Thereafter we alternated between the two islands, Taupo, Kaikoura, Tongariro, and Hawea following in due course.

For some time past the **New Zealand Government** had been in consultation with the United Kingdom Government about the future movements of the Division, there being in New Zealand a feeling that it should now come back to join in the defence of the **Pacific**. Not for the first nor yet the last time, the Government, supported by parliament, took a broad view and decided that the Expeditionary Force should stay in the **Mediterranean**. The appreciation of this decision shown by the United Kingdom Government spread to the various headquarters in the area, and explained in part why in the long run they were always so forbearing of our requests and our, to them, unusual and irritating ways.

We were told of this decision towards the end of May; but at the same time were told of the manpower situation in New Zealand, which was causing some concern. It was beginning to be doubtful if men could be found to keep the force at its existing figure. This brought up the position of the non-divisional engineers, some units of which were in any case severely hit by the furlough scheme. Practically all the companies had come with the first three echelons, had had few casualties and now found that up to 90 per cent of their strength was due for relief. The Government decided the fate of the Railway Operating Group out of hand by directing that it should be returned complete, so that the personnel could be used for work on the railways in New Zealand. Of the remaining units, some would have to be broken up almost at once. The rest would continue working for the present, but would receive no more reinforcements and might later have to be 'cannibalised' to help the Division. Scant attention was paid in these

decisions to the needs of GHQ, which had wryly to accept what we told it, and had no chance to make any plea for the full retention of the units. However, the North African campaign was over. What the future held no one knew for certain, but probably the arrival of **United States** troops would compensate for the withdrawal of ours.

In view of what the Government had said about manpower, we made an estimate of the degree to which we could dilute the strength of our force with women. Many of the tasks in **Maadi Camp**, for instance, could be undertaken by women, who for some duties would be better than men. Clerical work of all kinds was an obvious example. Our estimate was that we could take 900 women, so replacing 700 men, including almost the whole staff of Second Echelon.

Altogether the matters being discussed with New Zealand were so many and of such importance that it was decided that the GOC should make a hurried trip to New Zealand and carry on the discussions on the spot. He left with one staff officer on 6 June, as soon as the broad outlines of the furlough scheme were settled, and before the draft sailed.

On 11 June, in the middle of the turmoil surrounding the assembly of the furlough draft, the 9th Reinforcements arrived – not a big draft but, as always, very welcome. They could not be accommodated initially in **Maadi Camp** owing to the Division being there, but went to **Puttick Camp** on the other side of **Cairo**.

In May on the way back from **Tunisia** some soldiers of the Division took part in a bad case of rape, one of the worst offences of any kind that occurred during the war. The place was in **Tripolitania**, many hundreds of miles from **Maadi**. The offence was not reported to us until the Division had arrived in **Maadi**, but it was too bad to ignore. The difficulties of the case were great, and will be mentioned in

Chapter 15. It is sufficient to say here that we had to send a regular convoy of vehicles and troops all the way back to **Tripolitania**, not only once but two or three times. The offenders were found and duly punished by court martial.

The furlough scheme added to the complications of the everlasting marriage problem, in that many husbands wanted their wives to go back with them on the same vessel – an impossibility, as the vessel was in no way fitted to carry wives. We had to allow some husbands to contract out of the scheme so that they could stay with their wives. The number of married personnel was not great, but they caused troubles out of all proportion to their numbers.

Nothing daunted by the previous refusal earlier in the year, GHQ asked us again to form a parachute unit, but was told once and for all that we could form no more units unless for the immediate advantage of our own Division. As far as GHQ Middle East was concerned, that was its last request.

While the bulk of the men selected for furlough had gone back on the *Nieuw Amsterdam*, there were still odd parties whose release had been delayed one way or another, and whom we wished to get back at once. The New Zealand Government, during discussions about this, put some definite restrictions on the number of men who would be allowed to travel on unescorted vessels. If the vessel were under 15 knots in speed, the maximum draft was to be 25; if over 15 knots unescorted, then 100 could go. If a party was over these numbers, then the vessels must have an escort. The reasons were good, and we could not cavil at the decision; but it did slow up the return to New Zealand of small parties for the rest of the war.

At the end of June there was a marked lull in all our activities, for which everyone was thankful. It had been a strenuous thirty days.

During July the usual number of odd matters had to be dealt with. We had discussions with GHQ about what would happen if **Italy** were to

surrender, so releasing large numbers of prisoners of war. We finally decided that practically all the clothing for nurses and other women's services would have to be issued. We asked Army Headquarters to take action directed towards introducing new punishments for officers, including reduction in rank or to the ranks. We were told that the airgraph service had been speeded up by going via **Ceylon** and **Australia**, a new long-distance flight having started from Colombo to **Perth**. On the whole, however, July was a month of suspended animation, while we awaited the return of the GOC. He arrived back on the 31st after a strenuous trip.

The decision was then taken to disband all the remaining non-divisional units, the men not qualified for furlough being absorbed into the Division. Of the officers, some volunteered to join divisional units, and some accepted appointments with British units in the area or in **India**. The disbandment started in August, but was not fully effective for three months thereafter.

The next furlough draft (Wakatipu), comprising in the main the balance of the first three echelons, started assembling in August. Hopes were high that it would be sailing soon; but as it happened, owing to shortage of shipping, it was January 1944 before it sailed, a delay of over four months. We had to take some special steps to keep up the morale of this party.

The 10th Reinforcements arrived on 18 August 1943, only two months after the ninths. The situation was now fully restored, the Division was up to establishment again, and satisfactory numbers of reinforcements were in the depots. With the 10th Reinforcements there arrived a number of men who had been officers in New Zealand and who had had to revert to the ranks when proceeding overseas to the **Mediterranean**. They caused complications. On the one hand the GOC wished to be fair to them and restore their rank as soon as was reasonable; but on the other hand the existing and likely vacancies were not numerous enough to make this possible for many months.

During September 1943 the Division moved out of **Maadi** into a training area in the desert not far west of **Alexandria** and all the depots came back to **Maadi**, which once more became our main base camp. The Division was soon placed under orders to move to **Italy**, the move to take place in November, but this was then speeded up to take place in October. Past experience had told us what steps to take this time. **Divisional Headquarters** established a special Administrative Post to stay in Egypt at the despatching end until the move was complete. Plans were prepared for an advanced base to be established in **Italy** as soon as the first elements of the Division arrived there. It appeared that the Division was moving to **Europe** permanently, a state of affairs that would of necessity cause some changes further back, of which the formation of an advanced base would be only the beginning. For the moment no further action was taken; but future possibilities were much in our minds.

During September voting took place throughout the force for the General Election in New Zealand. An officer to conduct the election had arrived with the 10th Reinforcements. There was some confusion over election manifestoes, but luckily the whole force was inactive and so available to vote.

As part of the reduction in New Zealand's overseas commitments the Forestry Group in the **United Kingdom** had been reduced from three companies to one. This company was moved to the **Mediterranean** and arrived in **Algeria** in September. As it had been arranged that it should join **2 NZEF** and cease to be under the control of the military authorities in England, a staff officer from Headquarters visited it soon after its arrival, so as to establish a link between the company and its new controlling authority. Among other things it was arranged that the company should get its share at once of our various welfare activities.

The Division moved to **Italy** in the first half of October. We already had a port detachment at **Alexandria**, the port of embarkation, and now established one at **Taranto**, the port of disembarkation. Advanced Base

moved about the same time and was functioning between **Taranto** and **Bari** before the end of the month. Advanced offices were opened there for postal, pay, records and so on. The hospital from **Tripoli** moved at once – this time with the approval of the British authorities – and was ready in **Italy** as soon as the first New Zealand casualties occurred.

At an early stage slight difficulties arose with the new GHQ under whose orders we came. We had left our old friends, General Headquarters, **Middle East**, and were now under General Headquarters, Central Mediterranean Force (CMF), which meant that we had to start afresh to assert our degree of self-containment as a small national army. The new GHQ had been prepared for a fighting division, but had not appreciated that the Division had quite an important tail. The various administrative staff officers of HQ **2 NZEF**, including OICA, had to make several trips to advanced GHQ at **Naples**, and repeated visits to the local British area commander, before the position was satisfactory.

Concurrently with the move of the Division to **Italy**, we had co-operated with the new GHQ by setting up our own section of the general organisation formed to receive returned, or rather liberated, prisoners of war. Owing to the rapid reaction of the Germans to the Italian armistice, the numbers were not as great as had been hoped. Luckily, by the time we wanted our personnel for other duties the rush was over. The continuing problem of the steady trickle of escaped prisoners of war that reached the Allied lines in the next year or so was solved by our later forming a permanent Prisoner-of-War Repatriation Unit, which, while working within the Allied framework, handled our own escapees.



ITALY

Gradually the outline of an administrative layout in **Italy** was emerging. The problem was what to do with all our installations and units in **Egypt**, headed by HQ **2 NZEF**. It was accepted as definite that no matter what moves the Division might make, it would not be coming back to **Egypt**, so that a case could be made out for closing down in **Egypt** completely. Thought was given to this during September and October, and all the pros and cons set out; but it was then thought better to delay further action until the position in **Italy** was a little clearer. A decision would have to be made before long, for on it depended the degree of work to be carried out at Advanced Base.

Meanwhile, in **New Zealand** there had been difficulties over the return to the **Mediterranean** of the first furlough draft. The details are not the concern of this volume; but it appeared that there was a strong feeling in the country that the draft had done their bit, and that their places should be taken by younger and fresher men. At first it was only the married men who were deleted officially from the returning party; but little by little the numbers were further reduced, either by official action or by passive resistance. In the end only a small part of the draft ever did come back to us. Towards the end of the year (1943) many cables passed between the Government and the GOC on the question of future drafts, as the long-term calculations made while the COC was in **New Zealand** had now been nullified. The Government did its best to

compensate for the deficiency by increasing later reinforcement drafts; but for the first time our reinforcement position became erratic, and we had to become accustomed to a sort of hand-to-mouth existence. It took some time for both the Government and the Expeditionary Force to admit that 'furlough' was a misnomer, and that once men returned to New Zealand on leave they were gone from the Expeditionary Force for good. The effect on the Division was not so great as might have been expected, for with few exceptions, and those for good reasons, all the officers came back to us, and a good part of the NCOs also.

In October and November there took place a small operation in the Dodecanese Islands in which the New Zealand portion of the **Long Range Desert Group** took part, landing on the island of **Leros**. The operations were failures, and as it happened attracted the attention of the press to an exceptional degree. From the New Zealand angle, it was unfortunate that the troops had been committed to the operation without the knowledge of either the New Zealand Government or the GOC. Previously the unit's activities had taken place in the same theatre of war as the Division's, and the Government was always conscious that at any one moment the unit might be in action; but now the Division had gone to **Italy**, and the Aegean islands were a new theatre of war. The news that New Zealand troops were there at all gave the country a shock, intensified and indeed embittered by the conduct of the operation, which was severely criticised in the British press. The New Zealand Government showed great annoyance and expressed its views forcibly to the United Kingdom Government. The outcome was that the troops who survived the operation were returned to **2 NZEF**, the New Zealand portion of the **Long Range Desert Group** was disbanded and the troops were absorbed into the Division. They came back to us in December.

In one class of reinforcements, namely doctors and dentists, New Zealand was finding it most difficult to keep up the supply. There is no doubt that the service we received overseas from these two professional classes was exceptionally high, much higher than with any other British or Dominion troops; but the time had now come when we had to accept

a slight reduction in the service. Incidentally, we were under long-sustained pressure from New Zealand to reduce the number of our hospitals, or at least of our hospital beds. While possibly on a pure statistical basis we erred slightly on the side of being over-hospitalised, the increasing length of our lines of communication, and the rule that New Zealanders must always have one of their own hospitals within reach, justified our retaining the full number.

By the end of November the decision had been made that HQ 2 NZEF would move to **Italy, together with nearly all the NZEF 'controls' – medical, chaplains, pay, legal and so on. For reasons that will be explained in**

Chapter 7, it would have been impossible for HQ 2 NZEF to have carried on in Egypt.

About this move we were quite clear and firm. The position about Maadi Camp was not so clear. The pros and cons of moving it to Italy will be given in

Chapter 9. Here it will be enough to say that we would always need a transit camp in Egypt, and that the facilities in **Maadi** for training and looking after large numbers of men were unrivalled and could never be equalled in **Italy** within reasonable time. So it was decided to retain **Maadi** and to keep to a minimum the organisation in Advanced Base, even though we could not avoid making the new camp a copy, albeit a small one, of the larger establishment in Egypt.

It remained to be decided where Headquarters was to be located. The ideal location for a headquarters such as this is discussed in

Chapter 7; but it may be said now that when it proposes to move forward, Headquarters should go as far forward as it can, allowing for its not being a fighting headquarters. Otherwise the move may not be worth while. We had adhered to this rule in part by moving to **Italy**, but departed – or were forced to depart – from the rule as far as exact location in **Italy** was concerned. We had some trouble with the British authorities in finding a place at all, and it is true that the areas north-west of **Bari** were congested with Allied troops, especially the Allied Strategic Air Force. All the same, we should have been less hasty in accepting the site we did, which was just clear of **Bari** in a small and pleasant town on the coast called Santo Spirito. It was really too far back, as we were to find.

Concurrently with the arrival of the Division in **Italy** another club had been started in **Bari**, where the general amenities were poor. As it happened the Division itself never again came within reach of the club; but it was invaluable for convalescents from hospital in **Bari** and for the troops at Advanced Base. This last unit was at first in an entirely tented camp; but as time went on some hutments, both of wood and stone, were built. The camp was added to and improved during the time we were in **Italy**; but while it became comfortable enough, it was isolated and never approached the standards of **Maadi**. It was also too far back.

Our degree of self-containment was steadily increasing. By the time we reached **Italy** we had started our own ordnance depots, which dealt with the larger British depots and then distributed the stores to our own units.

In our early talks with GHQ CMF we made it clear that our reinforcements were solely for the support of **2 NZEF**, and that we could not help by forming any GHQ units. Such an attitude may appear selfish, and probably was so viewed by GHQ; but we pointed out that we maintained a fighting formation stronger than any British equivalent, and, moreover, looked after ourselves and did not need to draw on the services of British depots to the same extent as did British divisions. At

later stages we did form several new units to cope with new developments, and to support the claim that we looked after our own people. Such were units for the concentration of graves, for the reception and interrogation of escaped prisoners of war, and for the screening of claims made by Greeks and Italians for help given to Allied troops during the German occupation. Moreover, as our line of communications lengthened – ending at **Trieste** – we had to form additional intermediate links to help with such things as medical treatment and reinforcements. So one way and another we thought we were not doing so badly.

It must be said that the organisation and maintenance of the Allied armies in **Italy** was better than in North Africa – after all, we were all learning – and there never seemed to be the same call for special units.

When we first landed in **Italy** the main part of GHQ was still in **Algiers**, and we had to have a liaison officer there; but soon after our arrival GHQ moved completely to **Caserta**, near **Naples**.

We then ran into troubles over our communications with Egypt, the existing British signals link being too slow for our impatient methods. An application was made for a separate wireless channel for **2 NZEF** purposes alone. There was strong resistance to this from GHQ for many obvious reasons; but in the end it gave in with as good a grace as possible, and we got our wavelength. We could then often get a reply from **Maadi** in an hour or so. There was by this time no doubt in anyone's mind – our own or GHQ's – that the administrative standards we expected were higher than those in the British service.

During January 1944 the long-delayed Wakatipu draft at last sailed for New Zealand. For the moment there was no word of any future draft; and the 4th Reinforcements, the members of which had seen as much fighting as had the first three echelons, were left in a somewhat unhappy state.

Headquarters **2 NZEF** moved to **Italy** in late January and early

February 1944. Even before it was settled in its new location the Division had moved across **Italy** from the east coast to an area in front of **Cassino**, lengthening its distance from Headquarters appreciably. The move had been secret. All vehicle signs had been painted out, cap and shoulder titles removed, and efforts made to conceal the fact that the New Zealand Division had moved. It was unfortunate, therefore, that a steady trickle of officers from rear **2 NZEF** units – either from Headquarters or Advanced Base – came gaily driving up to the Division with vehicle signs and the words ‘New Zealand’ showing all over the place. The lesson was learnt, and when a move occurred again under similar conditions, rear echelons were warned and so shared in the attempt at concealment. The word ‘attempt’ is used advisedly, as it is doubtful if New Zealanders could be disguised merely by removing their badges and signs. There was always something about them that marked them out from other British troops.

This move meant that the distance from both Headquarters and Advanced Base to the Division was already too great for comfort. A reinforcement transit unit had to be formed and sited just behind the **Cassino** area. As the Division never again came any closer to Advanced Base, the Transit Unit became a permanency, a link which we had never had previously. Whereas in the summer of 1942 reinforcements had gone to units direct from **Maadi Camp**, they now went from **Maadi** to Advanced Base, thence to the Transit Unit, and only then to the Division. Distance made it necessary for troops to be brought under central control close behind the Division, before being sent on to units that might quite well have moved while the reinforcements were coming forward from Advanced Base.

In January 1944 we formed the Education and Rehabilitation Service (ERS), intended initially to help men who were on the New Zealand roll, i.e., who for any reason were going back to New Zealand. The majority on the roll were of course going back for medical reasons, and a good number were hospital cases. The ERS spent some time investigating the whole problem in **2 NZEF**, and was not functioning to

any degree until later in the year. It is discussed further in

Chapter 16; but it is right to say here that we had been much criticised in New Zealand for not having had such a service before.

The eternal marriage question led to a minor crisis in January 1944, when the Government showed signs of weakening over a proposed marriage to an Armenian woman – a type of marriage to which previously it had been rigorously opposed. There was an exchange of cables almost heated in tone; and then the case collapsed when the intended bridegroom decided not to go on with his application.

During February 1944 the Forestry Company moved from **Algeria** to **Italy**. It worked there in areas remote from the rest of the Expeditionary Force, one of them being in **Calabria** in the toe of **Italy**.

About this time fresh instructions were sent to **Maadi Camp** regarding the procedure to be followed with men of low medical category, the intention being that unless a man could be usefully employed he was to be sent back to New Zealand. Perpetual cookhouse fatigue was not looked on as useful employment. It had already been agreed with New Zealand that men who had been primary producers in peacetime should be sent back as soon as they ceased to be fit for field service, and should not be retained for service at the base.

In March 1944 Headquarters agreed to the formation of a Graves Concentration Unit, to work within the general Allied framework. For over two years we had had a Registration and Inquiry Unit, the task of which was to locate and register definitely the graves of those who had been buried during fighting, more often than not in individual sites. The new Concentration Unit would now lift the bodies and concentrate them into approved cemetery sites, where wooden crosses or other temporary religious symbols would be erected also. At the end of the war further action would become the responsibility of the Imperial War Graves Commission. At the date we have now reached – March 1944 – the time had come to concentrate graves in the long desert area from Egypt to **Tunis**, and the new unit started work there.

The alleged sins of the Division caught up with us during April, when General Headquarters, **Middle East**, forwarded a claim for deficiencies in tentage and other stores in the training area occupied by the Division in the desert west of **Alexandria** in September 1943. The accusation was that the Division had walked off with the articles, instead of leaving them *in situ*. The accusation was probably true; but after an exchange of notes HQ **2 NZEF** suggested that as the stores were in any case being used for the better prosecution of the war, and as the war was still going on, the matter might be allowed to drop – and dropped it was.

In late March the director of the ERS submitted his proposals for future action. A controlling committee was then formed, including representatives of such interested bodies as medical, chaplains and welfare, together with one or two officers selected for their special knowledge of the problem. The committee met for the first time at the end of March.

During March the Military Liaison Officer in **London** wrote to Headquarters about the provision of staff for prisoner-of-war repatriation units in England. One of the results of the invasion of **Europe**, whenever it took place, would be at some point the release of large numbers of prisoners of war, including many thousands of New Zealanders. The intention was that these men would be moved to England, where it was desirable that they should be met by special New Zealand units. Other than a small number of men to be drawn from New Zealand air force personnel in England, the liaison officer had no men available, and quite properly asked **2 NZEF** what it could do to help – with the approval of the Government. Here was a case where we could not refuse, but we made it a condition that the personnel would only be supplied when the Division was out of the line in a rest area; for willing though we might be, our numbers were not as great as all that, and we did not want to disturb fighting units during an active period. The numbers asked for ran to over 800 all told, so were not negligible. In the months following the request we drew up suitable war establishments and began to select suitable officers and men.

Now that the Expeditionary Force was in the main on the continent of **Europe**, it began to dawn on a lot of people that England was only a thousand miles or so away. There began a steady trickle of applications to go to England either when furlough became due or at the end of hostilities. As time went on the trickle increased, until at the end of the war it was almost a flood. For the moment nothing could be done except to recognise that a new problem was looming up.

The lengthening of the line of communication meant that at any one time some member of the staff of HQ **2 NZEF** was in the air on his way to or from Egypt, or in a car on his way up and down **Italy**. Visits from someone at Headquarters were always advisable to prevent the belief arising that any one part had been forgotten. Odd units, particularly, appreciated a visit from someone in authority.

The 21st April 1944 was a red-letter day in the life of HQ **2 NZEF**, for on that day there arrived from New Zealand the first contingent of women clerical staff, all properly trained shorthand-typists. The number sent out from New Zealand was only 20, and Headquarters took the greater part, leaving a few at **Maadi**. Their arrival was a godsend. For the first time in four years correspondence could be dealt with smoothly; and to those officers concerned with matters of policy and so compelled to produce directives, the relief of having someone who could take down and quickly type drafts prior to production of the final text was immense. Their presence caused a breath of fresh air to blow through the corridors of Headquarters.

During the months from the end of January until May, the Division remained in the area in front of **Cassino**, and no changes in lines of communication were called for. Losses had been heavy, but not comparable to those of past campaigns. From the purely statistical standpoint, the reduction in the number of prisoners of war was all to the good, as over half the wounded came back to duty in due course, whereas a prisoner was a complete loss.

During May we appointed our own press censor, to work within the

Allied framework but specifically for New Zealand messages. Prior to this appointment there had been many misunderstandings, often due to a simple thing like ignorance of New Zealand geography. The New Zealand censor was first and foremost a censor, and was not appointed to force messages through over the head of the Chief Censor; but he did prevent misunderstandings and helped our messages to pass more quickly.

About this time Headquarters had to take up with the [New Zealand Government](#) the question of advertising vacancies for civilian appointments in New Zealand. An increasing number of cables was reaching us from Army Headquarters saying that such and such a local body or business firm had a vacancy for some appointment and wished this to be made known to any interested persons within the force. Headquarters had to lay down that the exigencies of the service came first, and that an applicant could not be released prior to going on furlough in the normal course. The position otherwise would have become impossible, as there would have been a measure of disintegration in the force. In cases where personnel applied and were successful, it is believed that positions were kept open for them until they came back to take them up.

During early April there was an exchange of cables with the Government concerning the future of the Division, from which we were interested to see that the question was being considered on the highest levels, including the United States Government as well as the United Kingdom Government. An interim decision was taken to delay withdrawing the Division until after the fall of Rome, when the matter would be considered again. We were told also that the Prime Minister would be visiting us towards the end of May.

Censorship reports showed at almost any time a degree of cynical comment by the troops about the Government in New Zealand, and indeed about all activities in the homeland. At this point (May 1944) the comments were if anything more marked than normal, so that the imminent arrival of the Prime Minister became a cause for concern, for there seemed a likelihood that he might be involved in some

unpleasantness. The GOC in the Division, and OICA for other units, had to speak discreetly to COs and ask them to explain to the men that Mr Fraser was after all the Prime Minister of the country and deserved a welcome and a courteous hearing, no matter what a man might think. During the visit there were one or two minor cases of discourtesy, but nothing in any way resembling concerted action.

The Prime Minister arrived at **Naples** on 26 May and went straight to the Division, which was in the line to the north of **Cassino**, a part of the front not as active as that farther south. He saw most of the units, his visit to the **Maori Battalion** just coinciding with the resumption of the offensive. From the Division the Prime Minister visited units in the south of **Italy**, including HQ **2 NZEF**, and left for Egypt on 4 June. There he saw **Maadi Camp** again, together with odd units outside the camp. His original intention had been to go back to England from Egypt; but the Commander-in-Chief in **Italy** (General Sir Harold Alexander) had invited him to visit Rome if it should be captured at an early date. It was entered on 4 June; so the Prime Minister came back to **Italy** for twenty-four hours, arriving at **Naples** in the morning of 8 June and reaching Rome in the evening after a memorable drive along roads packed with advancing traffic. He left for England again on the morning of 9 June.

On this visit there were two subjects of the first order to discuss: the intentions about the furlough scheme and about the future of the Expeditionary Force. The two things were related, for if the force was to be withdrawn the furlough scheme did not matter; but if the force was to stay, or if there was going to be a delay in coming to a decision, the scheme must go on and the 4th Reinforcements must be relieved. It was in fact decided during the visit that the furlough scheme was to be taken this further stage; but the idea of 'furlough' was quietly abandoned and that of 'permanent relief' took its place. As soon as the Prime Minister had left, the machinery was set in motion to withdraw part of the 4th Reinforcements and to get them away to New Zealand. They left in the middle of September, followed by others in December, intervals which were longer than we would have liked, but which were governed

by the availability of shipping.

During his visit the Prime Minister talked to a fair cross-section of the force, and so gathered an opinion on such things as their morale and their views about the future. The disposal of the force continued to be discussed among the Governments for some months after the Prime Minister's visit, and was not settled finally until the middle of September. Not for the first time the Government took a truly broad view and decided that the Division was to remain until the end of the war in **Italy**. The Division in the **Pacific**, the 3rd, was to be broken up to provide reinforcements for the **Mediterranean**.

June 1944 saw the opening of our third club in one of the larger hotels in Rome. Like all our clubs, it was open to all ranks. Unfortunately, for some time after its opening there was a strict order from Allied Headquarters against troops staying in Rome overnight, so that men had to live in a camp outside the city and come in during the day. This restriction was not lifted until December 1944. The club added to the natural amenities of Rome to a degree which the troops appreciated enormously.

The air link to New Zealand was further improved during June as the air letter service was restored.

Headgear during the war had gone through many phases. Now at last we reached the end with the general adoption of the beret. The New Zealand badge was worn on the beret against a background of a black diamond, this latter sign having been the one used by the Division to mark its axis of advance since the early days in North Africa.

Towards the end of July the advance of the Allied armies which had landed in **France** in June became faster and indeed spectacular, for the enemy's defences appeared to be cracking. There was even a chance that **Germany** would collapse before the end of the year. We ought not to have been surprised, therefore, when we received from the liaison officer in **London** an urgent request for the early despatch of the personnel for

the prisoner-of-war reception camps. It was suggested that they should arrive in England at the latest by early September, which meant that we would have to start assembling them at once. Headquarters did point out rather plaintively that the conditions under which we had agreed to supply the personnel were not being fulfilled, in that the Division was very much in action; but of course the request was one that could not be refused, and steps were taken to release at least an advance party. In the end we did all that we were asked, including sending parties of welfare personnel, both women and men, to help start a club in London.

Advanced Base by now had become well established. So, despite previous decisions, one or two depots closed down in Maadi and reopened at Advanced Base. There was a saving in manpower thereby. In general, however, there was from now on a steady reduction in our training facilities, for drafts were becoming smaller and had in many cases already done long periods of training in New Zealand. In some cases men had had service in the Pacific too.

By this time the routine of administration throughout the long line of communications from Suez to the Division had settled down into a steady rhythm. It appeared to us that fresh problems were not occurring as frequently as in the past; but perhaps this was due to the fact that we were better at handling them.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 6 – THE LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS

CHAPTER 6

The Last Eighteen Months

DURING July and August 1944 the Division moved forwards steadily towards **Florence**. The GOC accompanied by OICA interviewed General Alexander during the latter part of July in order to get some idea about the future moves of the Division, and indeed of the Eighth Army in general; for on this depended certain moves in the **2 NZEF** line of communication. It appeared that the main line of advance of the Eighth Army would be along the northeast coast of **Italy** and not up the centre, so that our own moves would have to follow suit. Headquarters **2 NZEF** must in any case move soon, as we were fast getting out of touch with the Division. In further discussions with the staff at GHQ our attention was directed to **Ancona**, which, it appeared, was to be developed as a main advanced port, and through which, in common with the rest of the Eighth Army, our own Division would be maintained. It seemed that Headquarters could not do better than move to some place near this port. A first reconnaissance of the area was made almost at once, in fact as soon as **Ancona** was captured.

In August the Division made another of its secret moves, this time from **Florence** across to the north-east coast just in advance of **Ancona**. Our previous experience in January 1944 stopped the secrecy being compromised this time by undisguised vehicles or personnel coming forward from Headquarters or Advanced Base. Headquarters made a further reconnaissance of the area in early August, and was attracted to a small town called **Senigallia**, which appeared suitable for a headquarters; but the first reconnaissance was punctuated by some enemy shelling, so that we were a little premature. However, we did get in early this time, and staked out our claim beyond dispute.

Our last non-divisional engineer unit, the Forestry Company, went back to New Zealand complete during August, as practically all its personnel were due for relief.

The graves authorities were at this time looking ahead into the period following the end of the war, when concentration of graves would proceed vigorously. They asked us if we would be prepared to let our units continue to work in the post-war period. This was a question for the Government to decide, and it was referred to New Zealand at once. No decision was given at the time, nor indeed until the following year; but it may be said now that New Zealand units did continue to work in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the interior of Europe for nearly two years after the war.

In the middle of September, as has been mentioned in

Chapter 5, we were at last told that the Division was to continue serving in the Italian theatre. While there had been little doubt about this for some time, it was a relief to know officially. Planning could now continue with some assurance.

Senigallia was duly chosen as the new location for HQ **2 NZEF** and was occupied during September. It was a pleasant spot, a small port and seaside resort combined. The great advantage at the moment was that the Division was only a few miles away on the main road north, the front line being sufficiently close for laagers of tank units in reserve to park in the roads round Headquarters. One of our hospitals moved to the same township about the same time; and in due course other line-of-communication units followed suit— ordnance depot, reinforcement transit unit, and so on – until the area became almost an advanced ‘Advanced Base’. The distance from the real Advanced Base was now so great that we had to agree that our reinforcements and stores should travel from **Bari** to **Ancona** by sea. From Ancona onwards we took over in our own MT.

The proximity of the Division, and the presence of New Zealand women, both in the hospital and at Headquarters, combined to produce an epidemic of so-called sightseeing expeditions, in which young officers in jeeps took their girl friends away up the road into the divisional area, even into shelled areas. The excitement shown by both parties was perhaps understandable; but all the same the risks were a bit too great, and we had to issue instructions laying down a limit to this new forward advance. Probably no one took any notice of the instruction; but luckily the Division soon became active again and drew farther away, and the cruises stopped.

On 3 September the GOC was injured in an air crash and entered the hospital at **Senigallia**, being one of its first patients. Another officer took over command of the Division, but the GOC continued in command of the Expeditionary Force.

Our line of clubs was added to during August and September when we

took over a large hotel in **Florence**. This made four clubs – **Cairo**, **Bari**, **Rome**, and **Florence** – and it was becoming apparent that some form of central control would soon be necessary.

During the year the 11th, 12th, and 13th Reinforcement drafts had arrived, the last-named in November; but it was doubtful if these drafts, together with later ones foreshadowed in New Zealand, would be enough to keep the Division up to its present establishment. It had become most desirable that long-service personnel should be released forthwith and returned to New Zealand without further delay. The objective was to release all men with three years' service overseas, i.e, up to and including the 6th Reinforcements. During October the GOC, now recovered from his injury, reviewed the state of the Division in detail, and came to the conclusion that certain units could be disbanded without detriment to fighting power, and that others could safely be reduced in size. As an example of the first class, the fact that the **German Air Force** had been driven out of the skies meant that the Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment could be dispensed with; as an example of the second, the small number of casualties meant that field ambulances could be reduced in size. The result was to reduce the establishment of the Division by some 2500 all ranks, a considerable saving in manpower. The Government welcomed these reductions, as the most recent review of manpower in New Zealand indicated that in the future only equivalent numbers for men sent back under the replacement scheme could be supplied. There would be very few, if any, reinforcements to take the place of casualties.

The scheme of reductions in establishment, combined with the relief of long-service personnel, formed the subject of cables between New Zealand and the GOC over a period of two months. From the point of view of **2 NZEF** there were one or two complications. First, it was always difficult to withdraw men from the Division while it was in action. Second, it appeared likely that in the future we would have to embody future drafts from New Zealand into the Division as one body at some one fixed date, which again meant when the Division was out of the

line. Carried back to the New Zealand end, the scheme meant that future drafts would have to leave there on certain fixed dates if the changeover was to be effected smoothly. The GOC arranged with GHQ and Eighth Army Headquarters for the Division to be withdrawn from action at two periods during the approaching winter, each of some weeks duration, in the hope that drafts from New Zealand would be available in those periods to be embodied. Long-service men could then be released at the same time. He informed New Zealand of this programme, and obtained their concurrence, including agreement with the dates suggested for the drafts to leave New Zealand. It was thus distressing that before long we were told that sailings from New Zealand would be delayed. Not for the first time an extra effort had to be made within **2 NZEF** to keep faith with men who had been promised relief at a certain date. Sailings were in fact later than had been initially promised for both the 14th and 15th Reinforcements; and the reorganisation of the Division at the end of 1944 and beginning of 1945 was all the more difficult. For once the GOC had to voice some distress in his cables, and said (*inter alia*), 'the result of delaying the departure of the 14th Reinforcements will have most adverse repercussions upon the smooth working of the replacement scheme'.

It should be made clear that the fault did not lie with the **New Zealand Government**, which was doing its best, but was due to the usual shortage of shipping. In the end the changeover took place without much upheaval, for by this time the standard of training and of staff-work throughout the force was high enough to cushion a large degree of complication.

In November 1944 the British scheme **CASCADE** referred to on **page 55** was at last abandoned, 6 NZ Division ceased to exist, and **Maadi Camp** went back to its original name, together with all the depots, etc., that had been masquerading under fancy titles. The scheme had justified itself, which was the consolation for the occasional irritations it had caused.

Towards the end of October the Division came out of the line for the

first of its breaks, and went back into a rest area in some pleasant hilly country south of **Ancona**. For the first time in the war, HQ **2 NZEF** was really in front of the Division, which was the excuse for some harmless fun. Periodically Headquarters used to advise the Division that the **Senigallia** front was standing firm, and that the Division was in no danger.

A 'General Manager' was appointed during November for the dual role of managing the clubs and superintending the distribution of canteen stores. For during the war, despite our 1941 decision to keep **NAAFI** as our main source of canteen supplies, the Expeditionary Force had imported supplies of its own from New Zealand more and more, using **NAAFI** only to fill in the gaps. The control of these canteen stores, after a period when the **YMCA** was mixed up in them, had been transferred, still somewhat confusingly, to the clubs. Like Topsy it had just grown that way and now badly needed sorting out. The running of the clubs was a big business in itself, and could with justice be looked on as quite separate from the distribution of canteen stores.

The troops had now been long enough in **Italy** for one of the less attractive results of their sojourn to become apparent, to wit black-market activities. The situation was first brought to our notice when members of returning drafts produced to the pay staff large rolls of Italian lire, with the request that these should be credited to their pay accounts, by which means they hoped to obtain the advantage of an artificial exchange rate between the lira and the pound, and also the benefit of the current appreciation of the pound sterling compared with the pound New Zealand. During the war it had always been permissible for troops to ask the pay office to transfer credits in their pay accounts back to New Zealand; but the same claim could not be made for money which did not come from pay. On inquiries it became clear that a great deal of this money, if not all, had come from the sale to Italians of such things as blankets and boots, which commanded a price on the black market infinitely greater than the price demanded by the army for articles of lost kit. To sell the goods to the Italians and then pay the

army the regulation price was a simple way of making money. However, the pay staff refused to handle the excess lire, and men had to dispose of it in other ways, of which buying jewellery was one.

In November and December the late commander of 3 NZ Division in the Pacific visited 2 NZEF, partly to discuss the absorption into 2 NZEF of the officers from 3 Division, and partly to talk over the situation that might arise if New Zealand forces had to be used against Japan at the end of the war in Europe.

In December 1944 2 NZEF formed its own officer cadet training unit (OCTU) for the first time in the war. Since the abortive attempt to start it in 1940, mentioned on page 29, we had made use of British facilities in the Middle East, in India, and in the United Kingdom; but even at this late stage it was easier to run our own. A small unit was set up not far from Advanced Base in southern Italy.

It has been mentioned above that during the year (1944) we had formed small units to receive escaped or recaptured prisoners of war, and to conduct their interrogation. In addition, we had provided a small staff to help the British body which was investigating war crimes; and now at the end of the year we provided our own section of the staff for the unit, known as the Allied Screening Commission, which was investigating and adjudicating on claims from Greeks and Italians for helping Allied soldiers who had escaped or had avoided capture. Greece had not long since been reoccupied by the Allies. In this country, particularly, the inhabitants had been helpful to New Zealanders and deserved reward.

Headquarters 2 NZEF finished the year in a blaze of glory by becoming operational for a few weeks. There were signs that enemy parties were coming down the coast in boats at night and then landing and damaging railways and roads. Senigallia was right on the coast and open to damage. So Headquarters had to organise itself into guards, parties to repel boarders and so on, and moreover was given control over a strip of coastline which included other units, among them United States installations. Nothing happened; but it was a change.

The winter of 1944–45 was a quiet one, but the weather was colder than twelve months previously.

It was mentioned on [page 80](#) that we were using the sea route from [Bari](#) to [Ancona](#) for our reinforcements. We found, however, that sea transport for the mails was not so satisfactory, and that somehow or other there were delays in handling them; so during the winter we started our own MT postal service from [Bari](#) northwards. The number of vehicles employed was small, but the effect on the regularity of the mails was marked. We kept this service going until at a later date we made special arrangements to send the mail from [Bari](#) by air.

On a previous occasion, in 1941, New Zealand had sent us a small consignment of motor vehicles, to be additional to those issued to us from British depots. On another occasion New Zealand sent a consignment of MT, but for the use of Middle East Forces generally, and not specifically for [2 NZEF](#). In January 1945 we asked Army Headquarters to send us as many cars as it could spare. Luckily, the degree of demobilisation within New Zealand enabled Army Headquarters to help us by sending some dozens of cars.

During the winter watch was kept on the size of [Maadi](#) and Advanced Base, and from time to time adjustments were made towards reductions in personnel. Our main training area remained at [Maadi](#), where, among other facilities, a mock Italian village had been built so that troops could be trained in village fighting.

Our selection of code-names for returning drafts caused some confusion about this time, when the name we were using, [Tongariro](#), happened to be that of an existing vessel engaged in journeying to and from New Zealand. We had a mild protest from General Headquarters, [Middle East](#), asking us to be careful in the future not to use names of vessels. Thereafter we used to inquire from the Military Liaison Officer in [London](#) if there was a vessel bearing the name we proposed to use. He in turn checked with Lloyd's register.

In the early months of 1945 we had rather a spate of important visitors – the Hon. Mr Sullivan, Minister of Supply in New Zealand, Mr Jordan, High Commissioner in **London**, Sir Patrick Duff, High Commissioner designate for the **United Kingdom** in New Zealand, and Messrs Holland and Doidge, leader and member of the Opposition. The last-named two visitors arrived in time to see the opening day of what turned out to be the last offensive – 9 April 1945.

Up to the start of this offensive **Divisional Headquarters** had never been more than three hours' drive from HQ **2 NZEF** since the move of the latter to **Senigallia** in September – a great help to discussions with the GOC and to the administration of the force. On the other hand, it was a long journey to Advanced Base, a full day by car, with no convenient point at which to break the journey. To reach Egypt normally took two days, as the air service started from **Bari**, but on one or two occasions we were able to make special arrangements to travel by air from an airfield near Headquarters and then reached Egypt in one day.

Prior to the last offensive the Division had come out of the line for the second time. It went back to the same area as before, again for a few weeks.

The final advance of the Division from near **Faenza** in early April to **Trieste** in early May was speedy, and maintenance from the rear became difficult. Losses were low, however, and the demands of the Division for men or for medical attention were low also. Even at this late stage, however, Headquarters tried to keep contact in such things as were its concern, and set up further intermediate links in the line of communication – a reinforcement staging post, an advanced detachment of a hospital, and so on.

During the Division's rush past **Venice**, the GOC sent in a detachment of troops under a senior officer to make sure that New Zealand got the use of the **Danieli Hotel**, the best in **Venice**, as a club. The detachment went to ground there and was in **Venice** a day or so

before the official occupation. In the end, after making a gesture of offering to give up the place and accept an official allocation, the GOC was allowed to keep the hotel. There we established the last of our long succession of clubs. Every effort was made in the weeks that followed to ensure that everyone in the Division had leave in **Venice** for a few days. It was a fine finish to our welfare organisation.

In **Appendix II** is the Order of Battle of **2 NZEF** as at 9 May 1945, immediately after the end of the war in **Europe**. The most advanced unit was beyond **Trieste**, the rearmost one in **Suez**. Between these two points was a chain of New Zealand units, unbroken except for the sea gap between **Alexandria** and **Bari**. From the moment men came ashore at **Suez** they were handled by New Zealand units until they reached the Division. Had the war continued for another year or so, we might even have had our own vessel sailing across the **Mediterranean**! As it was the New Zealand hospital ships came all the way to **Italy**.

The end of the European war meant that our Education and Rehabilitation Service went into top gear. It was formed as a separate corps in order to emphasise its importance and to give its personnel some *esprit de corps*; and once it had called up the previously earmarked staff, it set to work to show results and to provide education up to the standard of New Zealand University degrees. Once the flurry with **Yugoslavia** over **Trieste** was finished, and there was no chance of further operations, ERS became of the first importance.

A few hours before the last offensive commenced, the GOC received from New Zealand a cable asking his views on certain proposals, then before the Government, for carrying on the war against **Japan**. From then until the middle of August the exchange of cables continued. The Government had every intention of supplying a force for the next stage of the war, but thought that the manpower situation would not permit of the force being above a certain size, too small in numbers to reach the size of the existing Division and its rear establishments. The theme underlying the exchange of cables was how best to organise the limited numbers, a subject on which the GOC held strong views. Naturally, the

cables are now only of academic interest.

As soon as the war had ended, steps had been taken both by the Government and by 2 NZEF to arrange the return to New Zealand of the next group of men due for relief, comprising the balance of the 6th and the whole of the 7th Reinforcements. They were released from 2 NZEF in the course of the next two months. Thereafter the return of men to New Zealand became part of the general scheme of repatriation.

Until the middle of July the Division remained in the Trieste area. It was then released from all operational duties and withdrew to an area in central Italy around Lake Trasimene, where it spent a further two months awaiting the determination of its fate. Until the surrender of Japan, there was the chance that part at least of the Division would be taken to form the backbone of the new force, and calculations of numbers available in various categories were sent out to New Zealand. There was even the possibility that the whole force might move to Egypt and reorganise there. Luckily it all came to nothing on the surrender of Japan, leaving only one query – how speedy would the repatriation be? The broad outlines of the scheme for repatriation involved sending back at once the drafts which were next in order of service, giving leave to England for the drafts coming next but one in the order, and assembling an occupation force for Japan from the single members of the last three reinforcement drafts, the 13th, 14th, and 15th Reinforcements. All the cables to settle this took some time, and it was not until mid-September, for instance, that the leave scheme to England was started.

While, strictly speaking, it had nothing to do with 2 NZEF, it must be said that the firm decision of the New Zealand Government not to allow any troops to take part in occupation duties in Europe created a slight feeling of shame in the force, at least among those who had dealings with British headquarters; for it was so clear that while we were all packing up and gleefully going home, many tens of thousands of British troops would be staying on for months and even years. It seemed a pity that after contributing so nobly to the war effort, we should just

fail to clinch it in the immediate post-war period. However, this was a matter for the Government, and not for us.

During these months after the end of the war in Europe Headquarters was involved in a number of small administrative matters – interrogation and repatriation of prisoners of war, selection of personnel to serve under the Colonial Office, preliminary handing in of gear, collecting wives from all over the Eastern Mediterranean, and trying to evolve some system out of the flood of applications to go to England, this last disclosing a remarkable capacity among New Zealanders for producing plausible reasons. The number of applications for early return to New Zealand for compassionate reasons sky-rocketed, but luckily by that time we had a well-tryed system of dealing with them. There was an undoubted falling off in the general discipline of the force, combined with an amount of long-distance sightseeing ('swanning') that was truly amazing, even making full allowance for the initiative of the New Zealander.

The leave scheme to England was a triumph of organisation, as it involved sending men by relays of MT all the way from **Italy** to the Channel coast of **France**, and enlisting the help of both British and **United States** camps and depots to form staging posts en route. The arrangements reflected the greatest credit on the staff of **Divisional Headquarters** who were entrusted with the task. A rule was made at the outset that men could not delay their repatriation to take advantage of the scheme, which meant that those next for repatriation were excluded, and only those whose repatriation would not take place for some two months or more could be considered.

In order to get better accommodation for the coming winter months, and to facilitate the organisation of the force to go to **Japan** (called 'Jayforce'), the Division moved into an area in and around **Florence** and **Siena**, settling down there in early October. At the same time the wheel turned full circle, and HQ 2 NZEF moved from **Senigallia** to **Florence** and combined with **Divisional Headquarters** to make one headquarters again, as had been the position away back in 1940. Control of repatriation and

of the other problems still confronting us was the task of HQ **2 NZEF** alone; but **Divisional Headquarters** remained as a unit, and one staff served for both.

The club in **Venice** was kept open for as long as the Division was in the **Lake Trasimene** area; but when we concentrated in **Florence** it was closed, as indeed were all the units to the north and east of the new divisional area. We were gradually drawing in our horns and concentrating the remains of **2 NZEF**.

The position regarding some of our equipment was not clear. Some was 'lend-lease' and had to be handed in to British depots for subsequent return to **United States** depots. Some was in excess of the normal equipment for a British division and belonged to the British authorities. Some was in effect our initial equipment, brought up to date during the war, and paid for by the **New Zealand Government**. It was definitely our own. The New Zealand Government specified some items which were to be sent to New Zealand; but with this exception we handed everything over to British depots, leaving any adjustments in costs to be settled between the Governments of the **United Kingdom** and New Zealand at a later date. For a while the **New Zealand Government** was inclined to stand on the strict letter of the law about ownership of equipment; but we pointed out that throughout the war we had always had the best of it when it came to issuing equipment, that for all our new units the British authorities had always found the equipment without more than a brief delay, that when it came to a settlement we were sure that New Zealand would be treated with the greatest generosity, and altogether that it ill became us to haggle at this or any stage. The Government was faintly surprised at this outburst, but accepted it in good grace, and all was well.

Black-market activities became a real menace, and indeed a disgrace. It has already been recorded that men were selling their personal equipment to Italians and, when charged with being deficient, were handing to the army the low price given in the vocabulary of

stores. Now they saw masses of unwanted equipment being handed in to depots, its future disposal being uncertain. To steal and sell items of this equipment, such as tyres or even whole vehicles, seemed to some men to be quite harmless, as the equipment was in such quantities that most of it must be superfluous to any military needs. In fact, they did not regard it as stealing at all. Putting guards on the dumps was useless, as in some instances the guards themselves quickly became involved in the racket; and sad to say, the only reliable protection in the last few months was that provided by German prisoners of war. In Maadi Camp also we used Germans to protect the camp against large-scale pilfering by Egyptians. There were plenty of prisoners who were only too pleased to be given something to do, and progressively they took over a lot of the domestic fatigues in both **Maadi** and Advanced Base.

All we could do about the black-market activities was to refuse to handle the large sums of money that so many troops accumulated. Altogether it was a regrettable state of affairs.

In October the **New Zealand Government** was asked by the United Kingdom Government to agree to a reduction in the ration, partly because of the reduction in effort now expected from the troops, and partly because of the world shortage of food. The Government referred the request to us, showing some concern about it; but we were able to assure it that the reduction could be accepted and that there would be no reactions. The reasons were explained to the troops, the memorandum including a comparative statement of their reduced ration as compared with the still lower ration of civilians in England. There was no trouble.

Between the leave scheme to England, the assembly of **Jayforce**, plentiful sporting activities, and the work of the ERS, the weeks passed not so badly, the only regrettable feature being a marked increase in the VD rate, a price we had to pay for release from tension combined with being billeted in large towns. Progressively units and depots throughout our long lines of communication were disbanded. Advanced Base was kept busy right up to the last, as drafts were now embarked at **Taranto**

direct into vessels for home and had to be assembled nearly three weeks before vessels sailed. Sometimes there was considerable congestion in Advanced Base – when, for instance, ships were delayed beyond the expected dates – but the prospect of soon being on a homeward-bound vessel helped to soften any hardships.

On 22 November the GOC gave up his appointment, exactly six years to the day since he had been appointed in **London**. It was the end of an era. His successor had the easy task of getting what was left of the force back to New Zealand.

But perhaps not so easy! Towards the end of December we were very nearly caught. All our plans had been directed towards keeping men occupied for long periods while sufficient shipping could be found. We had never envisaged a situation where ships came so fast that we would have trouble in filling them; but that is what happened. We had to take energetic steps to collect men in numbers enough to fill the vessels, including cutting short the leave to England of many thousands. Men were assembled in Advanced Base over Christmas and New Year in such density that the camp was holding two or three times its normal numbers, and conditions were most unpleasant. By early January the bulk of **2 NZEF** had vanished, and only a comparative handful was left. We owe a great debt to the British Government for providing shipping so speedily.

Following on this sweeping reduction in numbers, the remainder of the force in **Italy** was withdrawn to the area **Bari- Taranto**, leaving the newly-formed **Jayforce** in camp in Florence. By mutual arrangement with the commander of **Jayforce**, the time had come when it was to stand on its own feet, so to speak, and cease to be a part of the old **2 NZEF**. By that time it was fully self-contained, with its own small hospital, postal unit and so on. It embarked from **Naples** in February 1946.

The two graves units still remained as formed bodies, the Government having agreed that they should continue serving into the post-war period. Our few remaining medical units kept some cohesion

until the last, as their services were called on until repatriation was practically complete. Otherwise, of the old **2 NZEF** no formed units remained by the beginning of February 1946. Troops awaiting repatriation could then be numbered in hundreds, and their control passed to a small headquarters specially formed and headed by a senior officer located at GHQ near **Naples**. With the exception of rear parties, repatriation was complete by the end of February in both **Italy** and **Egypt**.

Towards the end of February, at a ceremony held in one of the midans (squares) in **Maadi** township, there was unveiled an obelisk bearing this inscription:

This pylon records the fact that between 1940 and 1946 76,000 members of the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force trained in **Maadi Camp**; and expresses the gratitude of the Force for the kindness and hospitality received during those years from the residents of **Maadi**.

The ground had been given us by the Maadi Land Company with the approval of the Egyptian Government, and the obelisk had been paid for out of the central regimental funds of **2 NZEF**. The day it was unveiled was exactly six years from the day the **Maadi Tent** had been opened to cater for the welfare of the newly-arrived New Zealand troops.

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CHAPTER 7 – HEADQUARTERS 2 NZEF - COMMAND AND STAFF

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PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

ON his way out to New Zealand in December 1939 the GOC prepared a series of notes on certain policy and administrative matters. After his arrival in **Wellington** he consulted with Army Headquarters and other authorities, and as a result embodied some of his notes into two documents which were submitted to the Government. With slight alterations the documents were approved, and were then given to the GOC in the form, first, of a charter over the signature of the Prime Minister, and second, a schedule of authorities over the signature of the Minister of Defence – both dated 5 January 1940, the day the First Echelon embarked. They are of such importance that they are included here instead of in an appendix.

The first and more important was as follows:

**Prime Minister's Office
Wellington 5th January 1940**

Memorandum for

The General Officer for the time being

Commanding the Second New Zealand

Expeditionary Force Overseas.

The General Officer Commanding will act in accordance with the instructions he receives from the Commander-in-Chief under whose command he is serving, subject only to the requirements of His Majesty's Government in New Zealand. He will, in addition to powers appearing in any relevant statute or regulations, be vested with the following powers:

(In case of sufficiently grave emergency or in special
a) circumstances of which he must be the sole judge, to make decisions as to the employment of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force,

and to communicate such decisions directly to the **New Zealand Government**, notwithstanding that in the absence of that extraordinary cause such communication would not be in accordance with the normal channels of communication indicated in the following paragraphs and which for greater clearness are also indicated in the attached diagram. ¹

- (To communicate directly with the **New Zealand Government** and
 - b) with the Army Department concerning any matter connected with the training and administration of the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force.
-

¹ Not included in this volume.

- (To communicate directly either with the **New Zealand**
- c) **Government** or with the Commander-in-Chief under whose command he is serving, in respect of all details leading up to and arising from policy decisions.
- (In all matters pertaining to equipment to communicate with the War
- d) Office through normal channels, and through the liaison officer of the High Commissioner's office in **London**, the former to be the official channel.
- (In matters of command to adhere to the normal military channels
- e) between the War Office and the General Officer Commanding the 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force overseas.
- (To establish such administrative headquarters and base and line
- f) of communication units as are necessary for the functions of command, organisation, including training, and administration with which he has been invested.
- (To organise, train, vary or group units and formations in such
- g) manner as he considers expedient from time to time.
- (To fix and alter the establishment and composition of units and
- h) formations as the exigencies of the service may in his opinion require from time to time.

After the Third Echelon has left New Zealand no officer above the substantive rank of captain will be sent overseas without the concurrence of the General Officer Commanding.

(Sgd) M. J. SAVAGE,

The second paper is as follows:

5th January 1940

Major-General B. C. Freyberg,

General Officer Commanding,

2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force Overseas,

Wellington.

The General Officer Commanding is hereby vested with the following powers:

- (1) Authority to increase the scale of ration, if necessary.**
- (2) Authority to procure equipment (shown on equipment tables) that cannot be supplied through official channels. Such equipment to be bought through Ordnance channels where possible.**
- (3) Authority to incur expenditures which cannot be foreseen at present, and which the General Officer Commanding considers necessary for protection of the health of the Force.**
- (4) Authority to incur expenditure not exceeding £500 for any one transaction for the recreation or other amenities of the Force.**
- (5) Authority to disburse, at the discretion of the General Officer Commanding, from an entertainment fund which will be provided, to an amount not exceeding £1,000 per annum. (Sgd) F. JONES Minister of Defence Following on a request from the GOC, a cabled authority was given from New Zealand, dated 18 April 1940, adding an additional paragraph to the above memorandum, to read:**
- (6) Authority to incur expenditure not exceeding £100 sterling for any one transaction to cover items which cannot be foreseen at present, but which he considers essential for the better training or security of the Force.**

In January 1940 there was also promulgated an issue of Expeditionary Force Emergency Regulations (made under a special act of Parliament), some of the paragraphs of which gave the GOC statutory powers to command, organise, and administer the force, appoint and

promote officers, return personnel to New Zealand for a variety of reasons (of which sickness and duty were two), and appoint, promote, or reduce warrant officers and non-commissioned officers.

To return to the two documents given to the GOC, paragraph (a) of the first paper deals with operational matters, and so, although it is of the first importance, is not the concern of this volume. Paragraphs (b), (c), (d), and (e) cover the procedure to be followed in communications passing between the GOC and various authorities, the only ones the concern of this volume being (b) and (c). The paragraphs to which special attention is drawn are (f), (g), and (h), for they constituted the authority under which HQ 2 NZEF came into being and functioned. The last (unlettered) paragraph is discussed in

Chapter 10.

Paragraphs (*f*), (*g*), and (*h*) gave the GOC extensive powers, which were the envy of the staff of other Dominion forces and, indeed, of the staff of GHQ also. They meant that the GOC had full powers to modify the Expeditionary Force as he wished without having to obtain the prior approval of any authority in New Zealand. The one restriction on the full 100 per cent implementation of these powers was that men had to be found by New Zealand, and that it was no use forming new units unless the men were going to be available, not only for initial formation but for subsequent maintenance. In the vast majority of cases men could be found from our reinforcement pool; but on occasions when the reorganisation was extensive – the proposed changes in late 1940, the proposed additions under FFC 36, and the formation of the armoured brigade – the prior approval of New Zealand had to be obtained. It may be claimed that the GOC's powers were used with restraint and with a due sense of responsibility, the number of occasions when Army Headquarters – the New Zealand authority most affected – made any form of protest or comment being remarkably few. There was, in fact, no case of real difference of opinion. Occasionally we were aware of a gasp coming overseas from the homeland over some action we had taken; but that was about as far as they ever got to remonstrating with us.

Provided that the Government of a country is prepared to trust the commander of an expeditionary force, the grant of such extensive powers is all to the good, if for no other reason than that there is an enormous saving in correspondence. The only risk is that the powers will be misused; but if this occurs, then the commander has been unworthy of the trust and must be replaced. It has already been mentioned that as a result of his visit to New Zealand in 1939–40 the GOC established a remarkable confidence by the Government in their commander, from which **2 NZEF** profited beyond measure. On his side the GOC fully justified the confidence.

The second paper is of less importance. As it happened, there was

little or no need to invoke some of these authorities, as normal military administration was adequate. We drew the British ration throughout with no augmentation; expenditures under paragraphs (2), (3), (4), and (6) were minor ones. The GOC made full use of paragraph (5), his custom being to allocate part of the amount to the officers holding the rank of brigadier.

It will be noted that in these charters the terminology used was '2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force'. There is no mention of the Division. At this stage the greater, the Expeditionary Force, included the lesser, the Division. The same form of words can be noticed in all the correspondence that took place in late 1939 while the appointment of GOC was being discussed by Mr Fraser with authorities in England. The point is not of sufficient importance to be analysed further, for it was always clear to all concerned that the GOC was being appointed to command the Division just as much as the Expeditionary Force; but in the early stages no one had considered how this dual role was to be exercised.

Nor had anyone any time to envisage the full layout of the Expeditionary Force overseas. The United Kingdom Government had been informed that New Zealand's contribution would be a division. In the telegram notifying the War Office of the constitution of the First Echelon, 'Base Details' appears as one item, and later on there is a request for recommendations for any corps or army troop units which should be provided in proportion. The War Office in its reply specified certain units as being most needed, but of these only one (a survey battery) was ever supplied, and in any case the units were for the benefit of the army at large and not specially for the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. There was no mention on either side of any base or training units or any indication of the extent to which the force would be self-contained. Later on it was made clear that New Zealand would provide certain medical units, including three hospitals; but beyond this nothing was settled.

The war showed that the fighting formation overseas – the Division –

was about three-fifths of the total force. Towards the end of 1941 there were as many troops outside the Division as inside it; but for most of the war the other ratio prevailed – for every three men in the Division there were two outside it. This portion outside the Division was made up partly of non-divisional units and of men in hospital, but mainly of reinforcement drafts and base and line-of-communication units. The excessive number outside the Division in late 1941 came from an accumulation of reinforcements at the time.

However, in 1940 we had not realised this in **Maadi**, and only came to full realisation as the year went on. At an early stage the need was felt for some sort of training establishment, and for a holding depot for men awaiting return to New Zealand. We could not wait for the arrival of our first hospital, but had to form one out of such bits and pieces as were available. By the late summer the outline of an extensive base training camp was emerging, necessitating the formation also of a number of service units to maintain it. The training depots envisaged were also to be the homes at the base of the various corps in the force, the place to which personnel from hospital or awaiting posting would be sent. At the time we did not have enough men to man all these new units, for beyond the first echelon of the Division we had nothing, so that improvisation was the order of the day.

The formation of a base organisation was the first link in a chain of events that led to development in our ideas about the command of the Expeditionary Force. A second link was formed by the fact that an army is really an example of complete state socialism, meaning that every aspect of life is the concern of the controlling authority – not only food, clothing, health, shelter, amusement, but also the domestic and personal problems that afflict mankind. Sooner or later, and indeed most of the time, all these or some of them are making work for the headquarters of the force. In our case, that of a small national army a long way from its homeland, most of these points meant communicating with New Zealand, in addition to the communications that must pass concerning the normal military administration of the force.

Neither of the two points mentioned above – the control of the base organisation and communications with New Zealand, especially on personal problems – had strictly speaking anything to do with the staff of the Division, the task of which was first to train a fighting machine, and later direct its operations in the field. These were full-time tasks in themselves.

In the latter half of 1940 we became aware of the imminent arrival of a number of non-divisional units, these being New Zealand's contribution to the common cause over and above the Division. These units by their very nature could have nothing to do with the Division.

It was thus becoming clear that the GOC was acting in two capacities: first as the commander of a division in the field, and second as commander of a military force consisting of a division plus an unspecified number of non-divisional, base and line-of-communication units, the whole creating a series of administrative problems, including domestic problems, which alone would necessitate a steady stream of communications to and from New Zealand. There was no thought in anyone's mind that the two roles to be filled by the GOC were incompatible one with the other, or that he should not continue to fill them; but it was agreed by all who were thinking about it that a divisional headquarters, engaged in conducting battles in the field, governed in its actions by operations against an enemy, and quite liable to be on the move for long periods, was not the place from which to control either non-divisional or base and line-of-communication units, or from which to engage in a mass of detailed correspondence with Army Headquarters in New Zealand.

The solution adopted was that a separate headquarters would be set up for 'NZEF' matters, that the GOC would always take the field with the Division, and that a senior staff officer would be appointed to the new headquarters to act for him when he was in the field. In September 1940 a memorandum was issued on the subject, the first two paragraphs reading as follows:

1. With effect from 5 Sep 40 it is proposed to separate to some extent the offices of HQ NZ Div and HQ **2 NZEF**, the former being located as is best suited to the needs of the moment, the latter remaining at **Maadi**.

2. The subdivision of responsibilities will be:

HQ NZ Div – will deal with all matters affecting the operations and normal administration of the troops under its command in the field. By normal administration is meant supply, evacuation of sick and wounded, movement, etc.

HQ 2 NZEF – will deal with all matters affecting accommodation and arrival of further contingents, training of further contingents and reinforcement drafts, training and organisation of the NZEF as a whole, base establishments of all kinds, and domestic administration of the NZEF (e.g. special clothing, rates of pay, etc).

It is not pretended that the wording of this memorandum is entirely clear, the use of the fatal 'etc.' conveying some degree of hesitancy. At the time everyone concerned was sure that the two headquarters were necessary; but when it came to putting it down on paper the results were not so good.

On 8 October 1940 an official **2 NZEF** Order was issued, reading as follows:

(1) HQ **2 NZEF** is constituted as a unit of **2 NZEF** to date 1 Oct 40.

(2) HQ **2 NZEF** is responsible for all matters of NZEF policy, all matters affecting **2 NZEF** as a whole, and for that portion of the administration of GHQ units that is the concern of **2 NZEF**.

(3) The following will be responsible direct to HQ **2 NZEF** on such matters as come within the scope of **para (2)** above:

Mil Sec

DDMS

Base Ordnance

Base Postal

SCF

ADDS

HQ Base

Paymaster

Auditor

DAG 2nd Ech

DJAG

Publicity

Commissioner National Patriotic Fund

YMCA. ¹

This was a bit better, and did show some attempt to restore order to what had been a rather confused situation. The very jumbled list of 2 NZEF 'authorities' set out in paragraph (3) comprises all those that existed at the time or were expected to arrive in the near future.

Between the publication of this order and of the next one given below, Divisional Headquarters moved to Helwan Camp to superintend the concentration of the Division, so exemplifying the state of affairs envisaged in paragraph 1 of the memorandum on page 98.

At a still later stage (27 November) yet another order was issued, reading as follows:

The organisation of headquarters in 2 NZEF is now as follows:

HQ 2 NZEF – responsible for policy and general administration as affecting 2 NZEF as a whole, and for the administration of GHQ

troops (in so far as concerns **2 NZEF**). It has no operational responsibility.

HQ NZ Div – responsible for normal duties of a divisional headquarters. In the meantime will continue to handle all courses of instruction including staff school and OCTU.

HQ 2 NZEF Base –

- (a) Administration of base camps and of 1 and 2 Gen Hosps.
- (b) Training of reinforcements, through a series of depots.
- (c) Command of all Base Administrative depots and units.
- (d) Movements between ports and **Maadi Camp**.

¹ Mil Sec - Military Secretary; DDMS - Deputy Director of Medical Services; SCF - Senior Chaplain to the Forces; ADDS - Assistant Director of Dental Services; DAG - Deputy Adjutant-General; DJAG - Deputy Judge Advocate-General.

The only new development in this order is the appearance of **HQ 2 NZEF Base**, which took over all the detailed day-to-day administration of **Maadi Camp**. It had been in the process of formation for some months, but had not previously had its duties defined in orders. While the above order is not clear on the point, it was intended that HQ Base should deal with **HQ 2 NZEF** and not with HQ NZ Division. The Base Commander, in common with the formation commanders in the Division, was entitled to approach the GOC direct; but OICA would be the staff officer with whom he would subsequently deal, and not any of the divisional staff. In the rather confused period from September 1940 until the Division went to **Greece** in March 1941, when both **HQ 2 NZEF** and HQ Base were feeling their feet, the Base Commander, a distinguished officer from the First World War, acted as the GOC's adviser on matters of policy in addition to his duties in **Maadi Camp**, and there was a duplication in the activities of this officer and those of OICA; but as the relationship between the Base Commander and OICA was excellent, no harm was done – indeed quite the reverse, for the Base Commander had really

something to contribute of value for the future, and gave advice which was appreciated as much by OICA as by anyone.

Such an indeterminate position could not continue indefinitely, however, and later in 1941 the respective duties of these two officers were clarified. Further attention is given later in this chapter to the duties of HQ 2 NZEF as compared with those of HQ Maadi Camp, the title adopted in August 1941.

For the purposes of command in its broadest sense, the GOC thereafter worked with two headquarters, HQ 2 NZEF and HQ NZ Division. He lived normally with **Divisional Headquarters** even when the Division was out of action, and only occasionally spent a day or so with HQ 2 NZEF. While engaged in active operations, he had to leave HQ 2 NZEF to its own devices. A heavy responsibility lay on the senior officer there, in part to carry on with normal routine as the GOC would wish, and in part to maintain contact with the GOC, keep him advised, and take his instructions.

The title chosen for this officer was 'Officer in Charge of Administration', that being the title usually held by the senior administrative staff officer in a British military command. It was suitable enough; but perhaps could have been improved. Later in the war a title grew up in the British service of 'Chief Administrative Officer', and this would have been better in our case also; but by then the other title had become well established. It was abbreviated to OICA.

Before reviewing the adequacy or inadequacy of this method of command, some attention may be given to the question of the location of HQ 2 NZEF. The chief administrative officer in such cases has two functions, one as staff officer to his commander, and one as the overseer, even if not specifically the commander, of all the base and line-of-communication units. One view would place Headquarters at the rear of the line of communication, from which position it supervises the whole layout and sees the expeditionary force spread out in front of it. In such a location it is free to get on with its work, undisturbed by the

ripples of war, but, for that very reason, out of touch with both commander and fighting formations. Another view looks on the Headquarters as part of the GOC's command organisation despite its separation from the fighting force; in which case it must be located where it can reach the GOC without too much delay, and moreover can keep in reasonable touch with the fighting troops. If the latter view is accepted, then Headquarters should be well forward in the line of communication, always bearing in mind that it is primarily an administrative office and should not get mixed up with operational movements. Moreover, when it moves, which should not be too frequently, it should go forward to the limits of reason. It is submitted that the second of the two views regarding location is the correct one.

From its formation in 1940 until the move to **Italy** in 1944, HQ 2 NZEF was in **Maadi Camp**. Had the campaign in **Greece** taken a different course, involving the Division in a permanent location in the **Balkans**, Headquarters would have had to move across the **Mediterranean**. But in both the **Greece** and **Crete** campaigns, and in the Libyan campaign of 1941, the Division moved out and back again so quickly that there was no question of a move for Headquarters. A fortnight after the beginning of the Libyan campaign, OICA and one or two other officers from Headquarters went forward to catch up with the Division and see what steps might have to be taken, only to meet the Division coming back to its starting point. Both before and after this Libyan campaign, the Division was in an area in the **Western Desert** not more than eight hours' car drive from **Maadi**.

When the Division moved to **Syria** in 1942 there was some talk of our moving, and indeed of closing down in Egypt altogether, for there was a vague idea that the Division would later be moving into **Turkey** or **Persia**; but again the Division remained in the area for a few months only. Nevertheless, HQ 2 NZEF was definitely too far away, for normally it took two days to go from **Maadi** to **Divisional Headquarters** at **Baalbek**.

During the Battle for Egypt in the summer of 1942 the Division was never more than two or three hours away from Headquarters. As the

victorious advance from **Alamein** continued, the Division became farther and farther away, until in early 1943 it became necessary to use air travel if the journey from **Maadi** to **Divisional Headquarters** was to be completed in reasonable time. Sometimes we could get through in one day, but often it took two. Had it not been clear from geography that sooner or later the advance must come to an end, we would have had to move HQ **2 NZEF**. Luckily for this purpose, the Division came back to **Maadi** very quickly at the end of the campaign, and for a while the two headquarters were together again.

It has been mentioned in

Chapter 5 that when the Division moved to **Italy** much thought was given to the action to be taken by **HQ 2 NZEF** and by **Maadi Camp**. About the move of Headquarters there was really little doubt, at least as soon as it was known that the Division would be continuing in the Italian theatre and not, for instance, moving to **France**. To be separated from the GOC for an indefinite period by either a sea journey, or a mixture of air and land travel taking at least two days, would have been impossible for the proper administration of the force, especially as the greater part was in **Italy**. When Headquarters moved in January-February 1944, it was already a month or two behindhand.

In accordance with the principle set out on **page 101**, Headquarters should have been located just as far forward in **Italy** as was possible. Unfortunately, we ran into some opposition from the new GHQ, or at least some failure to appreciate the position of the headquarters of a small national army, and it took us a little time to persuade GHQ that we must be accepted and accommodated reasonably well. The area on the east coast of **Italy** in advance of **Bari** was already congested with troops, including large units from the **United States Air Force**, so that the tendency was to push us towards the rear; but there is no doubt that OICA was wrong in accepting the site finally allotted to us, namely **Santo Spirito**, immediately north-west of **Bari**. We should have tried to get a more advanced site. **Santo Spirito** was quite suitable in itself, but was too far from the Division for an initial location. The distance was all the more noticeable when the Division moved across to the **Cassino** area, which it did almost as soon as **HQ 2 NZEF** arrived in **Italy**. However, the Division then stayed in this area until the end of May 1944.

From then onwards the Division moved farther north up the centre of **Italy**, by August it was in the **Florence** area, and it was obviously going farther north still. It was high time for Headquarters to move. At first we thought of following up behind the Division along the central axis; but just at that point the future plans for offensives in **Italy** involved the Division's moving over to the east coast, and thereafter

advancing along the coast to the north of the **Apennines**. Initially it was moving to near **Ancona**, which was to be the advanced port for the new advance. We were told by GHQ that somewhere in this area would be a suitable spot for Headquarters.

It was the only time in the war that we put into force the principles governing the location of Headquarters, i.e., not to move too often, but to move far ahead when the time does come. In the end we chose the township of **Senigallia**, which when we first looked at it was only a few thousand yards behind the front troops. Even when we moved there in September 1944 the front line was only a few miles away; and the Division, then awaiting its turn to go into the line, was less than half an hour away.

Senigallia turned out to be a great success, and as a location was ideal. Right up to the opening of the last battle in April 1945, **Divisional Headquarters** was never more than two or three hours away, and we were on the axis of advance.

By the time the Division reached **Trieste** in May, Headquarters was too far behind; but we put up with some inconvenience, as we knew that the Division would soon be moving back. Probably the most inconvenient period was while the Division was in the **Lake Trasimene** area in July and August 1945; for although the distance was less than when it had been in **Trieste**, the roads between the two headquarters were inconvenient, involving a roundabout journey across the **Apennines**.

When the Division moved into the **Florence** area in October 1945 the two headquarters were amalgamated, and we were back where we had been in 1940.

So much for the location of HQ 2 NZEF; but now we must consider whether the system of having two headquarters worked. That two headquarters were necessary is beyond doubt, for the staff of the Division in the field had to be left free for operational duties, and could

not handle the mass of administrative matter which passed through HQ 2 NZEF.

Our experience showed that such a system could work, provided that there is a dividing line between the duties of the two headquarters, and that the two staffs have a good understanding and co-operate to the full. The only danger – or perhaps difficulty is the better word – was that work properly the province of one headquarters would be done at the other; and as it was impossible for HQ 2 NZEF to trespass into the operational field, the hard fact was that the only trouble that did arise came from work being done at **Divisional Headquarters** that was really the task of HQ 2 NZEF, the reason of course being that the GOC was at **Divisional Headquarters** most of the time. There were occasions when OICA had to point out that some problem or other was strictly speaking a 2 NZEF one and not a divisional one, and that before any action was taken the 2 NZEF aspects should be borne in mind. If instructions were issued, or cables sent, without the staff of HQ 2 NZEF having the opportunity to express their views, there was a good chance that the action had been taken without a full knowledge of the circumstances, and that some confusion would follow; and this did occur. It must be remembered that the very existence of a separate Expeditionary Force Headquarters implies that the GOC will more often than not be otherwise occupied with operational matters, and during such time as he has been actively engaged in the field cannot possibly know all that has been happening in the rest of the force or in general administration. Nothing said here is intended to deprive the commander of a force of any of his authority; but if confusion is to be avoided it is better to work through the appropriate staff. It was with this object in view that an attempt was made to keep HQ 2 NZEF reasonably close to the GOC.

All that ever did happen was confusion, and nothing more serious. After all, the matters at issue were only administrative, and often long-term, and there was no question of operations in any form.

The relations of OICA with the GOC may perhaps be illustrated on their humorous side by the account of one incident. In December 1943

OICA was visiting Divisional Headquarters. It so happened that during his visit the new Corps Commander called. The GOC sent for OICA, and as the latter approached said to the Corps Commander, 'I particularly want you to meet this officer. This is the officer who tells me all the things I can't do.'

There were one or two occasions during the war when the **2 NZEF** aspects of operational activities of the Division were forgotten. The outstanding one was the failure to realise the full implications of the move of the Division from Egypt to **Greece**, and for this **Divisional Headquarters** and **HQ 2 NZEF** were equally responsible. Another less important case was the failure to advise **HQ 2 NZEF** of the secrecy of the move from the **Sangro** to **Cassino**. On the whole, however, the liaison between the two headquarters was good, and the two staffs co-operated well. This became progressively more necessary, as in the latter stages of the war we were more self-contained than in the early ones, and the moves of the Division had a correspondingly greater effect on rear NZEF units and installations.

Obviously, the one commander working through two headquarters can only work when the whole force is in one theatre of war, and when the field formation is at least half the total force. Had half the Expeditionary Force been in England and half in the **Mediterranean**, one commander in charge of the whole force and, at the same time, commander of one portion would have been an impossibility. Our brief experience in 1940 when the Second Echelon was in England would support this view. Similarly, had the Division not been the greater part of the force, and indeed the reason why the force existed at all, it would have been difficult for the commander of the field force to be commander of the whole.

It was sometimes suggested during the war that there should be an 'Expeditionary Force Commander' separate from the Divisional Commander, to be a full-time appointment in itself. The Divisional Commander would then be free to concentrate on operational matters,

and as far as concerned the support to be given by rear echelons, would be no worse off than the commander of any British division, where support is given by the Corps or the Army Headquarters and the Divisional Commander has no powers himself. At first sight there may be something tempting in this suggestion; but closer inspection indicates weaknesses. The Division in our case was the only one to be considered, whereas in an army corps or an army there are many divisions. Our Division was three-fifths of the total force and, even more important, was the reason why the force existed at all, for apart from the group of non-divisional units, the sole task of the rest of the force was to support the Division. There was thus in this sphere a unity of objective in our small army. It is an accepted principle in British organisation that the commander of the nucleus formation commands the whole force, the commonest example being that of the brigade group, where the commander of the infantry brigade commands all the ancillary units also. In some ways our Expeditionary Force could be looked on as a 'Divisional Group'. An 'Expeditionary Force Commander' would not 'command' the Division as an operational formation, but would merely be responsible for its non-operational administration. His only true command would be the base and line-of-communication units, so that while there might be some justification for making him of the same rank as the Divisional Commander, there could be none for making him senior in rank. Conflicts between him and the Divisional Commander would inevitably arise; for if the latter wished to make any alterations in equipment, establishments, location of rear units, etc., he would have to apply to, and then convince, an officer who had no responsibilities for the operations he was being asked to help. A normal divisional commander, when applying to his corps or army commander for help, is at least dealing with an officer who, on a higher level, is just as much responsible for the operations of the division as he is himself.

An Expeditionary Force Commander in the circumstances of **2 NZEF** would have been a fifth wheel to the coach and would have been a constant source of irritation to the Divisional Commander. The Expeditionary Force gained immensely in cohesion and flexibility by

having one commander who could make adjustments if any were called for, without having to consult an independent authority.

Had the Expeditionary Force consisted of two or three parts with either the same or differing functions, and approximately equal in size, it would have been a different story, and a case could be made out for a separate non-operational Force Commander.

At a time in 1943 when it seemed likely that the GOC would be offered the appointment of Corps Commander as a permanency, the [New Zealand Government](#) was firm that it would wish him to continue as commander of the Expeditionary Force. The desire to retain in any capacity the services of an officer who had already rendered outstanding service can easily be understood, and the reverse of the picture, that the GOC should sever his connection with the force, would have given a shock to everyone concerned, both in New Zealand and outside it. Good will on all sides, together with memories of the past, would doubtless have made the scheme work; but the position of the new Divisional Commander would have been awkward. Sentiment would have been in conflict with efficiency. Luckily for the control of the force, nothing came of the proposal, as the GOC preferred to stay with the New Zealand Army.

The extra work placed on the commander from his dual role is eased by having a dual staff, and a senior staff officer for Expeditionary Force duties. In the future when any expeditionary force goes overseas as part of the country's commitments under some international agreement, it is probable that there will be some semi-diplomatic work, or at least inter-Allied discussions, separate from the operational activities of the force. While the principle that the commander of the nucleus field formation should also be the commander of the whole force should for choice be adhered to, it becomes even more important that the staff officer for Expeditionary Force duties should be of some standing, and fully qualified to speak for his commander.

It was a year before the commander and staff of [2 NZEF](#) really knew

each other and developed that mutual trust and understanding which is essential. From then on the position could not have been bettered, and both the Division and the Expeditionary Force profited thereby – which indicates that it would be desirable that commander and staff should have worked together in peacetime, if only for a few months, so as to smooth off the rough corners. The staff would then be in a position to take control from the outset instead of spending a period – as we did in 1940 – learning our own job at the same time as we were supposed to be teaching others theirs.

In the same degree of importance is the necessity from the outset of having a separate staff officer for Expeditionary Force duties. These duties will arise from the very beginning, and should be the task of a separate staff from the beginning. It is putting an unfair strain on the normal administrative staff of a division to expect them to carry the dual burden, and our experience shows that it cannot be done. The need for the separate Expeditionary Force staff is all the greater if, as will be recommended later in this volume, a large part of the base and line-of-communication troops goes overseas at the beginning.

It may be asked whether it would not have been possible for HQ **2 NZEF** to be combined with HQ Maadi Camp instead of having two headquarters, each with a brigadier at the top. It can be pointed out with justice that for a year in 1942–43 the two headquarters were amalgamated; and it can be said now that when in 1941 the first commander of **Maadi Camp** left the force, and new arrangements were to be made, the intention was to have one headquarters only. A closer look at the position, however, caused this idea to be given up.

It is not difficult to draw the distinction between the roles of the two offices. Headquarters **2 NZEF** was primarily a ‘staff’ office, and OICA was staff officer to the GOC for one side of the latter’s work. It is true that OICA was ‘overseer’ of the lines of communication, and latterly even the commander of them by official appointment; but the command could only be exercised in a broad general way, for the units concerned were in part strewn all over **Italy** from the Po valley to **Taranto**, and in part away

in Egypt. Headquarters **2 NZEF** had to keep a broad view over **2 NZEF** as a whole, and ensure continuity from rear to front. Its viewpoint overseas ran from **Suez** to the Turkish frontier, or to **Tunis**, or to **Cassino**, or to **Trieste**, depending upon where the Division was at the moment. And this was only part of the tale; for Headquarters was responsible for maintaining the vital link with New Zealand, a task of the first order in itself. Headquarters, moreover, was the co-ordinating authority for the large number of NZEF 'controls' or 'authorities', including Medical, Dental, Chaplains, Legal, Pay, Public Relations and so on – the full list appears in

Chapter 8. The co-ordination might have been slight, almost impalpable, but it was nevertheless a necessity.

The work of HQ Maadi Camp bore the same relation to the work of HQ 2 NZEF as that of a commanding officer does to that of a formation commander. Headquarters Maadi Camp commanded directly many thousands of troops organised into a series of units, and was directly responsible for their training and administration, including their discipline – and it may be said that discipline in Cairo alone was a constant preoccupation. The work of HQ Maadi Camp was the detailed day-to-day work that always applies to direct command of troops.

Had the two headquarters been combined into one throughout there is no doubt that the detailed day-to-day work would have eclipsed the long-term work, a state of affairs that always happens if one office deals with both kinds of business. The head of the office would have had his hands full running Maadi Camp and would have had little time to travel round and keep personal touch with the GOC and the scattered parts of the force. When the Division moved to Italy, the position of OICA, tied to Maadi Camp, would have been an impossible one.

The explanation of the temporary amalgamation in 1942–43 is, in the first place, that it was an emergency measure to conserve manpower. The OC Maadi Camp at the beginning of the crisis was lent to GHQ for defence duties within Egypt, and no separate replacement was available; and throughout the camp officers and men were being released from administrative duties for employment as reinforcements, so that it was only proper that the two headquarters (HQ 2 NZEF and HQ Maadi Camp) should set an example of economy and exact harder work from those who remained. Moreover, the Division was nearer to Maadi than ever before during operations, so that the normal work of HQ 2 NZEF was reduced, the whole Expeditionary Force being in effect compulsorily concentrated. For the moment there was only one task in front of everyone, the defence of Egypt.

As soon as the advance started again after Alamein, and the canvas

widened out, so did the work of HQ **2 NZEF** change back again to what it had been before the crisis. The two headquarters remained amalgamated in appearance; but in fact the work was being done in two compartments, for a separate OC Troops was appointed for **Maadi Camp**, and another for the relief camp on the other side of **Cairo**. These officers, while subordinate to OICA, who continued to hold the dual role officially, were largely independent. The second role held by OICA was better expressed as 'Officer Commanding the Lines of Communication' than as 'OC Maadi Camp', i.e., he had supervisory powers over the real OC Maadi Camp without being actively engaged in the command himself. With the increasing dispersal of the Expeditionary Force, and the emergence of the furlough scheme, it would have been impossible for OICA to take an active or personal part in the running of the base camp.

Nevertheless, despite what has been said above, it is probably safe to say that while the Division was in North Africa and **Syria** the two headquarters could have been run as one, the strains that would have emerged being balanced by the saving in overheads. When the Division went to **Italy** the possibility of amalgamation vanished.

Inadvertently we had found the best answer of all in the period from **Alamein** onwards, namely that the Chief Administrative Officer should also be the commander of all base and line-of-communication units, including the base camp, so ensuring cohesion from rear to front. The base camp, in turn, would have its own commander and staff, as would any other camps. It was mentioned on **page 107** that OICA was 'overseer' of the lines of communication, this being a natural result of his official duties; but otherwise than in **Italy**, and then only latterly, he was never appointed as commander. Had this position prevailed during the time that the Division was in North Africa, the combined headquarters (**2 NZEF** and **Maadi Camp**) would have included a separate branch, under a senior officer, for the detailed command of the camp.

When in May 1943 the Division came back to **Maadi**, all our headquarters – Division, NZEF, and **Maadi Camp** – were in the one spot, and we had a little difficulty in deciding just who commanded whom.

Headquarters 2 NZEF, still amalgamated in appearance with HQ Maadi Camp, controlled the furlough scheme, which was the main task at the moment, while Divisional Headquarters controlled the camp. The position was not entirely clear, but good will among all concerned prevented either duplication or omission in daily routine.

To sum up – the roles of HQ 2 NZEF and of HQ Maadi Camp were distinct and the two headquarters could not be completely merged into one; but it would have been possible for them to be combined while the Division was in North Africa, provided that a separate OC Camp was appointed and OICA was not required to command the camp directly.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ORGANISATION OF HQ 2 NZEF

ORGANISATION OF HQ 2 NZEF

The term 'HQ 2 NZEF' was used somewhat loosely. In a broad sense it comprised all the group of NZEF 'authorities' which were concerned with the administration of the force as a whole, and which are set out in full in

Chapter 8. They included the Officer in Charge of Administration, the Military Secretary, the Director of Medical Services, the Senior Chaplain, the Chief Paymaster, and so on. Some of the authorities, however, did not necessarily live in the same immediate area as the rest of Headquarters; and all the authorities had titles and addresses of their own, and to some extent had an existence separate from Headquarters as interpreted in a more limited connotation.

The term 'HQ 2 NZEF' was used also for the office of OICA alone, and correspondence bearing that address was delivered accordingly. In the layout of all the offices, that was the title placed outside OICA's office. He and his immediate assistants may be taken as the 'staff', while the others are the 'services'.

Equally in **Maadi**, in Santo Spirito and in **Senigallia**, the offices were spread out, albeit in a limited area, and were never in one large building. In Maadi they were in hutments, and in the other two places in a series of small houses, a state of affairs to be preferred to being accommodated in a large office building. If it can be arranged, a semi-rural atmosphere is pleasant and does not detract from efficient office work – rather the reverse. The atmosphere of a large, grim office block is dampening before work has even started.

The office of the Officer in Charge of Administration, HQ 2 NZEF on the more limited connotation, varied its organisation during the war, depending on the requirements of the moment; but in general it had branches for the usual three divisions – General Staff, Adjutant-General, and Quartermaster-General. The terminology varied also. At one stage the three sub-divisions were known as A1, A2, and A3, the reason being that the greater part of the work at the time pertained to the Adjutant-General's branch. In the end the terminology settled down into (a) General Staff, Staff Duties (G-SD), (b) Assistant Adjutant-General (AAG), and Assistant Quartermaster-General (AQMG), three branches in all.

The detailed allocation of duties to these three branches varied also; but the following gives the allocation which we came to in the end, and

which survived unchanged for the last three years of the war.

Officer in Charge of Administration

All policy matters

Military Secretary

Senior Chaplain

Medical and Dental – large questions

‘G’ Branch

Organisation of **2 NZEF**

Training – with GSO I, 2 NZ Division

Composition of reinforcement drafts

Formation and disbandment of units

Vehicle markings

War diary, **2 NZEF**

War establishments

Statistics and wastage tables

Order of battle

Location statements

2 NZEF orders and circulars

Security and censorship

Intelligence

Ciphers and communications

Office staff and procedure

‘A’ Branch

Reinforcements to field

Discharges

Repatriation

Marriages

Furlough and replacement schemes

Women's services

Prisoners of war

Leave

Second Echelon

Attachments and detachments

Commanding officers' reports

Courts martial

Selection board – graded personnel

Courts of Inquiry

Honours and awards

Discipline

Personnel – miscellaneous

Traffic accidents

Promotions other ranks

Compassionate leave and personal matters

Service chevrons and wound

stripes
Transfers

'Q' Branch

Finance and capitation	Postal
Compensation for losses	Printing unit
Shipping and movements	Stationery depot
Quartering and accommodation	Base Kit Store
Ordnance, clothing, and equipment	Claims
Stores, rations, and supplies	ERS
NAAFI	Bands
Transport	Entertainment unit
Employment of civilians	Cinemas
Contracts	National Patriotic Fund Board
Publicity	YMCA
Pay and audit	Church Army
Port detachments	Welfare Committee
Archives	

OICA himself dealt with the Military Secretary – who had direct access to the GOC – and with the Senior Chaplain; the former because he handled confidential matters affecting officers and therefore better confined to the minimum number of staff, and the latter because the questions of spiritual welfare were sometimes of some delicacy and were better handled at the top. The DMS also had direct access to the GOC, and with the ADDS had matters to discuss from time to time affecting their relative duties.

It will be noticed under 'G' Branch that 'Training' is qualified with the words 'with GSO I, 2 NZ Division'. In fact the 'G' staff of the Division were responsible for all training directives, but these were transmitted to HQ **2 NZEF** and distributed by G(SD) Branch there. The 'G' staff of the Division was thus for certain duties the 'G' staff for **2 NZEF** also, for there was no justification for having a senior 'G' officer at HQ **2 NZEF**. Actually, a good deal of the correspondence on training passed direct between 2 NZ Division and **Maadi Camp**, a violation of the correct channel of communication that never caused any trouble. The biggest responsibility of the 'G' officer at Headquarters was Organisation, with a

capital 'O', including keeping a watchful eye on manpower, establishments, and wastage. This officer was also personal assistant to OICA, who took a slightly greater degree of direct interest in this branch than in the other two.

Strictly speaking, some of the duties allotted to 'Q' Branch did not come within the normally accepted allocation, e.g., welfare, pay, and ERS, all of which would usually have gone to 'A' Branch; but the division was made this way in order to even up the duties between 'Q' and 'A' Branches. There was more 'A' work than 'Q', so that in dividing the work equally some 'A' work overflowed into the so-called 'Q'.

Both in Egypt and Italy we had a liaison officer stationed at GHQ, but carried on the establishment of HQ 2 NZEF. We were far too modest about this. The officer was at first only a captain, and even at a later stage only occasionally a major. We would have been better advised to have expanded the office into a small mission, with a lieutenant-colonel at the head. We undoubtedly suffered a little through not having stronger representation at GHQ.

Just after the move to Italy HQ 2 NZEF, i.e., the office of OICA, numbered six officers and nineteen other ranks, together with eight WAAC personnel, including a WAAC subaltern who was in charge of all clerical WAACs in the force. Later it rose to a maximum of 45 all told, but including the Senior Chaplain and the General Manager of clubs and their staff.

It was mentioned in

Chapter 4 that HQ **2 NZEF** adopted a vehicle sign of a Southern Cross on a dark-blue background. At first officers used to wear an armband corresponding to that worn by the staff of an army corps, viz., red-white-red in equal horizontal bands. In 1942, however, GHQ in the **Middle East** ruled that any officers having direct access to GHQ – which we had – should wear the armband pertaining to an army, viz., red-black-red, so we adopted that and kept it for the rest of the war. It carried the inscription ‘**2 NZEF**’.

To keep touch with both divisional and base and line-of-communication units, the staff of Headquarters had to keep moving round. Reflection today makes it clear that despite good intentions neither OICA nor the staff of Headquarters moved about enough, and that as usual there was a tendency for the office work to prevail over the maintenance of personal liaison with the various parts of **2 NZEF**. Later in this volume the value of personal liaison will be stressed in other aspects. It is to be regretted that Headquarters did not set the example it should have done. The answer was either one or two permanent mobile liaison officers, or the same number of officers added to the staff of Headquarters for office duties – preferably the latter so that the senior officers could have carried out the liaison duties themselves. The only excuse that can be made is that Headquarters was trying to set an example of economy of staff.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 8 – HEADQUARTERS 2 NZEF - THE SERVICES

CHAPTER 8

Headquarters 2 NZEF - the Services

WE now come to what have been called the 2 NZEF 'Controls' or 'Authorities', i.e., those officers or units whose authority extended throughout the force. Some authorities, in fact the greater part, existed from the beginning of the force to the end; some did not appear until various later points in the life of the force; and one disappeared after the first two years. The list given below is the maximum. It does not appear that there was ever an official order of precedence of this miscellaneous group of offices, and the order given is adopted from various orders of battle.

List of Authorities

Military Secretary (MS)

Director of Medical Services (DMS)

Matron-in-Chief (later Principal Matron)

Assistant Director of Dental Services (ADDS)

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services (DDOS) – until 1942, then merged with ADOS 2 NZ Division.

Assistant Director of Mechanical Engineering (ADME) – representative of CREME 2 NZ Division after 1942.

Chief Paymaster (also Financial Adviser)

Senior Chaplain

Deputy Judge Advocate-General (DJAG)

Public Relations Officer (PRO)

Second Echelon (2 Ech)

Assistant Director of Education and Rehabilitation Services (ADERS)

Assistant Director of Postal Services (ADPS)

Auditor

Archivist

Commissioner National Patriotic Fund

Commissioner YMCA

Senior Secretary Church Army

Club Manager

Commissioner Red Cross

Printing and Stationery Unit

Ciphers

Censor Sections

WAACS – three divisions, welfare, hospital and clerical. Camp Commandant

At the risk of reiteration, it must be pointed out that part of the justification for the existence of HQ 2 NZEF was the need for some measure of co-ordination among all these varied offices.

Of the ‘corps’ in the army, the heads of medical, dental, chaplains, pay, postal, and educational were stationed at HQ 2 NZEF. In all other cases, the heads of corps were the senior officers of that corps in the Division. They all had a certain amount of ‘NZEF’ work to do, especially for promotion of officers, manpower and war establishments. The list is as follows:

Armoured Corps – Commander 4 Armoured Brigade (after 1942)

Cavalry – CO Divisional Cavalry (until 1942)

Artillery – CRA

Engineers – CRE after 1943 (see next paragraph)

Signals – CRSigs

Infantry (including MG and Maori) – GOC personally

ASC – CRASC

Ordnance – ADOS

EME – CREME

Provost – DAPM

Ciphers While not strictly speaking ‘corps’, the GSO I of the Division was looked on as the head.

Field Security While not strictly speaking ‘corps’, the GSO I of the Division was looked on as the head.

During 1941, 1942, and 1943, when we had a large number of non-divisional engineer units, we had no head of the corps of engineers in 2 NZEF. There were more non-divisional companies than divisional ones; and the work was so varied that it was impossible to appoint either the CRE or the head of any non-divisional group as the head of all engineer units. There was no justification for a separate officer as head of the corps. In the end a combination of OICA and the Military Secretary – the latter an engineer officer as it happened – kept a watchful eye on the interests of the corps of engineers as a whole. When in late 1943 the non-divisional engineers were disbanded, the CRE of the Division was appointed Chief Engineer for 2 NZEF, and all was well thereafter.

The list of authorities given on page 114 now merits some attention. As was stated in the Introduction, it is proposed to mention here only

those things that caused problems to HQ 2 NZEF, i.e., to the office of OICA. Every authority had problems of his own within his particular sphere, some of them being mentioned in other volumes of our War History.

MILITARY SECRETARY

Some aspects of the Military Secretary's work are discussed in

DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

It is not proposed to say more than a few words here about medical matters, as the work and difficulties of the DMS are being adequately covered in other volumes. At the beginning of the war his title was ADMS NZ Division; but when HQ 2 NZEF was organised as a separate authority, his title was changed to DDMS 2 NZEF and another officer was appointed to the Division. DDMS (Deputy Director of Medical Services) was the appropriate title in the circumstances, being next in the hierarchy above an Assistant Director; but the habit of British authorities of looking on a deputy as a subordinate, combined with the desire to improve the status of such an important authority, caused us in early 1942 to change the title to Director.

The greater part of the medical work in 2 NZEF was outside the Division, so that there was every justification for placing the medical head at HQ 2 NZEF. The DMS was the one adviser to the GOC whose advice of necessity nearly always prevailed, for matters of health and medical treatment are so specialised and the medical personnel so highly skilled that any commander must think long and deeply before overriding any advice given him. The responsibility remained that of the GOC nevertheless. In view of the importance of his work, the DMS dealt direct with the GOC on all matters of medical policy.

Officer ranks in the Medical Corps are on the high side at any time, so that it is perhaps not surprising that Headquarters was resistant to applications for an increase in senior ranks. The question was admittedly difficult, owing to the combination of administrative and specialist officers in any hospital, and to the shortage of the specialists. It often happened that when a specialist became due for promotion into one of the senior administrative vacancies available in a hospital, he could not be spared from his specialist work. In the end, to be fair to specialists, we had to agree to an additional number of senior ranks for

hospital staffs.

It can be claimed with complete justification that our standards of medical treatment and administration were high, and indeed were the admiration of other Allied troops, including British. We were better served than were most national armies.

MATRON-IN-CHIEF - PRINCIPAL MATRON

The work of the Matron-in-Chief is covered in the Medical volumes of the War History. The title was changed from Matron-in-Chief to Principal Matron when the first holder of the appointment retired in November 1943, the true Matron-in-Chief being at Army Headquarters in New Zealand.

Throughout the war we arranged for the Matron-in-Chief or Principal Matron to live in quarters of her own, and not with any medical unit. Both in Egypt and in **Italy** she had either a flat or small house, where she not only lived but also had her meals. In Egypt, for obvious reasons, she lived outside **Maadi Camp**, but near at hand in **Maadi village**; but in **Italy** she was within the circle of HQ 2 NZEF accommodation. Right up to the end of the war, Headquarters was conservative to the extent that it did not embark on mixed messes, although by that time even the British Army had admitted **WAAC** officers to area messes. Once we moved to **Italy** the Principal Matron should have messed with Headquarters, despite any grumblings that might have been voiced by some of the older officers.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DENTAL SERVICES

The ADDS was independent of the DMS, but naturally had to co-operate with him in matters of dental health in the broadest sense; and a similar position prevailed in a hospital between the dental officer and the heads of the surgical and medical divisions. At the beginning there was a certain amount of friction, and on occasion Headquarters was asked to lay down clearly where the division of duties came, a task

which was a little invidious; and in anycase this was difficult, for all the words that can be written to define dividing lines in such cases cannot take the place of cooperation and good will. If these relations do not exist, all the directives in the world will not replace them. The saving factor was that both sides were actuated by commendable motives, namely to find the best method of restoring patients quickly to complete health.

The work of the Dental Corps is being covered in another volume, but it must be said here that the standards it set overseas were much above those of the British service generally. Our mobile dental units were unique.

ORDNANCE - ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

For the first two years of the war the head of the Ordnance Corps was stationed at HQ **2 NZEF**. Like the medical head, he was first appointed as head of the corps in the Division (ADOS) but very soon became DDOS of **2 NZEF**, and another officer took up the divisional appointment. At the outset there was ample justification for a separate **2 NZEF** head, for all our initial equipment had to be drawn and there were developments in the maintenance of mechanical transport, the Ordnance Corps at that time being responsible for mechanical work also. Once issues of equipment were governed by battle losses or by wear and tear, the work of the Ordnance Corps became more routine and there was not the same justification for keeping a senior officer at Headquarters. The DDOS at the time voiced this opinion himself. His services were then accepted in a senior appointment with the British Army, and the responsibility for all ordnance work in **2 NZEF** passed to the ADOS of the Division. An assistant to this officer was stationed at HQ **2 NZEF**. When the subdivision of the Ordnance Corps took place in late 1942 - see below - a separate ordnance officer did not stay with Headquarters, the duties being largely taken over by the officer in charge of our expanding base ordnance depot.

In 1942 the British Army split up the Ordnance Corps into two

portions - one, retaining the name of Ordnance, to confine itself to provision, and the other, a new ' **Electrical and Mechanical Engineers**', to be responsible for technical maintenance. After some slight hesitation, we decided to follow suit, and the new corps of NZEME was formed in December 1942, its head being the senior officer with the Division, the CREME. An assistant to this officer was stationed at HQ **2 NZEF**.

PAY

As far as Headquarters was concerned, the only real trouble we had with pay matters came from extra-duty pay. It was an intractable problem; but it was a complication created in New Zealand and was in no way the fault of anyone in **2 NZEF**, certainly not of the Chief Paymaster.

When the first issue of Pay and Allowance Regulations was made late in 1939, one paragraph was as follows:

EXTRA DUTY PAY

(**Cooks 2/6 per diem**

a)

(**Privates and lance-corporals whilst carrying out one of the duties**

b) stated below will be granted 1/- per diem extra duty pay: Armourer, baker, bootmaker, butcher, dental mechanic, farrier, fitter, engine-driver, motor mechanic, orderly-room clerk, saddler, shoeing-smith, tailor, wheeler.

Up to the time of the departure of the First Echelon, the text of Pay and Allowance Regulations had not been scrutinised by any appropriate member of the Expeditionary Force, and in fact the bulk issue of the regulations was only placed on board the transports while they were in **Wellington** harbour. It was not until we had been in **Maadi** for a few weeks that this paragraph struck home to units, and then the complaints came thick and heavy.

Sub-paragraph (a) was not in question. The trouble was with sub-paragraph (**b**). As far as is known, the paragraph had been lifted bodily

from the regulations for the 1st New Zealand Expeditionary Force. There had been no time to examine it closely, nor to relate it to the new force, and it was allowed to stand. It would be unfair to blame anyone for this, for Army Headquarters was working under extreme pressure; but it was unfortunate to the highest degree. The paragraph as worded was largely inapplicable, and was in general unsuited to the force. It had been designed for a force whose transport was almost entirely horsed, and in which the amount of mechanical transport or mechanical appliances was so small as to be something exceptional. The new force had no horses, was entirely mechanised, and was equipped with a mass of complicated arms and machinery. There were no 'farriers, saddlers or shoeing-smiths', whereas there was an army of skilled tradesmen most inadequately covered by the terms 'armourer, fitter, engine-driver, or motor mechanic'. Our war establishments included tradesmen under a profusion of titles; but what was even more important was that the skilled tradesman of the First World War had ceased to be exceptional in the Second, and was just an ordinary member of the force and a reflection of the mechanical age in which we live. To have given all these tradesmen and skilled personnel the extra shilling would have been absurd, for in some corps – the armoured corps for instance – tradesmen were between one-third and half of the unit on 1940 establishments.



Maadi Camp, looking towards the Citadel and Cairo

Maadi Camp, looking towards the Citadel and Cairo



Divisional Headquarters offices, Maadi Camp, 1940

Divisional Headquarters offices, Maadi Camp, 1940



New Zealand Supply Depot. Vegetables arrive from native gardens

New Zealand Supply Depot. Vegetables arrive from native gardens

Egyptian laundry, Maadi



Egyptian laundry, Maadi



Divisional Headquarters mess, Maadi, 1940. From left: Maj W. G. Gentry, Lt-Col W. G. Stevens, Maj-Gen B. C. Freyberg, Lt-Col K. L. Stewart and Rev. E. B. Moore (back to camera)

Divisional Headquarters mess, Maadi, 1940. From left: Maj W. G. Gentry, Lt-Col W. G. Stevens, Maj-Gen B. C. Freyberg, Lt-Col K. L. Stewart and Rev. E. B. Moore (back to camera)

Inter-unit relay race, Maadi baths, 1940



Inter-unit relay race, Maadi baths, 1940



2 Echelon Records Section, Maadi Camp, December 1943

2 Echelon Records Section, [Maadi Camp](#), December 1943

Christmas parcel mail being sorted at the New Zealand Chief Post Office, Cairo, December 1943



Christmas parcel mail being sorted at the New Zealand Chief Post Office, [Cairo](#), December 1943



The Minister of Defence visits the Middle East, April 1943. From left:
Brig G. B. Parkinson, Brig H. K. Kippenberger, Hon. F. Jones,
Lt-Gen Sir Bernard Freyberg, Brig W. G. Stevens, Col R. C. Queree,
Brig C. E. Weir and Col B. Barrington

**The Minister of Defence visits the Middle East, April 1943. From left:
Brig G. B. Parkinson, Brig H. K. Kippenberger, Hon. F. Jones, Lt-Gen Sir
Bernard Freyberg, Brig W. G. Stevens, Col R. C. Queree, Brig C. E. Weir
and Col B. Barrington**



Rev. J. W. McKenzie
(Senior Chaplain) and
Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard
at Maadi, June 1943

Rev. J. W. McKenzie (Senior Chaplain) and Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard at Maadi, June 1943



Brigadier K. MacCormick,
Director of Medical Services,
2 NZEF, 1940-43

Brigadier K. MacCormick, Director of Medical Services, 2 NZEF, 1940-43

Troops in the Western Desert receive National Patriotic Fund
Christmas parcels, January 1942



Troops in the Western Desert receive National Patriotic Fund Christmas parcels, January 1942



Colonel F. Waite, National Patriotic Fund Board Commissioner, hands over to the YMCA a mobile canteen, the gift of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association

Colonel F. Waite, National Patriotic Fund Board Commissioner, hands over to the [YMCA](#) a mobile canteen, the gift of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association

1 NZ General Hospital, Helwan, August 1943



1 NZ General Hospital, Helwan, August 1943



New Zealand Broadcasting Unit, Maadi. Troops queue up to broadcast messages to New Zealand, May 1942

New Zealand Broadcasting Unit, [Maadi](#). Troops queue up to broadcast messages to New Zealand, May 1942

Suani Ben Adem



[Suani Ben Adem](#)

Early in 1940 we held a conference to see what could be done and what recommendation we could make to New Zealand, for rates of pay and allowances were not within the powers of the GOC to alter. We tried to separate the sheep from the goats and decide out of the mass of tradesmen which ones really deserved an extra shilling, and in the end we did get the list slightly extended by including such trades as artificer, electrician, and instrument mechanic. The result was still unsatisfactory, however, and became more so as the war went on and equipment became even more technical. When the first non-divisional engineer units reached us from New Zealand, the issue became more

complicated owing to some ill-considered promises made to the units by members of the Government, to wit that they would all get extra-duty pay. There was trouble with this paragraph repeatedly in the first few years, units asking from time to time that the list should be extended by such and such a trade; but the fact was that it was wellnigh impossible to draw a clear dividing line between what was truly exceptional, and what was just the normal duty to be expected from a trained soldier in a mechanical age. In the end we had to say firmly that complaints must cease and the position be accepted. It would have almost been better if in early 1940 we had asked that the paragraph be cancelled for future enlistments, for the number of men receiving the pay at the moment was not so great as all that, and would have diminished with the years. However, such action would have appeared to us at the time as too drastic, for we had not appreciated how bad the position was, and how much worse it would get. When at a much later stage we were told that the Government was considering a rise in pay, we suggested (somewhat half-heartedly) that the opportunity should be taken to abandon extra-duty pay; but by that time no one in New Zealand was prepared to take away an allowance that had existed for so long, and the original position continued to the end.

There was no doubt about the justice of the extra-duty pay for cooks. Many thought that it should be given also to clerks, because they were hard to find, and some inducement might have helped. Beyond that we were floundering in a morass and never found a way out. Probably it would have been better to give the allowance to no one, on account of the difficulty of determining who was carrying out exceptional work of a technical nature, and because no extra allowance was given to the poor infantryman for taking the great risks that were his daily share. The allowance could have been given to all tradesmen appearing in war establishments, but with the result that far too high a proportion of men would have been receiving it. Probably we did not grapple with this problem firmly enough; but there was no encouragement from the New Zealand end.

It has already been mentioned in

Chapter 6 that in the last year or so there were many cases of men producing large rolls of Italian lire notes and asking that they should be credited to their accounts. There was a strong suspicion – indeed more than a suspicion – that the money had been gained illegally. The Pay Office, in any case, was under no obligation to handle moneys other than pay, nor was the Government under any obligation to grant the exchange concession except for pay. Men were sometimes embarrassed over the disposal of legitimate gains such as those coming from wins on the totalisators at the races; but the obligation was on the man to prove that the money was legitimate, and the Pay Office was within its rights in refusing to handle money that was believed to have come from Crown and Anchor winnings or from black-market activities.

The Chief Pay Office at its maximum was about 200 all ranks. The Chief Paymaster and the main office moved to **Italy** when Headquarters moved, and remained with Headquarters throughout. A rear office remained at **Maadi**.

The Chief Paymaster was also Financial Adviser to the GOC. It cannot be claimed that his work under this heading was extensive, but there were occasions when the GOC needed some guidance about the propriety of certain expenditure.

CHAPLAINS

The work of the Chaplains has already been covered in a separate volume. From the point of view of Headquarters their work went smoothly, and we had no form of crisis or major trouble. The first Senior Chaplain came from the Anglican church, the largest church body in New Zealand. When a replacement was called for, however, we turned to the next senior Protestant chaplain, who was in any case the next senior among the totality of chaplains. He happened to be a Presbyterian. This might have caused some trouble from the Anglican church, so we thought it advisable to ask Army Headquarters to sound out that church before making the appointment. There was, however, no

objection from the Anglican church, and the appointment was made. When next a replacement was due, it happened again that the most suitable chaplain was a Presbyterian; but this time we went ahead and did not consult New Zealand.

Headquarters **2 NZEF** was, of course, not concerned with the spiritual functions of the chaplains, but only with their administration. The earliest problem was the proportion to be maintained among the various churches and denominations. The basis for our calculations was the proportions as shown in the individual records held by Second Echelon, for which purpose a special count was taken in early 1941 and at one or two intervals thereafter. The percentages varied very slightly from count to count. In the beginning of 1943, for instance, they were:

Church of England	44
Presbyterian	29·4
Roman Catholic	14·5
Methodist	7
Other denominations	5·1

The total number of chaplains in the force varied also, in the direction of a steady increase as the war went on. At the period under consideration the total had been set at 50, of which 26 were with the Division and 24 with hospitals, depots, and scattered units. Applying the percentages to this figure of 50, we arrived at the following number of chaplains:

Church of England	22
Presbyterian	14·7
Roman Catholic	7·25
Methodist	3·5
Other denominations	2·55

Taking the figures to the nearest whole number they became:

Church of England	22
Presbyterian	15
Roman Catholic	7
Methodist	3

Other denominations 3

In view of certain difficulties in the work of the smaller denominations, in particular the Roman Catholics, it was agreed by the senior chaplains of the churches affected that the Church of England and the Presbyterian figures should each be reduced by one. In this case the Roman Catholics and the **Methodists were each increased by one, the final figures being:**

Church of England	21
Presbyterian	14
Roman Catholic	8
Methodist	4
Other denominations	3¹

Similar calculations took place at other intervals. At a later stage, while the figures of chaplains in the Division and outside it remained the same, we carried three chaplains extra for emergencies – reinforcements in other words.

It was agreed from the first that Roman Catholic chaplains should serve the needs of their communion throughout the force, and that they should not be considered as unit chaplains in the usual sense. There were some difficulties with the units to which they were attached, and to clear up the position the following instruction was issued by Headquarters in November 1942:

- 1. Roman Catholic chaplains in **2 NZEF** number seven. For various reasons it has been found advisable at the present stage to place them with medical units; at later stages they may be located elsewhere.**
- 2. It must be made clear that in any circumstances they are placed in order to serve the needs of RC members of **2 NZEF** as a whole. The RC community is scattered throughout the force. The unit to which an RC chaplain is attached is thus his base, from which he operates over an area of country.**
- 3. He is not allocated to the unit as a unit chaplain; but on the other hand all RC chaplains have been instructed to take part in unit activities *subject to their duties under para 2 above*. Chaplains will**

also comply with the ordinary rules of reporting 'marchings in and out'.

4. The vehicles with which RC chaplains are provided are authorised army vehicles and are entitled to normal servicing in every way, including supplies of petrol.

Thereafter there was no trouble.

Originally chaplains fourth class, ranking as captains, were promoted to third class, ranking as majors, after three years' service overseas, i.e., from date of embarkation. There was nothing sacred in this period, which had been the one used in the first war. In the middle of 1942, i.e., about two and a half years after the sailing of the First Echelon, we reviewed the position, and found that there was only one combatant or medical officer left who had sailed with the First Echelon as a captain, was fit for promotion, and had not yet received it. In other words, with this one exception, all captains had been promoted, a great number of the vacancies being due to casualties. Taking it all in all, we thought that chaplains should be promoted on the same scale, and so altered the qualifying period to two years and six months.

Towards the end of 1942 we had to take up with New Zealand the question of the medical standards to be applied to chaplains destined for service overseas. In the few months preceding our representations there had been a lamentable record of sickness among recently arrived chaplains, several having to be sent back without any service with the force. It seemed to us that there was an idea in New Zealand that because chaplains were non-combatants lower medical standards than the best would suffice, especially as many chaplains served with hospitals. This was a false argument. Hospital vacancies were reserved for chaplains who needed a spell from field service, or who had served an adequate period in the field; and field service was strenuous for anyone, chaplains and all. Their medical standards must be the same as for combatant officers. We asked that this should be watched in the future, and Army Headquarters agreed to take action accordingly. The position thereafter did show an improvement.

Early in 1940, one chaplain, speaking on behalf of a number, suggested to Headquarters that chaplains should be allowed to visit Palestine as a definite part of their military training, the implication being that all their expenses should be paid by the Government. Speaking with all reverence, it did appear to Headquarters to be slightly bizarre that a visit to the Holy Land should be equated with the training that was then going on all over **Maadi Camp**. At that time there was no military transport to Palestine, but only civilian trains, indiscriminate travel was frowned on, we thought that everyone should stick to his last in **Maadi**, and, so it must be said, were not sympathetic. As it happened, leave to Palestine became possible later on in 1940 at small cost; still later, there was such a mass of military transport passing between Egypt and Palestine that no one had any difficulty in getting a lift, and later still in 1942 the Division was in **Syria** and our line of communication ran through Palestine. Doubtless all chaplains, at least until we went to **Italy**, did manage to pay a visit there.

Our field chaplains were ultimately all self-contained with transport. It is an impossible position to ask a chaplain to carry on his work in modern, fast-moving war if he is to be dependent upon chance lifts in miscellaneous vehicles.

LEGAL

Some few remarks affecting the Deputy Judge Advocate-General's branch are contained in

PUBLICITY

If trials and troubles are any justification, then the various bodies that made up our Public Relations Service merit a chapter to themselves. The service comprised the Public Relations Officer, war correspondents, broadcasting unit, cinema units, still photographer, official artist, newspaper and archivist, all, except perhaps the last, 'organs of publicity'.

It must be said at once that the trouble referred to, save in the very early period, had little or no effect upon the work of the various parts. We had every reason for thinking that the results were good. All parts of the force had their initial troubles, extending over a long or short period; but with Public Relations the period was longer than most.

Our difficulties in getting any war correspondents at all have been mentioned in

3 above. We never knew the exact reasons which led to the outcome that all correspondents were military personnel paid by the Government, and were not representatives of the New Zealand press; but discussions, not to say controversy, between the Government and the press, difficulties in selecting personnel, and basic suspicion in the Government of any outside publicity caused absurd delays before any proper appointments were made. We were forced to make one or two interim appointments ourselves; and it may be said now that after a few correspondents had come out from New Zealand, later appointments came from competent newspapermen from the Expeditionary Force itself.

A qualified war correspondent arrived from New Zealand in early 1941, the intention being that he should be our Public Relations Officer; but he was unlucky enough to be captured in **Greece**. A cinema and a broadcasting unit arrived about the same time, and meanwhile the GOC had appointed an official artist out of hand.

One way and another they were a difficult lot, all showing some degree of temperament, and cumulatively they caused more work at Headquarters than did any other branch of **2 NZEF** services; but at the same time it must be said that Headquarters was not always very clever in the way it dealt with them. Figuratively speaking, the staff at Headquarters were always rubbing the bruises they had incurred through getting mixed up in the problems of the Public Relations Service. Sooner than have to deal with them all individually, we decided to go on with the idea of a Public Relations Officer, and to make him responsible for all the branches. The PRO was intended to keep his finger on the pulse of the force, have a full knowledge of what was happening, or going to happen, throughout the force, and decide where and when any of the units or individuals should go at any one time. The PRO was to ensure that all the activities of the Division and the other NZEF units were adequately covered and reported to New Zealand – and it has already been indicated that despite troubles this object was achieved.

Unfortunately we had difficulty in finding a suitable officer for the appointment of PRO, and most unfairly thrust it upon officers unskilled in publicity, who struggled manfully with a task that might wellnigh have driven them to distraction. It was not until the middle of 1943 that the service settled down into a steady routine. Part of the blame rested with Headquarters. We had not appreciated the degree of specialisation and technical training required in publicity, but had thought that conscientiousness and hard work would alone be sufficient. Good work was done, and some foundation established for the future; but a thorough knowledge of all the aspects of publicity was really an essential for the appointment.

Our public relations staff, being military personnel and paid accordingly, were prevented from having the free roving commissions, with apparently inexhaustible expense accounts, of the representatives of great British or American publicity agencies. Association with these men, some of them world famous, went to the heads of a few of the members, and we had to take firm steps to bring them down to earth again.

The broadcasting unit had an unfortunate start owing to differences of opinion among the members, and took a little time to get into its stride; but thereafter it did excellent work, including the much-appreciated scheme by which men could record short messages to their families to be broadcast later over the air in New Zealand. This unit had throughout a very good liaison with its parent department in New Zealand.

The cinema unit was sometimes accused, most unfairly, of being merely a recorder of travelogues. The force operated throughout the war in photogenic areas – Egypt, Palestine, **Syria, Libya, Italy – and it was part of the duty of the unit to film scenes in these areas. It fulfilled its duty of taking scenes in the field also, and could not be accused of neglecting war for peace.**

Probably it is in the nature of still photographers to be less obtrusive

and more subdued than their more mobile brethren. This was one part of publicity which seemed to keep out of trouble and merely got on quietly with the job.

The status of war correspondents and of the personnel of the broadcasting and cinema units was not satisfactory. They were appointed 'with the status of lieutenants or captains'. It would have been better to give them military ranks outright – better for their work, and better for them if they were captured. The same point will be made when speaking of our welfare staff.

The official artist was taken closely under the wing of the GOC personally. The results of his work were good, and met with the commendation of the troops, the highest praise of all, but sometimes he did get away from the control of the PRO.

The *NZEF Times* was started in 1941 and continued till the end of 1945. From the first it was a 'news' paper only, and did not open its columns to correspondence, nor did it express any views on the problems of 2 NZEF – other than humorously. It tried to include a lot of news from New Zealand, and published war correspondents' articles and other matter about the happenings within the force. It was subjected to some criticism from the troops for not publishing letters to the editor and other contributions; and it must be admitted that there was a difference of opinion about the policy adopted. There was no doubt that the paper lost a bit of life thereby and gave no opening to contributions that would have come from all over the force; but when we used to read about the turmoils that were stirred up from time to time by army papers, both British and American, we were thankful that we were well out of it. 'Fair comment' so easily merges into indiscipline, or is unsettling to morale. It is probable that the policy we adopted was too rigid, and that it was only the difficulty of framing satisfactory rules for an alternative that led to our taking the line of least resistance.

The Archivist is discussed below on [page 129](#).

Headquarters never looked on its handling of publicity as one of its successes. The main requirement is a thoroughly qualified Public Relations Officer; and provided that care is taken to have a suitable officer ready to step into the post, a future Headquarters will be spared many worries.

Unfortunately, as will be mentioned again in

Chapter 10, we never had a satisfactory liaison with the Director of Publicity in New Zealand. We had the greatest difficulty in obtaining material from New Zealand – film scenes of the old home town and so on – and such New Zealand news as was sent us was poorly chosen and did not keep us in touch with what was happening in the homeland. Moreover – and this was most disheartening – we could never find out what use was made in New Zealand of the press, cinema, and photographic material which we sent back. We knew that the broadcasting unit's messages to next-of-kin were put on the air; but this was only learnt through subsequent letters from the next-of-kin, and not because of official advice. Taking it all in all, it was a regrettable state of affairs.

SECOND ECHELON

It took a little time at the beginning to impress on units the importance of strength and casualty returns. There was a tendency, perhaps a natural one, to regard returns as just so much paper work which had to be done to propitiate an impersonal body at 'the base'. It was soon realised that the returns governed such things as promotions, pay, and casualty returns, and they took their place as an essential element in military administration.

The war establishment of Second Echelon included an unusually large number of staff-sergeants and sergeants. Initially they came out from New Zealand with substantive ranks, so that when later on we thought it desirable that they should have some field service, it was difficult to force them on units. It was laid down at an early date that replacements for the personnel of Second Echelon must come from men who had had field service, and little by little the difficulty disappeared. It is a mistake to send a unit such as this overseas staffed with a lot of perfectly fit senior NCOs. It would be preferable, at least in the early stages, that this unit should be staffed either by personnel of a grading just below the highest, or by women, or by some of each.

Among the tasks of Second Echelon is the collecting of the effects of deceased personnel, and their despatch to Base Records in Wellington, a task requiring care and sympathy. It was important enough for us to issue a special instruction, which included the setting up of what was called, not very happily, the 'Standing Committee of Adjustment', to supervise the disposal of effects. The name came from the British regulations on the subject, and was a relic of the days of a purely regular army, when all sorts of military obligations and privately owned goods had to be taken into account – elaborate mess bills, gambling debts, polo ponies and so on. We should have introduced a name of our own. However, the essential part of the constitution of the committee, whatever its name, was and must be the inclusion of a representative of the deceased's unit. Tales regarding the alleged improper disposal of kits spring up easily and are readily believed. The more that can be done to make it all fair and above board the better.

When HQ 2 NZEF moved to Italy, the main part of Second Echelon remained in Maadi, as it was thought better not to disrupt the office. An advanced office was formed, however, and was established with Headquarters in each of the sites we occupied. The main office in Maadi at its maximum was something over 200 strong.

EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION AND POSTAL SERVICES

The work of these two services is covered in

AUDITOR

The auditor was appointed at the request of the GOC, who thought it desirable that any financial transactions in which we might be engaged should be open to review by a skilled inspector. The GOC had expected to get an auditor who would be responsible to him, or at the least to the army; but what we did get was an auditor who was a member of the staff of the Controller and Auditor-General, and responsible to that officer only – who, it will be realised, is in turn responsible to Parliament and the people of New Zealand only. This was slightly dampening, and meant that we would have to come to some arrangement with the auditor to obviate his comments going all the way out to New Zealand and later, through devious channels, coming back to us for a ‘please explain’. Such a roundabout procedure seemed foolish.

At an early point, therefore, we arranged with the auditor that if he had any adverse comments in his reports to his chief he would let Headquarters have a copy, so that if necessary – or if we thought it desirable – our own answer could go out to New Zealand at the same time. As it happened there were few comments of any moment; and after a while the auditor adopted the custom of coming to Headquarters first with his comments and discussing the matter before he ever made his report at all. This was most satisfactory and, after all, was the reasonable thing to do considering that New Zealand was so far away. Nothing was ever done on our part to interfere with the auditor's right to report to his own chief, but in effect he became the keeper of our conscience as well as the keeper of the public conscience.

In 1940 and 1941 there was an attempt made to conduct a stores audit. The moment appeared to be a suitable one, for at that stage our equipment was still being issued to us item by item, and was being checked and signed for. However, stores audit implies some fixed point round which to conduct it; and the course of events prevented anything

like a fixed point being found. Before the initial issue was complete the First Echelon was scattered all over Egypt and the Desert; and when it came back to **Helwan** the Second and Third Echelons joined it, and soon afterwards the whole Division moved to **Greece**; and from then on enemy action and emergency replacements on the battlefield had complicated the tale beyond any clarification.

Stores audit in a combatant force in a theatre of war is an impossibility. Financial check is another matter, and the auditor was an insurance, welcomed by both staff and services, that our financial transactions, pay or otherwise, were in order.

The auditor also checked regimental funds accounts, a task which from time to time disclosed some surprising results, as will be mentioned in

ARCHIVIST

After the First World War the war diaries and other records left by units had been of little help, so that historians had to start afresh to collect material. It is not suggested that war diaries provide all the material required in the compilation of a history, but they do at least provide, or should provide, some sort of foundation.

In an endeavour to improve on this situation for the future, an archivist was appointed early in 1941. Initially he was placed under the Public Relations Officer, largely for administrative reasons, but partly so that he could be put into the picture and know on what aspects of his work he should concentrate at any one time. Later in the war he was made an independent authority. His work was first to see that war diaries were kept in a proper manner, and then to collect material which might be of value to historians after the war. As part of this latter duty, he was the supervisor of unit historians; but as all we did was to exhort units to keep some sort of unit history, and as practice varied, his influence in this connection varied also. He subsequently produced a short series of provisional accounts – of the ‘popular’ variety – of the various campaigns, which had a good reception.

War History Branch has reported since the war that the Archives Branch unquestionably justified itself, but that it could with advantage have been expanded to become a proper Historical Section, with powers to collect battle narratives from units. It does seem that we were not firm enough about unit historians; but it will always be difficult to get units which are involved in the heat of battle to give any thought to possible advantages for historians in the future. The staff of a central historical section, carefully chosen as suitable for the interrogation of battle personnel who are probably very tired at the time, might have gone far to replace unit historians.

COMMISSIONER YMCA

SENIOR SECRETARY CHURCH ARMY

CLUB MANAGER

COMMISSIONER RED CROSS

These are all dealt with in

Chapter 16.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY UNIT

The printing unit did not begin its work until January 1942, which was two years too late. It is a commonplace that the printed word is easier to read than the cyclostyled one, partly because of the variety of type available, and partly because of the greater contrast between the colour of the print and the colour of the paper. A less obvious advantage is that for the same number of copies of any document, printing uses less paper than cyclostyling. From the point of view of the recipient, there can be no two opinions about the advantages of printing; and in order to be merciful to recipients in the early stages of a specially formed force, the printing unit should be available from the first. It is not just a luxury.

The unit began by printing orders only, but soon blossomed out into printing standing instructions and army forms. It never lacked work. At a later stage it was expanded to handle stationery supplies also. It would have been better if the unit had been designed so as to be able to work on trucks without unloading. Its mobility would have been increased thereby, and the labour involved in loading and unloading the machinery and establishing it on a satisfactory firm base would have been eliminated.

CIPHERS

The cipher staff was recruited from suitable personnel of any arm of the service. There were cipher sections at HQ 2 NZEF, HQ 2 NZ Division, and HQ Maadi Camp, the first-named being concerned mainly with traffic to and from New Zealand. The GSO I of the Division was looked on as the controlling officer of the cipher service, and issued such instructions as were necessary. The number of men employed was not great, but the standard required was high.

CENSOR SECTIONS

Our first censor section was formed in December 1941 to work in Egypt, and the second after we went to Italy for work in that country. They were formed at the request of GHQ in both cases, the intention being to help the overworked British sections, which previously had carried out the work without any help from 2 NZEF; but it had already become clear that it would be better if our own people performed for us this necessary but invidious task. The sections worked within the British framework and were under the control of GHQ and not of 2 NZEF. It was by arrangement with GHQ that the greater part of their work should be the censoring of 2 NZEF mail.

Their reports were sent to GHQ, but with copies to the GOC and to OICA. They took the form of brief extracts from letters, the names and the units of the writers being omitted. The extracts were selected in order to give a fair summary of the morale and opinions of the force for the preceding month, each subject being prefaced by a brief paragraph giving the general impression gained by the censor staff of the views of the force on that particular subject. It must be repeated that no names appeared in the reports.

Other than by recording their conclusions, the censor staff took no action, any steps that might be necessary to improve morale or to obviate irritations being for the GOC to take; but the censor staff did make definite reports, including details of names and units, where there had been clear breaches of censorship regulations – locations of units, future activities, particulars of losses and so on. The implication in these cases was that disciplinary action was called for. However, the responsibility of the censor sections ended with bringing the breach to notice, and further action was for the CO of the unit.

The censorship reports were of interest to the limited number of officers who saw them; but it must be said that there were very few cases where any explicit action was taken on a report. Morale fluctuated a little, which was only to be expected, but only once called for action throughout the force. The return of the Australian troops to their

homeland in early 1942, combined with the knowledge that **United States** troops were in New Zealand, caused the greatest uneasiness of any incident in the war, and did impel the GOC to issue a personal message to all ranks. In other cases the most that would happen would be that the GOC or OICA would remember what had appeared in a report, and would perhaps speak to a few appropriate subordinates about it. Very often the opinions held throughout the force came to notice without the need for reading the reports.

WOMEN'S SERVICES

Some remarks on the above subject appear in

CAMP COMMANDANT

In an agglomeration of headquarters offices such as has been described in this and the preceding chapter, some central administrative office was necessary to co-ordinate domestic routine. To control such a mixed collection was not easy, and called for patience and, on occasion, great tact. The Camp Commandant's staff included units for signals, field security, supply and transport, workshops, medical and dental, etc., much as in any camp organisation.

¹ **The figures given above make some small correction of those on p. 16 of *New Zealand Chaplains in the Second World War*.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

WE now come to what have been called the 2 NZEF 'Controls' or 'Authorities', i.e., those officers or units whose authority extended throughout the force. Some authorities, in fact the greater part, existed from the beginning of the force to the end; some did not appear until various later points in the life of the force; and one disappeared after the first two years. The list given below is the maximum. It does not appear that there was ever an official order of precedence of this miscellaneous group of offices, and the order given is adopted from various orders of battle.

List of Authorities

Military Secretary (MS)

Director of Medical Services (DMS)

Matron-in-Chief (later Principal Matron)

Assistant Director of Dental Services (ADDS)

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services (DDOS) – until 1942, then merged with ADOS 2 NZ Division.

Assistant Director of Mechanical Engineering (ADME) – representative of CREME 2 NZ Division after 1942.

Chief Paymaster (also Financial Adviser)

Senior Chaplain

Deputy Judge Advocate-General (DJAG)

Public Relations Officer (PRO)

Second Echelon (2 Ech)

Assistant Director of Education and Rehabilitation Services (ADERS)

Assistant Director of Postal Services (ADPS)

Auditor

Archivist

Commissioner National Patriotic Fund

Commissioner YMCA

Senior Secretary Church Army

Club Manager

Commissioner Red Cross

Printing and Stationery Unit

Ciphers

Censor Sections

WAACS – three divisions, welfare, hospital and clerical. Camp Commandant

At the risk of reiteration, it must be pointed out that part of the justification for the existence of HQ 2 NZEF was the need for some measure of co-ordination among all these varied offices.

Of the ‘corps’ in the army, the heads of medical, dental, chaplains, pay, postal, and educational were stationed at HQ 2 NZEF. In all other cases, the heads of corps were the senior officers of that corps in the Division. They all had a certain amount of ‘NZEF’ work to do, especially for promotion of officers, manpower and war establishments. The list is as follows:

Armoured Corps – Commander 4 Armoured Brigade (after 1942)

Cavalry – CO Divisional Cavalry (until 1942)

Artillery – CRA

Engineers – CRE after 1943 (see next paragraph)

Signals – CRSigs

Infantry (including MG and Maori) – GOC personally

ASC – CRASC

Ordnance – ADOS

EME – CREME

Provost – DAPM

Ciphers While not strictly speaking ‘corps’, the GSO I of the Division was looked on as the head.

Field Security While not strictly speaking ‘corps’, the GSO I of the Division was looked on as the head.

During 1941, 1942, and 1943, when we had a large number of non-divisional engineer units, we had no head of the corps of engineers in 2 NZEF. There were more non-divisional companies than divisional ones; and the work was so varied that it was impossible to appoint either the CRE or the head of any non-divisional group as the head of all engineer units. There was no justification for a separate officer as head of the corps. In the end a combination of OICA and the Military Secretary – the latter an engineer officer as it happened – kept a watchful eye on the interests of the corps of engineers as a whole. When in late 1943 the non-divisional engineers were disbanded, the CRE of the Division was appointed Chief Engineer for 2 NZEF, and all was well thereafter.

The list of authorities given on page 114 now merits some attention. As was stated in the Introduction, it is proposed to mention here only

those things that caused problems to HQ 2 NZEF, i.e., to the office of OICA. Every authority had problems of his own within his particular sphere, some of them being mentioned in other volumes of our War History.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MILITARY SECRETARY

MILITARY SECRETARY

Some aspects of the Military Secretary's work are discussed in

Chapter 13 under 'Officers'.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

It is not proposed to say more than a few words here about medical matters, as the work and difficulties of the DMS are being adequately covered in other volumes. At the beginning of the war his title was ADMS NZ Division; but when HQ 2 NZEF was organised as a separate authority, his title was changed to DDMS 2 NZEF and another officer was appointed to the Division. DDMS (Deputy Director of Medical Services) was the appropriate title in the circumstances, being next in the hierarchy above an Assistant Director; but the habit of British authorities of looking on a deputy as a subordinate, combined with the desire to improve the status of such an important authority, caused us in early 1942 to change the title to Director.

The greater part of the medical work in 2 NZEF was outside the Division, so that there was every justification for placing the medical head at HQ 2 NZEF. The DMS was the one adviser to the GOC whose advice of necessity nearly always prevailed, for matters of health and medical treatment are so specialised and the medical personnel so highly skilled that any commander must think long and deeply before overriding any advice given him. The responsibility remained that of the GOC nevertheless. In view of the importance of his work, the DMS dealt direct with the GOC on all matters of medical policy.

Officer ranks in the Medical Corps are on the high side at any time, so that it is perhaps not surprising that Headquarters was resistant to applications for an increase in senior ranks. The question was admittedly difficult, owing to the combination of administrative and specialist officers in any hospital, and to the shortage of the specialists. It often happened that when a specialist became due for promotion into one of the senior administrative vacancies available in a hospital, he could not be spared from his specialist work. In the end, to be fair to

specialists, we had to agree to an additional number of senior ranks for hospital staffs.

It can be claimed with complete justification that our standards of medical treatment and administration were high, and indeed were the admiration of other Allied troops, including British. We were better served than were most national armies.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MATRON-IN-CHIEF - PRINCIPAL MATRON

MATRON-IN-CHIEF - PRINCIPAL MATRON

The work of the Matron-in-Chief is covered in the Medical volumes of the War History. The title was changed from Matron-in-Chief to Principal Matron when the first holder of the appointment retired in November 1943, the true Matron-in-Chief being at Army Headquarters in New Zealand.

Throughout the war we arranged for the Matron-in-Chief or Principal Matron to live in quarters of her own, and not with any medical unit. Both in Egypt and in **Italy she had either a flat or small house, where she not only lived but also had her meals. In Egypt, for obvious reasons, she lived outside **Maadi Camp**, but near at hand in **Maadi village**; but in **Italy** she was within the circle of HQ **2 NZEF** accommodation. Right up to the end of the war, Headquarters was conservative to the extent that it did not embark on mixed messes, although by that time even the British Army had admitted **WAAC** officers to area messes. Once we moved to **Italy** the Principal Matron should have messed with Headquarters, despite any grumblings that might have been voiced by some of the older officers.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DENTAL SERVICES

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DENTAL SERVICES

The ADDS was independent of the DMS, but naturally had to cooperate with him in matters of dental health in the broadest sense; and a similar position prevailed in a hospital between the dental officer and the heads of the surgical and medical divisions. At the beginning there was a certain amount of friction, and on occasion Headquarters was asked to lay down clearly where the division of duties came, a task which was a little invidious; and in any case this was difficult, for all the words that can be written to define dividing lines in such cases cannot take the place of cooperation and good will. If these relations do not exist, all the directives in the world will not replace them. The saving factor was that both sides were actuated by commendable motives, namely to find the best method of restoring patients quickly to complete health.

The work of the Dental Corps is being covered in another volume, but it must be said here that the standards it set overseas were much above those of the British service generally. Our mobile dental units were unique.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ORDNANCE - ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

ORDNANCE - ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

For the first two years of the war the head of the Ordnance Corps was stationed at HQ 2 NZEF. Like the medical head, he was first appointed as head of the corps in the Division (ADOS) but very soon became DDOS of 2 NZEF, and another officer took up the divisional appointment. At the outset there was ample justification for a separate 2 NZEF head, for all our initial equipment had to be drawn and there were developments in the maintenance of mechanical transport, the Ordnance Corps at that time being responsible for mechanical work also. Once issues of equipment were governed by battle losses or by wear and tear, the work of the Ordnance Corps became more routine and there was not the same justification for keeping a senior officer at Headquarters. The DDOS at the time voiced this opinion himself. His services were then accepted in a senior appointment with the British Army, and the responsibility for all ordnance work in 2 NZEF passed to the ADOS of the Division. An assistant to this officer was stationed at HQ 2 NZEF. When the subdivision of the Ordnance Corps took place in late 1942 - see below - a separate ordnance officer did not stay with Headquarters, the duties being largely taken over by the officer in charge of our expanding base ordnance depot.

In 1942 the British Army split up the Ordnance Corps into two portions - one, retaining the name of Ordnance, to confine itself to provision, and the other, a new ' **Electrical and Mechanical Engineers**', to be responsible for technical maintenance. After some slight hesitation, we decided to follow suit, and the new corps of NZEME was formed in December 1942, its head being the senior officer with the Division, the CREME. An assistant to this officer was stationed at HQ 2 NZEF.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PAY

PAY

As far as Headquarters was concerned, the only real trouble we had with pay matters came from extra-duty pay. It was an intractable problem; but it was a complication created in New Zealand and was in no way the fault of anyone in 2 NZEF, certainly not of the Chief Paymaster.

When the first issue of Pay and Allowance Regulations was made late in 1939, one paragraph was as follows:

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

EXTRA DUTY PAY

EXTRA DUTY PAY

(**Cooks 2/6 per diem**

a)

(**Privates and lance-corporals whilst carrying out one of the duties *b)* stated below will be granted 1/- per diem extra duty pay: Armourer, baker, bootmaker, butcher, dental mechanic, farrier, fitter, engine-driver, motor mechanic, orderly-room clerk, saddler, shoeing-smith, tailor, wheeler.**

Up to the time of the departure of the First Echelon, the text of Pay and Allowance Regulations had not been scrutinised by any appropriate member of the Expeditionary Force, and in fact the bulk issue of the regulations was only placed on board the transports while they were in **Wellington** harbour. It was not until we had been in **Maadi** for a few weeks that this paragraph struck home to units, and then the complaints came thick and heavy.

Sub-paragraph (*a*) was not in question. The trouble was with sub-paragraph (*b*). As far as is known, the paragraph had been lifted bodily from the regulations for the 1st New Zealand Expeditionary Force. There had been no time to examine it closely, nor to relate it to the new force, and it was allowed to stand. It would be unfair to blame anyone for this, for Army Headquarters was working under extreme pressure; but it was unfortunate to the highest degree. The paragraph as worded was largely inapplicable, and was in general unsuited to the force. It had been designed for a force whose transport was almost entirely horsed, and in which the amount of mechanical transport or mechanical appliances was so small as to be something exceptional. The new force had no horses, was entirely mechanised, and was equipped with a mass of complicated arms and machinery. There were no 'farriers, saddlers or shoeing-smiths', whereas there was an army of skilled tradesmen most inadequately covered by the terms 'armourer, fitter, engine-driver, or

motor mechanic'. Our war establishments included tradesmen under a profusion of titles; but what was even more important was that the skilled tradesman of the First World War had ceased to be exceptional in the Second, and was just an ordinary member of the force and a reflection of the mechanical age in which we live. To have given all these tradesmen and skilled personnel the extra shilling would have been absurd, for in some corps – the armoured corps for instance – tradesmen were between one-third and half of the unit on 1940 establishments.



Maadi Camp, looking towards the Citadel and Cairo

Maadi Camp, looking towards the Citadel and Cairo



Divisional Headquarters offices, Maadi Camp, 1940

Divisional Headquarters offices, Maadi Camp, 1940



New Zealand Supply Depot. Vegetables arrive from native gardens

New Zealand Supply Depot. Vegetables arrive from native gardens

Egyptian laundry, Maadi



Egyptian laundry, Maadi



Divisional Headquarters mess, Maadi, 1940. From left: Maj W. G. Gentry, Lt-Col W. G. Stevens, Maj-Gen B. C. Freyberg, Lt-Col K. L. Stewart and Rev. E. B. Moore (back to camera)

Divisional Headquarters mess, Maadi, 1940. From left: Maj W. G. Gentry, Lt-Col W. G. Stevens, Maj-Gen B. C. Freyberg, Lt-Col K. L. Stewart and Rev. E. B. Moore (back to camera)

Inter-unit relay race, Maadi baths, 1940



Inter-unit relay race, Maadi baths, 1940



2 Echelon Records Section, Maadi Camp, December 1943

2 Echelon Records Section, [Maadi Camp](#), December 1943

Christmas parcel mail being sorted at the New Zealand Chief Post Office, Cairo, December 1943



Christmas parcel mail being sorted at the New Zealand Chief Post Office, [Cairo](#), December 1943



The Minister of Defence visits the Middle East, April 1943. From left:
Brig G. B. Parkinson, Brig H. K. Kippenberger, Hon. F. Jones,
Lt-Gen Sir Bernard Freyberg, Brig W. G. Stevens, Col R. C. Queree,
Brig C. E. Weir and Col B. Barrington

**The Minister of Defence visits the Middle East, April 1943. From left:
Brig G. B. Parkinson, Brig H. K. Kippenberger, Hon. F. Jones, Lt-Gen Sir
Bernard Freyberg, Brig W. G. Stevens, Col R. C. Queree, Brig C. E. Weir
and Col B. Barrington**



Rev. J. W. McKenzie
(Senior Chaplain) and
Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard
at Maadi, June 1943

Rev. J. W. McKenzie (Senior Chaplain) and Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard at Maadi, June 1943



Brigadier K. MacCormick,
Director of Medical Services,
2 NZEF, 1940-43

Brigadier K. MacCormick, Director of Medical Services, 2 NZEF, 1940-43

Troops in the Western Desert receive National Patriotic Fund
Christmas parcels, January 1942



Troops in the Western Desert receive National Patriotic Fund Christmas parcels, January 1942



Colonel F. Waite, National Patriotic Fund Board Commissioner, hands over to the YMCA a mobile canteen, the gift of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association

Colonel F. Waite, National Patriotic Fund Board Commissioner, hands over to the [YMCA](#) a mobile canteen, the gift of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association

1 NZ General Hospital, Helwan, August 1943



1 NZ General Hospital, Helwan, August 1943



New Zealand Broadcasting Unit, Maadi. Troops queue up to broadcast messages to New Zealand, May 1942

New Zealand Broadcasting Unit, [Maadi](#). Troops queue up to broadcast messages to New Zealand, May 1942

Suani Ben Adem



[Suani Ben Adem](#)

Early in 1940 we held a conference to see what could be done and what recommendation we could make to New Zealand, for rates of pay and allowances were not within the powers of the GOC to alter. We tried to separate the sheep from the goats and decide out of the mass of tradesmen which ones really deserved an extra shilling, and in the end we did get the list slightly extended by including such trades as artificer, electrician, and instrument mechanic. The result was still unsatisfactory, however, and became more so as the war went on and equipment became even more technical. When the first non-divisional engineer units reached us from New Zealand, the issue became more

complicated owing to some ill-considered promises made to the units by members of the Government, to wit that they would all get extra-duty pay. There was trouble with this paragraph repeatedly in the first few years, units asking from time to time that the list should be extended by such and such a trade; but the fact was that it was wellnigh impossible to draw a clear dividing line between what was truly exceptional, and what was just the normal duty to be expected from a trained soldier in a mechanical age. In the end we had to say firmly that complaints must cease and the position be accepted. It would have almost been better if in early 1940 we had asked that the paragraph be cancelled for future enlistments, for the number of men receiving the pay at the moment was not so great as all that, and would have diminished with the years. However, such action would have appeared to us at the time as too drastic, for we had not appreciated how bad the position was, and how much worse it would get. When at a much later stage we were told that the Government was considering a rise in pay, we suggested (somewhat half-heartedly) that the opportunity should be taken to abandon extra-duty pay; but by that time no one in New Zealand was prepared to take away an allowance that had existed for so long, and the original position continued to the end.

There was no doubt about the justice of the extra-duty pay for cooks. Many thought that it should be given also to clerks, because they were hard to find, and some inducement might have helped. Beyond that we were floundering in a morass and never found a way out. Probably it would have been better to give the allowance to no one, on account of the difficulty of determining who was carrying out exceptional work of a technical nature, and because no extra allowance was given to the poor infantryman for taking the great risks that were his daily share. The allowance could have been given to all tradesmen appearing in war establishments, but with the result that far too high a proportion of men would have been receiving it. Probably we did not grapple with this problem firmly enough; but there was no encouragement from the New Zealand end.

It has already been mentioned in

Chapter 6 that in the last year or so there were many cases of men producing large rolls of Italian lire notes and asking that they should be credited to their accounts. There was a strong suspicion – indeed more than a suspicion – that the money had been gained illegally. The Pay Office, in any case, was under no obligation to handle moneys other than pay, nor was the Government under any obligation to grant the exchange concession except for pay. Men were sometimes embarrassed over the disposal of legitimate gains such as those coming from wins on the totalisators at the races; but the obligation was on the man to prove that the money was legitimate, and the Pay Office was within its rights in refusing to handle money that was believed to have come from Crown and Anchor winnings or from black-market activities.

The Chief Pay Office at its maximum was about 200 all ranks. The Chief Paymaster and the main office moved to **Italy** when Headquarters moved, and remained with Headquarters throughout. A rear office remained at **Maadi**.

The Chief Paymaster was also Financial Adviser to the GOC. It cannot be claimed that his work under this heading was extensive, but there were occasions when the GOC needed some guidance about the propriety of certain expenditure.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPLAINS

CHAPLAINS

The work of the Chaplains has already been covered in a separate volume. From the point of view of Headquarters their work went smoothly, and we had no form of crisis or major trouble. The first Senior Chaplain came from the Anglican church, the largest church body in New Zealand. When a replacement was called for, however, we turned to the next senior Protestant chaplain, who was in any case the next senior among the totality of chaplains. He happened to be a Presbyterian. This might have caused some trouble from the Anglican church, so we thought it advisable to ask Army Headquarters to sound out that church before making the appointment. There was, however, no objection from the Anglican church, and the appointment was made. When next a replacement was due, it happened again that the most suitable chaplain was a Presbyterian; but this time we went ahead and did not consult New Zealand.

Headquarters **2 NZEF** was, of course, not concerned with the spiritual functions of the chaplains, but only with their administration. The earliest problem was the proportion to be maintained among the various churches and denominations. The basis for our calculations was the proportions as shown in the individual records held by Second Echelon, for which purpose a special count was taken in early 1941 and at one or two intervals thereafter. The percentages varied very slightly from count to count. In the beginning of 1943, for instance, they were:

Church of England	44
Presbyterian	29·4
Roman Catholic	14·5
Methodist	7
Other denominations	5·1

The total number of chaplains in the force varied also, in the

direction of a steady increase as the war went on. At the period under consideration the total had been set at 50, of which 26 were with the Division and 24 with hospitals, depots, and scattered units. Applying the percentages to this figure of 50, we arrived at the following number of chaplains:

Church of England	22
Presbyterian	14·7
Roman Catholic	7·25
Methodist	3·5
Other denominations	2·55

Taking the figures to the nearest whole number they became:

Church of England	22
Presbyterian	15
Roman Catholic	7
Methodist	3
Other denominations	3

In view of certain difficulties in the work of the smaller denominations, in particular the Roman Catholics, it was agreed by the senior chaplains of the churches affected that the Church of England and the Presbyterian figures should each be reduced by one. In this case the Roman Catholics and the **Methodists** were each increased by one, the final figures being:

Church of England	21
Presbyterian	14
Roman Catholic	8
Methodist	4
Other denominations	3¹

Similar calculations took place at other intervals. At a later stage, while the figures of chaplains in the Division and outside it remained the same, we carried three chaplains extra for emergencies – reinforcements in other words.

It was agreed from the first that Roman Catholic chaplains should

serve the needs of their communion throughout the force, and that they should not be considered as unit chaplains in the usual sense. There were some difficulties with the units to which they were attached, and to clear up the position the following instruction was issued by Headquarters in November 1942:

1. Roman Catholic chaplains in **2 NZEF** number seven. For various reasons it has been found advisable at the present stage to place them with medical units; at later stages they may be located elsewhere.
2. It must be made clear that in any circumstances they are placed in order to serve the needs of RC members of **2 NZEF** as a whole. The RC community is scattered throughout the force. The unit to which an RC chaplain is attached is thus his base, from which he operates over an area of country.
3. He is not allocated to the unit as a unit chaplain; but on the other hand all RC chaplains have been instructed to take part in unit activities *subject to their duties under para 2 above*. Chaplains will also comply with the ordinary rules of reporting 'marchings in and out'.
4. The vehicles with which RC chaplains are provided are authorised army vehicles and are entitled to normal servicing in every way, including supplies of petrol.

Thereafter there was no trouble.

Originally chaplains fourth class, ranking as captains, were promoted to third class, ranking as majors, after three years' service overseas, i.e., from date of embarkation. There was nothing sacred in this period, which had been the one used in the first war. In the middle of 1942, i.e., about two and a half years after the sailing of the First Echelon, we reviewed the position, and found that there was only one combatant or medical officer left who had sailed with the First Echelon as a captain, was fit for promotion, and had not yet received it. In other words, with this one exception, all captains had been promoted, a great number of the vacancies being due to casualties. Taking it all in all, we thought that chaplains should be promoted on the same scale, and so altered the qualifying period to two years and six months.

Towards the end of 1942 we had to take up with New Zealand the

question of the medical standards to be applied to chaplains destined for service overseas. In the few months preceding our representations there had been a lamentable record of sickness among recently arrived chaplains, several having to be sent back without any service with the force. It seemed to us that there was an idea in New Zealand that because chaplains were non-combatants lower medical standards than the best would suffice, especially as many chaplains served with hospitals. This was a false argument. Hospital vacancies were reserved for chaplains who needed a spell from field service, or who had served an adequate period in the field; and field service was strenuous for anyone, chaplains and all. Their medical standards must be the same as for combatant officers. We asked that this should be watched in the future, and Army Headquarters agreed to take action accordingly. The position thereafter did show an improvement.

Early in 1940, one chaplain, speaking on behalf of a number, suggested to Headquarters that chaplains should be allowed to visit Palestine as a definite part of their military training, the implication being that all their expenses should be paid by the Government. Speaking with all reverence, it did appear to Headquarters to be slightly bizarre that a visit to the Holy Land should be equated with the training that was then going on all over **Maadi Camp**. At that time there was no military transport to Palestine, but only civilian trains, indiscriminate travel was frowned on, we thought that everyone should stick to his last in **Maadi**, and, so it must be said, were not sympathetic. As it happened, leave to Palestine became possible later on in 1940 at small cost; still later, there was such a mass of military transport passing between Egypt and Palestine that no one had any difficulty in getting a lift, and later still in 1942 the Division was in **Syria** and our line of communication ran through Palestine. Doubtless all chaplains, at least until we went to **Italy**, did manage to pay a visit there.

Our field chaplains were ultimately all self-contained with transport. It is an impossible position to ask a chaplain to carry on his work in modern, fast-moving war if he is to be dependent upon chance lifts in

miscellaneous vehicles.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

LEGAL

LEGAL

Some few remarks affecting the Deputy Judge Advocate-General's branch are contained in

Chapter 15, under discipline.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PUBLICITY

PUBLICITY

If trials and troubles are any justification, then the various bodies that made up our Public Relations Service merit a chapter to themselves. The service comprised the Public Relations Officer, war correspondents, broadcasting unit, cinema units, still photographer, official artist, newspaper and archivist, all, except perhaps the last, 'organs of publicity'.

It must be said at once that the trouble referred to, save in the very early period, had little or no effect upon the work of the various parts. We had every reason for thinking that the results were good. All parts of the force had their initial troubles, extending over a long or short period; but with Public Relations the period was longer than most.

Our difficulties in getting any war correspondents at all have been mentioned in

3 above. We never knew the exact reasons which led to the outcome that all correspondents were military personnel paid by the Government, and were not representatives of the New Zealand press; but discussions, not to say controversy, between the Government and the press, difficulties in selecting personnel, and basic suspicion in the Government of any outside publicity caused absurd delays before any proper appointments were made. We were forced to make one or two interim appointments ourselves; and it may be said now that after a few correspondents had come out from New Zealand, later appointments came from competent newspapermen from the Expeditionary Force itself.

A qualified war correspondent arrived from New Zealand in early 1941, the intention being that he should be our Public Relations Officer; but he was unlucky enough to be captured in **Greece**. A cinema and a broadcasting unit arrived about the same time, and meanwhile the GOC had appointed an official artist out of hand.

One way and another they were a difficult lot, all showing some degree of temperament, and cumulatively they caused more work at Headquarters than did any other branch of **2 NZEF** services; but at the same time it must be said that Headquarters was not always very clever in the way it dealt with them. Figuratively speaking, the staff at Headquarters were always rubbing the bruises they had incurred through getting mixed up in the problems of the Public Relations Service. Sooner than have to deal with them all individually, we decided to go on with the idea of a Public Relations Officer, and to make him responsible for all the branches. The PRO was intended to keep his finger on the pulse of the force, have a full knowledge of what was happening, or going to happen, throughout the force, and decide where and when any of the units or individuals should go at any one time. The PRO was to ensure that all the activities of the Division and the other NZEF units were adequately covered and reported to New Zealand – and it has already been indicated that despite troubles this object was achieved.

Unfortunately we had difficulty in finding a suitable officer for the appointment of PRO, and most unfairly thrust it upon officers unskilled in publicity, who struggled manfully with a task that might wellnigh have driven them to distraction. It was not until the middle of 1943 that the service settled down into a steady routine. Part of the blame rested with Headquarters. We had not appreciated the degree of specialisation and technical training required in publicity, but had thought that conscientiousness and hard work would alone be sufficient. Good work was done, and some foundation established for the future; but a thorough knowledge of all the aspects of publicity was really an essential for the appointment.

Our public relations staff, being military personnel and paid accordingly, were prevented from having the free roving commissions, with apparently inexhaustible expense accounts, of the representatives of great British or American publicity agencies. Association with these men, some of them world famous, went to the heads of a few of the members, and we had to take firm steps to bring them down to earth again.

The broadcasting unit had an unfortunate start owing to differences of opinion among the members, and took a little time to get into its stride; but thereafter it did excellent work, including the much-appreciated scheme by which men could record short messages to their families to be broadcast later over the air in New Zealand. This unit had throughout a very good liaison with its parent department in New Zealand.

The cinema unit was sometimes accused, most unfairly, of being merely a recorder of travelogues. The force operated throughout the war in photogenic areas – Egypt, Palestine, **Syria, Libya, Italy – and it was part of the duty of the unit to film scenes in these areas. It fulfilled its duty of taking scenes in the field also, and could not be accused of neglecting war for peace.**

Probably it is in the nature of still photographers to be less obtrusive

and more subdued than their more mobile brethren. This was one part of publicity which seemed to keep out of trouble and merely got on quietly with the job.

The status of war correspondents and of the personnel of the broadcasting and cinema units was not satisfactory. They were appointed 'with the status of lieutenants or captains'. It would have been better to give them military ranks outright – better for their work, and better for them if they were captured. The same point will be made when speaking of our welfare staff.

The official artist was taken closely under the wing of the GOC personally. The results of his work were good, and met with the commendation of the troops, the highest praise of all, but sometimes he did get away from the control of the PRO.

The *NZEF Times* was started in 1941 and continued till the end of 1945. From the first it was a 'news' paper only, and did not open its columns to correspondence, nor did it express any views on the problems of 2 NZEF – other than humorously. It tried to include a lot of news from New Zealand, and published war correspondents' articles and other matter about the happenings within the force. It was subjected to some criticism from the troops for not publishing letters to the editor and other contributions; and it must be admitted that there was a difference of opinion about the policy adopted. There was no doubt that the paper lost a bit of life thereby and gave no opening to contributions that would have come from all over the force; but when we used to read about the turmoils that were stirred up from time to time by army papers, both British and American, we were thankful that we were well out of it. 'Fair comment' so easily merges into indiscipline, or is unsettling to morale. It is probable that the policy we adopted was too rigid, and that it was only the difficulty of framing satisfactory rules for an alternative that led to our taking the line of least resistance.

The Archivist is discussed below on [page 129](#).

Headquarters never looked on its handling of publicity as one of its successes. The main requirement is a thoroughly qualified Public Relations Officer; and provided that care is taken to have a suitable officer ready to step into the post, a future Headquarters will be spared many worries.

Unfortunately, as will be mentioned again in

Chapter 10, we never had a satisfactory liaison with the Director of Publicity in New Zealand. We had the greatest difficulty in obtaining material from New Zealand – film scenes of the old home town and so on – and such New Zealand news as was sent us was poorly chosen and did not keep us in touch with what was happening in the homeland. Moreover – and this was most disheartening – we could never find out what use was made in New Zealand of the press, cinema, and photographic material which we sent back. We knew that the broadcasting unit's messages to next-of-kin were put on the air; but this was only learnt through subsequent letters from the next-of-kin, and not because of official advice. Taking it all in all, it was a regrettable state of affairs.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

SECOND ECHELON

SECOND ECHELON

It took a little time at the beginning to impress on units the importance of strength and casualty returns. There was a tendency, perhaps a natural one, to regard returns as just so much paper work which had to be done to propitiate an impersonal body at 'the base'. It was soon realised that the returns governed such things as promotions, pay, and casualty returns, and they took their place as an essential element in military administration.

The war establishment of Second Echelon included an unusually large number of staff-sergeants and sergeants. Initially they came out from New Zealand with substantive ranks, so that when later on we thought it desirable that they should have some field service, it was difficult to force them on units. It was laid down at an early date that replacements for the personnel of Second Echelon must come from men who had had field service, and little by little the difficulty disappeared. It is a mistake to send a unit such as this overseas staffed with a lot of perfectly fit senior NCOs. It would be preferable, at least in the early stages, that this unit should be staffed either by personnel of a grading just below the highest, or by women, or by some of each.

Among the tasks of Second Echelon is the collecting of the effects of deceased personnel, and their despatch to Base Records in [Wellington](#), a task requiring care and sympathy. It was important enough for us to issue a special instruction, which included the setting up of what was called, not very happily, the 'Standing Committee of Adjustment', to supervise the disposal of effects. The name came from the British regulations on the subject, and was a relic of the days of a purely regular army, when all sorts of military obligations and privately owned goods had to be taken into account – elaborate mess bills, gambling debts, polo ponies and so on. We should have introduced a name of our own.

However, the essential part of the constitution of the committee, whatever its name, was and must be the inclusion of a representative of the deceased's unit. Tales regarding the alleged improper disposal of kits spring up easily and are readily believed. The more that can be done to make it all fair and above board the better.

When HQ 2 NZEF moved to Italy, the main part of Second Echelon remained in Maadi, as it was thought better not to disrupt the office. An advanced office was formed, however, and was established with Headquarters in each of the sites we occupied. The main office in Maadi at its maximum was something over 200 strong.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION AND POSTAL SERVICES

EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION AND POSTAL SERVICES

The work of these two services is covered in

Chapter 16, Welfare.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

AUDITOR

AUDITOR

The auditor was appointed at the request of the GOC, who thought it desirable that any financial transactions in which we might be engaged should be open to review by a skilled inspector. The GOC had expected to get an auditor who would be responsible to him, or at the least to the army; but what we did get was an auditor who was a member of the staff of the Controller and Auditor-General, and responsible to that officer only – who, it will be realised, is in turn responsible to Parliament and the people of New Zealand only. This was slightly dampening, and meant that we would have to come to some arrangement with the auditor to obviate his comments going all the way out to New Zealand and later, through devious channels, coming back to us for a ‘please explain’. Such a roundabout procedure seemed foolish.

At an early point, therefore, we arranged with the auditor that if he had any adverse comments in his reports to his chief he would let Headquarters have a copy, so that if necessary – or if we thought it desirable – our own answer could go out to New Zealand at the same time. As it happened there were few comments of any moment; and after a while the auditor adopted the custom of coming to Headquarters first with his comments and discussing the matter before he ever made his report at all. This was most satisfactory and, after all, was the reasonable thing to do considering that New Zealand was so far away. Nothing was ever done on our part to interfere with the auditor's right to report to his own chief, but in effect he became the keeper of our conscience as well as the keeper of the public conscience.

In 1940 and 1941 there was an attempt made to conduct a stores audit. The moment appeared to be a suitable one, for at that stage our equipment was still being issued to us item by item, and was being checked and signed for. However, stores audit implies some fixed point

round which to conduct it; and the course of events prevented anything like a fixed point being found. Before the initial issue was complete the First Echelon was scattered all over Egypt and the Desert; and when it came back to Helwan the Second and Third Echelons joined it, and soon afterwards the whole Division moved to Greece; and from then on enemy action and emergency replacements on the battlefield had complicated the tale beyond any clarification.

Stores audit in a combatant force in a theatre of war is an impossibility. Financial check is another matter, and the auditor was an insurance, welcomed by both staff and services, that our financial transactions, pay or otherwise, were in order.

The auditor also checked regimental funds accounts, a task which from time to time disclosed some surprising results, as will be mentioned in

Chapter 16.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ARCHIVIST

ARCHIVIST

After the First World War the war diaries and other records left by units had been of little help, so that historians had to start afresh to collect material. It is not suggested that war diaries provide all the material required in the compilation of a history, but they do at least provide, or should provide, some sort of foundation.

In an endeavour to improve on this situation for the future, an archivist was appointed early in 1941. Initially he was placed under the Public Relations Officer, largely for administrative reasons, but partly so that he could be put into the picture and know on what aspects of his work he should concentrate at any one time. Later in the war he was made an independent authority. His work was first to see that war diaries were kept in a proper manner, and then to collect material which might be of value to historians after the war. As part of this latter duty, he was the supervisor of unit historians; but as all we did was to exhort units to keep some sort of unit history, and as practice varied, his influence in this connection varied also. He subsequently produced a short series of provisional accounts – of the ‘popular’ variety – of the various campaigns, which had a good reception.

War History Branch has reported since the war that the Archives Branch unquestionably justified itself, but that it could with advantage have been expanded to become a proper Historical Section, with powers to collect battle narratives from units. It does seem that we were not firm enough about unit historians; but it will always be difficult to get units which are involved in the heat of battle to give any thought to possible advantages for historians in the future. The staff of a central historical section, carefully chosen as suitable for the interrogation of battle personnel who are probably very tired at the time, might have gone far to replace unit historians.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COMMISSIONER NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND – COMMISSIONER YMCA –
SENIOR SECRETARY CHURCH ARMY – CLUB MANAGER – COMMISSIONER
RED CROSS

COMMISSIONER NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND

COMMISSIONER YMCA

SENIOR SECRETARY CHURCH ARMY

CLUB MANAGER

COMMISSIONER RED CROSS

These are all dealt with in

Chapter 16.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PRINTING AND STATIONERY UNIT

PRINTING AND STATIONERY UNIT

The printing unit did not begin its work until January 1942, which was two years too late. It is a commonplace that the printed word is easier to read than the cyclostyled one, partly because of the variety of type available, and partly because of the greater contrast between the colour of the print and the colour of the paper. A less obvious advantage is that for the same number of copies of any document, printing uses less paper than cyclostyling. From the point of view of the recipient, there can be no two opinions about the advantages of printing; and in order to be merciful to recipients in the early stages of a specially formed force, the printing unit should be available from the first. It is not just a luxury.

The unit began by printing orders only, but soon blossomed out into printing standing instructions and army forms. It never lacked work. At a later stage it was expanded to handle stationery supplies also. It would have been better if the unit had been designed so as to be able to work on trucks without unloading. Its mobility would have been increased thereby, and the labour involved in loading and unloading the machinery and establishing it on a satisfactory firm base would have been eliminated.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CIPHERS

CIPHERS

The cipher staff was recruited from suitable personnel of any arm of the service. There were cipher sections at HQ 2 NZEF, HQ 2 NZ Division, and HQ Maadi Camp, the first-named being concerned mainly with traffic to and from New Zealand. The GSO I of the Division was looked on as the controlling officer of the cipher service, and issued such instructions as were necessary. The number of men employed was not great, but the standard required was high.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CENSOR SECTIONS

CENSOR SECTIONS

Our first censor section was formed in December 1941 to work in Egypt, and the second after we went to **Italy** for work in that country. They were formed at the request of GHQ in both cases, the intention being to help the overworked British sections, which previously had carried out the work without any help from **2 NZEF**; but it had already become clear that it would be better if our own people performed for us this necessary but invidious task. The sections worked within the British framework and were under the control of GHQ and not of **2 NZEF**. It was by arrangement with GHQ that the greater part of their work should be the censoring of **2 NZEF** mail.

Their reports were sent to GHQ, but with copies to the GOC and to OICA. They took the form of brief extracts from letters, the names and the units of the writers being omitted. The extracts were selected in order to give a fair summary of the morale and opinions of the force for the preceding month, each subject being prefaced by a brief paragraph giving the general impression gained by the censor staff of the views of the force on that particular subject. It must be repeated that no names appeared in the reports.

Other than by recording their conclusions, the censor staff took no action, any steps that might be necessary to improve morale or to obviate irritations being for the GOC to take; but the censor staff did make definite reports, including details of names and units, where there had been clear breaches of censorship regulations – locations of units, future activities, particulars of losses and so on. The implication in these cases was that disciplinary action was called for. However, the responsibility of the censor sections ended with bringing the breach to notice, and further action was for the CO of the unit.

The censorship reports were of interest to the limited number of officers who saw them; but it must be said that there were very few cases where any explicit action was taken on a report. Morale fluctuated a little, which was only to be expected, but only once called for action throughout the force. The return of the Australian troops to their homeland in early 1942, combined with the knowledge that **United States** troops were in New Zealand, caused the greatest uneasiness of any incident in the war, and did impel the GOC to issue a personal message to all ranks. In other cases the most that would happen would be that the GOC or OICA would remember what had appeared in a report, and would perhaps speak to a few appropriate subordinates about it. Very often the opinions held throughout the force came to notice without the need for reading the reports.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

WOMEN'S SERVICES

WOMEN'S SERVICES

Some remarks on the above subject appear in

Chapter 14.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CAMP COMMANDANT

CAMP COMMANDANT

In an agglomeration of headquarters offices such as has been described in this and the preceding chapter, some central administrative office was necessary to co-ordinate domestic routine. To control such a mixed collection was not easy, and called for patience and, on occasion, great tact. The Camp Commandant's staff included units for signals, field security, supply and transport, workshops, medical and dental, etc., much as in any camp organisation.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 9 – NON-DIVISIONAL, BASE AND LINE-OF-COMMUNICATION UNITS

CHAPTER 9

Non-divisional, Base and Line-of-Communication Units

IN this chapter it is proposed to discuss all the non-divisional, line-of-communication and base units and services, the majority of which were intended to make a self-contained force of 2 NZEF. For most of them there will be a few words of comment, but it is not intended to enter into detailed explanations of their work. As was said at the beginning of this volume, this is not a treatise on military administration. Most of the units worked, and the services carried out their functions, in accordance with normal military custom and with the instructions in the various manuals. We did like to think, however, that we were a bit better at our work than most.

This chapter is concerned with units not forming part of the Division; but it must be recorded that the constitution of the Division itself changed from time to time, each change making added activities at Headquarters – adjustment of reinforcement drafts, publication of war establishments and so on. The greatest change was the turnover of 4 Infantry Brigade to an armoured brigade. There was a tendency to add to service units, especially those which would make the Division more mobile. In the last stages of the war, the strength of the infantry in the Division was increased at the expense of some supporting arms, and at the same time the striking power of the divisional engineers was strengthened. There were good tactical reasons for all the changes, the theme running through them all being to make the Division a self-contained, hard-hitting and mobile formation. At its peak in the middle of 1944 the Division was one-third as large again as in March 1941. It started the war something under 15,000 strong. Its peak was over 20,000.

To return to units outside the Division – it would be too complicated a task to analyse all the changes during the war. Many units lasted unchanged, others were added at later stages, many were disbanded or were reorganised or amalgamated with others, or had their functions

changed. If one looks now at a series of orders of battle, published latterly almost every month and sometimes twice a month, the changes are readily apparent. Attention has already been drawn to Appendices I and II, where there appear the orders of battle of **2 NZEF** as in April 1941 and May 1945. Partly on account of location – we were in two countries in 1945 – and partly for administrative reasons, the arrangement of these two papers is not identical, leaving on one side the variation in units between the two dates.

In **Appendix III** is an attempt to group all the units that were outside the Division. Not all these existed at any one time. Some disappeared at comparatively early dates, others did not come into being until late in the war; but all had some existence, short or long, and all had their trials and troubles.

The first group of units – **Group A** in the appendix – are those which were formed in New Zealand at the request of the United Kingdom Government. The units came out from New Zealand already formed, to work under the control of GHQ. One of the units, **36 Survey Battery**, later joined the Division; another, **19 Army Troops Company**, went to **Greece** with the Division in place of **8 Field Company**, which had not at that time arrived; otherwise all the units remained non-divisional until disbanded. All units served in the field. Their operational control was exercised by General Headquarters, Middle East Forces, and was not the concern of HQ **2 NZEF**. On the other hand it was not possible for Headquarters to wash its hands of the units, the members of which were New Zealanders and were the responsibility of New Zealand for pay, promotion, welfare, and general care. We found it difficult to keep in touch, for the units were moved under GHQ arrangements, and despite all sorts of understandings with GHQ it was rare for us to be given notice of any move. The difficulty was increased by the way in which the units were split up into small packets distributed all over the **Middle East**. This point is referred to again in

Chapter 11.

Headquarters had to take special steps to maintain the morale of the units and make them feel that they were not forgotten. It was natural that the Division should receive all the fame and publicity, and that the existence of this group of units should almost be lost sight of, despite that in their several ways they did honour to the name of New Zealand. It is much to be regretted that the GOC's role as commander of the Division did in this instance definitely conflict with his role as commander of the whole force, in that he was never able to spare the time to pay adequate visits to the units.

Welfare caused some troubles on account of the fragmentation of units, and sometimes it was not easy to ensure that all members shared equally with the rest of the force in any little extra. A second mobile dental unit was formed for the explicit purpose of serving non-divisional units; for, as mentioned previously, dental treatment was one thing in which **2 NZEF** standards were higher than British.

In some ways the units were like Solomon's baby in that they did not know to whom they belonged, GHQ or HQ **2 NZEF**. At first they carried vehicle signs and unit serial numbers as laid down by GHQ for engineer and transportation units; but then HQ **2 NZEF** stepped in and, after discussions with GHQ, arranged for the units to carry New Zealand signs and numbers – with the approval, it must be said, of the units themselves. After a short spell with a reversed fernleaf (black on white) they carried the same Southern Cross as did other NZEF units, including Headquarters.

There were a few occasions in the beginning where units showed signs of acting on British authority for promotions and alterations to establishments. We had to be firm and say that the GOC was the only person who could give promotion to officers, temporary or substantive, that Second Echelon was the approving authority for NCO promotions, and even then only within the establishment, and that HQ **2 NZEF** was the approving authority for changes in establishment. We came to an

arrangement with GHQ under which the GOC would approve temporary promotion for those officers and other ranks who were on occasion performing duties with [United Kingdom](#) units which carried higher rank. It was only fair that they should get the pay if the new task was one normally carried out by personnel of senior rank.

All these units except one (the [Survey Battery](#)) were engineers, although there was not much similarity between the railway operating personnel or the forestry personnel and the rest. The variety of unit gives support to the contention made in

Chapter 8 that there was no justification for a 'chief engineer' to be in charge of them all. A staff officer for engineer duties might have been warranted, and in effect the Military Secretary filled this role.

The Forestry Company did not join **2 NZEF** until late 1943, when it moved from Great Britain to **Algeria**. It went back to New Zealand in the middle of 1944.

The **Survey Battery**, after a period of over a year under GHQ, during which time it carried out ordinary surveying duties (i.e., not artillery survey), joined the Division, where it was amalgamated with the existing survey troop and thereafter was a divisional unit. It was disbanded late in 1944 and replaced by a second survey troop, a much smaller unit.

The rest of the units were all disbanded during the latter half of 1943, and the personnel not due for furlough were used to reinforce the Division. There was sufficient justification for this action; but it was carried out somewhat roughly, without paying enough attention to the feelings of officers and men who by that time had acquired a pride in their units and their work. Again it must be said that the prior claims of the Division overrode everything else, even consideration for unit feelings. The action left a touch of resentment in the remaining personnel for some time afterwards.

Reviewing the whole position, it is clear that New Zealand had overreached itself in sending overseas so many specialist units, and that the warning given to the Government by the GOC in late 1940 ¹ was justified. It was a tribute to the desire of the Government that the country should do its utmost; but it should have held the balance better between forming new units and maintaining old ones.

To turn now to the next group in **Appendix III** – those units formed overseas by **2 NZEF** for service under GHQ, either in the **Middle East** or in **Italy**, or both. As we had formed them ourselves, we were able to keep closer control over them, even to the point that we could if we wished withdraw them and disband them.

The Long Range Desert Group (LRDG) started in 1940 as one patrol of a unit, the men being lent from the Divisional Cavalry, 7 Anti-Tank Regiment and 27 (Machine Gun) Battalion with the idea – or so we thought – that they would be returned to us after a spell of training; but it then transpired that GHQ wished to make the unit a permanency. As the Divisional Cavalry was clamouring to get its men back, we had to take the step – for the first time, incidentally – of forming a new operational unit of **2 NZEF and divorcing it from the Divisional Cavalry. The latter could then draw on reinforcements and make itself up to establishment again.**

The numbers involved were never great. For a while our contribution consisted of two ‘patrols’; but later this was expanded to a complete squadron of four patrols numbering 7 officers and 86 other ranks. The unit was disbanded in the end as a result of the **Leros operation in 1943, already mentioned in**

Chapter 5. After having had so much honour and glory during its career, it was a pity, even a tragedy, that its end should occur amidst failure and recrimination.

As a result of the operations in **Greece** and **Crete** there was formed a strong link between the Greek and New Zealand forces, so that it was understandable after the campaigns were over that the GOC should offer to provide the training staff for such Greek forces as remained in the **Middle East**. Never was a well-meant offer more regretted. Greeks are by nature politically minded to a degree unheard of among British communities. The Greek forces were riddled with politics, their natural tendency being reinforced by the dissensions among the politicians in exile. The patience of the training team was strained almost to breaking point, for it was difficult to get any continuity, beginning with the Greek commander, who

¹ See p. 32.

seemed to change every full moon. We carried on with the task until we moved to **Italy**, and then handed over to GHQ.

The two graves units were New Zealand's contribution to a Commonwealth or, indeed, an inter-Allied task, that of first recording locations of graves, and then later lifting bodies and concentrating them into approved military cemeteries, which after the war would be handed over to the Imperial War Graves Commission. The units worked under GHQ control over an area of country, first in North Africa and then in **Italy**, and dealt with all graves in the area, not simply those of New Zealanders. Both units carried on for a period after the war with personnel who had volunteered for the duty.

The prisoner-of-war repatriation and interrogation units also worked within the GHQ framework but did concentrate on New Zealanders. Both were formed after we went to **Italy**.

The work of the censor sections has already been dealt with in

Chapter 8.

The group of units shown under **C** in **Appendix III** had what may be called a spasmodic existence, in that some of them were formed, then disbanded, and later re-formed. The bulk of the group, in fact all except the prisoner-of-war camp, were first formed just before the Libyan campaign of November 1941 onwards, and lasted until the German advance in the middle of 1942. Some were re-formed after **Alamein**, and one or two in **Italy** for short periods.

We first supplied the staff for prisoner-of-war camps at the end of 1940, in order to help GHQ with the unexpected flood of Italian prisoners from the first Libyan campaign. The camps lasted until the prisoners were evacuated to various parts of the world. We helped again, in a rather informal fashion, when we first went to **Italy**.

We now come to **Groups D, E, and F** in **Appendix III** – units which were formed with the object of benefiting **2 NZEF**, and which on the whole worked for **2 NZEF** alone. No unit, however, certainly not those in **Groups D and E**, was exclusively for **2 NZEF**. All played their part in the common cause, and on occasion deemed it an honour to serve other troops, the hospitals being notable examples. Many of the units – the first four in **Group D** for example – were formed in accordance with a scale that laid down that one or more should be found for each division in the field, their control normally being under the Corps; but the understanding was that primarily they should serve our own Division.

It was mentioned earlier in this chapter that there were many additions to the Division from time to time. Those units shown in **Group D** were in principle no different from some others, equally designed to help the Division on its way. Examples were the mule company organised both in **Tunisia** and **Italy**, and the jeep platoon used in **Italy**; but these units (and others) had only a short life, were often organised out of existing units, and sometimes never figured in the NZEF order of battle. The units in **Group D** were ones that were formally constituted and lasted for some months at least, extending to some years in a few

cases.

Groups D and E shade off one into the other, probably the only distinction being the closeness in space of their support to the Division in the field. Any dividing line can only be a convenience for purposes of reference. In the order of battle for May 1945 ([Appendix II](#)), for instance, the following units from the groups figure as divisional units – from **Group D** the Field Surgical and Field Transfusion Units, and from **Group E** the Casualty Clearing Station, one VD Treatment unit, and the Optician Unit. The reason was that at that date the Division was so far away from the rest of the force that its supporting line-of-communication units had perforce followed it up, and for the time being had become part of it.

The **Field Bakery Section** could really be looked on as a divisional unit from its inception, as it was always close behind the Division. This was the famous ‘last straw’ unit of December 1942, i.e., the unit whose formation impelled OICA to point out to the GOC the shortage of manpower that would arise if more units of the sort were formed. It was intended – and in this it was successful – to bake bread near the fighting troops. Supplies sent forward from rear areas under the existing arrangements often reached the troops in a semi-stale condition.

The first three units in **Group D** were ancillaries of the Armoured Brigade. The Section Motor Ambulance Convoy was only a part of the unit as it appeared in British war establishments – a part large enough to serve one division. All these four units were intended to make us more self-contained.

The three medical units are dealt with in the medical history volumes. The Mobile Dental Unit was one of two, this one being for the divisional area. Its existence used to become known to British troops in the area, and sometimes it was almost swamped out by non-New Zealanders. It was almost a divisional unit.

The Advanced Ordnance Depot was inserted for a period into the

lines of communication to improve the supply of ordnance stores to the Division. It was later merged in a normal divisional unit.

In **Group E** the medical units, the first seven in the list, call for few comments here for their work is being covered in other volumes. Strictly speaking, the Anti-Malaria Control Unit was not necessarily a medical one, but it was always so regarded in **2 NZEF**.

The location of our hospitals was such that they often functioned unofficially as transit units for officers, and to a less degree for other ranks, on their way between the Division and **Maadi Camp** or Advanced Base. Hospitality was freely given by the staff of the hospitals; but, all the same, Headquarters on one or two occasions had gently to tell units that it was possible to have too much of a good thing, and that while an occasional visitor was all right, a flood of visitors, all wanting food and accommodation, was sometimes a bit too much, and might even interfere with the smooth running of the hospital. Visiting officers were expected to pay their mess bills in the normal way. It was a delicate situation, for the hospitals wanted to play their part, and certainly did not want to appear grasping.

The Convalescent Depot was a difficult unit to run, because when New Zealanders had reached this stage in their progress towards complete fitness they were inclined to think they were already fit and should be on their way back to their units. The depot is a medical one with a strong non-medical element to supervise such gentle training as is supposed to be done there. In the opinion of the staff of HQ **2 NZEF** – the non-medical staff, it must be said – the position would have been better if reversed, i.e., that the unit should be a non-medical one with a strong medical element to watch convalescence. The point is that men want firmer control than when in hospital; but whether this is best achieved by looking on them as invalids carrying out limited exercise, or as normally fit men with temporary disabilities, is open to argument.

The rest homes were really leave hostels of a high standard and were great successes. Other ranks particularly had a real spell under as good

conditions as are possible within a military framework. While medical units, they were often commanded by non-medical officers.

The mobile dental unit included here is the one formed for the service of the non-divisional units.

The rest camps, leave camps, or change-of-air camps were temporary units formed at various times when the Division came out of the line. They had nothing to do with the Medical Corps.

Our ordnance depots numbered two at their maximum, one being in **Maadi** and one in **Italy**, the latter having an advanced section also. They were formed for the same purpose as so many other units – to improve the service given to our troops by looking after ourselves.

To help in the despatch to the Division of both reinforcements and stores, we established port detachments of our own at every port in the line of communications. The detachment at **Suez** was the longest-lived, the first to be formed and the last to be disbanded. At intervals in the war we had detachments at **Port Said, Alexandria, Benghazi, Tripoli**, and then later at **Taranto, Bari, Ancona, and Naples**. The units were small, ranging from 18 to 30, and in effect were New Zealand 'missions' to the British movement authorities at each port. They supplied just that extra little bit of punch in the movement of our troops and stores. To operate efficiently, these detachments required a separate launch of their own. For Suez we had a special launch sent out from New Zealand – one that in peacetime had journeyed between Auckland City and **Rangitoto**. In other places we either hired launches or 'acquired' them by appropriate army methods.

The **Reinforcement Transit Unit** was established in **Italy** as an additional link between Advanced Base and the Division. When in the later months men moved from **Bari** to **Ancona** by sea, the unit met them at the latter port.

The clubs and the **Entertainment Unit** (the 'Kiwis') are mentioned in

Chapter 16.

The last group in **Appendix III (Group F)** comprises Base Units – those units which were stationed in **Maadi Camp** or in Advanced Base, or sometimes in both. An Advanced Base had to be interposed between the Division and **Maadi** on three occasions – in **Syria** in early 1942, in **Tripolitania** in early 1943, and in **Italy** from the end of 1943 to the end of the war. Basically the Advanced Base was merely intended to hold reinforcements nearer the Division than **Maadi**, and in **Syria** and **Tripolitania** this is all it did. In **Italy**, however, Advanced Base became a **Maadi Camp** in miniature.

Our experience shows that there is a limit to the permissible distance between a fighting formation and its base facilities. If that distance becomes too great, it is necessary to interpose another link, which in effect becomes the base as far as the fighting formation is concerned. When in the middle of 1942 the Division was on the **Alamein** line and only some 100 miles from **Maadi**, it was possible to send men forward direct to the Division, and even direct to brigades and regiments. By the time the Division had reached **Tunisia**, and even more markedly, when it moved to **Italy**, men had to be sent forward in bulk, so to speak, sorted out at Advanced Base, and there held until the moment was propitious for sending them farther forward. Moreover, the comparative nearness of Advanced Base to the Division made it possible to fulfil demands for men more quickly than if the supply had been drawn from **Maadi**.

It is not proposed to examine the organisation of Advanced Base in **Italy** in detail, as it varied from month to month and, in any case, was largely a miniature edition of **Maadi**, with holding depots, reception depot, training depots at later stages, service units nearly identical in number with **Maadi**, and a varied collection of welfare units. To dismiss it so lightly, however, is really not fair to the staff which controlled it, for in its own way it had all the troubles that beset **Maadi** in its early years, and which always will arise when something is being created from

the ground up.

One thing must be said, however. We made a mistake in [Italy](#) by siting Advanced Base so far back. Initially, when we were short of MT, the proximity to [Taranto](#) was an attraction; but when later we had more MT, and could send men forward in our own vehicles, it would have been better if the base had been well to the northwest of [Bari](#) instead of to the south-east. It has already been said in

Chapter 7 that local circumstances led us to accept a location for **HQ 2 NZEF** that was too far back; and similarly there were local factors that influenced the siting of Advanced Base. Later on we considered moving; but by then the site was being steadily improved, and so we stayed until the end.

Headquarters Maadi Camp, formed in April 1940 under the title of HQ Base, was the first new unit officially formed in **2 NZEF** overseas, a headquarters to command the miscellaneous lot of units that constitute a base being even by that time an obvious necessity. In June 1941 its title was changed to HQ Maadi Camp, and in August 1941 to HQ NZ Maadi Camp, this last change being the result of the instruction from GHQ that all Dominion units should carry letters indicating their country as part of their titles. As it happened, at a later stage GHQ took over portion of the camp, so that there was a ‘**Maadi Camp**’ separate from ‘NZ Maadi Camp’. In June 1942 the title was changed to ‘HQ 6 NZ Division’, that being one of the results of scheme **CASCADE** – for which see **page 55**. This scheme continued until late in 1944, when the title again became ‘HQ NZ Maadi Camp’.

Camp Headquarters had always been responsible for New Zealand troops in **Cairo**. When **HQ 2 NZEF** moved to **Italy**, it became responsible for all New Zealand troops in Egypt.

The training depots were the real reason for having **Maadi Camp** at all, and remained the hard core of the camp throughout. They showed a bewildering series of changes during the war, impossible of detailed analysis. They were formed, amalgamated, re-formed, disbanded, re-formed again, re-amalgamated, separated, expanded, reduced, and finally disbanded. When Advanced Base in **Italy** was formed it was at first intended not to have any training depots there, but to limit the organisation to ‘holding’ depots; but three or four advanced training depots were formed, then were expanded to become the main depots, which were closed down at **Maadi**, and then later on the depots were closed at Advanced Base and reopened at **Maadi**.

Some corps never had separate training depots at any stage, but trained their personnel, where training was called for, in the 'service' units in the area – the Postal Corps in the Chief Post Office, the Dental Corps in the Camp Dental Hospital, and the Pay Corps in the Chief Pay Office. ERS, which was a corps in the later years, never had any need for a training establishment.

Cavalry – later to become Armoured Corps – artillery, engineers, infantry, machine-gunners, and Maoris had depots of their own, or shares in a depot, for as long as training was called for, i.e., they never made use of base units to provide training facilities. Signals, ASC, ordnance, EME, and medical, after having had some form of depot for years, finally carried out their training in base units. The **Provost Corps had a combined 'Base Company and Training Depot' throughout.**

Armoured corps, artillery, and infantry were the only corps which had depots entirely their own from first to last, i.e., they never were part of composite depots. Other corps shared in composite or combined depots on many occasions. One of the first depots ever to be formed was 'the Composite Depot', so called, which served cavalry, engineers and signals, corps which were then considered to be too small to have depots of their own. This particular composite depot was later disbanded; but there were examples of combination at later dates – engineer and ordnance, machine-gun and Maori, and so on. There was a saving in overhead in having a common depot staff for these combined depots, but it is doubtful if the idea was a success.

Infantry for most of the war had separate depots for Northern, Central, and Southern groups, and also for most of the war had a superior headquarters over the three. Towards the end of the war there was one 'Infantry Training Depot' only.

As an example of the kind of adjustment that went on, the following were the steps taken in July 1944, at a time when the number of reinforcements was showing a decline. All available infantry and engineers were sent to **Italy, to be held in Advanced Base until required.**

Two hundred artillery personnel were transferred to the Armoured Corps Training Depot for two months' training – this arising from reductions in artillery units in the field, combined with low casualties compared with those of the Armoured Corps. The artillery training depot was disbanded and all remaining fit men sent to Advanced Base. Engineer, infantry, and Maori training depots were to remain, but the machine-gun training depot was disbanded – this foreshadowing the changeover of 27 (Machine Gun) Battalion to infantry. The signal school was disbanded, and future training was to be done by Base Signals. The ASC training depot was disbanded and all 11th Reinforcement ASC personnel were transferred to infantry, this arising from a reduction in the number of ASC units with the Division. Future ASC reinforcements were to be trained by ASC base units. Similar steps were taken by the Medical Corps.

Adjustments like these, though not so general, took place at intervals throughout the war. The depot situation in **Maadi was always sensitive to the reinforcement position in the force.**

In a small army the practice of having separate depots for each arm cannot but be wasteful of personnel; but short of sharing in the facilities of British depots, which is undesirable, or sharing in combined depots, which is of doubtful advantage, or concentrating training common to all arms in one depot, which has promise, there is little that can be done to improve the position.

The **School of Instruction and the Driving and Maintenance School did cater for all arms. The scope of the latter school will be obvious from its title; but the former was badly named, as its title conveyed nothing. It was in fact a small-arms school, with a curriculum of wide scope. The Signal School ran courses for regimental signallers in addition to the more technical work of its own corps. The Camouflage Training Unit, which had only a short life, also catered for all arms.**

It has already been mentioned that we were late in having our own Officer Cadet Training Unit. In

Chapter 13 it will be suggested that this was a mistake. Our own unit was not formed until the end of 1944, and had time to run only two or three courses before closing down. It was later briefly reopened to train officers for **Jayforce**.

The **Reception Depot** was designed to relieve training depots of as much administrative work as was possible. Men entering camp from hospital or from convalescent depot went first to the **Reception Depot**, where they were reclothed and re-equipped, tested for dental fitness and so on, and only then handed over to the appropriate training depot ready to go straight on with training. In theory the depot was a good one, and in the early stages it was warranted; but it was an impersonal unit with difficulties all its own in the maintenance of discipline, men did their best to dodge it, and with the best will in the world administration is never static, and the nice tidy position that existed when men joined their training depots soon became untidy again. The depot in **Maadi** was finally disbanded in late 1944. It is probable that we could always have done without it. Depots bearing a similar title were later formed both in **Advanced Base** and in **Maadi**, but their functions were those of an ordinary transit depot.

The **Discharge Depot**, on the other hand, was a necessity from first to last. It took over men when they were placed on the New Zealand roll (i.e., were awaiting return to New Zealand), on account of compassionate leave or unfitness not severe enough to take them to hospital. It saw to all the administrative detail preparatory to embarkation, and ensured that all those to be embarked were in one place instead of being scattered all over the camp. There were times when transportation was a long time coming, and special measures had to be taken to keep the men occupied – a good example being the long delay in the embarkation of some of the smaller furlough drafts. The depot could have been better equipped for this purpose, and deserved more attention than it received. Its name was not a good one, as men in the depot were awaiting not discharge but repatriation. The name was hurriedly applied in 1940 from recollections of the First World War. Repatriation Depot would have

been a better title.

The **Base Kit Section** (or Store) looked after the superfluous gear that officers were not supposed to take into the field. To this extent it had official justification, and indeed figured as a necessary unit in pre-war manuals. Gradually, however, it became a general dump of extra and unwanted gear, official or otherwise. Other ranks are not supposed to have anything extra but, like the snail, to carry all their limited belongings with them. However, the men accumulated clothing, officially or privately, and in addition had a collection of souvenirs, trophies, musical instruments, sports gear and so on. Stringent orders would have been useless, so we bowed to the inevitable and took it all into store. When units went into the field in 1941, and at intervals thereafter, every unit dumped there its superfluous mess gear, including pianos. Towards the end of the war it was a fascinating experience to visit the store and see what it had in stock. We had to persuade a reluctant British construction authority to build us an outsize in stores to hold the contents. Periodically we tried to have a spring cleaning and to persuade units and individuals to get rid of the accumulation; but, on the whole, the position at the end of the war showed no improvement. Thereafter there was a clean-out. We considered the possibility once of moving the store to **Italy**, but this would have seemed like encouraging depositors in their bad ways.

The Base Bakery, later called Catering Depot, is referred to in

Chapter 16, Welfare. It should be mentioned also that the Cookery School, also discussed in

Chapter 16, was part of the ASC Training Depot until the depot was disbanded, when the school became independent.

Both the Medical Corps and the **Red Cross** felt the need of store depots outside the scope of the normal ordnance and other supply depots. The Red Cross store remained at **Maadi** throughout. The Medical store moved to **Italy** in 1944.

To administer all these depots – and sometimes the training depots alone held many thousands of men – required the help of a large number of ‘service’ units similar to those that existed in the field. Their duties are obvious from their titles.

It has been mentioned that Advanced Base in **Italy** became a **Maadi Camp** in miniature. This brings us to the question whether it might not have been better to have closed down in **Maadi** when the Division went to **Italy**, and when it became clear that the Division would be continuing on a line of advance through **Italy** and would not, for instance, be going to take part in the invasion of **France**. There was a brief period when there was a faint possibility of this latter move; but it does not appear that the idea was ever taken up by either the **United Kingdom** or the New Zealand Governments. The proposal was at least never officially made.

Our initial inclination was to move everything to **Italy** with the exception of a minimum of transit units and port detachments. The move was warranted if for no other reason than that there would be a saving in manpower in having as much of the force as possible in one place, not to mention that the work of Headquarters would be eased if most of the force was in **Italy**. These points at first sight seemed conclusive.

It then appeared that the sea transport authorities were not prepared to carry the troops beyond Egypt in the same vessels in which they had travelled from New Zealand, so that transshipment in Egypt was inevitable, followed by a rearrangement of the drafts to fit the smaller vessels which would carry them to **Italy**. The stay in Egypt might be one

of weeks and our 'minimum of transit units' began to grow. It looked as if our transit facilities in Egypt would be much the same size as the proposed Advanced Base in **Italy**; and the alternative became either main base in Egypt and smaller one in **Italy**, or the reverse. By moving the main base to **Italy** we did not avoid having a smaller base in Egypt.

Then the more we looked at **Maadi Camp** the more we liked it. By this time it was as near perfect as any camp could be in the circumstances, for it had become a permanent camp with all the amenities that one could wish for. Within any reasonable period of time we could never organise a similar camp in **Italy**, putting aside the question whether at that stage of the war we were justified in asking the British authorities to embark on a mass of new construction. Moreover, training grounds in Egypt were unrivalled in the amount of room they offered and the weather was always good, though we realised that training in the desert was not entirely suitable for fighting in hilly and closely-settled country such as would be found in **Italy**. The real truth is that we were well dug in in **Maadi** and were reluctant to give it up.

The decision we had to take was a major one. As is known, it was to leave **Maadi** much as it was at the time and establish a glorified transit depot – Advanced Base – in southern **Italy**. Owing to the departure of HQ **2 NZEF** and its associated NZEF authorities, the total number in **Maadi Camp** showed a reduction. There was also some reduction in training facilities and in the 'service' units maintaining the camp.

It is not possible on reflection to say categorically that we took the correct, or the incorrect, decision. Had we decided otherwise we would doubtless have settled down in **Italy** after the initial upheaval; and there would have been a saving in manpower, together with an easing of administration, if we had moved. Probably the balance was in favour of moving to **Italy** but not by much.

There has never been an army, either full size or, as with us, a miniature one, that has not been criticised for having too large a tail. At one point in the North African campaigns the United Kingdom

Government sent out to the **Middle East** a specially appointed politician with a staff to investigate the size of the tail behind the Eighth Army, as there had been criticism in England about the number of personnel employed in rear areas. As far as we could see, nothing ever happened as a result of the investigations; but the accusation is a common one and merits a sober answer, so that a little time may be spent in debating whether or not the **2 NZEF** tail was too big.

It is possible to imagine the Expeditionary Force consisting of a division and nothing else – or perhaps it would be better to say consisting of field troops and nothing else. Every service behind the field troops would have to be done by someone other than New Zealanders. Our reinforcements on arrival would go to (presumably) British camps, our mail would be delivered by British units, our sick and wounded go to British hospitals, our pay come from British pay offices and so on. It is not necessary to labour this point, as it was never disputed that we should have some sort of rear organisation. The point to be determined is how much rear organisation there was to be. Men have to be clothed and fed, given medical and dental attention, paid, promoted (or reduced in rank!), guarded spiritually, supplied with welfare both on and off duty; their letters have to be collected, censored, and delivered, their domestic woes cured if possible, their return to civil life made smooth, until we find every ill the flesh is heir to being handled by military authorities – for after all the army is only 100 per cent state socialism of a rigid type.

It is a challenge to go through the list of NZEF authorities given on **page 114** and see which ones we might have dispensed with, remembering firmly that someone else might have to perform the duties itemised if New Zealanders did not. Which of them was unnecessary or a luxury? One or two of them were thinking about the future – the ERS and the archivist, for instance – and we might have done without them at the time. Our Public Relations Service was more for the benefit of the people of New Zealand than for the Expeditionary Force. Our welfare might have been carried out by one authority instead of four, although the saving would have been small. Perhaps the auditor was a luxury! –

but again he was primarily working for the Government in New Zealand and not for us. The censor sections were a contribution to the common pool, apart from the fact that New Zealanders preferred that this invidious duty should be done by other New Zealanders, who would understand the mentality of the writers and references whose meaning would be obscure to British censors.

It is hoped that elsewhere in this volume the case has been made out for having a HQ 2 NZEF at all. It has been admitted that a saving could have been made by combining HQ 2 NZEF with HQ Maadi Camp for such time as the whole force was in North Africa; but that does not affect the contention that the divisional staff, plus the service heads in the Division, could not have administered the Expeditionary Force as a whole.

To return to the list of NZEF authorities – no answer is given here to the question how many could have been dispensed with; but readers, and especially critical readers, are asked to be honest with themselves when expressing an opinion. Probably the cock-shy has been set up only to be knocked down again, and too much has been made of the point; but criticism comes easily to troops, especially to New Zealanders. Let us accept in the meantime that all the authorities were justified. There now remains the more delicate point whether or not they were staffed too generously; but before deciding this let us turn back to the units that have been discussed on pages 137–44 and are listed in Appendix III, Groups E and F.

It would be dangerous to make any comment about the necessity for any of the medical units, and the dental units too, except to say that our standards were high, and we gave a service much better than the normal. Units like the port detachments, the clubs, the entertainment unit – these were not essentials and we could have got on without them, but our troops would not have been treated so well. And if the standard of service is to be high, then the number of men employed thereon will be high also.

We tried to keep the depot position in **Maadi** under control, and records have shown that depots were reduced or disbanded from time to time when the number of reinforcements or the state of the war did not justify their continuance. The reception depot probably went on too long; the other odd schools and stores performed necessary duties. The 'service' units were similar to those that worked in the field. **Maadi Camp** was nearly self-contained, and we drew on British facilities as little as possible.

The crux of the matter in this aspect of the possible excess of units at the base or on the lines of communication lies in the word 'self-contained'. It is a fact that the smaller the truly self-contained force, the higher proportionately to the total will it be in overheads and maintenance units. It would have been more economical, for instance, if we had been content to have our depots as small sections of British ones, to send our students to British schools (even if we had supplied some of the staff too), to attach 'service' personnel to British units instead of running our own, and altogether if we had been content to have our base camp merely a section of the gigantic organisation that had been built up in the area from Tel el Kebir to the **Suez Canal**.

New Zealanders are happiest among their own kith and kin, not only while in training at a base camp but at every stage between the port of disembarkation and the Division; and if this feeling is accepted – and who would controvert it – then the price must be paid in units and manpower. It is doubtful if the service given to the troops was ever appreciated, except in a negative form – that men would have been horrified if they had been asked to go to British depots, or to be content with British YMCAs – although there were times when men were demonstrative enough to show their delight, as when for instance they came upon an unexpected New Zealand representative at a port.

Taking it all in all, it is maintained that so far we are on safe ground; but we now come to the point, which has been postponed once already, whether or not NZEF authorities and all the base and line-of-

communication units had establishments that were too generous. In other words, were they overstaffed? For field units we used British war establishments on which to base our own; but in 99 per cent of the cases that came before HQ 2 NZEF there was a request for the establishment to be increased, albeit by only one man or so. The requests came from the commanders of corps, often with the benediction of the divisional staff, and could not be refused. A request that the establishment should be reduced was of such extreme rarity as to be a phenomenon. There was a steady 'creep' of increases in all field units. However, it is not proposed to criticise this action, for the units after all were fighting ones; but it will be clear that the desire for an increase was not just a peculiarity of officers commanding base units, but was universal throughout the force.

Our NZEF, base, and line-of-communication units were our own creation, based on establishments that we evolved ourselves, and could easily be increased or altered. We tried to make them comparable with any similar establishment for field units, and there was a standing direction to the compiler that in no case were base figures to be more generous than field ones; but often there was no comparable field unit, and we had a free hand. To examine some of these establishments today, both for NZEF authorities and for base units, serves to impress one with the extraordinary number of men that had to be employed to keep the machine moving, and at first one is inclined to think that they could be drastically cut down. Closer analysis would lead one to delete the adverb 'drastically', for the reason that just as a small force led to an over-proportion of 'service' units, so do small units lead to an over-proportion of men employed on administrative duties. Each of the depots, for instance, was self-contained with its OC, Second-in-Command, Sergeant-Major, Quartermaster-Sergeant, office staff, cooks, medical orderlies, postman, regimental police, sanitary personnel, storemen, instructors and so on; and if one has seven or eight individual depots, the overheads will be more than in one depot the equivalent in size of the seven or eight together. Similar remarks may be applied to all the units that serviced **Maadi Camp – see **Appendix III, Group F**, at end. Each had its own function and could not be amalgamated with the next one, and the**

result was a large number of small units, each with its own overheads. Such a state of affairs cannot help but be wasteful of manpower; but again it is the price we paid for being self-contained and looking after ourselves.

The original establishments as thought out at HQ 2 NZEF, and then compiled and promulgated, were based on reasonably good principles of true economy in manpower; but thereafter Headquarters spent a lot of its time resisting appeals for small increases to offices and units, the reasons always being that the unit would thereby be able to render better service. It is amusing to be able to record that the worst offenders were officers from the Division, many of them senior officers, who were seconded for a while to Maadi or Advanced Base. They found themselves free of the restrictions applicable to establishments for field units, and were most eloquent in advocating some sort of increase. Very often depot commanders merely took men out of the reinforcement pool in the depot and 'attached' them to the administrative staff, so avoiding an application for an official increase. Periodically an inquisition into the staffing position would disclose these illegal additions, the offenders would express contrition and repentance, the men would go back to the reinforcement pool, and the situation would be correct again – but only for a while, for temptation was always too great.

The slow but steady 'creep' of additions applied to NZEF authorities (see page 114) equally with base and line-of-communication units; but all these offices were small. The office of the DMS at its maximum was 15 all told, including consultant surgeon and physician and the members of a standing medical board. The Military Secretary's office numbered 4, the ADDS office 5, and so on. It can with justice be claimed for all these authorities that their work showed a slow but steady increase from first to last.

Most suspect of all were the additions to units in Maadi Camp – and before going further it must be pointed out that it is only human nature to want to improve one's surroundings. Any unit fresh out of the line will want some form of amenity as soon as it settles down in a rest area; and

the longer the unit stays there, the greater will be the desire for more amenities, and for more men to staff the amenities. When we are considering **Maadi Camp**, we must remember that it was a standing camp and lasted for six years; and every CO of every unit in the camp at some time wanted some improvement. It would be small wonder if there were applications for more men.

And somehow or other the increases crept in. One is left with the impression that Headquarters might have been firmer than it was, and that at any one time the figures of men employed on base and line-of-communication duties could have been reduced to some degree – some small degree only, arising from reductions of twos and threes from each unit, and perhaps totalling one or two hundred at a maximum. Not all the saving would come from fit men, for it must be remembered that a large part of those employed at **Maadi** were unfit for the field. The only defence that can be put forward on behalf of Headquarters is that every officer commanding a unit in the base or on the lines of communication at some time asked for an increase, giving weighty reasons why it should be granted, and that it is sometimes difficult to go on resisting ‘constant dripping’. Let anyone who in the future is in a similar position of authority bear these words in mind, and armour himself with armour of proof.

One last point, and that a major one, must now be made about our base and line-of-communication organisation, and for this purpose attention is again drawn to **Appendix I**, the Order of Battle as on 17 April 1941. This was the first complete order of battle ever issued. One should have been published long before; but Headquarters was still learning its duties, and in any case at that time consisted of the proverbial two men and – a hornet. ¹ Orders of battle

¹ See p. 30.

are necessary documents, for it is not difficult to lose track of a

unit. During most of the war orders of battle were issued at least once a month.

The part of the issue to which special attention is drawn is that included in Serials 151 to 205. Serials 190 to 194, the hospitals and the convalescent depot, had been sent out from New Zealand. All the others had been formed by us overseas in the course of our first year in Egypt. The need for all these units had been found in that period of time; but no special draft of men had been sent out from New Zealand to staff them, and we had either to draw men from reinforcement drafts, which had been sent to us for a different purpose, or from units of the force, which was even less defensible. The number of men unfit for field service was at this time small. It was wrong at this early stage to have to use men wanted for other purposes to form these necessary units. Men for these duties should have been available from the first – men who need not have been fit for full field service.

It is not intended to blame anyone for this failure. Neither Army Headquarters nor the headquarters of the force had fully appreciated the position at the beginning; and there was never a point when Force Headquarters saw the future as a whole and could say that so many men would be wanted for the complete base. Headquarters, like everyone else, was still learning, and so the base grew unit by unit.

If a division goes overseas it will want a tail from the outset, in addition to the nucleus of an Expeditionary Force headquarters. Some base units will be wanted with the first wave to go overseas. The ideal would be that the whole of the base organisation went overseas first, so that when the fighting formation arrives there is already an organisation in existence to maintain it in the broadest meaning of the word. The strategical situation may not permit this, in which case the base units should accompany the first wave of fighting troops. One cannot be dogmatic about which units should go first; but it will be granted that units for medical and dental treatment – sedentary units such as hospitals – for postal duties, for pay, records, ciphers, welfare, port duties, works, ordnance – all these will be wanted for base duty

almost at once. Training depots could either be formed in New Zealand and come overseas complete, or could be formed overseas out of drafts provided for the purpose. The principle to be adopted should be that those units which are wanted at once should be formed in New Zealand from men of low medical category; for others either alternative will suffice.

It is worth mentioning at this point that **Cairo**, while in general a source of great trouble, was of advantage in the early stages, as we found there all the resources of a large city. Facilities like this may not be available again, and we may be thrown back on our own resources even more than in 1940.

Finally, here are some words from the GOC. In April 1945 the **New Zealand Government** was considering what size of force it could supply for the war against **Japan**. A cable was sent to the GOC outlining the proposals, and making it clear that the total force could not be as large as was **2 NZEF**. In fact, a figure was given him as the maximum, and he was asked for his comments. Part of his reply reads as follows:

No allowance appears to be made for base and line of communication troops. The standard of our base services at present is high and if there is the need could be reduced, but it will then be appreciated that we would have to accept a lower standard of overseas training and of medical, ordnance, dental, and welfare services than hitherto.... The high standard of efficiency and contentment of the NZEF has been the result of New Zealanders fighting together with a force big enough to look after itself and with base and line of communication services that looked after our health and welfare.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

**CHAPTER 10 – RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND
AND WITH ARMY HEADQUARTERS**

CHAPTER 10

Relations with the Government of New Zealand and with Army Headquarters

IT is proposed in this chapter to discuss the relations between the Expeditionary Force on the one side and, first, the Government of New Zealand, and then Army Headquarters, on the other. In all matters of day-to-day administration it was Army Headquarters with which we communicated. However, in all matters of policy the originator in New Zealand was more often than not the Prime Minister, with the Minister of Defence as his 'alternate'. If the Prime Minister chose to communicate with the GOC direct, the answer perforce had to go the same way. This method of communication was in fact in order, as will be seen from a reference to paragraphs (b) and (c) of the charter given on pages 93 and 94. Sometimes we were not sure if Army Headquarters had been consulted: but as what happened in the procedure in Wellington was not our concern, and as it was satisfactory and gratifying that the highest authority in the land was directly interested in our problems, it was not for us to raise any objections. The volumes of documents that have been published relating to New Zealand's participation in the war make fascinating reading, and should be read by any New Zealander who feels a pride in his country.

It is not intended in anything said here to trespass into political matters, or to take anything away from the unfettered authority and responsibility of the Government of the day; but it may have some small value to mention one or two things that appear to have some relevance to the control of an Expeditionary Force.

It should be unnecessary to say that the Government must have confidence in its commander, considering that in our case it had the fullest confidence. The national temperament of New Zealanders makes it necessary to stress this point. It is ingrained in the New Zealand character that no one has such marked superiority over his fellow men as to justify his being put in command over them, especially when the

command is a military one subject to that suspect thing military discipline. Leadership is thus regarded with suspicion; but if the commander of a force is to give of his best, there is no room for such feelings on the part of the Government at home. During the First World War there were cases where the United Kingdom Government lost confidence in a commander but still kept him in his post, a position unsatisfactory to both parties. In the second war the United Kingdom Government had greater courage, and removed commanders in whom it had lost confidence. The action taken may be unfair; but beyond all doubt it is correct in a time of national crisis.

At a critical stage in the early years of the American Civil War, a very good Southern general, Joseph E. Johnston, was wounded in the midst of a great battle. He had never been able to co-operate with the Southern President, and there had been a mutual lack of confidence. His successor was Robert E. Lee. ‘When told by a friend that his wounding was a calamity to the South, Johnston manfully answered, “No sir. The shot that struck me down is the very best that has been fired for the Southern cause yet. For I possess in no degree the confidence of our Government, and now they have in my place one who does possess it, and who can accomplish what I never could have done – the concentration of our armies for the defence of the capital.”’¹

It may appear that the point is being laboured; but the reason is this. The Government in 1939 did not think that any officer then serving in New Zealand, regular or territorial, was sufficiently experienced to command the Expeditionary Force. They had recourse to an officer who by upbringing had associations with New Zealand, and of whose eminence there was no doubt, but all of whose service from first to last had been with the British Army. The appointment was not at the time enthusiastically welcomed by senior New Zealand officers. During the war New Zealand commanders and New Zealand staff officers proved themselves equal to any occasion, and their reputation now stands high with the people of the country. If a commander is ever wanted again in similar circumstances, the appointment is likely to go to a serving New

Zealand officer; and if all is to go well, the Government of the day must be prepared to give him the same confidence as was given to the GOC in the recent war. The point is of such importance not only to the Government and the commander, but to the force also – its morale and its success – that it cannot be too much stressed. The results achieved by **2 NZEF owed something to the full confidence the GOC received from the Government.**

There is, of course, a reverse side to the picture – that the commander in turn must co-operate loyally with the Government, consult it on his problems, and keep it fully informed. An examination of the cables that passed between the Government and the GOC may serve as models of the kind that should be followed, for

¹ *R. E. Lee – A Biography*, by Douglas Southall Freeman.

they show (*inter alia*) the high sense of his responsibilities that was held by the GOC.

As it happened, there was a second occasion during the war when the Government had to despatch an expeditionary force overseas, namely that sent to the **Pacific in late 1942. The charter given to the commander of that force bears distinct traces of the influence of that given to the GOC of the **Mediterranean** force, the wording in some cases being almost the same. One feels when reading it that the Government had been placed in a position when it could scarcely be less generous to the second commander than to the first; but despite this the second charter is more restricted than the first, and the Government obviously intended to keep a closer hold over the operations, and indeed the administration, of the **Pacific** force. It would be unfair and unwarranted to deduce that the restrictions were because the commander of the **Pacific** force was a New Zealand officer. The reasons were the increasing shortage of manpower, the greater need for economy, the nearness of the force to New Zealand, the restricted operational tasks likely to confront it, and, reading between the lines, the fact that the higher**

command was to be exercised by **United States** officers. Taking it all in all, the charter was a generous one.

To leave this somewhat rarefied atmosphere and return to practical matters – we received excellent support from the Government throughout. Reinforcement drafts were provided to the best of the country's ability, the only time that there was a real shortage being in 1942, when home defence for a while took priority even over the Expeditionary Force. We understood this, and had no complaints. The Government showed real concern over the failure to send the first furlough draft back to us in 1943, and took steps to increase reinforcement drafts to compensate for the deficiency. There were one or two cases where the Government might have kept us better advised of action taken, but none was of vital importance. It was a long time before we were told the details of the financial arrangements with the United Kingdom Government for the costs of the force, a matter of some interest to us, even of some moment. After the entry of **Japan** into the war, we were told nothing of what was going on in New Zealand. Admittedly, a lot of this was top secret and could not be spread abroad; but a good deal could not be concealed, and might have been conveyed to us in a form that could, in turn, be passed on to the men. As it was, only the disturbing points came to the men's knowledge – that **United States** troops were in New Zealand, for instance.

The Government stood manfully between the force and either well-meaning or critical people in New Zealand. We were, however, embarrassed by receiving one or two unwanted gifts to be used as trophies, with the blessing of the Government, it must be said. The intentions of the senders were of the best; but the trophies were only a nuisance in a time of rapid movement and continual campaigning, for competitions, even football competitions, could rarely be carried to a finish. The National Patriotic Fund Board had achieved wonders in canalising moneys and gifts for the forces, but there was this little leak that might have been stopped up.

During the war we had very few 'please explains' of any kind, the Government presumably providing the answer itself to the points raised by critics in New Zealand. For this we were very grateful. It is a fact, incidentally, that so many queries of this kind are 'dead mutton' by the time they reach the force overseas, and even 'deader' by the time the reply reaches New Zealand. This is not to say that the force overseas should not give the fullest possible answer to any query received. Our rule was that any letter or cable from New Zealand should be read most carefully, and every word examined to see if it called for an answer. It would be fatal if the belief grew up in the homeland that the overseas force was evading the issue.

The only query ever received of any note was one about the conduct of the beer bar in [Cairo](#) in late 1942. It will be dealt with in

Chapter 16.

There were occasions when the New Zealand custom of ‘considering every case on its merits’ was in conflict with reasonably speedy action by the Government when considering some query or recommendation we had made. Once or twice there were long delays in giving us a ruling for which we had asked; but even more exasperating were cases where the Government, having given a ruling, and even reaffirmed it, went back on it when a concrete case came to its notice. It will be argued in

Chapter 17 that in time of war, even if not in time of peace, some simple rules are unavoidable, and must be adhered to if the administrative machine is not to break down. However, the instances were few; and we had cause many times to be grateful for the support we received and for the help in solving some knotty problems.

Ministers should exercise caution when making promises to troops about some future action, especially when the promise is to be implemented overseas. One or two promises of this nature turned out to be incapable of fulfilment, for the circumstances overseas were not as imagined when the promise was made. The extra-duty pay imbroglio (see [page 118 et seq](#)) was made worse by an unfortunate 'promise' made to certain troops before they embarked.

During the war we held a number of by-elections and one general election. On the whole these caused no trouble, the controversy in New Zealand over the destruction of the ballot papers being none of our making; but sometimes the course of the war made it impossible for men to vote. One by-election came right in the midst of the Libyan campaign of November–December 1941, and voting was out of the question for the men of the Division. In this and other cases the position was explained to the Government and was accepted.

In 1943 the Government placed some restrictions on the number of men that could travel in unescorted merchant vessels. If the unescorted vessel was under 15 knots in speed, the maximum was to be 25; if over 15 knots then 100. Any greater number must travel in escorted vessels. The numbers were considered not in their absolute aspect of so many men, but in their relation to the total manpower of New Zealand, where statistically a loss of 1000 men would mean more than such a loss to the [United Kingdom](#). The Government's attitude was sound; but the restriction had the effect of slowing down the return of parties under the replacement scheme.

In 1943 and 1944 there was a reluctance shown by the Government to send women clerical staff overseas, even though their employment

was one clear way of easing the strain on manpower, and even though we had already received a number of girls for duty in clubs and hospitals. It may have been that the Government thought that the atmosphere of army offices was not so suitable for girls, bearing in mind that they would probably have to live in **Maadi Camp**. We did in the end get some women clerks, but only after a long delay. Since that time the employment of women in the services has become more and more common, so that presumably there will not be the same reluctance in the future. The question is discussed further in

Chapter 14.

The Government was strangely reluctant to allow officers from Army Headquarters to visit the force, so producing a lack of personal liaison which is referred to later in this chapter. Whether or not the reason was that such trips were looked on as 'joyrides' is not known, but it was to be regretted.

Over a period of six years we had four visits from members of the Government – twice from the Prime Minister, and once from each of two ministers, the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Munitions and Supplies. It cannot then be said that the visits were overdone, and in fact it would have been better for all concerned if more ministers had visited us. We took care to make sure that ministers absorbed the real atmosphere of the force, even to the extent on occasion of telling officers to stand aside and let the visitors speak to the men without lookers on, a course of action that scandalised the purists. The visits were a little unsettling to the troops; but on the other hand they got a lot off their chests and felt better afterwards. Most of their queries and complaints had little or nothing to do with service overseas, but referred to matters in New Zealand. Our political visitors were appreciative of all that was done for them, and caused us no trouble – except for the inability of the Prime Minister to adhere to any timetable, no matter how carefully drawn up.

The average New Zealander has little reverence for his political leaders in normal times, a feeling that was accentuated during the war by absence from the country. Troops are always ready to believe the worst, and to give credence to the tales that reach them about what is happening in the homeland – that everyone at home is having a soft time, that no one is doing anything towards winning the war, that the men overseas are forgotten. Little by little there grows up a contempt for the 'home front', including in this the Government first of all, for in the eyes of the troops the Government is doing nothing for them at all. This may serve to explain why the troops treated the visits of politicians, at

least after 1941, with some amount of derision, and took all they heard from the visitors as political clap-trap. In 1944, when it was known that the Prime Minister would be visiting us, the attitude of the troops, gathered from censorship reports and first-hand experience, caused us some concern; and in the end discreet steps had to be taken to tell troops that, after all, our visitor was the Prime Minister of the country and merited a dignified welcome and a respectful hearing. Despite this there were some cases of impolite behaviour by individuals.

To sum up – in matters both of policy and of detail the relationship between the Government and the Expeditionary Force was excellent.

With one body in New Zealand, coming directly under the Government, our relations were not so good – namely the Director of Publicity. Our complaint was lack of support for our requests for material, and, what was more important, lack of advice of what use was made of the material we sent back, and lack of information about activities in New Zealand – such activities as could be made public. It has already been admitted that the handling of the publicity at our end was not perfect, and doubtless the Director of Publicity had complaints against us. The whole regrettable business was due to a mutual lack of understanding of the problems of the two sides. It would have saved a lot of heartburning if someone from the Director's office had visited us overseas.

With Army Headquarters from first to last our relations were also excellent. We received the best of support and understanding, even though sometimes we must have shaken the staff there badly, and even though we were occasionally what can only be called naughty. The GOC's charter gave him extensive powers, as has been seen, to form and disband units and to reorganise the force; and these powers were used to the full. Sometimes we went a bit too far and bent the law a little even if we did not break it; but with few exceptions Army Headquarters accepted the position, or at most remonstrated mildly. On one occasion there was a little acerbity shown, and that was over the comparatively minor matter of our creation of a 'Postal Corps'. We were in the wrong, for the

corps did not exist in the New Zealand Army; but our reason was to create some *esprit de corps* in the men handling the mails, instead of their being odd personnel drafted from other corps. This caused a sharp, but luckily short, exchange of cables, finishing with one from HQ 2 NZEF saying that it was sure that Army Headquarters must have its hands full with other more important matters, so that there did not seem to be sufficient justification for going on with the argument. We deserved the cane.

It should be mentioned at this stage that the policy adopted by HQ 2 NZEF was to try to settle our problems overseas and not refer them to Army Headquarters. Given good will on all sides among the mixed lot of authorities already discussed in

8, it was surprising how much was settled in this way.

It was always in our minds that Army Headquarters was for many purposes our 'superior authority' to which we owed at least full respect if not obedience. There were strict orders at Headquarters that any letter or cable from Army Headquarters should be read carefully, and every point answered. We realised that Army Headquarters had other occupations than merely looking after us, especially after Japan entered the war, and despite what has been said above we tried not to be a nuisance. It appears today, however, that we overdid this in that we never kept Army Headquarters advised of what we were doing to anything like the desirable extent. The constitution of the force was always changing, every monthly issue of orders showing additions or subtractions; and the general administration was always leading to the introduction of new rules and the alteration or deletion of old ones; but it does not appear that, save in special cases, we ever bothered to write to Army Headquarters separately telling it the reasons for all this. Admittedly Army Headquarters received copies of our orders and, in due course, copies of our war diaries; but out of this mass of straw, it was left to it to extract the wheat. We should have sent back clear periodic reports on the action we had taken and the reasons for it. Once or twice during the war there were faint murmurings from Army Headquarters, but not the definite complaint that in this case was probably called for. OICA and the Adjutant-General exchanged throughout the war a series of personal or semi-personal letters which were of value to both sides; but this was not enough. Headquarters 2 NZEF on its level in fact broke one of the rules laid down earlier for the GOC on his level – that authorities in the homeland should be kept fully informed.

There is no doubt that the GOC's charter prevented misunderstandings on the whole instead of creating them. Had he not been granted such extensive powers, HQ 2 NZEF would have been compelled to ask the prior concurrence of Army Headquarters for many of our activities, with every chance then of lack of understanding. Despite what has been said above, it may be claimed that the GOC's

powers were used with restraint.

Occasionally there was a bit of sparring for position which, even at the time, caused us nothing but amusement. An example was the discussion about which of the two sides was to appoint the commanders and other officers for the new units to be formed under FFC 36. Another example – and one that occurred more than once – took place when for some reason we were to exchange personnel, and a decision had to be made which side moved first. Such differences, if they can be called differences, were always settled amicably.

The numbering of units remained an Army Headquarters responsibility throughout, i.e., if we were forming a new unit that required a number we asked Army Headquarters for it. The units were thus as much part of the **New Zealand Military Forces as of the Expeditionary Force. On one occasion in England in 1940 some temporary units were formed and given numbers without consultation with Army Headquarters, with the result that for a while there was duplication between the units overseas and others bearing the same numbers in New Zealand. Nothing disastrous happened; but it was a mistake on our part.**

There were one or two cases where apparently some military authority in New Zealand had made promises to troops which could only be implemented overseas – action similar to that sometimes taken by politicians. We made it clear to Army Headquarters that any recommendation it forwarded to us would always receive the most sympathetic consideration; but it was irritating to us, and no doubt when it heard of it irritating to Army Headquarters also, to be informed by troops arriving from New Zealand that this, that, and the other had been promised to them. Often the promise was impossible of fulfilment.

From first to last we had only three visits from members of the Army Board – one from the CGS in late 1940, one from the Adjutant-General in 1941, and one from a later CGS in 1944. The only service heads to visit us were the Director-General of Medical Services and the Director of

the Army Education and Welfare Service. This was a totally inadequate liaison, even when allowance is made for the many other duties of Army Headquarters. Part of the blame must be given to the Government, which, as already mentioned, did not favour trips overseas by the army staff – a shortsighted point of view. Heads of branches of the staff and senior service heads should all have visited the force freely, or if they could not really be spared then well-briefed liaison officers would have sufficed. Certainly not a year should have passed without a visit from a member of the Army Board. The time spent in personal discussion with members of HQ 2 NZEF and HQ 2 NZ Division would have taken the place of a lot of correspondence, and would have given New Zealand a more vivid idea of our activities and our troubles. Difficulties of transportation are not a sufficient answer, for one way or another air transport was always available. It is not too much to say that this weakness in personal liaison was the greatest deficiency in the relations between Army Headquarters and 2 NZEF.

Liaison the other way – from the force back to New Zealand – has some value, but it is slight compared with the value of the reverse. As it happened, all senior members of the staff and services in 2 NZEF did visit New Zealand during the war; and in other cases officers went back to New Zealand on duty and later returned to the force, such being the case with those who went to New Zealand in late 1941 to help with the Army Tank Brigade; but none of this compensated for the loss of liaison the other way.

Our relations with the heads of services at Army Headquarters on the whole ran smoothly, such differences of opinion as did occur arising from our belief that the heads in New Zealand tried to keep too close a control over the service overseas. With some hesitation, and affirming that personal relations were always good, the case of the DGMS may be quoted. It was our opinion that he tried to exercise too great a measure of authority over the DMS 2 NZEF. The responsibility of the DMS was first and foremost to the GOC, whom he advised how best to maintain the health of the force and how best to effect the recovery of the sick

and wounded. Possibly it could be left at that; but it would be wrong to deny that the DMS had some responsibility to the DGMS in the homeland, for it was from the homeland after all that the medical staff was supplied. However, we thought that the DGMS interpreted his authority too widely, to the extent of taking the DMS to task for some of his actions – actions taken in accordance with the needs of the Division at the moment, and therefore, in effect, at the wish of the GOC. It was a difficult position for the DMS. The DGMS had in one respect a complaint against us that appeared warranted, namely that we had too many hospital beds – were ‘over-hospitalised’ – and so were making demands on the medical personnel in New Zealand that were unjustified. If this was so – and it cannot be argued here – an answer is given in part in an extract from the War History volume *War Surgery and Medicine*, where the author says that **2 NZEF** ‘contributed practically nothing to the common pool of administrative medical personnel’¹ – an opinion which will be discussed in broader terms in

Chapter 11. Our excess hospitalisation, if any, could thus be taken as one form of contribution to the common cause. The real point of this little controversy comes at the last. When finally, and far too late, the DGMS visited us in 1944, he agreed that we had made our case and that he could not support a reduction in hospitals.

We had a similar feeling about one or two other service heads – the Director of Dental Services and the Director of the Army Education and Welfare Service for example. The cases are quoted here not to show that there was friction – that would be too strong a word to use – not even so much to show that there were almost inevitable differences of opinion, but to underline the enormous advantage to be gained from personal liaison. If these heads of services – and others – could only have visited us at an early stage, the relations would have been free of even the small differences that did occur. It should be said that the Director of the Army Education and Welfare Service did finally visit us, but again far too late.

So much for the relations between Army Headquarters and 2 NZEF. It is time to turn to another aspect of the relations between an overseas force and the homeland.

The last paragraph of the charter given to the GOC by the Prime Minister in 1940 reads as follows:

After the Third Echelon has left New Zealand no officer above the substantive rank of captain will be sent overseas without the concurrence of the General Officer Commanding.

This paragraph was included in the draft drawn up by the GOC and presented to the Government, as the result of conversations with officers who had served in the First World War and remembered the hard words that had been said when relatively senior officers came out from New Zealand in 1917 and 1918. Quite frankly, the paragraph slipped through the net without the authorities in New Zealand fully realising what it implied, namely that after a year they would in effect be

deprived of the power to change officers over, because those already in the Expeditionary Force would wish to stay there indefinitely and not be called back to New Zealand on duty and replaced by others. This sentiment against late arrivals in the field is strong with New Zealanders, much stronger than with **United Kingdom** forces, where there is always

¹ *War Surgery and Medicine*, p. 48.

a steady movement of officers between field units and the homeland, or from appointment to appointment. In the British service, with a large number of overseas formations and a far closer control from the homeland, the exchange of officers was a commonplace, both by sending new blood out from England and by withdrawing those who had served overseas for a period. Several times in North Africa and **Italy**, officers were even sent out from England to take command of divisions in the field.

Those officers who were lucky enough to get overseas in the early stages soon felt that they had a pre-emptive right to remain there, that no one in New Zealand had a right to recall them, and certainly that they could not be replaced by other officers from New Zealand. This feeling was held by all, regulars and non-regulars alike, engendering resistance to returning to New Zealand on any form of duty, unless, as with the officers for the armoured brigade, the intention was that they should come back to the Expeditionary Force. On at least one occasion during the war, at the urgent request of Army Headquarters, the GOC sent drafts of officers back to help, the time being early 1942 when officers were badly wanted for home defence and for the **Pacific**. Among some of the officers selected there was the uneasy feeling that somehow or other they had failed overseas and were going home almost under a cloud. Many took it badly. In some ways it was a tribute to the feeling they all had for the Expeditionary Force, where morale was high, the sense of unity strong, and all felt that they were doing work that was

well worth while. When the time came for furlough in 1943–44, many senior officers would not take it until they were assured beyond doubt that they would be allowed to rejoin the force.

It is not easy to condemn this viewpoint outright, and indeed it could be taken to reflect credit on the officers concerned; but from the broadest standpoint of national interest it must be adjudged as mistaken. In principle, if the services of any officer are required in his homeland, or anywhere else for that matter, they must be made available, always with the reservation that the opinion of the GOC of the Expeditionary Force must be considered, as he cannot be expected to agree to such a withdrawal of officers as might wreck the force. In the last war, the GOC was always sympathetic to appeals from New Zealand.

It can be argued, therefore, that the paragraph in the GOC's charter was a mistake, for it produced the result that good brigade commanders and commanding officers, inexperienced through no fault of their own, were retained in New Zealand without the chance of overseas service in the [Mediterranean](#). On the other hand, it would require great firmness to override the opinion in any Expeditionary Force in favour of the paragraph in question. No one in the force would ever have believed, for instance, that the officers mentioned above would have been capable of carrying out their duties adequately if they had joined the force after its first campaigns. However, if from the first there were to be a free and frequent exchange – and the adjectives must be stressed – there could never be the same objections, nor the need for such a paragraph, nor would the feeling arise that it was in some way a disgrace to be sent back to New Zealand on duty.

Associated in some ways with the feelings referred to in preceding paragraphs was the feeling about junior officers. The diehards in the force – and they did exist – maintained that all commissions should come from the ranks in the force, and that no second-lieutenants or lieutenants should be sent from New Zealand with reinforcement drafts. It must be remembered that this view did not completely exclude personnel from New Zealand indefinitely. All that it meant was that

personnel, instead of obtaining commissions in New Zealand, would have to wait until they had served for a while in the ranks overseas and proved their fitness. The alternative view was that it was only fair that officers who had already been tried out in training periods in New Zealand, and whose services had already been made use of for home defence, for instance, should be allowed to retain their commissions and join the Expeditionary Force as officers. It was this view that prevailed.

With every reinforcement draft, therefore, a number of junior officers did come out from New Zealand, while the balance of our requirements was found from those trained in OCTU overseas. It is difficult to say exactly what proportion was found from each source. Various factors influenced the figure of total requirements. The wastage rate for officers was greater than for other ranks (with the artillery, for instance, twice as great); sometimes we had difficulty in finding as much 'officer timber' from within the force as we would have liked; sometimes there were circumstances that really compelled us to accept extra officers from New Zealand, e.g., those who had previously served in the Pacific and who came to us in 1944–45. In addition we felt some obligation to the large number of personnel who had held commissions in New Zealand, often for long periods, but who had had to revert when the home defence forces were reduced in 1943, and had then been drafted to the Expeditionary Force in the ranks. After a short spell overseas, many of these had their commissions restored. Their deflation, and subsequent re-inflation, explains the use of the term 'dehydrated' for their new status.

All these and other factors prescribed the number of officers we wanted and the proportion we could absorb from New Zealand at any one time. Before the figures for each draft were settled, we had discussions with Army Headquarters and always managed to come to an agreement about their proportion. It would require today the services of an actuary to say how many officers we were really short of at any time, and so to determine what proportion New Zealand should have supplied; but a rough guess would be that it supplied one-third to half of the total.

Whether or not this is too great a share is left to readers to decide.

When new units were to be formed in New Zealand, it was agreed that the primary right to find the officers lay with Army Headquarters; but in the one notable case, the formation of the Army Tank Brigade and the other units to be formed under scheme FFC 36, Army Headquarters itself asked for a proportion of the officers to be sent back from the **Middle East, including the commander of the brigade and a number of commanding officers. The respective shares were determined amicably between the two headquarters; but HQ **2 NZEF** had trouble with the heads of arms and services in the force, many of whom thought that **2 NZEF** should supply all requirements.**

When vacancies for promotion occurred in units overseas it was of course understood that the primary right to fill them lay with the GOC. Promotions were thus made to replace losses without our ever thinking of asking New Zealand to supply a replacement. It was a purely automatic procedure. No case ever occurred in combatant units of our asking New Zealand to supply an officer because we could not find a suitable one ourselves. Occasionally the DMS had to ask the DGMS to find a replacement for a medical specialist, as no officer with the necessary qualifications was available within the force; but this was an exceptional occurrence. Our reaction to any attempt from New Zealand to force even a junior officer on us would have been violent – was violent on one occasion, occurring of all things in the **YMCA. The Commissioner of the moment – early 1943 – was a prisoner of war. The machinery was set in motion to promote the member of our **YMCA** staff whom we thought the most suitable; and with a sense of courtesy possibly mistaken, we asked Army Headquarters to obtain the concurrence of the **YMCA** in New Zealand. In reply we were told that they could not agree to our nominee, but proposed to send someone from New Zealand. Our reply was firm, and in fact could have been called insubordinate. It was to the effect that we could not accept anyone who would be put over the head of an officer who had already been with us for some years. The exchange of cables was prolonged and slightly acrimonious; but in the end the New**

Zealand authorities bowed to our opinion, and the proposal to send someone from New Zealand was dropped. To be fair, it must be stated that this was not a full 100 per cent military appointment, and to some extent Army Headquarters was purely a channel of communication between 2 NZEF and the YMCA.

All this can be summarised when it is said that 2 NZEF looked on itself as a closed shop, as indeed it was, and that this was good for the morale of the force. Whether or not it was good for the New Zealand Army as a whole is left for the reader to decide. One thing is certain – that the Government of the day, and its military advisers, should appreciate the full consequences of such powers before granting them.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 11 – RELATIONS WITH GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

CHAPTER 11

Relations with General Headquarters

AT the beginning of the war it was tacitly assumed and accepted that United Kingdom military authorities would have operational control of the expeditionary forces of the Commonwealth. As far as New Zealand was concerned, this position was accepted throughout, without more than an occasional comment on the conduct of operations, the most notable instance being the bitter remarks passed by the Prime Minister over the Leros operation in 1943. Other Dominions were more critical, and Australia for one exacted a closer control over her troops. It is unlikely that in the future any Commonwealth country will be prepared to accept United Kingdom control to the same degree. It may even happen that part of the United Kingdom army may find itself under the control of one of the Dominions.

This is not the place, however, to write a treatise on the direction of Allied forces, about which many of the leaders in the last war have already expressed themselves. Nor is it the concern of this volume to write about the operational control of the Division, which is being covered in other volumes, and which will provide much material for comment and criticism. The subject of this chapter is the relationship between HQ 2 NZEF and the British headquarters with which it dealt; but a few words may be devoted to the connection between the various British headquarters themselves.

In North Africa the operational control of the fighting formations in the field was first exercised by Western Desert Force, and then from September 1941 onwards by Eighth Army, and it was under this latter formation that our Division worked. The headquarters of the army corps, intermediate between the Army and the divisions, is disregarded, as it was very much a fluctuating quantity. The supreme control throughout the Middle East, including the control of all rear areas, was exercised by General Headquarters, Middle East Forces; and it was this headquarters that allotted troops either to Eighth Army or to the other areas for

which it was responsible, e.g., **Syria**. It was GHQ which moved the Division to **Syria** in early 1942 and placed it under Ninth Army. General Headquarters' control was strategic in the broadest meaning of the term.

Unfortunately the picture becomes a bit confused owing to the peculiar relationship between GHQ and HQ Eighth Army, whereby the former exercised a close control over the latter, until in the crisis of mid-1942 the two headquarters were nearly merged. However, from the standpoint of HQ **2 NZEF** there was no confusion as we dealt with GHQ alone, and had no dealings with any army headquarters. General Headquarters controlled all administrative matters in which we were concerned – movements, locations of rear establishments, equipment, supplies, formation of units and so on.

In Italy there were two field armies, Fifth and Eighth, controlled by a superior field headquarters called, first, Allied Armies in **Italy** (AAI), and then later 15 Army Group. Everything outside the immediate army area was controlled by General Headquarters, Central Mediterranean Force, which was located first at Algioes and then at **Caserta**, near **Naples**. Again the Division dealt with one of the armies or with the Army Group, while HQ **2 NZEF** dealt with GHQ.

Before discussing the relations between GHQ and HQ **2 NZEF** a word must be said on a delicate point that, properly speaking, is outside this volume, namely the right of the GOC to communicate direct with the **New Zealand Government**, and particularly to inform it of forthcoming operations. It is not proposed to attempt to settle the vexed question of the rights of the commander of a small national army *vis-à-vis* the Commander-in-Chief, but merely to record that only good will on both sides made it possible for the GOC to send to the Government all the information he thought advisable.

The problem was, in the main, a personal one for the GOC; but once or twice, owing to his absence in the forward area, the invidious task fell to an officer of HQ **2 NZEF** of taking the GOC's proposed cable to the Commander-in-Chief and obtaining his approval to the wording. To steer

it past the Commander-in-Chief was not so difficult as to steer it past his immediate staff!

To return to the real subject of this chapter – it must be said that the relations between GHQ and HQ 2 NZEF, both in Egypt and Italy, were good from first to last. We could not have asked for greater consideration or for greater appreciation of our work, and many times it was most moving to be told how much New Zealand troops were admired. Such arguments or differences of opinion as did arise were conducted in an atmosphere such as surrounds friends or members of a family, without any element of bitterness or bad feeling. It would have been unnatural if differences had not occurred; but the never-failing good feeling removed any sting and ensured that discussions were conducted in an atmosphere free of strain.

Both in North Africa and in Italy it took us a little time to assert our separate identity as a national army, albeit a small one. Both the GHQs had expected a Division; but neither had expected such a large tail, nor had appreciated how much we were self-contained and how much we would wish to increase our degree of self-containment. Sometimes in the early days there were sharp words, as when, for instance, some officer at GHQ could not see why we wanted pay offices and welfare institutes of our own; but without too much delay GHQ accepted the position. If we learnt a lot from British headquarters, it can be said also that they learnt from association with us, and became better as time went on in their role as the headquarters of a group of Allied forces.

On occasion we must have been difficult children – and here it must be said that GHQ, both in Egypt and Italy, had a lot of children to humour. The number of nationalities represented in the troops in the Mediterranean area was greater than has been realised. General Headquarters in Cairo had not one Dominion contingent to handle but three – Australians, New Zealanders, and South Africans – together with Rhodesians, Indians, Free French (a task in themselves), Poles, Greeks, Czechs, Yugoslavs, and Arabs; and over and above these were the troops from East and West Africa, Palestine, Basutoland, Bechuanaland,

Somaliland, Malta, Ceylon, and others. General Headquarters in Italy, itself an integrated British- United States organisation, in addition to many of those itemised above, had a force part British part American, with another Dominion, Canada, and another foreign country, Brazil. The task of either GHQ was unenviable in having to humour all these different peoples, all with their national characteristics, and some trying to assert their national identity and exalt their national prestige. We tried to remember that we were not the only ones making requests or producing difficulties. The number of countries with which GHQ had to deal must always be remembered when one is inclined to criticise any action it took.

General Headquarters was functioning in a dual capacity, first as the headquarters of an Allied army, and second as the headquarters of the British forces alone – by which is meant those forces for which the United Kingdom was financially responsible. Occasionally these two roles were in conflict, as the staff at GHQ did not keep the distinction clearly in mind. Only one series of administrative orders was issued, and in these orders a great part dealt with matters which affected British troops only – pay, leave, enlistment matters, separation allowances, transfers and so on. Mixed up with this would be an order that applied to all troops – transport, traffic control, rations, equipment, etc. The fact that part of the orders was obviously not intended to apply to Allied troops led to the situation that Allied troops began to ignore GHQ orders altogether, treating them all as inapplicable. On the suggestion of HQ 2 NZEF, GHQ MEF ultimately indicated which orders were applicable to United Kingdom troops only, the assumption being that the remainder applied to all troops; but even then the position was not always clear, and in Italy we came under a different GHQ and had to start the campaign all over again. And even after GHQ had understood the position and was specifying whether orders were applicable or not, there still remained subordinate British headquarters in commands and areas, all of which issued their own orders, and some of which had New Zealand units under their command. We had instances of Area Commanders trying to make New Zealand units – mostly from the non-divisional

engineers – comply with orders that obviously were intended for British troops only. In December 1941 we issued NZEF Order 683, reading as follows:

General Orders—Applicability to 2 NZEF

- (1) The administration and legal position of **2 NZEF** is sometimes at variance in certain respects with the position regarding British Service troops. In consequence, orders issued by any higher formation (e.g., GHQ MEF) are being marked whether applicable to all troops under the command of the formation, etc., or else are indicating that they are or are not applicable to certain categories.
- (2) HQs of Armies, Commands, Areas, Sub-areas and Formations have been instructed, before issuing orders, to consider whether they should specify that any particular order should **NOT** apply to **2 NZEF**. If in doubt, they will refer to HQ **2 NZEF**. Time may often not permit of this, but there should always be sufficient time for higher formations to refer to the senior **2 NZEF** officer under their particular command.
- (3) HQs of Armies, Commands, Areas, etc., have been directed to send copies of any orders about which there may be any doubt as to applicability to HQ **2 NZEF**. If necessary, HQ **2 NZEF** will advise if any order should be amended to suit the legislation or administration of **2 NZEF**.
- (4) All **2 NZEF** units will adhere to all orders issued by HQs of Armies, Commands, Areas, etc., under which they have been placed for command, *if a failure to do so is liable to upset the whole effect of the order throughout the Area or Command concerned*. If, however, the order is in conflict with **2 NZEF** custom, representations on the matter will immediately be made to the HQ of the Army, Command, Area, etc., concerned, and in cases of doubt or difficulty, direct to HQ **2 NZEF**.

The order is clumsily worded, but the intention is clear. We put ourselves on side by including **paragraph (4)**. As an example of the confusion that occurred, there had been a case where a local Area Commander prescribed certain inoculations, and our units objected as they had already been inoculated under NZEF arrangements. It cannot be said that HQ **2 NZEF** was ever inundated with requests for advice under **paragraphs (2) and (3)**; but the order was at least helpful to our units.

One of our most persistent troubles in North Africa was on the question of detachments; and here there was a basic difference between the views of **2 NZEF** and those of GHQ. To the latter a division was an *ad hoc* assemblage of units, consisting of so many regiments of cavalry, all with strong regimental traditions, so many regiments of artillery (*Ubique*, etc.), a few companies of engineers, also with pride in their ubiquity, and a number of battalions drawn from probably nine different regiments, again with nine varieties of regimental pride – all brought together temporarily and just as easily separated again. Some divisions developed a divisional spirit and a strong one – 51 (Highland) Division is an example – but even with that division it was not certain that its units would remain unchanged indefinitely.

The New Zealand Expeditionary Force and the New Zealand Division made up a national army in miniature. We were all first and last New Zealanders with a strong national pride. The *esprit de corps* was primarily national, and not attached to the unit to quite the same degree as in the British Army. Unconsciously at first, and then more consciously as time went on, we liked working with our own people and disliked being detached from them, until there was a cohesion in the Division that no British division ever possessed, no matter what its record. This cohesion ran right through the Expeditionary Force.

From the British standpoint, there was no objection at all to detaching part of a division, one out of many. From our standpoint there was every objection to detaching a part of the Division, the only one. In the various volumes covering the operations of the Division, this point will appear as it affected the tactical employment of our troops. We are concerned here with detachments outside the forward areas.

We must at the outset be fair to GHQ, especially in the **Middle East**. An attempt has already been made to express an understanding of the difficulties confronting GHQ with so many nations represented in the command. It must now be said that it also had great difficulties in providing men for the million and one small jobs that go to make up a

military force in the field, especially when that force is operating in a foreign land. There were never enough British troops to go round and certainly not enough to handle the manifold tasks outside the actual fighting. Further attention is given below to the question of New Zealand's share of base and line-of-communication duties. It will be enough to say here that we did realise that it was unfair to expect the **United Kingdom** to carry the whole burden.

Quite early in 1940 we were asked by GHQ if, under certain circumstances, we would be prepared to find men for special duties, in fact to help run the railways in the **Middle East** if it became necessary to take them over from civilian control. Hard on the heels of this came requests for signals and MT personnel for the newly-formed Western Desert Force. At a later stage there were requests for personnel for guard duties, which duties were always in themselves most varied. The understanding was that these detachments would be required for temporary duty only. At least, that is what GHQ said (both then and in the future), although one cannot help thinking that the assurances were given with the unexpressed prayer that something would turn up that would stop having to implement them. That we believed at the time that the duties were only temporary is confirmed by the words in a cable to New Zealand, 'as these detachments are for a short duration'.

By July 1940 a large part of the First Echelon had been lent for various duties, some tactical ones, but others administrative. Then the time came when the GOC arrived back from England, the Third Echelon arrived from New Zealand, the Second Echelon was under notice to come to Egypt from England, and concentration of the whole force became a necessity, at least from our standpoint.

There was the greatest difficulty in getting the detachments back, and even some degree of acerbity shown by the heads of the staff at GHQ. The GOC was compelled in the end to cable the **New Zealand Government** and ask for its support in any action he might have to take, and armed with the promise of this support, which was immediately given, had to be very firm with GHQ. In the end the troops were sent

back, but not with very good grace, and the Division was able to concentrate. This event had the result that the GOC laid it down that the purpose of **2 NZEF** was to maintain the Division, including keeping it up to establishment. Only then could troops be used for other duties. The course of the war thereafter made us on occasion depart from this principle; but a principle it remained. We considered that, by keeping the Division up to establishment, we made a contribution to the winning of the war just as good as, and indeed better than, if we allowed our troops to be employed on other duties, essential though those duties might be.

One can sympathise with Commanders-in-Chief when one reads General Wavell's 'Note for the New Zealand Division' issued at the end of December 1940, and intended to explain why the Division had not been used for the current campaign in **Libya**. He explains that he would have had to consult the **New Zealand Government**, so jeopardising secrecy, and goes on to say, 'I therefore decided, somewhat reluctantly, not to use the New Zealand Brigade, and to use instead the 16th Infantry Brigade, which I could do without reference to anyone'. It is these last few words that have a melancholy sound – 'which I could do without reference to anyone'. This was written about the employment of New Zealand troops alone. If one looks at the list of national forces under GHQ, given on **page 168**, one will have some idea of the difficulties of the commander of a multi-national army.

The various duties for which GHQ asked us to supply men had to be done – if not by us, then by someone else, with a strong probability that it would be British units that had to suffer. The demands on GHQ were unending and, it must be remembered, were very often for duties which had nothing to do with fighting. Here are some of the major establishments and tasks for which men had to be found, all of them in rear areas: manning ports and controlling all movements by sea, land, and air; running railways; assembly of vehicles shipped to the ports in a knocked-down condition; storage of bulk equipment; storage of bulk rations and stores and their distribution; large-scale repairs to

everything; internal security and guards; construction work of all kinds; traffic control in rear areas; mapping and distribution of maps – and it may be taken that these are only a few of the tasks that have to be done and which cannot be ignored.

In such argument as has so far appeared in this volume it has been maintained that New Zealand could not confine her army effort to the provision of a Division alone, but had to accept the responsibility of also finding a sufficiency of personnel for training depots, welfare, hospitals, and the immediate maintenance of the fighting troops. The next stage is to decide whether or not New Zealand should provide troops for other general duties in the theatre of war or should leave it to the **United Kingdom to find them from metropolitan or colonial troops. If New Zealand decides not to supply men for these duties, it would be as well to advise the United Kingdom Government accordingly at the beginning, so as to avoid the embarrassments that might occur between the commander of the New Zealand force and the British commander-in-chief. What our proportion should have been in North Africa, what number of troops we should have provided cannot be stated with accuracy. Only once during the war were we given any figures. In August 1942, dealing only with the rear organisation in Egypt and Palestine, GHQ said that in proportion to the total numbers serving in the **Middle East** we should be finding 502 officers and 2566 other ranks for our share. At the time we might have been providing about one-tenth of these figures with any degree of permanency, although we were able to point out that only a month previously 1100 out of 2300 available reinforcements had been on temporary duty in **Cairo** and **Alexandria**. It was quite impossible for us to find the numbers given above, especially as at the time we had had no reinforcements for nine months; but we felt we must help at a time of strain, and so managed to scrape up some men of lower medical grade for additional duties.**

There was at least one fallacy in GHQ's contention. Whereas most British formations were always below establishment, often tragically below, our own Division was always reasonably well up to establishment,

even at a lean time such as late 1942. If we were not contributing in one way we were doing it in another. There are other weaknesses in GHQ's argument, for it had not taken into account how much we were self-contained; but it cannot be denied that we were not quite pulling our weight in rear areas. The standard figure of personnel required in a theatre of war to maintain one division was from 1941 onwards taken as 40,000, i.e., to maintain a division of about 19,000 required another 21,000 in the theatre at any one time, employed on duties of every kind from the base port up to the area immediately behind the division, and including reinforcements, base camps, hospitals, depots, workshops, transportation units, and everything of any kind that goes to the making of an army. Our maximum numbers in **2 NZEF** were 36,000, and our average was 31,000; and for three years we had some 2000 non-divisional troops in the field in addition to a division. We were thus very far from providing our share of all the rear requirements. Whether or not we should have provided them is another matter, which would have had to be decided on the inter-governmental level. One thing will be certain in the future, that the GOC in the field will be asked to help, just as we were in the last war.

Our reinforcement pools were a constant attraction to GHQ. It is understandable that when GHQ saw some thousands of men under training in **Maadi**, there was an irresistible urge to ask that they be lent for other duties, principally for guards, for which the demand was unending in a theatre of war where depots were developing at a phenomenal rate.

In November 1940 we were asked to send what reinforcements we had to help garrison **Crete**. It was just as well that the GOC did refuse, for we would certainly never have got them back. In 1943 GHQ asked if they could be used as beach parties for the landing in **Sicily**; but at that time the force was in the throes of the first furlough scheme, and we had to refuse. About the last occasion of any note was when in September 1944 we were asked to lend reinforcements for garrison duties in **Greece**, which had just been reoccupied. Here we refused for reasons

which had nothing to do with alternative employment for the men. In this case we wanted to keep clear of Greek politics, having had quite enough while we were training the Greek Army.

All the cases quoted above were for men for duty in the base and line-of-communication area. There were, in addition, cases where GHQ asked that we should form units for duty in the field. Sometimes we complied. During the Libyan campaign from November 1941 onwards we supplied some signals, ASC and medical units, which lasted until well into 1942. The Long Range Desert Group was, of course, the outstanding example. Had Japan not entered the war, we would have formed a number of corps units as part of scheme FFC 36, which would have had the effect of relieving some British units from the duty of supporting our Division. Both in 1942 and 1943, GHQ asked us to form a parachute battalion, being good enough to say that the initiative of the New Zealander was specially suitable for a unit such as this; but we were firm, and with the second request for this unit the custom came to an end, and GHQ MEF never asked us again.

In Italy the position was different from the start, and the only units we ever formed were on our own initiative to give better support to the Division. In any case the nature of the war had changed, and the country was a European one, where the civilian population could be used for duties not suitable for local labour levies in the **Middle East**. We were asked once to supply the personnel for an ambulance train, but begged to be excused.

Before leaving this question, it must be pointed out that all the duties for which GHQ asked us for men had to be done by someone; and one has more than a suspicion that it was British troops that came to the rescue. We did not send men to **Greece** in 1944; but British troops had to go there, and became involved in putting down a civil war. Those who criticise the British Higher Command might remember for a moment or two the varied duties that fell to the fate of a commander of an Allied army operating in foreign lands.

Here it might be pointed out that British troops had no furlough or replacement scheme comparable with the one operating in **2 NZEF** from mid-1943 onwards. We are proud of what we did in the war; but it should be remembered that the British Army took the strain for a longer period than we did.

It will be clear from all that has been said above that at heart we were sympathetic to GHQ's requests, and were understanding of its difficulties; but it must be said also that we thought that GHQ dissipated the efforts of the troops by making too many detachments from complete units for special tasks, instead of allotting larger tasks to whole units. The custom was known to the Division in the form of 'battle groups', 'monthly columns', and such like. It took other forms in rear areas. Our non-divisional engineers were distributed in small packets all over the **Middle East**. In January 1942, 21 Mechanical Equipment Company, 250 strong, had detachments from **Halfaya** on the Egyptian-Cyrenaican border to **Rutbah** wells in **Iraq**, including one detachment at **Aqaba** in **Transjordan**. Others were nearly as bad. The task of a company commander in those circumstances was wellnigh impossible.

Unfortunately we were on weak ground when it came to complaining about the moves of the non-divisional engineers, who by the terms of their formation were under the operational control of British authorities. It was only natural that GHQ should think that this gave it full authority to move units as it wished; but it had forgotten, or rather had not appreciated, that the units came from another country and were part of that country's war effort. The trouble saw the light of day for the first time in November 1940 when a press message from **London** stated that New Zealand troops were in **Greece**. The first HQ **2 NZEF** knew of it was when a cable was received from the **New Zealand Government** asking us for information about it. It must be remembered that at this time New Zealand units had not been in action anywhere. The New Zealand Government had already been told by the United Kingdom Government that there was no truth in the message, so that it was

doubly unfortunate when it transpired that a detachment of 9 Railway Survey Company, 56 in number, was in **Greece**. The detachment had been moved there by the Transportation Directorate of GHQ without the knowledge of the staff of GHQ, and certainly without the knowledge of **HQ 2 NZEF**. It should be said that the Directorate was quite in order in acting on its own authority, as far as GHQ was concerned; in the conference that followed the Directorate admitted that it had never realised for a moment that **HQ 2 NZEF** should either be consulted or informed, and the same applied to other branches at GHQ dealing with our units – engineers mainly. The units were believed to be under the unfettered control of GHQ. We pointed out that the troops sent to **Greece**, while strictly speaking not combatant ones, were the first to enter a theatre of war outside North Africa, so that the people of New Zealand must be interested in the move. General Headquarters was firm that while it regretted this occurrence, it must retain the right to move the non-divisional units as was necessary, and also to make such detachments as were required. We were not satisfied with this, and consulted the **New Zealand Government**; but the latter was of the opinion that GHQ had right on its side, and that we should not try to restrict its freedom of action. For a while thereafter we were a bit of a nuisance to the branches at GHQ which controlled our units, as we were forever asking what moves they proposed to make, what detachments were being sent off to a new war and so on. After some months of this, however, the moves of the Division became more important than the moves of small units, and perforce we accepted the position – which remained that while GHQ never did advise us of proposed moves, somehow or other we found out, generally from the units themselves. The real explosion came after most of the units had been disbanded, when, as has already been recounted, the **Long Range Desert Group** was launched into the ill-fated **Leros** operations without a word being said to either the GOC or the **New Zealand Government**. For as long as the Group had been operating in North Africa all had been well, for everyone knew that at any one moment the Group might be in action somewhere; but this sudden appearance overseas was too much. The result of the acrimony that followed was that the Group was disbanded and the

personnel absorbed into the Division.

The wide dispersal of our non-divisional units meant that we had to take extra steps to make sure that the units shared in our welfare arrangements. Moreover, where possible someone from HQ 2 NZEF tried to visit all the bits of the units from time to time, so as to prevent them from thinking that they were forgotten men.

Our experience makes one think that in any future war it would be unwise to let small New Zealand units pass from the control of the New Zealand headquarters. It would be better if New Zealand's contribution to the general pool were to take the form of complete responsibility for one large task, e.g., controlling an area or running a port, instead of forming a number of small units for scattered small tasks.

The financial arrangements for the Expeditionary Force were really not our concern. We knew that initial equipment was to be paid for at cost, and that subsequent replacements would come under some sort of capitation scheme. Initial issues ended in effect when the Division went to Greece, although it would have been difficult to determine a date when one system really ended and the other began. When we heard in a roundabout way that discussions had started with the United Kingdom Government to settle the financial arrangements, we offered to send our financial adviser (the Chief Paymaster) to give what help he could. The offer was not accepted; and it was not until April 1943 that we were informed of the arrangements made, these being that a lump sum was to be paid for initial equipment and for maintenance up to 31 July 1942, and a monthly sum for maintenance thereafter.

The paragraph of the Financial Arrangements that is relevant to the theme of this section is the following:

It is understood that this arrangement covers the equipment and maintenance of New Zealand Land Forces from United Kingdom army sources according to United Kingdom army scales and standards. If the New Zealand Government or its authorised representative requires a

standard or scale higher than the relevant **United Kingdom** standard or scale, the **New Zealand Government** will be responsible for meeting any additional expenditure arising therefrom.

The words 'according to **United Kingdom** scales and standards' are simple ones, and should at first sight present no difficulties; but as the Division was rarely, if ever, working to the identical organisation of a **United Kingdom** division, and was often larger than a **United Kingdom** division, it was difficult to say what exactly were the scales and standards applicable. Our base and line-of-communication organisation was another complicating factor; for although the British Army had bases and lines of communication of its own, the different sizes of our units, and the different ideas about welfare and maintenance held by British authorities and our own, again made it almost impossible to say whether or not any equipment of ours was within **United Kingdom** scales. Headquarters **2 NZEF** at one stage decided to become fully mobile and so wanted extra trucks; some of our medical and dental units had no equivalent in the British service; our welfare was definitely on a higher scale than theirs – all these things, and many others, helped to make a confused situation. Were the tanks issued to the Armoured Brigade in 1942–43 to be looked on as fresh equipment or as normal maintenance? In what category was the extra equipment added to the Divisional Engineers in 1944?

Occasionally the branch of the staff at GHQ concerned with issues would express some doubt whether or not we were entitled to something, but in the end would heave a sigh and give the necessary authority, saying sadly that when the New Zealanders decided they wanted anything it was easier to agree at once than to refuse and subsequently withstand sustained pressure. Sometimes when we produced a war establishment for a divisional unit that showed clearly an excess of equipment over British scales, GHQ would not give us the excess unless **Divisional Headquarters** obtained additional authority from the army headquarters in the field; and in fact we always made it clear to our own units that while our war establishments were conclusive as far as

concerned manpower, they were not necessarily so for equipment. But one way or another we always seemed to get what we wanted. The financial authorities at GHQ knew of the position and realised that often we were drawing stores and equipment to which we were not entitled if there had been a strict adherence to the words 'according to **United Kingdom** scales and standards'. The point is that they never did interpret the words literally, and in every way treated us with consideration and generosity. There was never any doubt in our own minds that we were getting the best of it.

In February 1940 the War Office, through the High Commissioner in **London**, asked the **New Zealand Government** whether staff officers of Dominion formations could be regarded as available for duty with British formations and vice versa; and whether the same arrangement could apply to brigade and unit commanders and seconds-in-command. The War Office favoured pooling resources. The inquiry was referred by the Government to the GOC, and by him referred in turn to the officers who at the moment would be affected by any such arrangement, viz., brigadiers and selected COs and staff officers. It was early in the war, and we looked at the request from a purely New Zealand standpoint. While we would have had no objection to New Zealanders moving on to higher command and staff appointments with British formations, we could not bring ourselves to agree to the reverse, as we did not think that officers from the **United Kingdom** would be able to handle New Zealanders. This was of course one-sided, and could not be put forward as an official opinion, so that the only thing to do was to advise against the proposal, which was done. The New Zealand Government then advised the War Office that New Zealand commanders and staff should be retained for service with the Expeditionary Force.

This can be considered as a narrow and shortsighted view. The size of British formations gave scope for wider activities than would ever be available within **2 NZEF**; and it seems unfair that outstanding New Zealanders should not get their chance to show what they are capable of. But to be fair the scheme should operate both ways, and here our

opinion of ourselves gets in the way. We thought in 1940, and continued to think throughout the war, that New Zealanders gave of their best only when commanded by New Zealanders, and that there could be no question of a British unit or formation commander serving in **2 NZEF**. About staff officers we were perhaps not so rigid, although if pressed we would probably have said that it would be better if we relied on our own efforts.

In the end the traffic, never extensive, was nearly all one way. There was no case of a British commander serving with the Division, and only two cases of British staff officers, and these arose from the GOC agreeing to the exchanges for limited periods. When the period was up, the exchanges were ended and were never repeated. A few New Zealanders, however, served with British formations as staff officers, the appointments being fortuitous and not part of a design. A few officers who had special skills and whose abilities we could not use to the full moved across to the British service, with our blessing, as most of them received promotion that might not have been available with **2 NZEF**. There was one outstanding case where British Headquarters took from us one of our best brigadiers and gave him command of a division.

It is difficult to come to any decision about this question. Probably the action taken was a fair enough solution, i.e., a small number, coming from those for whom there is not adequate employment with the Dominion forces, should move away into the British service; but it still leaves the one-sided arrangement that the Dominion force does not take anyone from the British service.

No objection could be taken to any of these moves: but there was a class of move about which we were not so happy. As the war went on in North Africa, the position arose that any branch at GHQ, or almost any unit in the British rear services, would jump at the chance of getting Dominion officers on their strength, as all were perpetually shorthanded; with the result that periodically some officer would apply for a transfer to the British service, on the plea that he would get a much better job there, or that his peacetime avocations would be assisted thereby.

Sometimes, though not often, we would agree, one of our reasons – not entirely commendable – being that the officer in question was not much in favour in **2 NZEF**; but so often the reasons seemed to be purely selfish ones, and we did not like the plea of ‘getting a better job’. Our view was that officers had joined **2 NZEF** to give it of their best, and not to go sailing off somewhere else merely because the prospects were more pleasant there. In any case we had to be firm, for the British Army was quite prepared to take all that offered, and we might have been left shorthanded in turn. In a few cases we were genuinely irritated because the officer concerned, after making a plea to be allowed to transfer because he would get a better job than in **2 NZEF**, then discovered that welfare arrangements, for instance, were much better in **2 NZEF** than in the British service, and wanted to be allowed to retain those benefits – in other words, to get the best of both worlds.

Our only trouble was to make sure that the small number we allowed to transfer did not become a flood; and moreover, that GHQ did not skim the cream away from us. While this might have been – probably would have been – for the good of the service in the broadest sense, we preferred to keep our good as well as our not-so-good. The problem remains an arguable one.

At frequent intervals during the war GHQ asked us for personnel to be commissioned into the British Army, saying that the standard of our NCOs was so high that the proportion who would make good officers was above that in the British service. From time to time we let a few go, but not to the extent that GHQ would have wished. Our idea was to keep the standard of **2 NZEF** high in every way, and not to diminish it by letting our best be taken away from us. A case can be made out for a more generous release of New Zealand personnel; but again there is room for difference of opinion.

Most of these troubles occurred while we were serving in North Africa. When we moved to **Italy** we kept self-contained from the first, and this question of transfer to the British service did not arise.

The change from Egypt to **Italy** had one disadvantage, in that we had to start all over again to train the new GHQ in 'knowledge of New Zealanders', and especially in the realisation that we were a small national army, and not merely a detached division. It took a while to achieve this; but even then it was a shorter time than had been necessary in Egypt, when both GHQ there and HQ **2 NZEF** were learning their jobs. It was irritating to have to start all over again; but as some of the trouble arose from part of the staff at GHQ being Americans, and as it was always exhilarating to deal with them, there were compensations.

The attitude of GHQ towards Dominion troops, and in particular towards New Zealanders, has been expressed by an impartial observer. General Mark Clark, in his volume *Calculated Risk*, says first that '...ominion troops who are very jealous of their prerogatives.... have always been given special consideration by the British' ¹; and again, 'The British were exceedingly careful in the handling of New Zealand forces because they were territorial troops responsible only to their home government and it was necessary to use tact to work harmoniously with them.' ²

With these opinions New Zealanders must be in full agreement; and this chapter must end with another tribute to the helpfulness, generosity, and consideration always given to us by GHQ, both in North Africa and in **Italy**.

¹ *Calculated Risk*, p. 299.

² *Ibid.*, p. 298.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 12 – FIELD AND BASE

CHAPTER 12

Field and Base

IT has already been indicated in

Chapter 10 that those who were serving overseas in **2 NZEF** looked on themselves as superior to anybody serving in New Zealand, and were resistant to returning to New Zealand for duty. Such a feeling is only one phase of something that runs right through a force from front to rear – the feeling of superiority held by those who are near the enemy for those who are not so near. Within the Division rifle companies looked down on Headquarters Company, infantry in general on artillery and all other arms, artillery or engineers on ASC, and ASC on medical corps – and the whole Division on all those who were serving at the base. It is this last aspect which is being touched on briefly in this chapter.

Any army develops strains between that portion which is serving in the field and that portion which is serving at the base. It is a traditional feeling, and to that extent there is nothing unusual in the experience of **2 NZEF**; but when the force comes from a small country where everyone knows everyone else, or knows about everyone else by not more than one remove, it is a feeling that in some ways is to be regretted.

But not in all ways; for it must be admitted that this feeling of superiority held by the fighting troops is an element in high morale, and could even for that reason be pardoned. If those in the field thought themselves superior to all those at the base, who can grudge them this opinion of themselves, earned, and justified, in the hard way on many a St. Crispin's Day.

This feeling should not be unduly magnified; but it is correct to say that those serving in the field had a mild contempt for those serving at **Maadi**, mixed perhaps sometimes with a slight feeling of jealousy because so and so had got himself a nice soft job there. They thought that all those serving at **Maadi** were doing so by their own choice, that they lived lives of ease, that they were ruled by self-interest only, that they never gave a thought to their fellows in the field, and in fact took a delight in putting it across everyone else, and that **Maadi** was inhabited only by a collection of dodgers. Field troops were only too ready to believe the worst about any occurrence at **Maadi** of which they heard.

Now some of this was just 'big talk', and evaporated when quieter times came or when the field men had occasion to come back to **Maadi**; but their beliefs ranged from pure emotion – the major part – to some small degree of sincerity; and it is this last portion that merits an answer.

How much was the feeling deserved? But before we go any further it must be said categorically that the greater part of those who served at the base were good and efficient officers and men, all trying to do their best. Many of them, on account of age or medical grading or the need for a spell, could be employed only at the base, and were glad to be continued in employment and not sent back to New Zealand. When reading what follows, the presence in the background of these good soldiers should not be forgotten.

There were three classes of officers and men in **Maadi** that laid themselves open to criticism. The first two, those who dodged going into the field and those who drifted back from the field for various unworthy reasons, will be with us in any war; and in this case the criticism from field troops was at least understandable. The third class, those who were sent back to **Maadi** because they were unwanted in the field, was of our own making. Here the criticism, even if justified, might have been avoided.

There was a belief that **Maadi** was full of dodgers – those who had never served in the field and had no intention of ever doing so. In **2 NZEF** from the earliest days there had been a rule that all those employed at **Maadi** must have had field service or be medically unfit; but critics may be pardoned if they thought that the rule about field service was frequently broken. However, on two occasions the rule was put to the test. In the crisis of June-July 1942 a return was called for in **Maadi** to show what men had not had any field service. The number of personnel in all kinds of employment in and around **Maadi**, including all **2 NZEF** offices and all training depots (but not the reinforcements), was roughly 2500, and it transpired that only about 100 had not seen

service, and that a part of these had always been medically unfit. More authentic figures were obtained in May 1943 when the first draft to go back to New Zealand under the furlough scheme was being assembled. The order of return explicitly gave preference to those who had active field service with 2 NZ Division or non-divisional units, the term 'active field service' meaning service in the officially defined theatres of war during First Libya, Greece, Crete, Second Libya, Battle for Egypt, and Alamein to Tunisia. Second Echelon (i.e., Records) made a careful count so as to place men in the correct category, and found that out of 9300 members of the first three echelons who were still serving, only 400 had never seen field service, and that the greater part of these had been medically unfit for the field from an early date. This figure of just over 4 per cent bears a close relationship to the one given previously, and means that only a handful had somehow or other managed to dodge all service in the field. The periods of service were probably in many cases short ones; but the number of genuine all-time *embusqués* in Maadi was not as great as people thought.



Main entrance to New Zealand Advanced Base, Taranto, March 1944

Main entrance to New Zealand Advanced Base, **Taranto**, March 1944

Troops at Advanced Base wait for trucks to take them on the first stage of their journey to New Zealand



Troops at Advanced Base wait for trucks to take them on the first stage of their journey to New Zealand



Lady Freyberg and Brig A. S. Falconer welcome members of the first WWSA party on arrival at Port Tewfik, October 1941

Lady Freyberg and Brig A. S. Falconer welcome members of the first WWSA party on arrival at Port Tewfik, October 1941

Lt-Gen Sir Bernard Freyberg (with Matron Miss I. MacKinnon)
shaking hands with members of the nursing staff of 6 NZ General
Hospital, Florence, during his farewell visit



Lt-Gen Sir Bernard Freyberg (with Matron Miss I. MacKinnon) shaking hands with members of the nursing staff of 6 NZ General Hospital, Florence, during his farewell visit



Lowry Hut at Advanced Base, Taranto, January 1944

Lowry Hut at Advanced Base, Taranto, January 1944

New Zealand Field Bakery, Italy. Fresh bread for troops in the field



New Zealand Field Bakery, Italy. Fresh bread for troops in the field



Troops arrive for the opening of the New Zealand Forces Club, Cairo, February 1941

Troops arrive for the opening of the New Zealand Forces Club, Cairo, February 1941

In the Club library



In the Club library



Hotel Danieli, Venice, a New Zealand Forces Club in 1945

Hotel Danieli, Venice, a New Zealand Forces Club in 1945

Education and Rehabilitation Service library in Italy



Education and Rehabilitation Service library in Italy



Headquarters 2 NZEF, Santo Spirito, May 1944

Headquarters 2 NZEF, Santo Spirito, May 1944

Headquarters 2 NZEF, Senigallia



Headquarters 2 NZEF, Senigallia

Rt. Hon. P. Fraser is greeted by Brigadier Stevens on arriving in Italy to visit New Zealand troops, May 1944



Rt. Hon. P. Fraser is greeted by Brigadier Stevens on arriving in Italy to visit New Zealand troops, May 1944

At Santo Spirito, May 1944. From left: Brig H. S. Kenrick, Lt-Col R. B. Schulze, Col T. D. M. Stout, Rev. J. W. McKenzie, Brig W. G. Stevens, Col J. R. Boyd, Lt-Col J. F. Fuller, Lt-Col H. E. Crosse, Lt-Col A. V. Knapp, Lt-Col L. F. Rudd, Hon. Lt-Col H. C. Steere and Capt N. R. Flavell



At Santo Spirito, May 1944. From left: Brig H. S. Kenrick, Lt-Col R. B. Schulze, Col T. D. M. Stout, Rev. J. W. McKenzie, Brig W. G. Stevens, Col J. R. Boyd, Lt-Col J. F. Fuller, Lt-Col H. E. Crosse, Lt-Col A. V. Knapp, Lt-Col L. F. Rudd, Hon. Lt-Col H. C. Steere and Capt N. R. Flavell



2 NZEF Memorial, Maadi

2 NZEF Memorial, Maadi

There will always be ‘fainthearts’ in any army – they that have ‘no stomach to this fight’ – and such men will always find their way out of the field to safer employment farther back. They will gradually pile up in the base camp until there is an accumulation there of useless specimens, either in some easy employment or just hanging about in depots and dodging reinforcement drafts. The majority can produce some convincing reason, generally a medical one, why they should stay

at the base. While there are few cases of self-inflicted injuries, there are more of self-induced illnesses. Part of this collection was really useless, and caused us much thought, until in 1942 we had a special board appointed in **Maadi** to look them over from time to time. From the end of 1942 onwards we find that periodically a collection of misfits was sent back to New Zealand – a conclusion no doubt satisfactory to them, although poor consolation for those who were sticking it. These people will always exist; and all that can be said in defence of their being at **Maadi** is that they can do less harm there and cannot endanger men's lives. There were more of this type than of the 100 per cent dodgers.

There was a third class of officer and man at **Maadi**, either employed there or waiting for some employment – the ‘unwanted’ from the field, i.e., those who had definitely been sent back by their units for having failed in some way to measure up to the necessary standards. This class merits closer attention.

In March 1941 the Military Secretary addressed a memorandum to all formation and unit commanders. It read as follows:

I am directed by the GOC **2 NZEF** to write to set out the policy with regard to the interchange of officers and NCOs between NZ Div and **2 NZEF Base**.

In order to maintain the efficiency of the Force as a whole it is not desirable that officers and NCOs should be retained at the Base for indefinite periods. Those with experience completely up to date are required at the Base for training purposes, and no one is to be allowed to remain there for too long a period. For this reason there must be a constant flow backwards and forwards between the Division and the Base.

For all but COs of units, the maximum period at the Base will be six months, and this will be reduced to three whenever possible. As regards COs, whenever a vacancy occurs in a unit in the field, as a rule the CO of the corresponding training unit at the Base will be sent forward to

take his place, and COs in the field may also be sent back to the Base on interchange with a training unit when considered desirable from time to time.

The only exception will be in the case of officers and NCOs who are Grade II, who may be retained at the Base indefinitely in work of an administrative nature, so long as they are efficient.

No officer or NCO will be employed at the Base who is unsuited by character or efficiency for service in the field. Those who are found inefficient on coming to the Base, will be returned to their units immediately. Officers and NCOs who are subject to adverse reports, will be reported on in their own units, and will be returned to New Zealand in the case of officers, or reduced in the case of NCOs where necessary.

The above policy is considered essential to maintain the continued efficiency of the Force, and the co-operation of all commanders is needed to make it effective.

Brave words! But how far from ever being put into effect! As far as employment at either HQ 2 NZEF or HQ Maadi Camp was concerned, we tried hard throughout the war to prevent the unwanted and inefficient from being employed there; but as far as employment at depots and elsewhere in the camp was concerned, it was a losing struggle. Hardly once did OICA visit the Division without some formation or unit commander saying to him, 'Look here, so and so is no good to me. Can't you find him a job at Maadi?' One could not resist a phalanx of senior officers all getting rid of their unwanted in this way.

Those who were truly unfit for service in the field were not numerous enough to fill all vacancies, and there was room and to spare for fit officers and other ranks. The chances are that no good officer or NCO will volunteer for a spell at the base; but many would not be averse to being detailed for duty there, and it may even be for the good of the unit that some personnel should be sent back for a spell without the option. Naturally, the efficiency of the field unit must come first; but this does

not mean that occasionally a thoroughly fit and efficient officer and NCO cannot be spared for a few months to serve in a training depot or elsewhere at the base. A tour of duty at [Maadi](#) was not a disgrace although some officers, senior ones, too, seemed to think otherwise. The atmosphere of base units, in common with all units, is a reflection of their officers; and if the atmosphere is poor, and the unit poor also, the fault will lie in part with the custom that allows indifferent officers to serve there when they have been rejected from the field.

The majority of the unwanted officers were not sent back, however, for any specific duty, and their subsequent employment at [Maadi](#) was on account of the shortage of good officers, and the shortage was often due to the reluctance of field commanders to detail suitable officers.

The question may well be asked what is to become of these inefficient. They obviously cannot stay with their units, and there are objections to employing them at the base. The Military Secretary's memorandum is clear – if inefficient with their unit in the field they are to be reported on adversely and returned to New Zealand. This is drastic action, so drastic that there was a natural reluctance among commanders to make use of it, and so condemn someone beyond reprieve; and we are then back where we were – that the inefficient find their level either in base employment, or in hanging about waiting for employment.

The term 'beyond reprieve' has been used; but it can only be taken to apply to service with the Expeditionary Force. The idea that an officer will carry this stigma into civil life is surely an exploded one. Memories are short, and in a few years everyone except the few who were closely associated with the incident at the time will have forgotten it – and the chances are that the civilian community never knew the circumstances.

It is, of course, stupid to run one's head against a brick wall; and commonsense tells us that no matter how hard we try, some 'unwanted' must be found employment at the base, and may even do well there, for not everyone is a commander of men. However, the policy should remain

that the field is the first source of supply for personnel to be employed at the base; and only if suitable officers cannot be found from there – and the policy should be to put pressure on field commanders to find them – then the post must be given to someone who cannot be employed in the field. In such circumstances it is surely unreasonable of field commanders to criticise the base because of the poor type of officer employed there.

It is then considered that freer use should be made of the rule that inefficient officers should go back to New Zealand, for nothing can be said in favour of keeping such officers in base employment indefinitely. Even under these rather rickety arrangements, there should be a turnover of officers, and those who have served for six months or so should be replaced by someone else.

However, opinions will differ on the solution to this problem, and perusal of this chapter may even lead to a revival of wartime emotional beliefs about the base. It will be sufficient to say that the problem exists, and needs firm measures to find any solution at all.

Disposal of unwanted NCOs should not be so difficult, for the machinery existed for reducing them, the GOC having been given powers in statutory regulations. Periodically Headquarters used to draw the attention of COs to these powers; but again there was a reluctance to make use of the machinery, with the result that depots always had a sprinkling of unwanted. The chances were that in due course these NCOs would be sent forward again with a draft, and there would follow a minor storm from the unit, which would make it clear that it never wanted to see them again. Freer use of the GOC's powers would have solved this problem.

To return to the views on [Maadi](#) held by the troops in the field. It was true that troops in [Maadi](#) lived in comfort and worked to regular hours; but surely nothing would have been gained by making the clerks of Second Echelon live in slit trenches, and the hours of work were long and steady and were often extended when the need arose. At least

everyone lived in **Maadi Camp** instead of in the more comfortable accommodation available in **Cairo**. Within those limits, there is everything to be said for being as comfortable as possible, and not reducing everyone in the force to an equality of misery. Incidentally, it was only human nature that caused the amenities of **Maadi** to be steadily increased as the years went on.

There was a lot of talk in the field in the crisis of 1942 about the 'flap' that was going on in **Cairo** and **Maadi**. If by 'flap' is meant a lot of work being carried out at frantic speed, the destruction of any papers that might be of value to the enemy or were not of the first importance, the hurried evacuation of civilian wives, the combing out of depots, etc., to find men for the field, the preparation of plans for the evacuation of women's services, for the defence of the area, and for a steady withdrawal if the worst happened, then it is true that there was a 'flap'. Is it too much to suggest that *mutatis mutandis* there was then a 'flap' of a fairly extensive order going on in the **Western Desert**? The difference was only one of form and not of principle, for both field and base in their differing ways were trying to counter unexpected disaster.

Those in authority at **Maadi** always had special difficulties with the discipline of troops back from the Division, at least when the troops were in small parties and not with their own units. Release from the tension of the field tended to produce a semi-hysterical bravado, and a belief, often loudly voiced, that they were not to be bound by the normal rules applicable to a standing camp. All this could be understood, and the line of least resistance was to let the men have their way and to turn a blind eye to violations of routine, but on the other hand men could not be allowed to go into **Cairo** looking like pirates, and somehow or other it had to be impressed on them that a modicum of tidiness and adherence to routine was inescapable. Men back from the field, where dress was of little importance and where routine was governed by operational necessities, did not take kindly to checks for unbuttoned jackets, or to having to get up or go to bed at an arbitrary hour. Such men required very tactful handling.

The policy at HQ 2 NZEF or HQ Maadi Camp was to grin and bear the criticism from the field, and never to retaliate. It was amusing to those naughty people with cynical minds to note that the severest critics of some divisional administrative activity were senior officers from the Division – good senior officers – who came back to Maadi or Advanced Base for a spell of duty. On several occasions they had to be restrained from retaliating to some divisional misdemeanour.

Some of the criticism of the base made by field troops then was justified, but no more or no less justified than in any army in any age. Some of it was unjustified. Some of it could have been avoided if there had been a steady stream of first-class officers and NCOs coming back to the base for a few months' duty, having been specially selected on account of definite suitability for employment there.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 13 – MANPOWER

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PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

MANPOWER in the broadest meaning of the word was the main task of **HQ 2 NZEF** – to make sure that there was an adequate supply of reinforcements, that the supply to the Division was speedy and reliable, and that the most economical (the optimum) use was made of what men we had. It is this last portion of the task that was the most difficult, but at the same time the most interesting.

One of the duties of G-SD at **HQ 2 NZEF** was to keep an up-to-date appreciation of the manpower position in the force, showing establishment, posted strength, number of reinforcements available, likely wastage for the next three months and so on. At any moment the position could be clearly seen. Like all purely statistical documents, however, the appreciation was suspect. Heads of corps, in particular, always looked on it with the deepest suspicion, for they never would believe that they really had the men available as shown. Admittedly the numbers in depots at the moment never agreed with the numbers shown in the appreciations as available, partly owing to time-lag, and partly to temporary absences of men on leave or courses or extra-regimental duties; but the numbers did exist somewhere in the force. An example of one appreciation is contained in **Appendix IV**.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

REINFORCEMENT DRAFTS

REINFORCEMENT DRAFTS

Reinforcements were sent from New Zealand to keep the Division up to establishment, and this remained throughout our primary task. It has already been mentioned that the GOC affirmed this early in the war, when it was seen that there were going to be other demands on our manpower. The Division at that time had an establishment of about 15,000 and was organised exactly the same as a British division. At its maximum in late 1944 it numbered over 20,000 and had gone through many fluctuations in the intervening years, mainly directed towards increasing its mobility and striking power. Some of the fluctuations were of the first order and had repercussions right back to New Zealand, the most marked example being the change of one infantry brigade to an armoured brigade in 1942–43. Others were not so marked, and we managed to make the adjustments ourselves – adding extra units to give mobility, disbanding unnecessary units in late 1944 and so on. The point is that each change meant some alteration to the relative proportions of our reinforcements, possibly some alteration to training depots, adjustments among the pool of reinforcements or in the next draft to come from New Zealand. In fact any change in the Division, however small, had its effect in our base administration, and was not ended by the change in the unit within the Division. Headquarters **2 NZEF** had always to be prepared for these changes, and had to ensure that within its powers the change was effected smoothly.

It was not the province of HQ **2 NZEF** to dispute any alterations to the Division, which after all had been approved by the GOC before being promulgated. From our distant viewpoint it appeared to us once or twice that the immediate advantage had outweighed longer-term disadvantages; but with one exception we kept our opinions to ourselves. The exception was the formation of the **Field Bakery Section** at the end

of 1942, with the intention of baking bread nearer to the fighting troops and so supplying it to them much fresher than was possible under the existing British arrangements. It was a small unit numbering only 37 all ranks; but at that time our reinforcement pool was empty, and although another draft was arriving in two months it would all be absorbed into existing deficiencies. The unit happened to be the last of a series of small additions to the Division, and from the point of view of the staff at Headquarters who were trying to keep a balance in the manpower struggle, it was the last straw. Like last straws, the unit, looked on only as a unit, was of no importance, and indeed was a source of amusement, but in principle it meant a lot. For once OICA was impelled to point out to the GOC exactly what the position was: that if we went on this way there would, in the end, be no one left to do any fighting. The unit quite properly was retained; and in the years that followed the head of the service concerned used to take great pleasure in conducting OICA to the unit and giving him a nice, fresh, crisp roll.

From time to time the reinforcement position used to be discussed at length with the GOC and with all heads of corps with a view to making the position clear. Maintenance of the Division was not the only claim on our manpower even within **2 NZEF**, for base and line-of-communication units had to be maintained, and the balance had to be held throughout the force. To hold this balance correctly requires the wisdom and foresight of a Solomon. It is so easy to add on some new unit which will improve the fighting powers of the Division or add to the amenities of the force; but with each addition to capital there comes a consequential requirement for income to maintain it; or to drop the metaphor, for each additional unit there would in due course be a demand for reinforcements to keep it up to establishment. Somewhere or other the balance has to be held, and very difficult it is. When the manpower supply is limited, it requires something approaching a philosophical inquiry to determine what in the long run will be the most profitable way of using it. Another assault unit or a leave camp, another engineer unit or another club, another workshop or a transit unit – the choice and the alternatives are infinite. The decision ought to be made

after calmly weighing all the pros and cons, figuring out the likely wastage in the future (and thus trying to guess the enemy's moves), and taking into account the likely future supply from the homeland; but more often than not the decision is made in the excitement of the moment, for reasons which look compelling at the time; for, after all, there is no time to hesitate in war, and speed in decision is inevitable. To hold the balance requires patience, some thought, and the strength of will to say no.

The Division showed steady increases throughout the war, while at the same time the rate of reinforcements from New Zealand was showing a slow and steady decline; until the time came in late 1944 when the strength of the Division had to be much reduced so that the balance between establishment and reinforcements could be restored. Up to that time the supply from New Zealand had always been sufficient to meet the needs of the moment, with the exception of a few months in 1942, for which no one except the Japanese could be held to blame. Otherwise our pool had been large enough to compensate even for the losses in Greece, Crete, and Second Libya, and to supply a 'cushioning' effect to cover the irregular intervals in which the drafts arrived.

The words 'holding the balance' have been used as referring to the force as a whole. In a more limited application, HQ 2 NZEF had to hold the balance in the formation of base and line-of-communication units. Many of these were forced on us by the obvious need to have our own training depots and their ancillaries, our own reinforcement machinery, our own hospitals and welfare units and so on. Geographical factors, as it happened, led to a steady increase in the length of the lines of communication, with a corresponding increase in personnel employed thereon; but within this framework there was room for choice, and for difference of opinion about the action to be taken – whether or not we should put another link in the chain, what changes were to be made in the depots, to what extent should Advanced Base be developed, should the whole base move to Italy, and so on.

Early in 1940 we realised at what was then Divisional Headquarters

that we had had no discussions with Army Headquarters about the size of reinforcement drafts, and had no idea what we could expect to receive. Armed with certain data given us by the Military Liaison Officer in **London**, we started to calculate the size of draft that would be necessary to keep us up to establishment. Probably this was not our business, for we soon found out that Army Headquarters, helped by similar figures obtained from the War Office, was engaged in the same calculations. However, two heads were better than one at this stage in the war, and there followed an amicable exchange of cables ending in agreement. The basis of the calculations were the official 'Wastage Tables' held in the War Office, i.e., tables showing the estimated losses per month for each arm of the service under conditions of no activity, normal activity, and intense activity, the last-named implying full-scale attack or defence. As an example, the percentage of losses to be expected during one month of intense activity was:

Infantry: Officers 25 per cent, other ranks 20 per cent.

Artillery: Officers 10 per cent, other ranks 5 per cent.

ASC: All ranks 3 per cent.

The tables were compiled in this form for all arms and all stages of activity, and were revised several times during the war as the result of experience. We found them a bit confusing at first, and called in a trained actuary to help. The tables included the assumption that 50 per cent of total casualties would return to duty within six months, having been cured of their wounds.

Our own experience in **2 NZEF** was enough in itself to cause us to make some changes in the tables. The unexpectedly large numbers of men who were taken prisoner threw all pre-war calculations into confusion, previous experience (in the First World War) having tended to minimise this feature. Then it was found that the swaying fortunes of war in the desert, combined with some changes in function, tended to equalise casualties among the arms, so that while infantry still had the

heaviest casualties, their excess over the other arms had lessened, while the rates for other arms rose markedly. Engineers, ASC, provost, and medical were quite likely to find themselves in the forefront of the battle. On the other hand, it was found that the percentages of casualties that returned to duty was greater than had been expected, partly owing to the changed nature of wounds, but mainly to improvements in medical treatment. We found that 80 per cent of those wounded returned to duty, a figure different in basis from '50 per cent of total casualties', which was proved inaccurate for losses which included masses of prisoners.

As a starting point for calculations of drafts, the tables were of use; but our own experience often caused us to depart from them – when, for instance, we knew of proposed changes in the Division, or when we could make adjustments ourselves by transferring personnel from one corps to another. We had to give Army Headquarters the suggested composition for a draft many months before it would be arriving, so leaving many loopholes for errors to creep in, as the picture in some months' time might be a little or even a lot different from what we had expected. Even in the early years we had to ask Army Headquarters at short notice to vary the proportions of the different arms, or else had to give notice that we would be transferring men between corps later on. In increasing measure we had to shuffle drafts round after they had arrived, moving men into new corps and training them again. Sometimes many hundreds of men were moved in this way.

Occasionally the reasons for this would be a change in plan since the draft had been ordered from New Zealand. It was difficult to make heads of corps appreciate that notice of a draft had to be given months before; so that if they suddenly decided to change the organisation of units, or if a fresh unit in some corps was suddenly authorised, it was unlikely that the men in the depots would fit requirements. If it was impossible to wait for a while, or if no other patchwork arrangement was possible, then men had to be taken for some other corps.

In principle, reinforcement drafts should move from the homeland in

a regular stream, so many thousand every three months, or something of that nature. In practice it never worked out that way, the overriding factor being the supply of shipping. There were several cases where a draft was ready to leave New Zealand but no shipping was available to move it. In any case, the supply of reinforcements can never keep exact step with casualties, which far from occurring in a steady stream, occur at irregular intervals. In 1941, for instance, the bulk of our casualties occurred in April, May, and November, only three months out of twelve. Unless the pool of reinforcements is large enough, it might quite well happen that all the casualties for a year occur in so brief a period as to empty depots at a stroke and still leave heavy deficiencies. It is impossible to reconcile 'crisis' losses with long-term planning, so that we owed a debt to New Zealand for piling up reinforcements fast enough in the first two years for us to be able to meet the crises when they occurred.

One way and another, sometimes guessing, sometimes being lucky, but all the time having loyal support from New Zealand, we managed to compete with demands reasonably well, and the reinforcement system – if it was a 'system' – stood up to strains most manfully.

Incidentally, we tried in a rather half-hearted manner to obtain the adoption of the term 'replacements' instead of reinforcements, because we thought it more truly descriptive of men who are intended to take the places of those lost in action. 'Reinforcements', strictly speaking, should be those who make the force stronger than it was before, and would more properly apply to new units sent out from the homeland. On occasion the term 'replacements' would be used by both Army Headquarters and HQ 2 NZEF when discussing the composition of a contingent that included both new units and unformed drafts, the latter being the true 'replacements' and the former 'reinforcements'; but the term never came into common currency. As with our attempt to use 'contingent' instead of 'echelon', we had to admit defeat, and 'reinforcements' they remained.

As an item of interest, and not out of place at this point, there is included as [Appendix V](#) a table showing casualties in all campaigns from 1940 to 1945, the figures being as we knew them in June 1945.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

WAR ESTABLISHMENTS

WAR ESTABLISHMENTS

We started the war by adhering to British war establishments for our units. Basically we continued to do so until the end, but with many alterations and additions. British war establishments were fine examples of staff work, in this case of designing an organisation which would stand up to pressure from all directions, and could suffer adaptations without collapsing. Part of their soundness lay in the fact that they were designed for average conditions of service. In times of stress a unit might feel the strain and be short of men for its requirements; in times of normal activity, numbers would be just right; and in times of no activity, a unit would be well off and could release men for leave. In average conditions the work of a unit should just be pressing on its numbers.

It is easy to understand that field commanders are never satisfied with this position. A common appeal at Headquarters was that extra men should be sent to the unit – not posted, but just ‘attached’ – instead of sitting at **Maadi** doing nothing, the plea being that the unit would be able to do some extra work and might even beat the Germans a bit sooner, and that the men would get more practical training with the unit than in a depot.

At first sight this appeal is plausible; but it is a false argument. Reinforcements are retained in depots so that they can be looked after, kept in good health, and kept alive to replace casualties as they occur in field units. If they go to units in advance they will not be so comfortably looked after, will be used on extra work, and may be casualties themselves before they can fulfil their real role – which is to ensure that the maximum fighting force is maintained at a steady figure instead of fluctuating wildly. Carried to extremes, the appeal would mean that all reinforcements, as soon as they arrive, should be posted to units. All the

manpower eggs would then be in one basket, and if disaster happened, as it did to a few units during the war, all the eggs would have been broken at one blow. Reinforcements are the insurance for the future, and should be kept for that purpose. It may be difficult to determine just what proportion of the total manpower should be in the form of units, and what in the form of reinforcements; but a combination of war establishments, wastage tables, and hard experience produces not such a bad answer.

On one or two rare occasions we did let small parties of reinforcements join units before they were required to make up deficiencies; but in every case it was because their technical training could not be carried out at **Maadi**, and the units were working on the lines of communication and having no battle casualties.

All through the war there was a steady stream of applications for small increases to establishments – an additional clerk, Bren-gunner, driver, signaller, mess waiter, and so on. Each case was a minor one, but in the mass they mounted up. For alterations to divisional units, the custom was that the applications had to be approved by **Divisional Headquarters** before coming to **HQ 2 NZEF**; and if **Divisional Headquarters** agreed, it was difficult for **HQ 2 NZEF** to dispute them. Our liaison with **Divisional Headquarters** helped to keep the number of these applications down, for we would keep it advised of the reinforcement position; but, all the same, small increases in the Division absorbed the odd hundred or so every year.

Establishments at the base or on the lines of communication were left entirely to **HQ 2 NZEF** to settle, and it was – or should have been – easier to refuse an application for an increase; but it must be admitted that too many slipped through the net.

Not for the first time it must be said that the GOC's charter was a blessing. Without it we would have had to refer to New Zealand all this mass of proposed alterations, with the result that the administrative machine would have collapsed. The medical historian for one has

commented on the advantages that accrued from the flexibility of war establishments in 2 NZEF.

Initially we used British war establishments without alteration, and tried to get enough copies to distribute to units, but soon found this impossible so commenced duplicating our own. Gradually we abandoned the British establishment in full detail and in increasing degree worked out our own, which also had to be reproduced and distributed. A war establishment is a complicated affair of numbers and ranks, arms, vehicles, ammunition and equipment, even if issued once and for all; but the never-ending slight alterations increased the work more than was realised by those who asked for the alterations; for the greatest accuracy is necessary, and an alteration of one man would cause consequential alterations to many other columns and totals. Cumulatively the preparation and distribution of war establishments became one of the biggest single tasks undertaken by HQ 2 NZEF. The number of copies required for any one unit was never great enough to justify using our hardworked printing unit, and war establishments were cyclostyled.

It should be borne in mind that the official war establishment was the authority for the ranks, and thus the pay, of officers and NCOs alike, not to mention those entitled to extra-duty pay.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

TRANSFERS BETWEEN CORPS

TRANSFERS BETWEEN CORPS

A few pages ago it was mentioned that we often had to transfer men of reinforcement drafts between corps in order to compensate for unexpected losses or for a change in plan since the draft had been arranged with Army Headquarters. The average New Zealander can be transferred in this way with reasonable ease. He learns the new work, and adjusts himself to his new place, with commendable readiness. In this case it gave us a flexibility that helped to solve some awkward problems. There are limits, of course, to what can reasonably be done by an exchange. It would for instance be unfair to expect a man to transfer from infantry to EME and become a highly-skilled optical mechanic at a stroke; but even here the chances are that he will learn his new work quickly.

The commonest form of transfer was from one to another of the three infantry groups, Northern, Central, and Southern. Varying losses, the varying composition of the call-up in New Zealand, the formation of the armoured brigade and other moves of units, all made it necessary from time to time to transfer blocks of men after arrival in **Maadi**.

And this brings up another point, that there is an essential uniformity among New Zealanders, no matter from what part of the country they come. By uniformity is not meant class uniformity, although that does exist too, but uniformity of manner, speech, outlook and physical type. Aucklanders are sometimes regarded by other New Zealanders as one-eyed, and Dunedinites are said to have yearnings after **Scotland**, but that is about the limit of the difference. In Great Britain, however, the differences are most marked in all the characteristics enumerated above, so that a man from **Devon** may not understand one from Cumberland, and a **Durham** miner sees things quite differently from an Essex farmer. It is easily understood why regiments of infantry,

and units of other arms too, are recruited from limited areas of country, and why transfers between units, if undertaken at all, have to be effected carefully and sympathetically. There are no such compelling reasons in New Zealand to make it necessary to draw units from one particular area. Sentimental ties to an area there may be, and the chances are that these will increase with the years, but there is nothing to prevent men from any part of the country, thrown together into a unit, from merging into a unity with strong *esprit de corps*. The units of **2 NZEF with the highest *esprit de corps* included at least one that was drawn from all over New Zealand.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

REPLACEMENT SCHEMES

REPLACEMENT SCHEMES

Our experience in the war showed that after about three years of overseas service there will be a demand from the people of the country that men with longest service should come home. There should be no repetition of the 'furlough' scheme. It should be a replacement scheme straight out. It should be remembered, however, that when a man begins to realise that his turn for replacement is approaching, there will be a tendency for him to have his head over his shoulder. His usefulness as a soldier will show a steady decline.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PERSONNEL FOR EMPLOYMENT AT THE BASE

PERSONNEL FOR EMPLOYMENT AT THE BASE

In the initial stages, the personnel in base units, whether sent out from New Zealand with the unit or later recruited in **Maadi, were all fit for field service. It was later ruled that all personnel should see some field service, and as opportunity offered and other personnel became available, most of those who had started in base units did serve for a while in the field. It was unfortunate that Second Echelon had on its establishment an exceptionally large number of sergeants and staff-sergeants. When the rule was made, it was difficult to place these NCOs, for the resistance from field units was fierce. With the years the problem ceased to exist, as the staff was by that time made up of men who had seen service.**

It is a difficulty arising in the early stages only, and it could be avoided altogether if the staff of base units was recruited at the outset either as a whole or in large part from personnel of the second medical category, i.e., men not fit for service in the field, but fit for service in sedentary employment. An alternative is to recruit from personnel just above the age limit for field service. Such a scheme effects an economy in men of the top medical grade, and would be justified for this reason alone. It is a waste of good manpower to have fit men working in base offices when there is an adequate alternative. A second alternative is to employ women; and this is discussed further in

Chapter 14.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

TRAINING

TRAINING

From the point of view of HQ 2 NZEF, training of reinforcements presented few problems. The GSO I of the Division was the staff officer principally responsible for training, but he used the machinery of HQ 2 NZEF for distributing any directives. At Headquarters the GSO-SD distributed material sent to him by the GSO I, and to some small degree acted as his mouthpiece. In Maadi Camp, however, there was always a senior officer responsible for supervising training, and it would be more accurate to say that HQ Maadi Camp was the authority in 2 NZEF that controlled training, for the number of directives issued by the GSO I was small.

The varied career of the training depots has already been recounted in

Chapter 9, and it is not necessary to go over it again.

It is a matter of opinion how much training should be carried out in the homeland and how much overseas. If we had listened to some senior officers in the force, we would have advocated that only the minimum of elementary training should be carried out in New Zealand, all the rest being carried out in **Maadi; for there was a strong belief that training in New Zealand was subject to many interruptions – leave, helping with the harvest and so on – and, moreover, lacked that touch of realism which can so easily be given overseas. There is some truth in this. Although many drafts from New Zealand had been well trained – the 8th Reinforcements, owing to their long period under arms, were an outstanding example – there were others whose training had been spasmodic. For as long as men are in their homeland there is an irresistible urge in leaders, both political and local body, to use them for other duties should the need arise; and the influence of domestic arrangements must continue to be strong. Overseas there will be greater continuity, and the training will be carried out by instructors fresh from the field. If conditions overseas are suitable, there is a lot to be said for adopting the policy of carrying out only basic training in the homeland and leaving the rest for overseas. Other factors may prevent this, the need to have a pool of fully-trained men in the homeland, for instance; but it should be borne in mind as an advantageous policy.**

The pros and cons of moving our main training camp to **Italy have already been indicated in**

Chapter 9, mainly from the standpoint of effect on manpower. Training facilities in **Maadi**, which in so many ways were unrivalled, had to be set against the fact that training in a hot climate in the desert is not the best introduction to subsequent fighting in a temperate climate in a closely-settled European country. From the standpoint of training alone, however, we probably did right in adhering to **Maadi**.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

OFFICERS

OFFICERS

The administration of the corps of officers was handled by a Military Secretary with direct access to the GOC and not subordinate to HQ 2 NZEF. This was the normal custom in the British service but at that time was new to New Zealanders, who were accustomed to such matters being handled by the Adjutant-General's branch of the staff. To New Zealand eyes the new arrangement at first seemed strange; but there is no doubt that it was correct. The Military Secretary had no responsibility to OICA for his duties as adviser to the GOC on promotions and postings, but was nevertheless governed by the formation and disbandment of units and the war establishments promulgated by HQ 2 NZEF. The Military Secretary and OICA had to work in close association. The chance that they might not do so was the only reason for making the Military Secretary subordinate to the chief administrative officer. There was some rather indefinite discussion in mid-1941 about the relative positions of the two appointments; but in the outcome the independence of the Military Secretary was maintained, and rightly so.

Normally the selection of a staff officer is made with a view to his suitability for working with his commander, the point whether or not he suits subordinates being of lesser importance. But with the appointment of Military Secretary it is incumbent on the commander to ensure beyond any doubt that he has selected an officer who has the confidence of the corps of officers, who is approachable at all times, who can listen to grievances and at least give a sympathetic answer.

The powers of the Military Secretary for good or ill were unusually great, for he dealt with selection for OCTU, first postings, repostings from depots, appointments to the staff and to command, promotions (and decisions not to promote), discussions with Army Headquarters on the despatch of officers from New Zealand, return of officers to New

Zealand on duty (or because their services were no longer required), honours and awards. Last but not least, the Military Secretary had to be sufficiently trusted by the GOC and sufficiently in his confidence to be able to give disinterested advice, whether asked for or not.

In the early discussions between Mr Fraser and the GOC in London in November 1939 the GOC suggested, and Mr Fraser concurred, that all appointments of staff officers to the Expeditionary Force should be subject to confirmation after divisional training in Egypt. This was fair enough, for it is always open to a commander to change his staff as he thinks necessary. All regimental officers, however, sailed with their ranks and appointments made substantive. When we had been in Egypt only a few weeks deficiencies became apparent in some officers. No action could be taken to reduce them in rank, with the result that we had the first examples of trying to dispose of them in base appointments, or to find jobs for them outside their units. A few of these officers were an embarrassment to us for years. Here is a nettle that should be grasped, although the process may not be easy. It is suggested that possibly ranks were made substantive too soon, and that there is something to be said for all officers, not only staff officers, holding temporary ranks until the force has been overseas for a short period, two months or thereabouts. The difficulties of this course of action are not being minimised, as it is obvious, for instance, that the position of a CO who after some months is down-graded in his regiment would be impossible; but it must be repeated that it is doubtful if the period spent in camp in New Zealand is enough to show the real capabilities of officers. An alternative would be that still greater care should be taken in New Zealand, and that if there is the slightest doubt about an officer's fitness to hold his rank, he should not be confirmed in it. The problem occurs only in the initial stages. Thereafter, all officers are under constant observation, and are not promoted unless they have shown their fitness under active service conditions.

We had no system of regular confidential reports on officers in 2 NZEF. Opinions of formation and unit commanders varied on this point;

but the administrative **2 NZEF** staff, including those who served as Military Secretary, thought that the omission was unfortunate. Human nature shows one of its weaknesses (a pardonable one) in not liking to tell people unpleasant truths unless driven to it. Commanding officers were often reluctant to tell junior officers outright that they were not quite up to the mark, or had certain deficiencies that might deprive them of promotion in the future. It was notable the number of times that officers claimed that the first they knew about their unfitness was when they were suddenly removed from their position or passed over for promotion, the latter being the commonest manifestation. The officers claimed that if they had been told earlier they would have tried to remedy the weakness, or at least would have known what to expect if no improvement was shown. It is questionable if in many cases prior warning would have had the desired effect, as so often the weakness is deep-seated in character and cannot be remedied; but at least the prior warning would have ensured that the officer had been treated fairly. If we had had a system of reports, senior officers willy-nilly would have had to record their opinion of their juniors; but without the compulsion of a periodic report, there was a tendency to let things drift on. A simple form of report could have been devised, to be rendered not more often than twice a year.

It is questionable whether we should not have had our own Officer Cadet Training Unit (OCTU) throughout. In late 1940 we had arranged for this, and a commanding officer and staff were selected; but then British Headquarters in Egypt made the suggestion that we should make use of its facilities, attaching a small staff for special New Zealand duties, and we agreed. Thereafter we continued to use British OCTUs, first in Egypt and then in Palestine, and even sent cadets to OCTUs in England and **India**. It was not until late 1944 that we had our own unit.

The plea for making use of British OCTUs is that it is better for cadets to associate with men from other countries, that it is good for future liaison, that it broadens their views and so on. There is something in this, but not much. Men are being trained as platoon leaders only, will

have to handle their own men only, and may never come in contact with troops from other countries. The plea is of great force for senior officer schools or for staff colleges, but has small application to OCTUs. New Zealanders of the type selected for commissions are of high intelligence and learn quickly. It is possible to give them concentrated instruction; and if their training as embryo officers is under our own control, it can be directed towards the things we think most important in time of war, and can dispense with the excessive amount of 'spit and polish' that British OCTUs retained even in wartime. We were satisfied that our own ideas on the subject were just as good as those of British Headquarters, and better than theirs for New Zealanders.

Not all our officers reached us through OCTU, for with every reinforcement draft from New Zealand there came a number of junior officers. The case for and against this has already been argued in

Chapter 10.

Promotion for officers was within the arm or corps as a whole. With some corps there were no special troubles, e.g., artillery, signals, ASC, medical. With others there were a few complications. The Divisional Cavalry started as a corps on its own, but in late 1942 was amalgamated with the regiments of the old 4 Infantry Brigade to form the Armoured Corps. It then ended the war as an infantry unit, but for a few months only.

For as long as we had the large number of non-divisional engineers we had minor difficulties over the promotion of engineer officers. In theory there was one corps of engineers; but in practice the divisional engineers formed a corps of their own, and each group of the non-divisional engineers did likewise. The transfers from group to group were rare.

The infantry were the most complicated of all. There were five corps, Northern Infantry, Central Infantry, Southern Infantry, Machine-gunners, and Maori. Promotion might be within the corps (Northern, Central, etc.) with occasional transfers of a major, selected for future command, from one corps to another. There was no commander of the infantry in **2 NZEF**, the GOC in effect filling the role himself.

The corps of Northern, Central, and Southern Infantry had complications of their own, as their linked battalions (18, 21, and 24 for Northern, etc.) were not in one brigade but were spread over three, so that there was not even the advantage of one infantry brigade commander to command the corps. The poor Military Secretary had to consult three brigade commanders and three COs when considering promotions in the corps and before approaching the GOC. The position was eased slightly when 4 Infantry Brigade took its three battalions into the Armoured Corps, and the linked battalions were reduced to two; but they were still in separate brigades.

For ease of administration it would have been better for the linked

battalions to be in one brigade; and it is interesting to note that this was the reason for a reorganisation of infantry brigades in the New Zealand Division in 1917. It is realised that the processes of mobilisation may not permit of this being done at the beginning, as it may be necessary to send the force overseas in waves ('echelons'), each wave representing a fair cross-section of the country as a whole. No attempt is made here to find a conclusive answer; but it would seem that there is a lot to be said for having definitely one single corps of infantry. It would be the biggest corps, but not so big as to be unwieldy.

Once or twice during the war we had troubles over temporary ranks, because officers holding such rank were reluctant to give it up. The rank had been given the officer while performing some additional duty, and in principle should have been given up when the duty ceased. We had already been generous in allowing the rank to continue for a period after an officer had been wounded or while at courses of instruction and so on, but had to resist the agitation that the rank should be held throughout a period of furlough. It must be said, however, that sometimes the officer had justification for a sense of grievance, for in some cases officers had been left with temporary rank when, with justice, they should have received substantive promotion. The rules should be clear and should be strictly applied, and temporary rank should be temporary and not semi-permanent.

The position of officers non-regimentally employed often caused difficulties. Many officers, for reasons not showing any discredit, served for long periods outside their regiments. Sometimes the reasons were medical ones, sometimes due to age, sometimes due to 'special skills', sometimes because we had to have someone to do the work and took the best that was offering; but no matter where employed, the officer remained on the roll of his regiment, the bulk of which was serving in the field. If he then became due for promotion, his case was prejudiced because he was serving outside the field, or even because he was not known to the CO of the moment. It will have been seen already that there is a large number of posts at the base and on the lines of

communication, and that there are difficulties in getting that free and frequent exchange of officers between field and base which would minimise this particular problem among others. The attitude of some field commanders was unfair in that they would neither agree to promotion of an officer serving outside the regiment nor supply a suitable officer of the higher rank. The duties have to be done, and while no one resists advancement to officers serving in the field, it is unfair to deny it all the time to officers who are not serving there. One answer would be the formation of a special corps, or a General Service list, to which such officers could be transferred, thereafter finding their advancement in the new corps and being divorced from the old.

During the war HQ **2 NZEF** received many requests from officers who had served in the first war, and who for one reason or another could not get overseas, to be allowed to come out and join the Expeditionary Force for any duty that could be given them. The conducting officers of drafts, who came from this class, were forever making appeals to be taken off the transports and retained in the **Middle East**, a course of action that by arrangement with Army Headquarters we could not countenance. There was here, however, a source of supply that was not sufficiently tapped, the officer slightly too old for the field. Those few who did serve with **2 NZEF** were invaluable, as they brought a maturity of judgment to our problems and were only too pleased to be serving anywhere, even at **Maadi**. It appears that use could be made of such officers from the first, in which case the suggestion of a General Service list or corps receives support, and we are spared the complications arising from trying to work a system of regimental promotion under conditions for which it is not fitted.

Regimental ranks were governed by war establishments, which basically were the same as British ones; but when it came to the ranks for officers performing NZEF, base, or line-of-communication duties, we had to combat pressure to make the ranks too high. As best we could we kept the ranks no higher than the nearest similar rank in the field. One common plea, a plausible one, was that higher rank was necessary

because the officer would be dealing with senior officers at some British headquarters, and should be able to talk to them on level terms. The plea was a false one, for after all ours was a small force, and our ranks were those that were justified within the force; and our experience showed that the mere fact that the officers represented New Zealand was enough to give them extra authority.

One small embarrassment was the imminent return on occasion of senior officers who had been prisoners of war for some lengthy period. In general it was thought to be unfair that they should come back to us and displace the officers holding their posts. In at least two cases the GOC had to be most tactful and dissuade officers from rejoining. In principle this view can be controverted, for providing the returning officer is fit, there seems to be no objection to his rejoining the force, and if necessary being carried surplus to establishment until employment can be found for him; but it must now be said that all our experience went to show that escaped or repatriated prisoners of war, if their imprisonment had extended beyond a few weeks or months, definitely required a period of furlough before being truly fit. We used to do our best to persuade such officers to return to New Zealand, and later come back to us if they so wished.

The problem of officers wishing to transfer to the British service has already been dealt with in

Chapter 11. It may be summarised in the words that while it was in order for an officer who had reached his limit in **2 NZEF**, or had special military skills that could not be made use of in **2 NZEF**, to transfer into a service where he would have more scope, it was not in order for officers to transfer who merely wanted to better themselves or who fancied the post offered more than the post they held. The **2nd NZEF** had the right to get the best out of all those who joined it, and the right not to be abandoned by those whose motives were really selfish ones.

In the **First Expeditionary Force** there was a publication entitled 'Regulations for the Expeditionary Force' which covered promotions, appointments, and transfers. In the hurly-burly of early 1940 the same title was adopted for a similar publication for the **Second Force**. It was not a happy choice. It would be hard to say what would be meant by 'regulations for the force', though one can imagine a voluminous publication covering every sort of activity, but to apply that title to a publication dealing with the restricted subject of promotions was going too far. 'Regulations for Promotion' would have been in order; but 'Regulations for the **Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force While Outside New Zealand**' it remained from first to last. The first draft was much amended during the war to keep it up to date with realities, and to ensure that, while it was not over-generous, it was fair to the personnel affected – both officers and non-commissioned officers, for regulations for the latter were included. By the end of the war our experience had resulted in the production of what we thought was an eminently fair set of rules. It was an example of the principle of having some rules and adhering to them; but later altering them if their incidence was seen to be unfair.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

WARRANT OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

WARRANT OFFICERS AND NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Neither warrant officers nor non-commissioned officers caused many complications. The understanding with Army Headquarters was that all reinforcement WOs and NCOs should come out to us with temporary rank only which they would relinquish on arrival in **Maadi**. In general this rule was adhered to; but there were occasional exceptions, one case being the members of the tank battalion that came with the 8th Reinforcements. The battalion embarked as a unit, with the whole of its non-commissioned staff holding substantive rank – which was reasonable. There were other odd cases of a similar nature, together with a sprinkling that merely slipped through the net.

The first idea was that all reinforcement WOs and NCOs should revert to the ranks; but this was too severe, and the rule adopted was that they dropped one rank at once – except that all WOs reverted to temporary sergeants – and were subsequently tested in depots for fitness to hold their lower rank, and if considered up to standard were confirmed in the lower rank. This rule was in conflict with a belief among some commanders that all reinforcement WOs and NCOs should revert to the ranks on arrival. It is probable that the tests, which were held in depots under corps arrangements, were purposely made severe, so that in the end only a few ever found their reverted ranks made substantive.

The promotion of NCOs up to and including the rank of sergeant was vested in COs of units, no attempt being made to have any centralised form of control throughout the corps as a whole. This meant that there was an element of chance in the promotion of NCOs. If an NCO was wounded or sick, a substantive promotion could be made in his place shortly after he was evacuated out of the unit, without any delay being imposed because he might get well quickly and come back; and,

moreover, while he was away he lost his chance of promotion into any vacancy that occurred in the unit. Sometimes COs tried to hold vacancies for good NCOs who they had reason to believe would soon be coming back; but this was not to be recommended, as the movements of the evacuated NCO were never certain. To be 100 per cent fair to all NCOs would have required some centralised machinery that would have been so cumbersome as to be unworkable. The power given to COs to promote speedily had to be set against the occasional bad luck of some one NCO. It was a rough and ready system, and was probably fair enough to the unit as a whole while sometimes being unfair to the individual.

For staff-sergeants and warrant officers, whose numbers were comparatively small, we established a form of centralisation through Second Echelon, in order to prevent the accumulation of these ranks that would have arisen if COs had had full power to promote to that level. If a vacancy occurred in a unit, cognisance had to be taken of anyone of the rank waiting in a depot to go forward. Field units did not much like this system for reasons (among others) not unconnected with the dumping of unwanted NCOs on depots; but it was introduced only after long experience. It was in fact intermediate between the 'free for all' system of promoting NCOs up to sergeants, and the fully centralised control exercised by the Military Secretary over the promotions of officers.

Every now and then we would receive an application for some non-commissioned rank in war establishments to be made higher. On inquiry it often emerged that the reason for the application was not so much one of principle (i.e., that the rank was justified permanently) as that it was desired to give promotion to some deserving NCO and, by implication, keep him in the same job. This was not enough to warrant a change in war establishments, and the answer was that the NCO must be moved to some post carrying the higher rank. In so ruling Headquarters laid itself open to the accusation of being a miserable lot.

Temporary ranks, as with officers, caused some troubles. In the early

stages particularly, but on occasion at all times for reasons which were never clear, but which appeared to include a degree of faintheartedness, there was a tendency in units to go on promoting NCOs in a series of temporary steps. We had cases of privates who were temporary staff-sergeants, and corporals who were temporary warrant-officers. If by any chance the unfortunate man were evacuated to hospital, away went his temporary rank and he found himself down at bedrock again. We had to lay it down that not more than one step in temporary rank could be given. If higher rank was still wanted, the necessary action must be taken to make the next lower rank substantive.

We deprecated the use of 'acting' ranks, which were unpaid, but there was a steady demand from units to be allowed to make them in emergency, and in the end the list of authorities with the necessary powers was extensive. The implication was that some- times rank was wanted for a brief period in excess of establishment, or pending a more permanent promotion, but it is an unsatisfactory method.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

NON-MILITARY PERSONNEL

NON-MILITARY PERSONNEL

War correspondents, together with personnel of the **YMCA**, **Church Army**, **Broadcasting Unit** and **Cinema Unit**, did not wear any badges of rank. The war correspondents carried a special badge, belonged to a class that was well known, and could fight their own battles; but the other personnel had a status that, while well enough known within **2 NZEF**, was not clear to the staff of other forces. They 'ranked' as officers or NCOs, which was a bit obscure. The point became of more than academic interest when some members were made prisoners of war and found great difficulty in persuading the Italians or Germans that they were entitled to officer or NCO status. In the end we had a special card printed as an identity card for non-military personnel, giving details of their duties and of their equivalent military status. It appears that it would have been easier to have had all these people sworn in as ordinary members of the force, and so entitled to wear the normal badges of rank, instead of leaving them in an indeterminate position.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 14 – WOMANPOWER

CHAPTER 14

Womanpower

ONE of the notable features of the Second World War in the **Mediterranean** was the way in which women from **Britain** played their part in the services, not only in sedentary tasks in offices, but in practical work in outdoor units. They arrived in the **Middle East** in their thousands, and their numbers were augmented by many thousands more recruited from **Cyprus** and Palestine.

New Zealand lagged in following suit, especially in comparison with South Africa, which set an example by employing girls from the Union in large numbers. Save for the nursing sisters in the hospitals, and later the VADs, the Government was reluctant to let New Zealand women serve with the force. The surroundings of a hospital are obviously suited to the employment of women; but presumably elsewhere the moral risks attendant on a few women serving among a lot of men, especially in the unsettling atmosphere of Egypt, were held to be too great. Surprisingly enough, most of the men in the force agreed with this view, and did not approve of New Zealand women working in the **Middle East**. This viewpoint does everyone credit; but surely time had marched on, women were already serving in the **Middle East** from both **Britain** and South Africa, and the modern girl, and the New Zealand girl in particular, can look after herself very well.

Having said all this, it must be admitted that in the early years we were not enthusiastic ourselves at HQ **2 NZEF**. In July 1941 a conference was held at Headquarters on the possible employment of women, our conclusions being that except in hospitals, and in our one club, the employment of women was undesirable in view of (*a*) local conditions, and (*b*) the small number of men displaced by them. It took another two years for us to change our views; but the change was then a 100 per cent reversal of opinion.

The nursing sisters in the hospitals were with us of course from the

beginning. They were not in themselves the cause of many problems, perhaps the most irritating one being that too many of them got married – and whether marriage to someone inside the force or someone outside it was the more troublesome it would be hard to say. We changed their ranks during the war by abolishing the rank of ‘staff nurse’ and having two grades of ‘sister’ instead. We also made an increase in the number of ‘charge sisters’ in order to give more scope for promotion, which otherwise tended to be slow.

The first draft of girls – they were all called ‘girls’ – to leave New Zealand was for work in the **Cairo** club. They were specifically asked for by the GOC, and left New Zealand in September 1941, thirty in number. It was then agreed that girls should be sent to work in hospitals as VADs (so called) and the first draft (200 strong) arrived by hospital ship in January 1942. The suggestion in this case, it should be said, had come from the **Red Cross Society** in New Zealand, and the Society helped in the selection. Thereafter at intervals reinforcements were sent for both these groups, soon entitled the Welfare and the Medical Divisions of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAACs).

In June 1943, when the whole manpower position was under review following on the furlough scheme, we investigated the possibility of employing women in place of men. We estimated that on clerical and other administrative work in and around **Cairo** (including **Maadi Camp**) we could employ some 900 women, replacing some 700 men. The GOC took the figures with him on his visit to New Zealand, in order to discuss the possibility of a real dilution with women; but the idea met with no enthusiasm and could not be pressed. However, it started us off on an agitation to get at least a party of shorthand-typists to relieve the unending strain on the various offices comprising **HQ 2 NZEF**. The reaction from New Zealand was still an inert one. However, we kept pressing, and after some months finally got approval for a party of twenty to join us. They arrived early in 1944. Subsequently the number was slowly increased, until at the end we had about 200.

To return to the welfare girls, the first to join the force: there can be

no two opinions about their hard work and devotion to duty, which was just as we had expected. Where there is room for difference of opinion is whether or not their services achieved the original object, which was to raise the atmosphere of the **Cairo** club by the feminine touch, and by the mere presence of New Zealand girls, and so ensure a good standard of behaviour among the men. To begin with there were never many girls in any one club. The original draft numbered thirty and was concentrated in **Cairo**. Their final numbers were just over forty, but by then they were divided between **Cairo**, **Bari**, and Rome. They were only a drop in the ocean as far as the total staff of the clubs was concerned, for each club had a male military staff varying from fifty in Rome to seventy in **Cairo**; and each club had large numbers of civilian employees, the Rome club having retained the whole of the normal staff of the hotel in which it was located. In view of the need for time off duty – the clubs were open for long hours – there were never many girls in front of the public at any one time, certainly nothing like enough to have any influence on the hundreds and thousands of men who used the clubs every day.

In each club certain duties were given the girls, depending on the numbers available. In one club it might be serving ice-cream or tea, in another taking orders for purchases, in another reserving seats for opera performances or for bus tours.

The officer clientele of the clubs tended to monopolise the attention of the girls, both on and off duty, partly because of having more money to spend on suitable entertainment, and partly because of their having some form of transport in which girls could go sightseeing in comfort. Officers could afford to take girls to the opera, while the other ranks usually had only the attractions of a **NAAFI** institute to offer. Similarly the bulk of the purchases, proportionate to numbers, was made by officers. It is no wonder that the belief gained ground among the men that the girls were ‘officer conscious’, with the result that many of the men tended to avoid them and even sneer at them as mere decorations.

It would have been better if the number had been many times

greater, so that their presence was obvious to all at all times. Their influence for good, which is a reality, might then have had a chance to show itself. As it was, while in other ways they did good work, their influence on behaviour in the one club that really mattered, **Cairo**, was negligible; but for this the girls were in no way to blame.

In the hospitals the girls again did valuable work, both in easing the strain on the nursing staff, looking after the welfare of patients, and in general administration. The number of 200 was enough to allow of from fifty to seventy being allotted to each of our hospitals. This is not the place, however, to speak of their value to the Medical Corps. From the point of view of HQ **2 NZEF** the only trouble – or perhaps irritation is the better word – arose from the attempts of the **Red Cross Society** in New Zealand to control them while overseas. The Red Cross appeared to us to look on these girls as their special responsibility, almost their ‘private army’, and we were frequently taken to task by the Society for some action we had or had not taken. The girls were members of **2 NZEF** and were paid by the Government; and we were responsible to the Government for our actions in directing their activities – but not to the **Red Cross**.

The delay in sending the clerical staff overseas was a regrettable mistake. Male clerical staff was very difficult to obtain, and in addition there are many duties which women can carry out better than men. We could easily have staffed a large part of Second Echelon and the Chief Pay Office with women, and most of the clerical duties at HQ **2 NZEF** and HQ Maadi Camp could have been allotted to them. To accommodate the girls in **Maadi Camp** required special measures, but in no way difficult ones. We built hutments of a superior type within an enclosure. In Italy the girls lived in requisitioned civilian houses. The services rendered by this belated party of clerical staff were invaluable, despite some gloomy remarks by the odd anti-feminist before their arrival. It is a pity that we waited four years to get them.

The official status of the nursing sisters overseas was easy to define, as they all ranked as officers and wore the same badges of rank as male

officers. The position about the three divisions – welfare, hospital, and later clerical – of the WAACs was not so easy. Three or four were officers; but the majority were ‘other ranks’, wore no badges of rank – even the NCOs preferred not to wear their stripes – and in the eyes of all outside **2 NZEF** were just private soldiers. Within **2 NZEF** it was easy to make special arrangements for them. There were never more than a few hundred all told at any one time, all specially selected; and while every good New Zealander deprecates class distinctions, the fact remained that they had been chosen on account of good behaviour and good appearance, and represented the best of the community. They used the officer portion of our clubs, and a lot of their travelling was, in any case, in officer transport. They travelled first class on the trains when a move was made by rail (only in the **Middle East**), although we had to go through the motions of paying excess over second class to the British railway authorities.

Outside **2 NZEF**, however, we had a few minor troubles, arising from the position of the WAACs from the **United Kingdom**. These girls were in every way counted as the female equivalent of the man in the ranks.

We were not prepared to see our girls treated in the same way as were these English WAACs, who travelled third class, who could only use clubs open to other ranks, and who were treated just like ordinary Tommies. We thought our select band deserved something better.

There was some trouble over our girls being admitted to hotels in **Cairo** which were open to officers only; but it is fair to say that this was overcome in most cases, as the escort was sure to be an officer. The same applied to British officers' clubs. In Italy the complications increased owing to the presence of American WAACs and American clubs, etc., and in increasing degree our girls found themselves treated as ‘other ranks’.

It was suggested at one stage that we should give them all honorary rank as officers, so that they could wear the badges of rank; but we thought this was going a bit too far. In the end we had special cards

printed, stating clearly that within 2 NZEF the holder had all the privileges of an officer. Thereafter the production of this card almost invariably prevented trouble.

In any future war it is likely that the number of women serving will be markedly higher. This question of ranks and privileges will need to be tackled at an early stage.

The question of marriages is being dealt with in

Chapter 15. It cannot be gainsaid that they must be accepted, whether entirely within the force or not, and the staff must just make the best it can of all the irritations that are bound to arise.

All our women's services received initially an outfit grant and thereafter an annual upkeep grant, combined with a small varying number of items of army issue. The nurses were all right for as long as we were in North Africa, for there they had access to good shops in **Cairo** and **Alexandria** and to large army clothing stores; but when we moved to **Italy** it was not so easy, as shops were empty of most articles of general utility, and the clothing stores were not so easy of access as in Egypt. In any case it had been found that the existing outdoor uniform was not as truly serviceable as was desirable. Finally, after much discussion the uniform was changed, so as to ensure that the bulk of replacements could be obtained through service channels.

With the girls, while the general arrangement was the same, i.e., part issue, part upkeep grant, it soon became apparent that the grant, which was a small one, was inadequate for them to maintain themselves in a reasonable manner. Again we held a series of discussions between the heads of the various divisions, the Matron-in-Chief and other nursing heads, and one or two embarrassed male staff, and in the end evolved a satisfactory scheme, which meant that most articles would be issued from army stocks, the upkeep grant being left for a few personal extras.

After the first party of girls had been overseas for some time, a legal point arose which made it necessary for us to know whether or not our women's services, including the nurses, were true official members of **2 NZEF** and subject to military law. As the result of our communications with Army Headquarters, it transpired that the position was indeed obscure; and it was only after some months, in fact not until the middle of 1943, that all women's services were made subject to the Army Act, with some marked and reasonable reservations. There was, for instance, a definite restriction on the sections of the Army Act under which disciplinary action could be taken.

Right at the end of the war, there was a case where disciplinary action was taken against a nurse for offending against the censorship regulations. It is doubtful whether the offender or the officer dealing with the case felt the more awkward; and in fact the whole business was silly. We ended the war without ever having to come to grips over the discipline of women's services, but it is likely to be more of a problem in the future.

Of all single items, probably more troubles arose out of the combination of the young officer and the jeep than out of anything else. Officer and jeep would call for a girl friend and away they would go, and either have a breakdown or return very late, or visit some place out of bounds, or go wandering into the divisional area, or otherwise break the law. In Egypt the trouble used to be the combination of the young **RAF** officer and the aeroplane. A lift would be offered to somewhere miles away, the assurance being given that the officer would be coming back the same day; but **RAF** routine stepped in, or the plane developed some defect, and the 'liftee' would find herself stranded. In 1940 we had a party of nurses left high and dry in **Cyprus** in just this way.

However, all these troubles were minor ones, and did not detract from the manifold advantages of having a few New Zealand women as a leavening among so many men. With us the sum total of the problems they created was small; but the administrators of any future expeditionary force, which will inevitably include a larger proportion of women, will have to do some serious thinking before the force embarks.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 15 – ‘CRIMES, FOLLIES AND MISFORTUNES’ 1

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PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MILITARY LAW

MILITARY LAW

THIS is not intended to be a treatise on discipline, but only a record of a few points that caused trouble, and which might be avoided in the future. Fundamentally the whole code of military law was intended for a regular army in peace and war. Despite some changes after the experience of the first war, it was still at the beginning of the second unsuitable to a citizen army; and if it was not suitable to a citizen army drawn from the **United Kingdom, it was even less suited to a citizen army from the Dominions. It was unfortunate that in peacetime there had never been either the staff or the time to work out a system of military law of our own, keeping all the principles of the British code, but modifying the procedure to New Zealand conditions and the New Zealand temperament.**

In the Emergency Regulations creating the Expeditionary Force in January 1940, the force was placed under the governance of the Army Act, with the exception that no sentence of death was to be put into effect without the concurrence of the Governor-General, which meant in practice that the death sentence became null and void. Later in the war, and partly at the suggestion of HQ **2 NZEF, other modifications were made, including the introduction of one or two additional punishments for officers on what may be called an intermediate scale.**

Our position in regard to King's Regulations was not so clear, although at first we accepted that we must observe the disciplinary paragraphs; but as the war went on we began to pick and choose, and almost to make our own regulations. Again it would have been better if there had been separate New Zealand regulations of a similar type. Our ideas of what is essential to the discipline (in the broadest sense) of an army differed from those of the **United Kingdom – and from this difference, somewhat regrettably, arose a number of unfortunate**

disagreements with British authorities, especially in that plague spot, Cairo.

The intention of the Army Act and of the Rules of Procedure is, *inter alia*, to ensure beyond reasonable doubt that an offender gets a fair trial, and with this intent both classics lean over backwards to avoid prejudicing the accused in any way. In fact, they lean so far that they have wellnigh emasculated themselves, or, in other words, have succeeded in making it very difficult to punish a genuine offender during the course of a modern war. From the point of view of the British way of life and deeply-ingrained sense of fairness, this is all to the good, as it ensures that an alleged offender remains innocent until proved otherwise; but another result is that those who are responsible for discipline in a war such as the last hesitate before attempting to set the machinery in motion to try an offender by court martial, for the machinery is slow-moving, while the war is the reverse.

It might well happen – it often did happen – that an offence might occur in one spot, but by the time it was reported, even only as far as to the CO, the unit might have moved miles away and be still moving, and the witnesses might have moved the opposite way; and all the time the machinery of preliminary investigation, hearing before the CO, summary of evidence, application for court martial, and trial was slowly grinding its way forward, the movement of all the troops concerned was continuing also. The difficulties mounted by almost geometrical progression for every stage, and by some sort of astronomical progression if civilian witnesses were involved. Some fixed point was necessary; and often we had to form a small camp, at which all concerned could stay while the machinery of investigation, etc., went its way. Witnesses, etc., would be withdrawn from all the units concerned and assembled at one spot, and would stay there until it was all over. Not all trials were like this. Many, of course, concerned only one unit; but even then the unit often found it easier to drop off all those concerned and leave them, while the rest of the unit got on with the war.

The results of all this were either long delays in coming to trial, or the abandonment of the whole idea. And while the latter course is free from any possibility of unfairness to accused men, it meant that too many offenders escaped punishment, small consolation to the well-behaved. It is not proposed to suggest a solution. It may well be that this is a price that must be paid if we are to have fast-moving war instead of the trench warfare of 1914–18.

The Judge Advocate-General (JAG) in New Zealand commented adversely on many occasions on courts-martial delays in [2 NZEF](#), i.e., that there was too long a delay in bringing a man to trial. Prima facie he had cause for his complaints, for on a purely factual estimate the length of time between offence and trial appeared to be beyond visible explanation; but our contention was that in the majority of cases the delays were due to the fortunes of war and were not the fault of the unit. The JAG, in addition to being an eminent lawyer, had served with distinction in the First World War, where the total advance of the New Zealand Division from August 1918 to the Armistice three months later was 50 miles, where the maximum side-slip of the division during all its time in [France](#) was 60 miles, where units stayed for months in one area and, if they did move, went no further back than a matter of ten or twenty miles, and after a period came back to where they had started, where all transport was horsed and men moved on their feet. The manoeuvres of the division in [France](#) were like the movements of a dancer on a congested night-club floor. In the second war distances were measured in hundreds and even thousands of miles, the Division once moved over 800 miles in ten days, its journey from [Tunisia](#) back to [Maadi](#) was 1800 miles, and even in [Italy](#), where distances were not so great, some of its cross-country moves involved over 200 miles of travel.

During furlough in 1943, OICA explained this to the JAG, and his comments were adapted accordingly. Notwithstanding the tirade in the preceding paragraph, it can be admitted that units sometimes did let the difficulties daunt them, and that there were cases of genuine dilatoriness. Once or twice during the war Headquarters had to remind

unit and formation commanders about it, even to the extent of thundering out the terms of Section 21 (1) of the Army Act, which reads:

Every person ...ho ...nnecessarily detains a person in arrest or confinement without bringing him to trial ...hall, on conviction by court-martial, be liable, if an officer to be cashiered....

Courts martial in non-divisional units sometimes caused extra delays in that members of the court might have to be drawn from outside the group, the officer establishment of which was not large enough to supply independent officers in sufficient numbers or of the appropriate ranks. We were firm that we preferred to try our men in all-New Zealand courts, even though it was legal to use British courts.

One way and another, it is little wonder that COs preferred if they could to avoid courts martial, and that very many offences never reached a formal trial.

The outstanding case, as far as difficulties were concerned, occurred in **Tripolitania** in 1943, while the Division was on the way back to **Maadi** from **Tunisia**. Four New Zealanders left the convoy and, after making a lot of trouble with a family of Italian settlers, raped the wife of the householder. By the time the complaint caught up with the Division, it was already back at **Maadi**; for the complaint had to pass through many channels, commencing with the Military Government of **Tripolitania**. An initial inquiry was held in **Maadi**; but before the suspects could even be formally charged they had to be identified, which meant that the officer conducting the inquiry, together with the suspects, escort, and enough personnel from the unit concerned to allow of a proper identification parade, had to be sent all the way back, some 1200 miles. Thereafter the official summary of evidence had to be taken, and later the members of the court, with spare officers, had to be sent all the way to the place. One way and another, there was a series of convoys going up and down the road, each journey taking several days. It was fortunate that the trouble was not in vain, for the identification was made by the civilian complainants beyond any doubt, the evidence was convincing and the

men were found guilty. And this was not the whole tale, for in the meantime another suspect had managed to get away to New Zealand on furlough. The case was too bad to ignore, so we arranged for him to be sent back to the **Middle East**; and, nearly a year after the offence, the whole procedure had to take place again. Luckily again the identification was made beyond doubt, and this last man was found guilty also. The case created a great sensation among the Italian settlers generally, and was most favourably commented on as an outstanding example of British justice.

Most of our cases were tried by Field General Courts Martial, which are intended to be simple in form, to omit some of the ceremony of a normal court, and to retain the validity of their proceedings despite inadvertent slips in the Rules of Procedure, always on the understanding that the accused's defence has not been prejudiced thereby. There were a few odd cases that were quashed in New Zealand on what appeared to us to be purely technical points; but discussions between the DJAG and the JAG helped to obviate this.

Proposals were made once or twice that we should have 'military magistrates', officers who dealt with cases in much the same way as stipendiary magistrates in New Zealand, and who would have certain limited powers of punishment; but this was too revolutionary a change to be made without more thought than was possible during the war, and in any case would have meant the passing of elaborate regulations by the **New Zealand Government**. Another proposal was that we should have permanent courts, or at least permanent presidents, so ensuring uniformity and avoiding breaking into the service of regimental officers during a campaign. This could be done without any alteration to the existing law; and as far as a permanent president was concerned, was tried out at **Maadi** and Advanced Base in **Italy**. The proposal has some value in places such as those; but one is loth to depart from the principle that a man should be tried by officers from his own unit, or from units in the area, who can be expected to have a knowledge of the atmosphere surrounding the case, and can try it with more

understanding than can an impersonal court. Nevertheless, the proposals have some attractions.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE

The irritating ways of Egyptians have a lot to account for. To an occidental, the habits of the oriental as seen in Egypt were often amusing, but just as often infuriating. The New Zealand soldier, spending the evening in **Cairo** or other Egyptian town, would find dirt and noise, stupidity and dilatoriness, bad drink, blatant attempts to cheat, until the point was reached when there would be an explosion, which at the worst might take the form of an attempt to wreck the place. Those officers who were in positions of authority in **Maadi Camp**, and so were responsible for New Zealand discipline in **Cairo**, always felt that they were sitting on the safety valve of a volcano, and heaved a sigh of relief each morning if nothing out of the way had happened in **Cairo** the evening before. Charge sheets or complaints from the series of British officers in charge of the Cairo Area were a common feature of the morning mail at **Maadi**. Looking back on it now, however, our methods must have been reasonably good, as we were spared any riot comparable with the famous 'Battle of the Wassah' of the First World War. Disorder was somehow or other kept within limits.

It is a lamentable fact that few New Zealanders know how to drink. This is not the place to enter into discussions on the rights and wrongs of consuming alcoholic liquor; but it will have to be accepted that consumption of alcohol is a habit spread all over the world, and that wherever New Zealand soldiers go, there they will find alcohol provided for them, much more readily obtainable than in the homeland, and in pleasant surroundings. Our New Zealand conditions of drinking are far from pleasant, and consist in the main of consuming as much beer as possible in the hour from five to six, without any chance of sitting down and taking it quietly. Beer may be a good drink, but large quantities are an element in its consumption – nothing less than a half-pint.

Few New Zealanders understand the 'short drink' – the small glass of sherry or pink gin or vermouth or other aperitif, drunk in a leisurely manner before a meal or as a concomitant of conversation, seated at a table, and really only an incidental to human companionship. To make a drink last a long time is foreign to past experience for the New Zealander, who has been trained to cram it all into that one fatal hour after work, and moreover to take his drink in a large 'man-size' glass. When the drink is beer alone, the harm done is not so great; but in lands where there is a large choice, where a man may be offered a drink the name of which conveys nothing to him but is probably some form of absinthe, to start off by consuming a large glass is fatal. Our New Zealand habits may be all right for as long as we are in New Zealand, but they are the worst possible training for drinking in any foreign land. The British soldier with his experience of the peaceful atmosphere of the 'local', where one drink, even of beer, may be spun out for hours, is much better placed to compete with the differences he finds overseas. The majority of offences in **Cairo had drink as an element; and probably the majority of those came from the inability of men to understand a more leisurely way of drinking in small quantities.**

It must be admitted that some of the over-drinking, alike in Egypt and **Italy, was due to not knowing what else to do. The subject of welfare is dealt with in**

Chapter 16, but it may be said here that despite all our efforts – greater efforts than for any other force – there were never enough clubs or institutes or other suitable means of filling in time after work. Our experience tended to show that the best answer was to keep facilities for drinking within the camp or lines, and so make it unnecessary for men to go further afield. If the drinking that goes on can be spread over a series of bars, so much the better. Mass drinking easily produces mass excitement and may lead to mass trouble. Our attempt at having one large beer bar associated with our club in **Cairo** was a failure on account of the large numbers of men that assembled there; more of this, however, in the chapter on welfare.

Our troubles in **Italy** were never so acute. To start with it was a European country, with a population of agreeable and friendly people with whom one could talk reasonably (despite language difficulties), and living a life that had many things in common with our own. Especially was this the case in the countryside; and even in the towns the population and the habits remained European. It was of great help that men could freely enter private homes and talk with people in family surroundings, a form of entertainment that New Zealanders found most acceptable. We owe a debt to the hundreds of humble folk in **Italy** who in a simple way entertained our men and kept them from trouble. The New Zealander likes more than anything being taken into a house. If he can help with the baby or the washing-up, he will be perfectly happy.

A lot of minor troubles came from deficiencies in dress and from failure to salute, both these offences being reported more frequently by the British Corps of Military Police than by our own **Provost Corps**. Slovenly dress was offensive to all responsible authorities, but as an offence was complicated by the custom of the Eighth Army and the **Western Desert**, where the less one looked like a stereotyped soldier the better, and where officers and men alike looked like pirates. All would agree that some degree of normal smartness was necessary in large towns; but it was no use trying to be dictatorial about it, and men had to be more coaxed than ordered. Saluting created its own particular crop of

difficulties. Most New Zealanders are naturally polite and would be prepared to pay some compliment to an officer when addressing him; but, on the other hand, they cannot see the point of saluting every officer they pass, especially in a large camp or large town where men and officers are passing one another every few seconds – and most officers would agree with them in their hearts. Our custom, on the whole, was to disregard non-saluting unless the case was a glaring one, for rightly or wrongly most New Zealanders do not consider that saluting officers on all occasions is an essential part of military discipline, or at least of the special military discipline peculiar to New Zealand. The viewpoint of British authorities and so of the Corps of Military Police was more rigid on this question, hence the large number of charge sheets for non-saluting.

It is not claimed that the custom of the Expeditionary Force was either clear or yet correct. It is suggested that it is one of those points where a clear and reasonable solution should be found, and counted as one of the customs of the New Zealand service. It is time we developed some of our own customs, for we have assuredly grown up as soldiers.

A difficult problem, although not a big one, arises from the indisciplined soldier who is also a good fighter – the brave scallywag. Is a certain amount of indiscipline to be condoned because, for instance, a man shows exceptional initiative on patrol? By indiscipline is meant not real criminality, but such offences as an occasional drunken bout. The inclination in these cases must surely be towards tolerance; for it must always be remembered that basically ours was only a temporary force of temporary soldiers, with only one object, to beat the enemy as quickly as possible.

The really bad offender, the true criminal, never redeems his criminality by good service in the field. The problem he creates is a different one: that it is quite possible for a man of that type to make such a nuisance of himself that he never sees any fighting, spends the whole war either on the run, or awaiting trial, or in gaol, and causes all concerned infinite trouble, even if it is only in collecting the evidence

and going through the procedure of a court martial. Early in 1940 the GOC suggested that we should have some sort of a purge and send 'bad hats' back to New Zealand; but this was resisted by COs at the time, who pointed out that it would be setting a premium on bad behaviour. Probably the answer is that the army must accept a proportion of criminals and keep on punishing them; but it must be stated that from early 1942 onwards we did start sending back to New Zealand those men who were never out of detention barracks. It is debatable if we were right in doing so.

Indiscipline was evenly spread throughout the force with one exception. It is regrettable to have to say that the Maoris figured in an over-proportion of bad offences. It appeared that if a Maori kicked over the traces, he made a good job of it while he was about it.

In Italy we had trouble with black-market activities, as has already been mentioned. Such things as army blankets or boots or rations brought high prices among the civilian population, prices which were fantastic when compared with the value set on them in the army vocabulary of stores. In the general relaxation of moral standards in the war, men saw nothing wrong in selling stores to civilians, especially items of their personal gear, for when charged with being deficient they had only to plead that the articles had been lost, and then proffer the army price. The offence became increasingly prevalent after the end of the war, when men saw masses of stores that were no longer required for war purposes lying round in dumps all over the country, and could not resist the temptation to make easy money from what they did not regard as theft. It was useless to put guards on the dumps, for they became involved in the racket. It is almost tragic to have to say that the only reliable guards in the closing stages, either in **Italy** or Egypt, were German prisoners of war.

At one point during the war a belief went round the troops that all monetary punishments – fines or stoppages – would be refunded after the war, so that it did not matter if such a punishment were inflicted.

Apparently some small measure of action of this kind had been taken after the First World War. We asked the views of Army Headquarters and were told that such action was most unlikely after this war, for men were serving in all three services, with a resulting increase in complications. The belief died down after a while, and no such action has of course been taken.

In

Chapter 17 it will be suggested that we had altogether too many orders during the war, and that a great many were unenforceable. Order after order ended with the words, 'failure to comply with this order will lead to severe disciplinary action', or words to that effect; but it would have been an utter impossibility to take any sort of disciplinary action, severe or otherwise, in all the myriad cases of violations that did occur. So no action was taken, and order after order joined the ever-growing collection of unenforceables, and added one more stone to the edifice of disregard for orders. Constant threats which are never put into effect lead to troops treating all orders as just so many words. It may well lead to another example of the old cry of 'Wolf!'; for among all the chaff of unnecessary orders there is bound to be one that really matters, but which shares the same fate as the others and is ignored. It requires great care, and much restraint, before making threats in an order.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PROVOST CORPS

PROVOST CORPS

The more our men could be controlled by our own **Provost Corps** the better. Outside of any national feelings, there is something about the red cap of the Corps of Military Police that makes it resemble the proverbial red rag, particularly if a man has had a few drinks. The hat with the blue puggaree worn by our **Provost Corps** was much less offensive. Legally the CMP had full authority to arrest New Zealanders, and during the brief honeymoon of early 1940 no practical objection was taken to this; but as time went on and men became tougher and war-weary, the arrival of the CMP undoubtedly caused irritation, and sometimes bred increased violence. We never went so far as to ask definitely that the CMP should not arrest New Zealanders; but we did suggest that it would be better if they looked round for one of our own provost personnel to make the arrest. In Cairo it was possible to arrange that New Zealand provost NCOs accompanied CMP patrols; but elsewhere this could seldom be done. **Cairo** was, of course, the chief source of trouble.

Experience with one or two serious crimes requiring detailed investigations led us ultimately to form our own Special Investigation Branch, or detective squad. It gave valuable service.

Elements of the **Provost Corps** are required from the outset. Probably the first draft should include a few men already trained in the police or police reserve. Thereafter their selection and training merits special attention, for psychology forms a large part of it. A lot of troubles can be prevented before they ever start given a provost staff that carries out its duties with intelligence and humanity.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PUNISHMENT CENTRES

PUNISHMENT CENTRES

The small size of the Expeditionary Force caused us to make use of British military prisons and detention barracks throughout, but no New Zealand officer liked them. We thought that they were administered too rigidly, made little distinction between real criminals and occasional offenders against military law, and used a system that was reminiscent of the treadmill and would tend to discharge men with feelings of resentment. Punishment is necessary; but we thought that something a little more human could have been devised.

In the middle of 1941 we formed our own **Field Punishment Centre, which coped with the majority of offenders. Where at all possible, we avoided sentences of detention. Anyone sentenced to a term of imprisonment amounting to years was sent back to New Zealand to serve it.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PUNISHMENT OF NCOS

PUNISHMENT OF NCOs

There is a theory, and a defensible one, that NCOs should not be punished, the reasons being either that their original selection has been so careful that they cannot offend, or that if an NCO is punished his usefulness has ceased. Whatever the rights and wrongs of this theory may be, it is a fact that military law made it difficult to punish an NCO at all except by court martial. For a regular army this may suffice, but for a temporary citizen army it hardly meets the case. NCOs are only human after all, and there is not time for that careful selection that would obviate later offences. It is undesirable that NCOs should go scot free for offences for which the man in the ranks is punished, for men are quick to note such things. One solution is to grant greater powers of summary punishment to COs or to Brigade Commanders, probably the latter. Whether or not the summary punishments should include reduction in rank is a matter of opinion. All that is suggested here is that there should be some better solution than having to send NCOs before courts martial for relatively simple offences, or where some punishment greater than a CO can award is thought necessary.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PUNISHMENT OF OFFICERS

PUNISHMENT OF OFFICERS

For officers the trouble was that the scale of punishments was either too light or too severe. The Army Act did not allow of reduction in rank, or to the ranks; and if for any reason an officer was considered unfit to go on holding his commission, the only punishment available was cashiering, which meant that the officer was a civilian as soon as the sentence was confirmed. In two cases in Egypt we had trouble with the civil authorities, as they set a limit to the time an unwanted civilian could stay in the country; and while we were ready to provide shipping space to take the offenders back to New Zealand, we no longer had any control over them and could not make them take the passage. One ex-officer in the end had, in effect, to be compulsorily deported. In 1943 after discussions between HQ 2 NZEF and Army Headquarters (which had also felt the need), additional punishments were introduced, allowing of reduction in rank, or in extreme cases, to the ranks, the last-named being an alternative to cashiering.

A brief mention may be made of one point, already touched on for other ranks: to what extent should the good fighting officer be permitted licence or indiscipline. There were some cases during the war in which offences were passed over; but nothing approaching a principle was ever established.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MARRIAGES

MARRIAGES

So much for the 'Crimes'. It is now the turn of the 'Follies'. Of all the various aspects of human relations with which HQ 2 NZEF had to deal, marriages were the most troublesome. A military headquarters is not the place best fitted to compete with this task, and even the best of staff officers is likely to be a bit heavy-handed when dealing with it. The average citizen does not realise the kind of task with which the headquarters of an expeditionary force has to deal, particularly when operating in a foreign land. Soldiers are trained in military tactics and administration; but it is unlikely that they have been trained to decide on the suitability or otherwise of a proposed bride, or to compete with that lack of reason that assails a man in love. The whole marriage problem, whether between members of the force, or between a member of our force and a member of another force, or between a member of the force and a civilian, was an unending trial.

It is a fair question to ask what the marriage of a member of 2 NZEF had to do with Headquarters, and if we were not making heavy weather of it. Surely, it may be said, a man or woman should be allowed to marry whom and when they like, just as in peacetime. An attitude of general approval would be easy for all concerned, and could be defended. Had the Expeditionary Force been operating in the **United Kingdom** or entirely in a western European country, it is more than likely that this is the attitude that would have been adopted, subject always to the needs of proper registration. On the question of approval, more will be said shortly; but even if 'general approval' had been the method followed, Headquarters would still have been dragged in, for other little difficulties cropped up beyond the power of the individual to solve. Registration, release from service of the partner, repatriation—all these brought work to Headquarters, as will be seen below.

First, the question of approval to marriages. Throughout the war the whole or part of the force was living in the Eastern Mediterranean, in the midst of a population largely oriental, or at best included in that comprehensive but indefinite term 'Levantine', meaning the semi-Europeanised inhabitants of Egypt, Palestine, **Syria** and **Lebanon**. The population ran to extremes of wealth, beginning at the bottom with an illiterate, wretchedly poor peasantry, and ending at the top with an ostentatiously wealthy layer, living lives of a type that died out in Great Britain in the eighteenth century. A large part of the educated population had a layer of European culture, but was accustomed to life in the enervating atmosphere of the Eastern Mediterranean, where servants are plentiful and cheap and no wife has to do any housework. The 'Family' played a part which is strange to British eyes, forming a closely-knit clan, where matters of personal relations were freely discussed, where the approval of the head of the family and of the members, too, had to be given to any proposed marriage by a member of the clan, where the daughters of the house still lived under strict parental or family control, and where the wife was still the obedient servant of her husband. The form of life was altogether different from ours in New Zealand, different not merely in a few details, but basically.

There was, moreover, the question of colour; for while the educated inhabitants of the **Levant** are not truly 'coloured people', it is a fact that most have complexions much darker than the Western European.

It was unfortunate that despite these difficulties and drawbacks the young ladies of the **Levant** have great charm—doubly so to the young man far removed from his own people.

At an early stage we raised with Army Headquarters the desirability of 'mixed' marriages, as we thought that having brought men to an area where they were thrown among people whose mode of life was so different from that in New Zealand, and where separation from their own womenkind made them all the more susceptible to the attractions of local girls, it behoved us to try to stop them taking hasty action which

they might regret later on.

The question was considered to be of sufficient importance to merit the attention of the Government – and its attitude was clear. No marriages were to be allowed without the approval of the GOC, and no marriages with non-Europeans were to be allowed at all. It may be said now that this decision was reaffirmed on more than one occasion, and that particular importance was paid to the prevention of marriages with such races as Armenians or Syrians.

It was thus most unfortunate that when the Prime Minister visited us in 1941, he gave permission to one man (who had approached him direct) to marry an Egyptian. The man's application, for obvious reasons, had already been refused by Headquarters in accordance with the Government's direction. The case became known and, for some time thereafter, made the position of Headquarters difficult. The marriage in question was not a success.

In Italy the position was easier. There were not the same objections to marriages with Italians as there were to marriages with Levantines. All that could be said was that perhaps it was a pity.

In theory, therefore, no marriage should have taken place without the approval of the GOC, given through HQ **2 NZEF**; but here it must be said that legally we had no power to stop a man marrying whom he pleased. Provided a man could find a clergyman or priest or civil authority to perform the ceremony, he could go ahead, and our veto was just so many words. This was especially the case in **Italy**, where no ban of ours would stop the **Roman Catholic Church** giving its blessing to the desire of two people with no impediment to enter on the sacrament of marriage.

Where our ban was of some effect was in the subsequent registration of the marriage, which was necessary to give it full legal force. In the **Middle East** the registration authority for all British forces – using the word **British** in its widest sense – was the Headquarters of the British

Troops in Egypt, which stood in the place of the official registrar of marriages in any British country. Before the registration could be effective, the approval had to be obtained of the man's commanding officer and of the formation headquarters under which he was serving. We thus had power to block the registration of what we considered an unsuitable marriage, pointless though this might be; for we had no power to prevent a man going on with a religious ceremony that normally would have been binding and was so viewed by the participants. In Italy, moreover, after an initial period of doubt, it was ruled that civilian registrations would be accepted by the military authorities, as **Italy had a satisfactory civilian system – and so our last chance had gone!**

But we could make a nuisance of ourselves. We could delay giving approval in doubtful cases. It was ruled also that if a man married without permission he would get no dependants' allowances, and none of the post-war benefits of a married man – would not be entitled, for instance, to a passage to New Zealand for his wife. Naturally, the approval of the Government had been obtained before these rulings were promulgated; and in fact the direction not to pay allowances was initiated by the Government. It must be stated, however, that it appeared to us to be of doubtful legality, and needed some further legal action to make it effective. The Pay Regulations merely said that certain allowances might be paid to the dependants of a married man, and said nothing about obtaining approval to a marriage; but there was a comprehensive power given to the Minister to refuse to grant the allowance, and it was presumably on this that the direction was based.

Actually the number of cases of true unofficial marriages was few; but we adhered to the ruling that no allowances would be paid, and for the purposes of a deterrent to others were firm in not granting any special privileges. Otherwise we made things as difficult as possible for men before the marriage ceremony in cases where the proposed bride was thought unsuitable; but if the man was insistent despite rebuffs, we had in the end to agree. It should be said here that the expected arrival

of a child was not taken as sufficient justification for approving a marriage which was thought to be undesirable.

In the end our opinion was that the most one can do is to obstruct the course towards marriage as far as can be done legally, and then agree with the best grace possible. For one way or another the man will achieve his object if he is determined; and there are limits to the degree with which one can persist in stubborn action such as refusing marriage allowances. Ultimately the man must get the allowances, and the fact of the marriage, undesirable or otherwise, must be accepted.

In January 1944 we had our only dissension with New Zealand over marriages. A man applied to marry an Armenian and was refused permission, which refusal was confirmed when he appealed. He then went to New Zealand on furlough, enlisted some popular sympathy, and somehow or other prevailed on the Government to cable Headquarters suggesting that the case might be treated as an exception. Headquarters felt bound to maintain to the Government that the case was in no way exceptional, and that if permission were given the policy previously applied would collapse, as others would apply to Headquarters and could not be refused. Adherence to some simple rules was the only way to deal with this problem. Headquarters went on to say that the rule against marriage with Armenians had been made with the full concurrence of the Government. Our cable from Headquarters was strongly worded, and we could quite properly have been taken to task over it. The case ended when the man decided not to go on with his application (reasons unknown), which settled the affair to the relief of both Government and Headquarters.

So much for the awkward problem of mixed marriages, to which our solution was at best a rough and ready one. Marriages with members of other Commonwealth forces caused later difficulties over the question of release from service. If the New Zealand husband were repatriated to New Zealand, the non-New Zealand wife naturally wanted to go too; and similarly, if the non-New Zealand husband were repatriated to his homeland the New Zealand wife wanted to accompany him.

Headquarters 2 NZEF never resisted a request for discharge from a member of the women's services in such cases; but General Headquarters was most resistant to releasing members of any of its women's services, its plea being that married women in England were liable to national service, and that the fact that a woman got married was no excuse for releasing her from her obligations, even though her husband might be serving elsewhere. The question became acute when the furlough scheme started. In the end, after an argument which reached the inter-governmental level, GHQ agreed to release women in cases where the husband was being permanently repatriated, and only then. In the circumstances we had to allow some husbands to contract out of the furlough scheme.

Marriages entirely within the force were the cause of a controversy, initiated by the first case that occurred. In the middle of 1941 one of our nurses married one of our medical officers, and the argument was whether or not she should be allowed to continue serving, or should be sent back to New Zealand. There were discussions among senior officers, and in the end we came to the conclusion that it was better that husbands and wives should not serve together. In such cases there was bound to be a strong wish that they should have as much of each other's company as possible, that if one got leave the other would want it at the same time and as a matter of right, and that many troubles, albeit minor ones, would be avoided if the wives went back. After all, they would then be in no worse position than the tens of thousands of wives who were likely to be separated from their husbands for years. We recommended to the GOC accordingly; but for once he thought that this was a problem that must be settled in New Zealand and so referred the case to the Government. There was a long delay while the Government deliberated on it in New Zealand, but its decision in the end was that married nurses should be allowed to continue serving. That ruling, extended to cover all women's services, held for the rest of the war.

Looking back after this length of time, it must be admitted that our reasons do not appear compelling, although they seemed so at the time.

The DMS, whose department was the most affected, was later of the opinion that while there had been cases of minor troubles over leave, etc., the efficiency of the Medical Corps as a whole had not been weakened. The chances are that in any future war many more women will be serving overseas. This could lead one to the conclusion that it is more important than ever that wives should be removed from the force; but on the other hand it may well be thought that with women now a normal part of the army, marriages should be accepted as part of the price paid for having them. No answer is given here; but a firm answer should be given if ever the need arises again.

There was a kind of ironic humour in the situation that saddled Headquarters with the task of collecting all the non-service wives at the end of the war. We had to set up an elaborate organisation as a wife-finding agency in the Eastern Mediterranean and **Italy**, and then had to arrange to get them down to the port of embarkation and aboard the transport. Sometimes they took a lot of finding. Often we had great trouble with 'The Family', which in **Italy** as well as in the **Levant** seemed to have a hold over the wife even after she was married. The British idea that a wife becomes one with her husband, and that the husband is the next-of-kin, seemed to have no influence over excited Italians, where 'Mamma' was still the ruling authority; and here were poor staff officers having to conduct arguments that more properly should have been ones for the husbands. The latter were never any help, and in any case the majority had already sailed for New Zealand, leaving their wives to be sent on later. The Italian civil authorities required convincing proof of the marriage before we were allowed to remove the wife from 'the family'. Even when the wives were on board the transports, we had storms because we had to put all the wives together in one part of the ship, and the wife of an officer would be in the same cabin as the wife of an 'other rank'. All very amusing today, but not much fun at the time.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

We now come to the 'Misfortunes', beginning with compassionate leave. The army in wartime when away from the homeland is an example of 100 per cent state control, where Authority is responsible for looking after all the interests of the members of the community, including their domestic problems. In peacetime the church, the welfare organisations, the magistracy, the police are well aware of the amount of domestic trouble that exists; but to the staff of 2 NZEF it was a never-ending source of amazement, and a cause of much reflection on the frailties of human nature. As in so many things, an army staff is not necessarily the best-fitted body to handle these problems, and sometimes, at least in the early stages, we were doubtless clumsy.

Domestic difficulties generally reached Headquarters in the form of a request to be allowed to return to New Zealand so that the applicant could deal with his troubles on the spot; but occasionally we were merely asked to lend the weight of Headquarters to obtaining an answer from New Zealand to correspondence that had been unanswered, in the hope that the answer we obtained would bring consolation with it. The problems were not all matrimonial, though these were the majority. Illness of members of the family, death of a near relation, care of children, family quarrels, troubles with neighbours, business difficulties, disputes over wills – all these occurred from time to time; but none caused so much mental trouble as accusations about the behaviour of wives from well-meaning friends or neighbours, or distressing letters from the wives themselves.

We had a few cases in 1940 and 1941; and at the time tried to handle them ourselves by listening to what the man had to say, and then in consultation with regimental officers, or with someone who knew the man in New Zealand, deciding whether or not the case had

been proved and justified sending the man back. This was a difficult task, and the tendency was to accept the tale and let the man go home; but as the tales became more complicated and the number of cases increased, we commenced as a first step sending the details to Army Headquarters and asking it to verify the facts, and to advise us what action to take. In the end we never made the decision ourselves, but sent all particulars back to New Zealand and left it to them, for after all people in New Zealand were in the best position to assess the degree of urgency in the cases. The scheme which we finally evolved in collaboration with Army Headquarters we regarded as one of our successes. Depending on circumstances, we communicated with New Zealand either by letter or cable. The Department of National Service then made the necessary inquiries, either with members of its own staff, or through local bodies, the Child Welfare Department, the **Salvation Army** and so on. Often the inquiries had to be made discreetly, especially in cases of alleged infidelity of wives. It was, moreover, undesirable that it should become widely known that officials had been calling at houses and asking awkward questions. In the early stages there were instances of clumsy handling of cases in New Zealand; but progressively the system worked more smoothly and, as far as we were concerned at the receiving end, produced reports which were convincing. We always accepted the New Zealand recommendation.

It is worth noting that in many cases the situation was nothing like as bad as had been represented to us – not that the applicant had knowingly made false statements, but that his correspondents had painted too gloomy a picture and that he had then been brooding over his problems and magnifying them in his mind. The ‘well-meaning’ have a lot to account for, together with the human weakness for putting the worst construction on events.

In the very early stages we used to let the men see the reports in full; but sometimes the reports included comments by witnesses or by the investigator that made men angry and indeed exacerbated the case, and in some cases led to bitter criticisms of the investigator being

written back to New Zealand by the applicants. It is a difficult situation, for it is easy to start the belief that Headquarters is hiding something and that the full tale has not been told; but experience taught us that it was far better to take suitable extracts from the reports, sufficient to answer the man's doubts or queries, perhaps to send him the full conclusions, but not the full evidence. Names of investigators were always suppressed.

The scheme was issued as a Standing Instruction, one of the editions appearing in [Appendix IX](#).

From time to time we were told that applicants had had civil law actions decided against them in New Zealand without having a chance to represent their own case, a common example being that men stated they had had maintenance orders made against them, but that they had a good defence. Whether or not such cases did occur was never clear to us overseas, and in fact we were not convinced; but at one point a suggestion was made by an eminent lawyer serving in [2 NZEF](#) that the services of the Law Society in New Zealand should be invoked to produce a scheme by which the defence of men serving overseas would be ensured. As far as we knew no such scheme existed; but it is, of course, most desirable that the interests of men absent from their homeland should be safeguarded.

It will have been apparent from the preceding sections on marriages and compassionate leave that the military staffs at Headquarters found difficulty in competing with the problems created and were sometimes heavy-handed. We could have done with some skilled advice, or better still, would have been helped by leaving the initial investigation of the problem at our end to be handled by someone skilled in such tasks. Something of the nature of a 'Family Welfare Office' was wanted at Headquarters – a small branch staffed by one or two officers specially selected on account of their peacetime knowledge of dealing with family troubles. We could probably have found personnel from within the force; but alternatively it would have been worth while to get suitable personnel from New Zealand. This office would be a properly constituted

branch of Headquarters, but would deal initially with the non-military problems that have filled so many pages in this volume, and would then advise the staff proper what action should be taken. We could have learned a lesson from the British service, where there was an amply staffed service to deal with domestic problems alone.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PRISONERS OF WAR

PRISONERS OF WAR

We found the returned or escaped prisoners of war 'problem children', to the extent that something in them made them desperately anxious to go on serving, to go back to their units, and to carry on from the point where they had left. But it was clear to all those concerned in any way with the reception of one-time prisoners of war that the majority were in no fit state to resume work, and required above all a period of rest, preferably in New Zealand. It was difficult to persuade them to agree to this, especially as quite a lot of them seemed to be physically fit and were not conscious of the mental strains that were apparent to observers. The official policy of 2 NZEF was that all prisoners of war who came back to us, either as the result of an official exchange or by escaping, should go back to New Zealand for a spell; but the policy was never strictly enforced.

Very few members of the force knew anything about the prisoner-of-war portions of the Geneva Convention. They had a vague idea that all they were compelled to say when captured was to give their name and rank, but beyond this were ignorant of their rights and obligations. No one had ever expected that we would have such a large number of prisoners of war, otherwise a knowledge of the convention would have formed part of normal training. Since the war a new convention has been produced, and without a doubt should be explained to every member of an expeditionary force, at least in so far as concerns the portions relating to prisoners of war.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

THE MARGINALLY UNFIT

THE MARGINALLY UNFIT

One of our most difficult problems was the disposal of what may be called the marginally unfit man. There were always a number of men who, while officially fit for service in base camps, were one way or another of little use, or at best were more trouble than they were worth – and the ‘trouble’ referred to was not disciplinary trouble so much as troubles arising from various personal characteristics, which in the long run led to their being unemployable. A good number had some form of mental upset that made them cases for a psychiatrist. Some were in a perpetually depressed condition, and these speedily went from bad to worse once they were withdrawn from the field and sent to work at **Maadi**. Some men seemed always to be having minor illnesses. Some could be described as ‘burnt out’ or suffering from loss of nerve. There were a few who developed objectionable habits, of which chronic alcoholism was one. Some were just ‘plain useless’ and drifted round the camp from one low-category job to another. Some had landed back in **Maadi** on account of lack of heart for the field. All were officially still ‘fit for base employment’, and often it was difficult to determine how much of the trouble was due to malingering.

There was always a feeling in the Government in New Zealand that men should be sent back home as soon as they became unfit for service in the field; but we had to point out that there was work for many hundreds of men in base units, and that if Grade II men were not employed there, it would mean that so many more of Grade I would be wanted. We felt that we must make sure, however, that men were adequately employed and carrying out useful work, particularly as there was a tendency for men to slide rapidly down the slope from a good Grade II to a useless Grade IV. Special instructions on the subject were issued at intervals from July 1941 onwards. In the end we appointed a

special 'Employment Officer' in **Maadi** to look after men who were marginal cases, and to ensure that the work they were doing was reasonable. It was laid down, for instance, that perpetual cookhouse fatigue was not satisfactory employment, but that some variety must be introduced. At the same time a special board was constituted to investigate doubtful cases, and to have power to authorise the return of men to New Zealand. The members included the Consultant Physician and a psychiatrist. The board was effective by the end of 1942. As an example of its work, in November 1942 141 men were placed on the New Zealand roll, the categories being:

Burnt out	58
Always sick	39
Subnormal	11
Lost nerve	15
Objectionable habits	1
Bad conduct	17
<hr/>	
Total	141

Parties of this type were sent back every few months thereafter. The question of sending back bad-conduct men has already been discussed briefly on [page 219](#).

The activities of this board helped to bring another point to a head. For some time we had not been satisfied with the terms used for medical grading. They were the ones used in New Zealand for the initial inspection of men when called up from civil life, where the main question to decide was whether or not a man was fit to go overseas. They were not necessarily applicable to medical boards held overseas to determine whether a man was ill enough to be sent back, or whether he was fit enough to be employed elsewhere than in the field. In considering a change, one point that weighed with us was that no matter what we said overseas about a man's medical state, he was automatically boarded again on arrival in New Zealand, an eminently sensible course of action. It seemed to us that we would not be causing any confusion if we used overseas a terminology that clearly defined the

man's medical grading within the Expeditionary Force. All concerned were agreed that there should be a change; but it took some time to reach a form of grading that met with general acceptance. Our final decision, while it worked quite well, was not necessarily the perfect answer. We adopted a grading from 'A' to 'E' – 'A' being fit for service anywhere, 'B' fit for service anywhere, but with some small physical disability (loss of a finger joint, for instance), 'C' fit for service on the lines of communication, 'D' fit for service in **Maadi Camp** only, and 'E' unfit for any service in **2 NZEF**. We considered that to make the change was within the GOC's powers, and so made it first and told Army Headquarters about it afterwards. We could almost hear the gasp in Egypt; but Army Headquarters raised no concrete objections and accepted our action without demur. The change was effective in April 1943.

At a later stage in 1943 it was agreed with New Zealand that primary producers who ceased to be grade 'A' should be returned to New Zealand forthwith; but this was the only exception to the rule that men stayed with the force for as long as they could perform useful work.

This is not the place, nor has the author the qualifications, to write at length about the characteristics of the average New Zealander; but there is one characteristic that was the cause of many of our troubles. Given a job to do of real importance – and the man himself reserved the right to decide whether the job was important or not – the average New Zealander would do it better than anyone. After all, we have the opinion of the enemy to support the claim that our men were among the best fighters on the Allied side. British officers, whether in the field or out of it, were unstinted in their praise of the work done by New Zealanders, no matter what it was, or what arm or service was involved. They tackled the job wholeheartedly, and brought to it an intelligence above the average.

But once the work was over and a man found himself with nothing to do, except possibly daily chores, he showed an impatience that was

above the average also. The New Zealander had come overseas to beat the enemy as quickly as possible, to get on with the job and no nonsense, and to get back home just as fast as he could; so he did not appreciate any prolonged spell of waiting about. Unfortunately, in war there are bound to be spells of doing nothing. It is an old tale that war is merely long spells of boredom punctuated by moments of extreme terror. It appeared to us sometimes that the New Zealander did not stand up to the boredom as well as he did to the terror. Here was a case where the British Tommy had rather the better of it, as he is just as patient as the New Zealander is impatient, and, one job done, is content to wait until someone comes along and gives him another; but while the New Zealander is waiting for the next job, he is very prone to go looking for trouble.

There was another aspect of human nature that was the cause of some cynical comment at Headquarters, namely the way in which men walked cheerfully into trouble, matrimonial and otherwise, and then sat back and waited for the army to extricate them. It has already been mentioned on [page 228](#) that husbands were never any help when it came to removing wives from remote villages or from hysterical relations, but were quite prepared to see the military authorities do their work for them. Undoubtedly the majority of the cases arose out of relations with women, legal or illegal, sometimes very complicated; but we had others involving financial matters. All had one thing in common – that the man had become involved in the case with his eyes open, but that as soon as things became awkward he had recourse to military authorities to get him out of his difficulties.

One must not be unfair about this. It has already been said—not very originally – that the army is a form of 100 per cent state socialism, so that presumably a man is within his rights in looking to Authority to extricate him from troubles even if of his own making. The only point that need be made here is that any headquarters similar to [HQ 2 NZEF](#) must expect to be faced with problems of this nature, and must be armed accordingly.

To finish on a lighter note, the beliefs of soldiers in the mass have been a source of wonder and entertainment ever since history was written, so that it is not surprising that we had a healthy crop. When the Minister of Defence visited us in 1943, he received the following complaints among others:

The Post Office staff looked carefully through the parcels and appropriated those that looked the most promising.

The National Patriotic Commissioner was making a good thing out of selling the stores that arrived from New Zealand for distribution to the troops.

Everyone in the [Middle East](#) travelled free on the railways except New Zealanders.

Everyone in the [Western Desert](#) was getting New Zealand meat except the New Zealanders.

It need hardly be said that there was not a word of truth in any of them.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 16 – WELFARE

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EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION SERVICE

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

IT was always of interest to ask any officer who had served in the first war in **France** what welfare arrangements had been made for the troops there. The answer would almost invariably be that the army did very little. In the divisional area there might be an odd **YMCA** institute or two; in the nearest town there might be a bigger club or church institute. The nearest welfare establishment to the average unit was probably the local *estaminet* – and a tribute should be paid to the hard-headed but kind-hearted peasant women who ran these *estaminets* and so made up a little for the army's deficiencies. It must be said that the men did not appear to notice that there were any deficiencies, but one way or another managed to keep themselves entertained. It would be trespassing into dangerous ground to suggest that the generation of 1914-18 was more self-reliant than that of 1939-45; but however that may be, by the outbreak of the Second World War, Welfare (with a capital W) had become a feature of civilian life; all the more so in New Zealand because the Government of the day was a Labour one, with State Welfare one of the biggest planks in its platform.

Before the Expeditionary Force set sail, the Government had taken one step which was of great value, and that was to canalise the efforts of those local bodies and institutions, welfare committees and individuals, who wanted to collect money for providing amenities for the troops. The experience of the First World War had been lamentable, in that there was no proper central control, and a mass of committees of all sorts set to work to collect money, often in competition with one another, and often at a cost which swallowed up the contributions. By the end of the war the number of bodies that had been engaged in this activity ran into hundreds, and many had never handed over a penny to army welfare. As part of the pre-war arrangements in 1938-39 (see [pages 10 and 11](#)), there was evolved a scheme comprising one National Patriotic Fund with district branches, the scheme which held the floor during the war and is

well known to everyone. The Emergency Regulations to put this into force were ready when war broke out.

Prior to the embarkation of the First Echelon, the **National Patriotic Fund Board** had appointed the Young Men's Christian Association as one of its expending agencies overseas, which implied that money given by the National Patriotic Fund would reach the troops through the medium of the **YMCA**. A small number of **YMCA** personnel sailed with the First Echelon.

As with so many other administrative matters, however, the exact position regarding welfare arrangements had not been fully determined, and certainly was not known to the staff of **2 NZEF**. It was only when we settled down at **Maadi** that we were able to take stock of the position, while the few **YMCA** secretaries carried on with welfare work in units, and took steps to start the first institute in the camp. We were then told by cable from New Zealand that the Government had given approval to the Church Army (the Anglican Church) entering the welfare field overseas, and that *inter alia* it was to be allowed to run an institute of its own. This appeared in order to us. No Church Army staff were available at the time, and the senior Anglican chaplain watched its interests.

The Salvation Army chaplain then applied to Headquarters for permission to erect an institute, stating that he had the necessary funds from his own church. To Headquarters this appeared a reasonable request, coming as it did from a church body which carried on a large part of its work through the medium of institutes of various kinds; and in any case, we still had memories of the first war, when all religious bodies were represented in greater or less degree in welfare establishments. A site was allotted in **Helwan Camp**, and construction was started. The Roman Catholic chaplain then applied for similar permission, which was granted.

Somehow or other knowledge of this state of affairs reached New Zealand, probably through the church bodies themselves, for we then

received a strongly worded, indeed almost angrily worded, cable saying that all this work was to stop, and that no bodies except the **YMCA** and the Church Army were to be allowed to run institutes. Naturally, the **Salvation Army** and Roman Catholic chaplains protested vigorously; but the direction came from New Zealand, and we had to tell the chaplains that we were powerless, and that their protest would have to be carried further by their churches in New Zealand. The Government was firm, however, with the result that throughout the war the Anglican Church was the only one separately represented in welfare work.

It is not the task of this volume to criticise what went on in New Zealand, particularly as in this case we never knew what had happened there; but it must be said that in our own view overseas, the decision to allow one church only to enter the field was unfortunate. We could have understood a decision to allow all churches to be represented, and we understood, and approved, one undenominational body, the **YMCA**, having sole charge of the work; but to favour one church alone seemed inexplicable. There may have been good reasons, but they were not obvious to us, nor, it is certain, to the other churches. Thereafter, throughout the war, in that particular field, Headquarters had to deal with two bodies instead of one; for although the Church Army representatives tried to co-operate with the **YMCA**, and did co-operate adequately in the field, the fact remained that they felt a degree of responsibility to their church in New Zealand, and could not forget that they were an independent body. Headquarters received no more guidance from New Zealand on this delicate point, and had to wrestle with the problem unaided. The **YMCA** remained the main single welfare body, and expanded steadily in accordance with the growth of the force; and periodically the senior Church Army secretary would ask for permission to expand also, for his view was that where the **YMCA** went, the Church Army should go also. Had we adhered to the strict letter of our instructions, we could have told him that one institute only had been approved; but this would have been silly, and they were allowed some additions during the war. In the distribution of welfare secretaries with units, mutual arrangements with the **YMCA** prevented duplication, the

Church Army having so many and the YMCA the balance, which was by far the greater number of the two. In July 1943, for instance, the YMCA had 23 secretaries and 2 cinema operators, the Church Army 4 secretaries only.

It must be repeated that it would have been better if the Government had adhered to the original decision to make the YMCA alone the expending agency for the National Patriotic Fund.

Early in April 1940 there came a need for sports gear, and Headquarters recollected that there was a National Patriotic Fund; but how one obtained money from it no one knew. It then transpired that, pending a permanent appointment, the senior YMCA secretary was the temporary Commissioner for the fund. His instructions read that he and the Base Paymaster were authorised to expend moneys to provide comforts for the troops. Each of these officials had been advised of this authority, but up till then nothing had happened to bring the proposed procedure to the light of day. The Paymaster interpreted his authority merely to mean that he was the holder of the funds, and disbursed them as advised by the temporary Commissioner. There could be no difference of opinion about the need for sports gear; but when it came to a discussion about one or two other things, it emerged that the acting Commissioner interpreted his authority as including the right to decide whether or not any one item of expenditure was really required, and in broad terms to decide what forms of welfare were best for the troops.

This point appeared to Headquarters to be of the first importance – a matter of principle that would have to be settled forthwith. It seemed to our simple minds to be wrong that when the GOC had decided that some form of welfare activity was called for, he might be overruled by an independent authority of junior status. It was early in the life of the force, and we were not so confident on this and many other points as we would have been some years later; but all the same the arrangements did not seem right. In the middle of April 1940, therefore, the GOC cabled New Zealand asking that the form of control should be reviewed. The cable went on to say:

... best results cannot be obtained by Commissioner and paymaster controlling.

Commander sees whole picture and best able to assess the comforts needed. Also three possible sources of expenditure for troops, (a) public funds, (b) Nat Pat Funds, (c) presumably **Red Cross**.

Only commander can decide which is legitimate course for any one item. Therefore suggest power to nominate representatives on special committee to control.

The National Patriotic Fund Board in New Zealand concurred in this suggestion; but owing to the course that the war took about this time, the GOC was not specifically advised of its concurrence. We were then in the middle of May, the news of the diversion of the Second Echelon to England had just been received, and the pressure of more urgent business pushed this question of control of welfare into the background. The permanent Commissioner had sailed with the Second Echelon and was now on his way to England, so that for the time being the problem was put aside. The needs at the moment were not great, for the force was a new one and was training hard.

Early in 1941 the Commissioner arrived in the **Middle East**, and the question of responsibility was taken up again. In the meantime a welfare committee of a sort had been functioning, although, as far as we were aware, without the benediction of New Zealand. The Commissioner was in touch with his board about this; and in a letter to him at the end of May 1941 the Board, in effect, reopened the whole question by saying:

...he Board approves of the consulting committee consisting of ... names] as arranged by the Commissioner in the **Middle East**, but as the Commissioner is the Board's representative in the **Middle East** the final decision regarding expenditure must rest with him.

At the time the GOC was in **Crete**, and the discussions with the

Commissioner were conducted by OICA, who had no hesitation in telling the Commissioner that the wording of this paragraph was not satisfactory, for the reason that the welfare of the force must be the responsibility of the Commander. The Commissioner then said that it appeared to him that the whole question would have to be referred to New Zealand and settled there on the highest level.

We had already adopted as an unexpressed policy that we would settle any troubles arising within the force ourselves, and would not worry New Zealand with them; and OICA suggested to the Commissioner that we should try and find a *modus vivendi*, while adhering to our own points of view. Only as a last resort should we refer our differences to New Zealand. There was room for a sort of half-way house. No one was suggesting that the Commissioner should just be a rubber stamp, and it was agreed that he must have the power to say that any item of proposed expenditure clearly went outside the purposes for which the fund had been subscribed; but he should exercise this power only under great provocation and only after friendly discussion. For their part the army authorities should be careful not to go to extremes and should consult the Commissioner at all stages; but they considered that in the last resort the opinion of the GOC must carry the day. We then agreed that a better and more authoritative welfare committee should be formed – the Commissioner himself being of course a member – in order to debate the general purposes for which money from the fund should be used. The Commissioner on his part agreed not to approve grants on his own authority, but to submit his proposals to the committee. It should be said that since he had arrived from England he had made one or two grants which appeared to us to be completely out of order, and one of which at least cut across the regulations on which the force was being administered; and in case it may be thought that the regulation in question was of our own making, it should be said that it was one prescribed from New Zealand.

Little by little the *modus vivendi* was established, and it was never necessary to refer the argument to New Zealand. There were occasionally

sharp differences of opinion; but as welfare became more elaborate, it was clear that an advisory committee was essential, and the Commissioner came to welcome it. The committee discussed and determined the size of grant to be made to units to augment regimental funds, whether or not any special grant was called for, what aspects of welfare needed strengthening, how many welfare secretaries there should be for work with units or in camps, and so on. It met about six or seven times a year.

Before discussing other welfare arrangements, it is desired to pause for a moment to consider again this question of responsibility for welfare. It is maintained firmly that the responsibility for the welfare of a force lies with its commander, and that he cannot hand it over to an independent authority. It is as much his responsibility as tactics or training or health or discipline. It may be a comparatively new responsibility, but it is none the less compelling. Military history shows a steady addition to the Commander's responsibilities. In Wellington's days the Commander had no responsibility for supply and transport, which was arranged by the authorities in the home country and controlled in the field by an independent commissary. Today such matters are a part of normal military administration. Once upon a time, moreover, welfare would have been regarded as a luxury, instead of a necessity as it is today.

It must be remembered that the National Patriotic Fund was not the only source of welfare. The GOC, by the terms of the powers given him by the Minister of Defence, could spend a certain sum on any one welfare item; and experience had already shown that if he applied to the Government for further authority it would be given him, e.g., the sum of over £1000 had been approved for a swimming bath. As will be seen later on, Government funds accounted for a large part of our welfare arrangements.

The Overseas Commissioner of the fund should stand to the GOC in the capacity of a technical adviser, a role filled for instance by the DMS. The Commissioner can advise the GOC whether or not any proposed

course of action comes within the scope of the National Patriotic Fund; and the GOC is not going to override this advice without much thought. But he has the last word.

Had the welfare arrangements broken down at any stage, it is the Commander who would have been taken to task, and rightly so. No matter what arrangements may be made to find the moneys for welfare, their subsequent application overseas is one of the duties of the Commander and of no one else.

The main expending authorities for money drawn from the National Patriotic Fund were thus the YMCA and the Church Army, the former being the heavier expender. For this reason, and for the reason that the introduction of the Church Army was a mistake, it is proposed in what follows to confine attention to the YMCA. Its work was partly within units, and partly in the form of institutes and cinemas within camps or in forward areas. The YMCA staff consisted in part of 'secretaries' and in part of 'orderlies', of whom there was one to each secretary. Most large units – battalions or field regiments – had a full-time secretary.

The YMCA is a body of the highest repute. While undenominational, its principles are those of the christian religion, and its work is aimed at improving the conditions of life of all those who care to accept its ministrations. Men knew that in dealing with the YMCA they were above all things getting a square deal, and thus gave the YMCA a confidence and trust which New Zealanders, suspicious and critical as they are, rarely give to organised bodies. The work of the YMCA staff was thus of inestimable value; but it must now be said that it is a matter of opinion exactly how much of the good work done by the YMCA welfare staff overseas was in fact due to the YMCA organisation in New Zealand.

The money with which they operated came from the National Patriotic Fund. It was unfortunate, therefore, that all the institutes, cinemas, vehicles, etc., were so clearly marked YMCA and that the part played by the Patriotic Fund was indicated only by a notice, albeit a large one, inside the building or the vehicle. There is little doubt that

most of the troops thought that the **YMCA** activities were financed by the **YMCA** alone. It often happened that letters from the men to New Zealand would include remarks about what wonderful work the **YMCA** was doing, but how little they got from the National Patriotic Fund. Some told their people not to subscribe a penny to the fund but to give it all to the **YMCA**. That body was thus inadvertently getting credit to which it was not entitled.

The **YMCA** in New Zealand in the early stages, and at intervals thereafter, sent special staff overseas to act as secretaries. Some of these, but not many, had been full-time employees of the **YMCA** in peacetime; some, while not employees, had been active in **YMCA** work on a voluntary basis. Both could claim to be ' **YMCA** staff'. But these two classes together were only a small part of the total **YMCA** staff employed overseas. The rest came from the rank and file of **2 NZEF**. From time to time the **YMCA** Commissioner would apply to Headquarters either for an addition to the staff on account of increasing work, or for a replacement on account of losses, very often asking for some named individuals. Suitable personnel would then be transferred from their units and would become **YMCA** secretaries. Moreover, at an early stage it was agreed with the **YMCA** Commissioner that the army would provide one assistant, called an orderly, for each secretary. These men, while of a type that was in full accord with **YMCA** principles, had in all probability never done any **YMCA** work in peacetime, and had no claims except the title to be called ' **YMCA**' at all. Towards the end of the war the **YMCA** and Church Army welfare staff combined amounted to 100 all told – 36 secretaries, 41 orderlies, and 23 drivers and cinema staff – and of those by far the greater part had been drawn from units of **2 NZEF**. The pay of all except the secretaries proper was entirely the responsibility of the Government, which was thus one way and another giving a heavy subsidy to the welfare work carried out under the auspices of the **YMCA**.

At this point it must be said that the **National Patriotic Fund Board** was responsible for the pay of the 'secretaries' – except that the army paid them as privates in order that they should have a proper military

status. The Board did not treat them at all generously, perhaps from a belief, understandable in Victorian days but out-of-date today, that welfare workers should work for the love of it. Welfare today is a necessity and not a luxury, and the staff employed thereon deserve to be paid in accordance with their duties. When our clubs come to be discussed, the poor reward received by the welfare secretaries will be even more apparent.

To return to the previous point – namely that the **YMCA was inadvertently getting a lot of credit which did not truly belong to it – there was a belief among the troops, possibly among the people of New Zealand, and possibly at the headquarters of the **YMCA** in New Zealand, that this **YMCA** headquarters was in fact running or controlling the welfare work overseas. The control exercised by the New Zealand headquarters was one of principle only, and had little effect upon the practical work done in the field. What welfare work was required was discussed in the Welfare Committee, or by talks among those concerned, and was then implemented by the welfare staff. It would have been an impossibility for any office in New Zealand to have detailed control over our arrangements overseas.**

But, on the other hand, the impalpable control exercised by the principles of the **YMCA should not be minimised. It meant that **YMCA** institutes, large or small, sometimes only a tent with a staff of one, were conducted in a way that was beyond criticism, the atmosphere was clean and fresh, the spirit was one of mutual helpfulness, and always in the background was the secretary ready to be consulted and to advise, and perhaps more accessible even than the chaplains. Liquor and gambling in any form were not allowed, and the greatest efforts were made to ensure that men had some real relaxation in an atmosphere as peaceful as is ever possible in any army. The men knew that they would get a square deal from the secretaries either with the unit or in institutes, that money entrusted to them for commissions would be safe, that confidences would be respected, and that the staff had no thought except to help.**

It is in this invisible dissemination of the basic principles of the **YMCA** that the New Zealand headquarters exercised its influence in **2 NZEF**. The influence was of the first importance; but it does not justify the widely held belief that the **YMCA** was responsible for welfare in **2 NZEF**.

There were many in **2 NZEF** who thought that welfare should be entirely an army responsibility, and that there should be an Army Welfare Service as a separate corps. This opinion receives support when it is realised that over and above the welfare arrangements discussed at length above, we had a number of clubs with a total staff greater than the **YMCA** and Church Army together, and that the staff were all soldiers and the clubs properly constituted units of **2 NZEF**. The **Entertainment Unit** (the **Kiwi Concert Party**), the canteen stores, the *NZEF Times*, the Postal Corps, the ERS – all these were elements of welfare in its widest sense, and all came under military control. In the Army Welfare Service those men who in peacetime were engaged in work with the **YMCA** or similar church organisation, either whole or part time, would naturally find their place, just as members of the **Red Cross** or St. John's Ambulance gravitate to the Medical Corps. After all, there are no other peacetime bodies which go to war under their own flag, so to speak.

However, it must be said that our arrangements worked in **2 NZEF**, no matter how illogical they might have been. The sentiment attaching to the **YMCA** is now a strong one, and it may be thought that the red triangle of the 'Y' has an appeal that no official Army Welfare Service could equal. If the moral effect of the name '**YMCA**' is thought to be irreplaceable, then its work must continue as before; but to be fair to all concerned, it should be made very clear where its money comes from, where its staff is drawn from, and who is directing its activities.

Before going on to other forms of welfare it is right to say that too much was left to what, after all, was only a handful of **YMCA** and Church Army staff. The attitude of officers only too often was that welfare was the duty of the welfare secretary, and that the regimental

officer need not interest himself in it directly. When units were out of the line, or in base areas at all times, the men were left to the welfare staff at the end of the day's work, and the officers largely went about their own business. While the welfare secretaries might have been fully responsible for making arrangements for entertainments, etc., they would have welcomed a little help from outside, and a little more interest shown in what went on inside their institutes. The Standing Instruction on Welfare did say that it was 'primarily the responsibility of the unit', but this was often interpreted as 'of the unit secretary'.

A mention must be made here of two special institutes, only one of which was in any way under military control. First comes the famous 'Maadi Tent', started by a few British residents in Maadi village almost as soon as the First Echelon arrived. It was placed within the limits of the village, but just at the approach to the camp, at first in a large tent alone (hence the name) but latterly distributed over a series of tents and even more permanent buildings. A committee of residents controlled it, and some of the ladies were always on duty there, helped by a native staff. They tried with some success to keep a homely atmosphere in the tent, and in addition ran a steady series of entertainments of quite good class. The tent stayed open for a full six years, and only closed when practically the last New Zealander had gone home. What small profits they made were given to British war funds. The great majority of the men who passed through Maadi Camp will always remember the Maadi Tent with affection.

The other institute was the Lowry Hut, erected in Maadi Camp in 1941 from money given by Mr T. Lowry of Hawke's Bay. He had made a similar gift to the First Expeditionary Force, and wished to repeat it in this second war. It was in every way a superior type of institute. A second hut was later provided by the same gentleman for use in Advanced Base in Italy. It was much regretted in the force that Mr Lowry died before the end of the war. Both these institutes were run by the YMCA.

Towards the end of 1940 the GOC decided that a New Zealand

institute or club was required in **Cairo**, where despite all the efforts of the British community in Egypt, of the British Army, and of the **YMCA** and church bodies, there was still a need for welfare establishments. By that time also the men were getting a little weary of civilian bars and restaurants. A large building was taken in the heart of **Cairo**, financed initially by the National Patriotic Fund, and adapted to the needs of a club for all ranks, including in this restaurants, tearooms, reading rooms, games rooms and so on. It was intended from the first to supply liquor there, which meant that it could not be run by the **YMCA**. The club was therefore made an official unit of **2 NZEF**, with a captain as manager and a military staff which reached seventy at its maximum, together with a civilian staff which at the peak ran into hundreds. From the first it was comprehensive in its amenities, and became even more so as the years went on. It was our longest-lived club, and by far the biggest. It was also by far the best in **Cairo**, and after making it available at the beginning to all Allied troops, we had ultimately to restrict entrance, as it was swamped out and jammed to the doors. While we had most regretfully to close it to **United Kingdom** and other Allied troops, we continued to make it available to Australians, of whom there were often small parties in **Cairo**, either from the **Royal Australian Air Force** or on duty or leave from Palestine. This was in part a form of reciprocity, for the Australians had made their Jerusalem clubs available to New Zealanders; but we continued to make all our clubs open to Australians to the end of the war, including those later opened in **Italy**. Our clubs were also open to all British nurses.

The Cairo club became a Frankenstein's monster to the staff of **Maadi Camp**. It got bigger and bigger as the number of troops in Egypt increased. More and more facilities were provided – post office, buying organisation, ice-cream bar and so on – and in late 1941 the first party of girls arrived to work there. The club was so big, and the number of men so great, that the atmosphere was always strained, and the one thing unknown in it was peace. It now meant that New Zealanders on leave in **Cairo** tended to concentrate in the club, instead of spreading themselves round the many other clubs and civilian cabarets and bars;

which meant in turn that we had to have a contingent of provost staff always on duty there, if only to keep the pavements clear outside. In trying to do good, we had only made another rod for our backs.

From the first beer was available for the men at meals. It was then decided to take in a small amount of adjoining accommodation and establish a beer bar. The intention was a deliberate one, namely to attract men from the civilian bars, where the liquor sold was poor and the atmosphere frequently sordid. The results were what might have been expected, and the beer bar became a second monster. The men congregated there in hundreds until it was difficult to get inside the door, the air became thick with smoke, and the New Zealand habit of drinking a lot in a short time had full rein. On many occasions, especially when there were parties of men back from the **Western Desert**, men could be found in dozens sitting in the gutters, or on the pavements leaning against the walls, drinking out of bottles and throwing them away when finished, and this in the centre of the European business and shopping area of **Cairo**.

The place was a disgrace and did great harm to the reputation of New Zealand. It was a regrettable experiment and should have been abandoned after a few months' trial. It was, in the end, closed down; but in the meantime it had attracted the attention of the Government in New Zealand, and for once we had the not very easy or pleasant task of explaining it away.

What the correct answer was, both to club and bar, it is not easy to say. There were many men in the force, indeed the majority, who would have enjoyed a restful atmosphere, with heaps of room to read, play games, drink tea, write letters and so on; and at no time was this type of man adequately catered for. It might have been better to separate the 'peaceful' club from the other type completely, and have two clubs in different streets. In the 'restaurant' club, beer could be provided with meals, but not at other times. Beer bars are better kept within the limits of camps, and not opened where they can be seen by the public.

When we moved to **Italy** we established clubs in every city of any size through which we passed. First came **Bari**, largely for the benefit of Advanced Base, for the Division soon moved away from the area. Next came Rome, and then **Florence** and **Venice**. By the time the Rome club was formed, the Italian armistice was in force, by which (*inter alia*) the Italian Government was to provide welfare facilities for Allied troops. The form which this took in part was that the Allies took over hotels as going concerns, the Italians paying the staff and the Allies providing the food and fuel, items that were beyond the powers of the Italians. So in Rome we took over a large hotel and turned it into a residential club for all ranks. This club was a great success, mainly because the number there was regulated and congestion avoided, and in addition there were all the amenities of hotel life. Similarly, in **Florence** and **Venice** we took over hotels and made them available for residence on leave. In all cases the clubs were for all ranks, the only separation being that officers had separate dining rooms and slightly less congested room accommodation – and also paid more than the men, for whom the charge was purely nominal.

As was mentioned in

Chapter 6, the Venice club was formed under somewhat piratical circumstances, as we practically captured the Hotel Danieli by force of arms. It was a magnificent success as a club.

By the time the Florence club had been started in September 1944, the Welfare Committee came to the conclusion that we wanted a central controlling authority for all our clubs, which had become real business organisations. A general manager was then appointed to ensure some uniformity in administration; for all our clubs were military establishments, and entirely the responsibility of the Government. At the maximum, when we had all five clubs running, the military staff amounted to 14 officers and over 200 other ranks, over twice the number employed with the YMCA and Church Army together.

Looking back now on our arrangements, it must be said that despite all that was done, it was still not enough. We could have done with more welfare staff in units, more institutes and more clubs, partly to avoid congestion, partly to give greater opportunities for those who wanted peace and quiet in their off-duty periods, and partly just because more was wanted to prevent men from becoming bored in their spare time. While they were in action the need did not arise in quite the same way – more reading matter would have helped a lot here – but as soon as the Division came out into rest areas, and certainly while men were at Maadi or Advanced Base, they were bound to have long spells off duty, and wanted somewhere to go and something to do. Our quality was unrivalled but our quantity still insufficient.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CANTEEN STORES

CANTEEN STORES

The General Manager of the clubs took over also the responsibility for the bulk distribution of canteen stores, assisted by separate canteen managers. For some time previously the bulk distribution of canteen stores had been handled by the club managers, largely because they had suitable accommodation and could find the staff either from the military personnel in the clubs or from civilian labour; but by late 1944 canteen stores had become a business too great to leave to club managers to handle as an incidental, and separate but parallel canteen depots were set up.

Credit must be given where it is due, and it must be said that from first to last the **YMCA** and Church Army staff largely handled the distribution of canteen stores to units. In fact, in the very early stages they handled them completely; but after a while the bulk distribution passed to the clubs.

Canteen stores were a problem in themselves. We started the war by agreeing to make use of the Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes (**NAAFI**). At various spots in **Maadi** and **Helwan** camps, **NAAFI** opened institutes which provided certain amenities, including meals and beer, and which in effect formed part of our welfare arrangements. The managers of the institutes took orders for canteen goods, which were paid for at something approaching market prices, a part of the price later coming back to the unit as rebate. **NAAFI** had been running ever since the end of the first war, and was experienced in the work, so that our initial decision to make use of it was understandable.

However, by the end of 1940 complaints began to reach Headquarters about the standard of service that was being rendered, which was the best that could be produced by a poor type of native staff.

Moreover, the troops were missing their special brands of New Zealand tobacco and other New Zealand delicacies, and were feeling the first stirrings of the wish to be looked after by their own people. We had heard that the Australians ran their own canteen service, and indeed had had some experience of it during the time that an Australian division had been at **Helwan**. The GOC with the approval of the Government appointed a committee of inquiry to go into the question, including in the inquiry a visit to Palestine to inspect the Australian organisation.

The committee came to the conclusion that, take it all in all, we should stick to **NAAFI** and not set up our own canteen service. It considered that the many complaints against **NAAFI** could be remedied, and in fact subsequently arranged with the local **NAAFI** chief to import more New Zealand goods, employ a better class of servant and so on.

The committee appeared to be right in its decision at the time. **NAAFI** was already a world-wide organisation with an extensive knowledge of running institutes and supplying stores. Its bulk buying machinery made it flexible. And, best of all, it saved us from tying up men in running our own organisation.

Nevertheless, the committee was wrong. It had not taken enough cognisance of the liking of the New Zealander for his home goods, and for his belief that no one looked after him as well as his own people. It had not appreciated – and in this it was certainly not alone – to what an extent our welfare services would expand, until the point was reached that **NAAFI** impinged on us only in **Maadi Camp**. In fact, it had not been able to foresee what the next few years would bring forth, and as at the time of its report the force had not seen any active service, it is hard to blame it.

Little by little we started importing our own stores from New Zealand, and gradually built up an organisation of our own. We still drew on **NAAFI** for many basic items, and thereby laid ourselves open to the accusation of just making a convenience of **NAAFI** instead of taking the

rough with the smooth; but as our purchases even at their height were but a very minor part of the total **NAAFI** sales in the **Middle East**, no great harm was done. We agreed to sell at **NAAFI** prices, especially in those cases where we were importing the same articles as it was.

The goods in New Zealand were bought at wholesale rates by the **National Patriotic Fund Board** and shipped overseas in transports. Later the Commissioner in the **Middle East** was reimbursed for this expenditure. The goods were then sold at a little above cost, in accordance with the normal custom – and also to avoid troubles with **NAAFI** – with the result that by the end of the war we had accumulated a fair profit. There were then signs of coming argument over the ownership of these profits; but as will be known, the post-war arrangements on the point are satisfactory to all.

The conclusions to be drawn from our experience are that it would be better to grasp the nettle from the beginning and run our own canteen organisation.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

OTHER AMENITIES

OTHER AMENITIES

In addition to helping with the clubs, the Patriotic Fund paid for sports gear, wireless sets and books, bore the entire stage costs of the **Kiwi Concert Party**, subsidised regimental funds, gave special grants at Christmas, and provided the money to start our paper, the *NZEF Times*. Here the Government played its part also, for the personnel of the 'Kiwis' and the staff of the *Times* were soldiers and paid in the normal way, and both units were properly formed units of **2 NZEF**. It must be pointed out again that our welfare was shared between the Patriotic Fund and the Government, and was not maintained by the former alone.

The 'Kiwis' were officially known as the **Entertainment Unit**, the more glorified title being thought better for a unit which was self-contained in transport and equipment, and did not merely include the performers. Originally it was intended to serve the troops while in **Maadi**; but once made fully mobile it roamed all over the theatre of war in the wake of the Division, and in **Crete** served as a fighting unit. On at least one occasion it made a special trip – to **Malta** – to entertain other troops, and gradually became famous throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. While showing the necessary degree of 'snappiness', it avoided the more than doubtful items which to us disfigured many of the concert parties from the **United Kingdom**. It is worth recording that while New Zealand troops were by no means saints, they did not like 'smut' in their entertainment. Their comments on some of the concert parties were pungent, to say the least of it.

It may be claimed that the *NZEF Times* was a success also, although many of the troops were disappointed that it did not open its columns to 'Letters to the Editor'. It has already been mentioned (see [page 126](#)) that we thought it wiser to confine it to being a 'news' paper. There was a good deal of difficulty in ensuring that all men had a chance to see a

copy of the paper. It was distributed to field units on a basis of one copy to three men, and to base units on a basis of one copy to five men, free in both cases; but unfortunately numbers of men posted copies back to New Zealand or kept them as souvenirs and did not pass them on, and there were steady complaints from men that they did not see a copy. The remedy lay with units, and was beyond the powers of Headquarters or of the *Times*. It should be said that there was insufficient paper to print one copy for every man in the force except for a special edition at Christmas.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

REGIMENTAL FUNDS

REGIMENTAL FUNDS

Regimental funds were derived in part from profits made by the unit on the sale of canteen goods, in part from donations from the National Patriotic Fund, and in part from donations from 2 NZEF Central Regimental Funds, of which more later. Unit funds were subject to audit; and with distressing frequency the auditor would point out that money had been spent on something that could not in any way be called 'an improvement in the general welfare of the men', which were the words used in the Standing Instruction on the subject. The commonest fault was to buy extra office equipment – typewriters, lamps, stationery – and we had a case of a unit paying for lessons in German for one of its NCOs. When checked by the auditor, the unit would apply to HQ 2 NZEF for retrospective approval for the expenditure to be paid by the Government. We had to emphasise that COs were administering a trust fund, and must adhere to the principle that the money was intended for improvements in the general welfare of the men, a definition that appeared to us to be sufficiently broad to cover all things in reason.

It was perhaps small wonder that every CO tried somehow or other to become possessed of a unit fund about which neither Headquarters nor the auditor knew anything.

The Standing Instruction on the subject is in [Appendix XII](#).

We had also a Central Regimental Fund, the money in which came from a rebate from [NAAFI](#) known as the Egyptian Customs rebate, i.e., a retrospective refund by the Egyptian Customs of the duty paid when the goods entered Egypt. It was handed to us on a numerical basis depending on the strength of the force, and bore no relation to purchases. We retained a portion of this in a central fund for general 2 NZEF purposes, and distributed the remainder periodically to units. Audit of all these

funds was highly desirable, for it is very easy for a campaign of suspicion to start about the use made of them.

At the end of the war, Headquarters recommended to units that the balance of their funds should be paid into the Central 2 NZEF Fund, which we thought would go after the war to swell a large central fund in New Zealand – as has been the case. There was, however, a tendency for the unit spirit to play its part, and for units to hold on to their funds for the use of members of the unit who might be in need after the war. The intention was excellent; but there are bound to be difficulties in administering small funds once all concerned are back home and scattered all over New Zealand.

A word must be said here about the most generous gifts made to the NZEF by Captain Dennis Duigan, a New Zealander formerly resident in South Africa, and later in England, who served with the force in 1940, but was later discharged owing to ill health. At intervals throughout the war he sent to the GOC sums of money amounting in the total to many thousands of pounds, to be used at the unfettered discretion of the GOC for the good of the force. The ‘Dennis Duigan Fund’, in common with all others, was strictly controlled and was regularly audited.

At each Christmas time the Government gave a special grant of one shilling a head to be spent on Christmas fare. One way and another, the welfare of the New Zealand troops was of a standard much above that of any other British force.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHRISTMAS CARDS

CHRISTMAS CARDS

At an unfortunate moment in 1940, Headquarters engaged itself to produce a Christmas card for **2 NZEF**, to be distributed to units at cost (which was exceptionally low in Egypt) and sold by them at a slightly higher rate, the profit going to regimental funds. Each year until 1944 we repeated the performance, though we should have learned better long before that. Each year there was dissension about the design, although it had been drawn by the Official Artist and certainly did not lack merit. Each year at the last moment some units decided to have a card of their own. Each year it took us well into the next year to get payment for the cards. The end came in 1944, when for the first time we had the card printed in **Italy** by the British Stationery Service. It was much delayed in production, and when it did appear was so impossible that it was thrown to units free in the hope that there might be a few who might make use of it. The rude remarks of **2 NZEF** took a lot of forgetting, and we made a solemn vow for the future; but the need never rose again.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

BANDS

BANDS

When the First Echelon left New Zealand the understanding was that each infantry brigade should have a band. Had it stopped at that all would have been well; but there was a tendency for other corps or units to want bands of their own. It was not long, for instance, before the artillery had a band, and **Maadi Camp at least one, all these being official. In addition, a number of unofficial bands appeared, the explanation being that the men were really something else during working hours and only bandsmen in their spare time, a tale that deceived no one. The value of bands is undoubted, providing they play for their formation or unit and do not go touring; but some limit there must be.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COOKING

COOKING

Almost as soon as the First Echelon arrived in **Maadi Camp**, the GOC started a cookery school to run courses for unit cooks, the instructors initially being drawn from the British Army. The school continued throughout the war as part of the ASC training establishments, and was of inestimable value in training cooks to make the best of the ration – so much so that the idea got round the various parties of attached British troops that there was a special New Zealand ration, which was not the case. We drew the ordinary British ration, but we made better use of it. There was also in **Maadi** a pie bakery and an ice-cream factory, later combined into a Catering Depot. Pies and ice-cream are good things; but in this case they were entirely for the benefit of troops in and around **Cairo**, or at most in Egypt, which was a pity. In any case, they verged on being pure luxuries.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

BOOKS

BOOKS

It was casually mentioned on page 246 that more reading matter would have helped the troops while they were in the field. The demand for books or for anything to read was insatiable. No matter what steps were taken to buy books from every possible source, there were never enough, in part because the wear and tear in the desert and elsewhere was excessive, and men were not as careful as they might have been. Paper covers and desert sand do not go well together. There was no solution; there were just not enough books. It would repay the trouble taken if, at the beginning of a war, someone went round buying up every cheap edition of books he could lay his hands on. The books would never be wasted. It is worth noting also, that there was a tendency to go back to the great classical writers of the nineteenth century – Dickens, Jane Austen, Scott, Lytton and the rest.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

POSTAL

POSTAL

Probably there is no element of welfare so potent as the prompt and frequent receipt of letters. The frequency was beyond our control; but promptness we could do something about. The members of the Postal Corps were from the first looked on by Headquarters as something more than merely skilled personnel handling mail. They were encouraged to develop an *esprit de corps* of their own, which is the reason they were formed into a special corps, instead of being just a collection of personnel from odd units. At the outset in 1940 the Chief Postmaster was told, in words that were not meant to be entirely jocular, that he was the only officer in 2 NZEF who could at all times have all the men he wanted; and this was repeated at intervals during the war. As the war went on we tried so to arrange it that we controlled the movement forward of our mails 100 per cent without having to call on the facilities provided by the British movement staff. In Italy, for instance, after trying the normal rail and sea movement forward from the base port (Bari or Taranto), we set up our own MT link and sent letters by that means right up to the Division. At a later stage we made special arrangements to fly all mail from Bari forward. It is probable that the men did not appreciate what had been done for them; but there should be little doubt that the speedy delivery of the mail had an unconscious influence on morale. There are few morale builders as good as a steady mail service from the homeland.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

RED CROSS

RED CROSS

The activities of the Red Cross Commissioner are mainly the concern of the Director of Medical Services, with whom rested the responsibility, under the GOC, for the health of the troops. The appointment of someone to represent the **Red Cross** is in some part a relic of the time over a hundred years ago when the army took little or no care of the sick and wounded, and the **Red Cross** societies did noble work in restoring a sense of humanity to the care of these unfortunates. Today the military medical services are fully capable of restoring men to health without any assistance from other bodies. The function of the **Red Cross** is then to supply occasional jam to the army's nutritious bread and butter, or in other words, to supply those additional little amenities which make so much difference to life in hospital. The work of the Commissioner is thus social and not medical.

The understanding was that the Commissioner was to work under the direction of the DMS. On any future occasion, this should be made clearer. The Commissioner's funds were supplied from the Patriotic Fund in New Zealand.

As with the **YMCA**, the army provided a great deal of help for the Commissioner – clerical staff, personal assistants, and the whole of the men for a **Red Cross** store. In other words, the Red Cross Commissioner was a normal part of the **2 NZEF** welfare organisation, and not an independent authority. It has already been mentioned that the Society was inclined to look on the girls who worked in the hospitals as their own private army; and now it must be said that there were occasions when it appeared to us that they looked on the responsibility for the treatment of the sick and wounded as belonging to them also. We were probably wrong in this belief; but it is right to say that that was the impression left on us by various communications from New Zealand. The

responsibility was the GOC's alone, with the skilled assistance of the DMS; and the GOC in turn was responsible to the Government.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION SERVICE

EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION SERVICE

Last but not least in the field of welfare comes the Education and Rehabilitation Service (ERS). From first to last there was a strong feeling among many senior officers of 2 NZEF that an educational scheme was out of place in a fighting force. One officer, an eminent lawyer in civil life, put it simply when he said that men should put their books away while serving in the force. It was thought that if men devoted themselves to training for war, and keeping themselves physically fit, they would have no time for anything else. If men started taking courses in this and that during the war, it was bound to distract their attention from the real matter in hand, the defeat of the enemy.

Whether or not that is a correct opinion, the fact remains that for the first four years of the war we took no steps at all to set up any form of educational service, and looked on rehabilitation as something that authorities in New Zealand would handle after the men got back. To refrain from taking any action to provide education for the men serving in units is understandable, and can be defended; but no defence at all can be put forward for our delay in doing something of this nature for men in hospital, and especially for those on the New Zealand roll, whether fit or not. This was probably our greatest omission of the war. It should have been possible – it was possible – to arrange that men on the New Zealand roll either resumed their broken studies, scholastic or technical, or else started something new, and in any case were made ready in some degree to take their places again in civil life. Our defence can only be that Headquarters was also busy getting on with the war in its own way, and had little time to think about what would happen to men once they left the force for New Zealand. It must be pointed out also that even an ERS takes men to run it, and that our available pool of men would have been reduced if we had started such a service. The pros

and cons of starting the ERS in, say, 1942 might well have formed the subject of the philosophical inquiry suggested on [page 190](#).

By about the middle of 1943 we were under a mild fire from New Zealand on this subject, the reason probably being the introduction of an army education service there. During the first phase of the furlough scheme in the second half of 1943, when a number of senior officers were on leave in New Zealand, discussions on this subject were held with members of Cabinet and with Army Headquarters, and it was agreed that an ERS scheme should be started in [2 NZEF](#), the director elect being sent from New Zealand. It was not until the middle of 1944 that the scheme was ready – at least three years too late.

Even then there was suspicion from serving members of [2 NZEF](#), or rather those members who were actively engaged in the field. It was still thought that nothing should be done to distract soldiers from waging war; and in addition there was the strong feeling that men not in the field should not get an advantage over those who were. This latter feeling had caused trouble in previous years, for from 1940 to 1942 it had been arranged by the University of New Zealand that some reputable body in [Cairo](#) (e.g., the British Council) should conduct examinations on its behalf for such men as could sit. This procedure then ceased, partly because men could not keep up their studies, and partly because the only ones who ever could sit were those who happened to be serving at [Maadi](#) or in other sedentary employment. There was a lot of truth in this latter contention, as more often than not the Division had been in the field on the critical dates.

So one way and another the new ERS had a stormy passage in its first few months, even though it had never been intended that the scheme should apply to anyone not on the New Zealand roll for as long as the war lasted. Until the war ended, there was no idea of interfering with men in the field. There could be no two opinions about the need of the work for men on the New Zealand roll, and gradually more and more facilities were provided for them, including preparation for and supervision of University examinations. An authoritative Rehabilitation

Committee was formed to discuss and settle the broad outlines of the work. Book work was comparatively easy, but trade training difficult.

While the war lasted, the active work was thus confined to those on the New Zealand roll; but the main task of the ERS was to prepare for the immediate post-war period, and here again there were difficulties with officers serving in the field. Preparation for post-armistice work had to go on while the war was still going on too. Preparations had to be such that as soon as fighting ended a complete scheme would be ready to go into top gear without delay. The scheme required staff, and while a good part was sent out specially from New Zealand, we had to rely to a large degree on 2 NZEF; but it was impossible to draw anyone from the Division. Rightly enough, winning the war was still the first task; but at that stage there was room for a little flexibility. However, the ERS had to go ahead with what staff it could get, and in the main was ready when the time came. Schools were started where selected personnel attended for concentrated instruction; but the greater part of the work was done either by correspondence or by work within units. As it happened, the time from the end of the war to the repatriation of the bulk of the force was short, and the ERS did not have as great a part to play as had been expected. However, what work it managed to achieve was of some value, and went beyond the commonly voiced opinion that all it was worth was to fill in men's time and keep them out of mischief.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 17 – SOME MISCELLANEOUS POINTS

CHAPTER 17

Some Miscellaneous Points

IT will possibly have been noted that few of the problems that have been mentioned in previous chapters were what is known in the army as 'Q' problems. The greater part of our difficulties were either matters of organisation or were personal problems, and appertained either to 'G' or to 'A' branches. This is not to say that there was a lack of activity on the Quartermaster-General's side, but merely that most of the work went smoothly and did not create any purely **2 NZEF** problems. With Army Headquarters we had few discussions on any 'Q' matters, because the main 'Q' subjects were for discussion with General Headquarters overseas (e.g., movements, rations, accommodation, equipment, repairs) and New Zealand played no part in them. New Zealand supplied us with the bulk of our woollen articles of clothing, including battle dress; but, strictly speaking, this was as a result of the arrangements made by the **United Kingdom** supply authorities when contracting for uniforms from New Zealand for all troops, and was not of our own making. Officially these and other articles were supplied by New Zealand to the **United Kingdom** authorities and by them passed over to us; but the practical arrangement was made in this case that we received them direct from New Zealand.

MECHANICAL TRANSPORT

Several times during the war we appealed to New Zealand to help us out with MT. On one occasion they sent us a consignment of trucks with the names of the original owners still decorating the sides - 'XYZ, Carrier, **Lower Hutt**' and so on. On one or two occasions they sent us the consignment direct, and on one occasion a consignment for GHQ.

We were probably extravagant over MT, and were not content until we were self-contained throughout, and until all the bits and pieces had transport of their own - chaplains, public relations, and anyone whose duties necessitated his travelling round and about with any degree of

frequency. Our scales were higher than with British formations and led, as has already been mentioned, to arguments with GHQ regarding our right to the vehicles under the financial agreement. The additional cars prevented a lot of minor irritations, such as a state of affairs that left the unit chaplain to travel on any vehicle in which he could beg a seat.

But in an endeavour to economise on MT, we tried once or twice to establish a pool of cars at HQ 2 NZEF. The rule we tried to enforce was that whether or not an officer had a car of his own depended upon the degree of urgency with which he might be called on to move, and not on seniority alone. If an officer could always give fair notice of his wish for transport, there was no point in tying up a car for him all the time; whereas if he might have to move at short notice, then a car must be ready for him. There then followed protests from senior officers who were excluded from the chosen few, and somehow or other they got their cars. To enforce the rule strictly was a hopeless task, and probably the effort was not worth it, for compared with the scandalous waste of MT that went on throughout our force and in the army generally, our little saving would not have been even one drop in the ocean.

HEAD-DRESS

We started the war with the usual New Zealand head-dress of the high-crowned felt hat. At an early point it appeared that there would be some difficulties over future supplies; and in the opinion of some senior officers in the First Echelon, the felt hat was not a good headgear for a sandy country. This engendered some emotion in other senior officers, who claimed that the war would be lost if we did not continue to wear our beloved hats. In the summer of 1940 the First Echelon was issued with genuine tropical helmets. The Division then went to Greece in a combination of simpler helmets ('Bombay bowlers') and the 'fore-and-aft' British cap, the reason being that these were the normal wear of British troops, and that it was easier for us to draw them from British depots than to persist with a separate hat. Thereafter we adhered to British usage, first the 'fore-and-after' and then the beret. Troops in Maadi

retained the New Zealand hat for a long time, as reinforcements always arrived so equipped; but in general the hat became rarer, and we even shipped some consignments back to New Zealand.

A good deal of sentiment attaches to our 'funny hats'. It seems likely that we were a bit hasty in abandoning them, although it is true that they get sticky and dirty, are not suitable for use in cars and trucks, and are quite useless for members of armoured regiments. We could not help noticing that felt hats were the universal wear in South-east [Asia](#).

[HAT BADGES](#)

It had been decided in New Zealand while the First Echelon was training there, that [2 NZEF](#) should wear a universal hat badge, which was to be distinctive of New Zealand. There was reason for this. In the First World War New Zealanders had worn their peacetime regimental badges, in which except under close examination there was nothing of a distinctive New Zealand nature, artistic though many of them were. The Australians, on the other hand, had adopted a universal badge – the rising sun – which, while having nothing particularly Australian about it, was clearly distinctive and became widely known. In 1939, therefore, a badge had been designed and made in New Zealand, and had been issued to the First Echelon before departure.

This meant that all troops had to give up their regimental or corps badges, a sacrifice that did not meet with universal approval. The new badge had been issued fairly late and, so to speak, had not registered as the 'one and only', so that here and there the custom arose of sticking to the peacetime badge. Artillery had their gun, the Machine Gun Battalion had revived the crossed machine guns of the first war, and so on. As soon as this was noticed, and orders were issued to stop it, there was an outcry which soon became general. All units wanted something else – mostly their peacetime badges – while the accusation was made against the new badge that it was lacking in imagination and was not artistic. This agitation was bound up with an ill-defined feeling that the infantry titles should be changed, as the new numbers had no

connection with any peacetime title. However, the answer was clear. It was too late to reopen the question of titles and thus the question of the badges of the infantry. The other corps must fall into line and all the nice unit badges must be abandoned. As time went on the universal badge achieved a position of its own, and came to be accepted as a New Zealand distinction.

SHOULDER PATCHES

While the First Echelon was still in New Zealand, a system of shoulder patches had been designed, intended to distinguish brigades, battalions, field regiments, etc. Patches had existed in the First Expeditionary Force, and it was natural that they should be revived for **2 NZEF**. Once overseas, however, complaints started, the theme being that they did not go far enough and did not indicate sub-units to the degree desirable. We had a conference on this also early in 1940 and endeavoured to achieve both rationality and finality. All went well until after **Greece** and **Crete**, by which time the force had greatly expanded and the system showed signs of becoming too complicated. After all, there are only a few distinctive primary colours, and not many simple shapes, and the number of combinations is limited. Just when we began to think that we would have to tackle the whole thing again, the point – or rather the alleged point – of having patches at all wellnigh ceased to exist. They could not be worn on shirts, which became standard dress for at least half the year, because they would not stand up to washing, and it was too much trouble to unstitch them and then stitch them on again. The same applied to bush shirts when they became standard dress. They could still be worn on service dress or battle dress; but by the end of 1941 people had ceased to worry about them, for it was apparent that their practical value was small, and their sentimental value not very great. Patches were never officially abandoned, and they appeared on battle dress spasmodically until the end.

SHOULDER TITLES

Units had come overseas wearing the metal titles issued in New Zealand and applicable to the various corps. Partly owing to difficulties of replacement – metals were precious – and partly because the titles did not sit comfortably on shirts or bush shirts, they gradually ceased to be an article of normal wear. What we wanted was something distinctive for New Zealand, which led to the introduction of the cloth title with the words ‘New Zealand’ in white on a black background. The first issue was so made that it had to be stitched on, which again led to troubles at washing time. The final pattern was a looped title which could be slid over the shoulder straps that were a part of all types of dress. This could be easily removed and was a success. After an initial issue made in Egypt, later issues were drawn from New Zealand. Chaplains wore a loop of purple material in addition.

VEHICLE MARKINGS

Vehicle markings caused little trouble. For the Division the tradition established in the First World War made the choice of a fernleaf inevitable. The first complication, even if only a minor one, arose when the number of non-divisional units became appreciable. It was thought desirable that they should have a separate sign, and for some time they carried a black fernleaf on a white background, the reverse of the divisional sign. However, this was never truly distinctive, for by an optical illusion the eye often saw what it thought it ought to see, and few appreciated that the colours had been reversed. When in 1942 **Maadi Camp** became 6 NZ Division, a separate vehicle sign was necessary and the kiwi was selected; and the opportunity was taken to devise a fresh sign for **2 NZEF** units, as opposed to divisional or base ones. A minor competition was held, and on one particular day a number of vehicles were lined up outside Headquarters bearing sample signs such as Mount Cook, a tiki, and a mako shark. In the end we adopted the Southern Cross as it appears on the national flag, i.e., the four stars of the cross in red with a narrow white surround, all on a dark-blue background. It was effective, and also distinctive. Its effectiveness was doubled when, in 1943 and later, we came into touch with American troops. Their

general officers carried red stars on their cars to mark their rank, ranging from one for a brigadier-general to four for a full general, all the stars in a horizontal line on a light background – the system which in fact has been adopted by the British Army. The sight of our four stars arranged in cross form was often too much for American military police, who must have thought that it represented nothing short of Commander-in-Chief The World, from the look of petrified astonishment that appeared on their faces.

In the memorial erected in **Maadi village** to commemorate the presence of New Zealanders over the years, all three signs appear – the fernleaf, the kiwi, and the Southern Cross.

COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF KIT

For the first three years of the war we had trouble over compensation for loss of officers' kit, including in this nurses' kit. It should be said that as other ranks were normally issued with all articles of clothing, replacement was automatic and caused no troubles. Officers and nurses, however, were responsible for their own clothing, with the exception of a few special military items, and to maintain themselves in kit were granted an annual upkeep grant. It was clear from the first that an officer losing his kit by straight-out enemy action was entitled to be compensated, a procedure that caused a lot of work after **Greece** and **Crete**. The situation was not so clear in cases where officers or nurses lost their kit by such hazards as fire or theft, and there followed some cabling to and from Army Headquarters before an answer was found – which was in brief that compensation would not be paid if the risk was an insurable one. We found a reputable insurance company in Egypt that would accept such risks, and with which we came to the understanding that losses in front of the Main Dressing Station in action would definitely be considered as arising from enemy action, in which case the State would reimburse the officer; while losses behind the Main Dressing Station, if not obviously caused by enemy action, could be covered by insurance. We thought that the company took a very liberal

view of the risk they would accept. We then arranged that the Chief Paymaster would accept 'bankers' orders' to pay premiums when due.

Some officers insured; but the majority did not bother and took the risk themselves, shrugging their shoulders philosophically if they were caught. Nurses were the trouble. Despite the ruling, nurses still applied for compensation when incurring losses that were clearly insurable, an outstanding case occurring in late 1941, when the tent belonging to two nurses was burnt to the ground while they were away at the cinema. They duly applied for compensation, and when they were refused it appealed to a succession of senior officers, and finally to New Zealand, where, however, both Army Headquarters and the Government were firm in adhering to the ruling. As a result of this and other cases, we arranged that every sister should sign a receipt for a copy of the relevant instruction, so that there could be no argument about it – or so we thought. Thereafter it became one of the duties of the Principal Matron to ensure that every sister had received a copy and had signed for it. But we were not out of the wood yet. When our hospital was moving from **Beirut to **Tripoli** in early 1943, the matron drew the attention of all sisters to the position about loss of kit, pointing out that part of the journey was to be done by train, and that loss by theft or by natural hazard was insurable. And then the worst happened. One railway truck went missing on the journey, and out of all the mass of gear of a hospital on the move it contained nurses' kits. Some nurses had insured and were compensated accordingly. The remainder duly applied to Headquarters for compensation. Again this reached New Zealand through local MPs or somehow, and again everyone there was firm. During his visit to New Zealand in 1943, in view of the emotion this subject was engendering, OICA discussed it specifically with Army Headquarters; but both sides were agreed that there was no cause to change the ruling.**

Many thought sincerely – and strongly – that the rule was a hard one, and that compensation should be given for all losses occurring on active service, no matter how they happened. On the other hand, we thought that an officer must be expected to take the usual reasonable

care of his kit, and that it was a fair solution to ask him to insure to cover such risks as the company would accept. As already stated, men in general accepted the position. It was the ladies who were troublesome.

Reviewing the problem today, it seems that the ruling was a little bit too hard, and should have been relaxed to include compensation for losses which were a direct result of active service conditions – in which case the second incident mentioned above (the rail loss) would have come within the scope of compensation by the State while the first one (the fire loss) would still have been outside it. The difficulty would have been to know where to draw the dividing line.

The basis on which compensation was paid by the State was reasonable replacement value, to be applied to a definite list of articles, generous enough in its range, but excluding articles of a semi-luxury type, valuable presents, etc. When officers' clothing stores appeared in the theatre of war, we took their prices as the ones to be followed. The abnormal losses in **Greece** and **Crete** were adjudicated on by a Claims Uniformity Committee, with a membership including officers who had been through the campaign. We tried to be generous – the Prime Minister himself told us to be generous – but on the other hand we had to exclude losses due to sheer carelessness. Taking it all in all, the claims were fairly met. The Uniformity Committee continued as a permanent piece of administrative machinery.

The Standing Instruction on the subject is in **Appendix X**.

CLAIMS FROM CIVILIANS

The people of Egypt and the **Levant** soon found out that the British Army was fair game for claims for compensation arising out of alleged damage done to the person or to belongings. No doubt the troops were often careless, sometimes rough with the inhabitants, and only too easily involved in accidents. In Cairo particularly there was always a mass of MT weaving its way in and out of an anarchic jumble of civilian donkey carts and hawkers. Accidents were inevitable.

Claims from civilians were lodged first with the British headquarters, and then, if our men were concerned, were passed over to us. For a while we tried to wrestle with these ourselves; but our knowledge of Egyptians was slight, we had no idea of local values, and had to rely in any case on the help given us by the British authorities. In the end, by mutual arrangement, the British Claims Commission handled our cases entirely. We gave it authority to settle outright any claims not above a certain figure, subsequently obtaining reimbursement from us; and we engaged ourselves to give much weight to any recommendation made by the commission when bigger amounts were involved.

The commission saved us an enormous amount of work. However, in some ways we were not satisfied with its methods or recommendations. We thought that it was too kind to the Egyptians, and we had a feeling that the necessity of maintaining good political relations with Egypt sometimes weighed with it. It appeared to us that often it was we who had a claim against an Egyptian, and not the reverse. It became our habit to examine the commission's recommendations closely, often not to accept them, but to ask that they be reconsidered. Gradually relations between the commission and Headquarters became more and more strained, until a point was reached when the commission took umbrage at one of our remarks and asked for an apology. We had undoubtedly gone too far, and the apology was given; but all the same, we were never very happy about the position. However, the alternative was that we should handle the claims ourselves, which we did not want to do. The conclusion must be that we were in the wrong, and should have accepted the recommendations of the commission without cavilling at them.

In Italy the position was easier. The troops did not run foul of the inhabitants to anything like the same degree as in Egypt, and claims were less common.

IDENTITY CARDS

It was mentioned on [page 31](#) that we had considered the introduction of a photographic identity card for all ranks to be pasted into the backs of paybooks, but did not go on with the idea. While it must be admitted that we never felt the lack of these cards in the years that followed, the reason probably was that we had never experienced the advantages of having them. It appears that there are advantages in such a scheme, which after all is a simple one.

NEWSPAPER MAILS

At any one stage during the war, the postal store in **Cairo** would be clogged up with newspapers from New Zealand, most of them already many months old owing to delays in transportation. Space on ships was at a premium, and newspapers were low in the order of priority. To attempt to readdress this mass of papers, in a way similar to that employed with letters, was manifestly a waste of time for the postal staff; and if a paper was unclaimed at the last address known, it was handed over to hospitals. Moreover, it was common knowledge that there was a great deal of duplication in the despatch of papers and journals, in that many correspondents in New Zealand might send the same paper to the one man, and that many copies of the one paper (the *Weekly News* for instance) might be received in the one small unit. One way and another a lot of the papers became undeliverable. To achieve a satisfactory answer would appear to require a degree of centralisation in New Zealand that would be unworkable. From time to time we used to ask men to let their correspondents know if they really wanted the papers that were sent to them, and possibly some did; but the accumulation in the postal store continued to the end. It might be possible for the New Zealand authorities to produce a paper covering the whole country, and to send it to units in bulk; but it is realised that this is not quite the same thing as the despatch of a local paper by a friend. One thing is sure – that the Postal Corps would welcome anything that reduced the enormous bulk of newspapers.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

In September 1942 Headquarters published an order on the difficult question of acceptance of payment for services. What was legitimate was reasonably clear, e.g., payment for a photograph accepted by the *NZEF Times*. What was irregular was also clear, e.g., acceptance of money or even gifts from contractors. In the middle, however, came a number of cases that were defined as questionable, e.g., a unit photographer making considerable profit out of selling copies of his photos to members of the unit, a hairdresser also charging so much as to give him a good profit, and so on. It appears to be wrong that a man should make money out of his fellow soldiers in these ways, but it is difficult to draw a clear dividing line between what is above board and what is of doubtful honesty. COs were asked to keep a watchful eye on all such cases.

DISBANDMENT AND RETURN TO NEW ZEALAND

Toward the end of 1941, after the Libyan campaign, it became clear that the Division would be having a long spell for rest and reorganisation. The opportunity was taken to circularise all senior officers and ask their views about repatriation after the war. At the moment nothing seemed more distant than going home to New Zealand; but the problem was one that required much thought and long planning, and in any case there was no harm in letting Army Headquarters have our views. The resulting paper went off to New Zealand in April 1942, and as far as **2 NZEF** was concerned that was the end of it. We were informed that our contribution had been passed to the 'Rehabilitation Council' in New Zealand, where, as we had reason to believe later on, it was duly taken into account.

The details of the paper are not worth mentioning, except those that concern the order of return and the occupation of the force while awaiting repatriation. The consensus of opinion favoured 'first out, first back', and of concentrating on a scheme of educational training, although the prospects of the scheme were somewhat damned by the comment, 'at the best it can be little more than a means of filling in time'.

It is of major interest to note that some of our assumptions proved not to be justified. We thought that shipping delays would make the repatriation take up to two years from the end of the war. Actually, it took much less than a year. We assumed that 2 NZEF would spend some time on garrison duties, probably in Central Europe. Actually, when it came to the time, the Government refused to let New Zealand troops be used for this duty.

One internal problem over which there was considerable difference of opinion was the length of time that existing units should remain as units, i.e., the stage at which men should be withdrawn for reorganisation preparatory to embarkation. It was obvious, although some COs would not agree, that the existing unit framework would have to be broken up for the journey back, and special units formed. The COs in question were gloomy about the prospects of keeping discipline in temporary units.

As it turned out, the order of return never created a problem, as the 'first out, first back' was accepted. Those wishing to go back before their turn applied for compassionate leave in the ordinary way – and HQ 2 NZEF could console itself with the thought that it had not to make the decision.

The ERS has already been discussed in

Chapter 16, where it is claimed that in the end it did more than merely fill in time, and was a satisfactory and reputable way of tiding over the period of waiting.

It has already been mentioned in

Chapter 6 that at the end of 1945 we were nearly found wanting, in that ships came so fast that we had difficulty in filling them. We had perfect schemes for keeping men employed for indefinite periods, but had never thought of the unexpected factor. In the end all was well; but it is a lesson for the future.

It is undoubtedly desirable that men should stay within the framework of their old units for as long as can safely be allowed. It was in part because of this, of course, that we were nearly caught out; but even that experience does not detract from the desirability of retaining unit identity for the maximum time possible. At Advanced Base men were reorganised into suitable units for the journey back; but it was generally possible to arrange that officers known to the majority of the men were also in the units.

For special reasons the **Maori Battalion** was allowed to embark as a unit. Its place in the order of embarkation was such that a good number of the men were later in leaving than if they had gone normally. In a rather rough and ready way this compensated for the fact that a lot of the men were getting away before their time.

Throughout the war we had had many cases of disbandment of units – disbandment in the form of the complete disappearance of the unit on one particular date. At the end of the war the disbandment was more in the nature of ‘fading away’, the popular method of all old soldiers; but even then it was desirable that the normal administrative action should be taken, and in effect this was the case. There was in existence a **Standing Instruction on Disbandment of Units** (see **Appendix XIII**) which enabled all concerned to check off the action to be taken. All promotions had in any case stopped some time before throughout the force. Equipment had been handed in as part of the general clean-up, and so on. Almost the only remaining problem, the disposal of regimental funds, has been discussed in

Chapter 16.

We had a certain amount of general equipment that belonged definitely to **2 NZEF**, and was not part of the equipment issued to us from British sources. Examples are a lot of our cars, the launch at **Suez**, and the printing machinery. These were sold to 'best advantage', the sale being conducted through a special Disposals Board in order to avoid any scandals. The money, of course, went back to the Government.

There were many duties to be carried out to the last, by which is meant after the rest of the force had embarked. In the Pay Office and Second Echelon we had to retain certain key personnel, even though we went as far as we could to staff the units with volunteers. The personnel concerned, all officers or senior NCOs, understood the position and were uncomplaining. For the Graves units we relied on volunteers, having them sign a special form agreeing to serve for a period after the war. Most of the men volunteered for laudable reasons – love, or a desire to see a bit more of the world – but a few did so because of the chances of loot and more black-market activities. Had it become necessary to retain large numbers, we would have had to be very careful whom we accepted.

ADMINISTRATION

It has been mentioned in one or two places that the day-to-day administration of **2 NZEF** proceeded in accordance with normal military custom, and that it was never intended to write a treatise on the subject; but the administration of a small specially formed national force served to cast a highlight on a few points which appear worthy of mention.

The basic point which must always be remembered was that it was a specially formed force and had an existence that at the most would be of only a few years. It differed in this respect from a regular army, and even from the wartime divisions of the British Army, where there was always a stiffening of regular personnel in units, and where the new formations were built on a foundation of the peacetime regular army.

It is a complete impossibility to expect a temporary *ad hoc* force to achieve the same standards of administration as in a peacetime army. For one thing, there is no time. Such time as there is must be devoted to training for war in its broadest sense – not that administration does not matter, and that there is not an irreducible minimum of training necessary for that also; but something must suffer, and it is inevitable that it should be administration. A comparatively low standard must be expected, and must be accepted. The aim of the headquarters should be to make things as simple as is possible for recipients and to ease the burden on formation and unit commanders.

Some orders, some rules, some adherence to the custom of the service there must be. In peacetime it is possible for New Zealanders to ‘consider each case on its merits’; in war there is no time for such a luxury, and one must adopt some rule, rough and ready though it may be – and stick to it. If the rule then turns out to be hard, or does not meet the generality of cases, the thing to do is to alter the rule, and then continue to adhere to it. Few orders, as few as possible, and strict adherence to them, will make it easy for both the enforcer of the rule and the ensee.

It must be remembered that the perfect answer, the answer that would be completely fair to every individual case, is unattainable in wartime. To achieve it would mean such delays that the administrative machine would gradually grind to a standstill. It often used to be said at HQ 2 NZEF that if only the enemy would ‘freeze’ for a few months we would have everything properly sorted out, would have every peg in the proper hole, and could make a nice clean fresh start; but the enemy, far from ‘freezing’, was a particularly energetic one, so we had to get on as best we could.

If there is one thing that is certain, it is that far too many administrative orders were issued during the war, the greater part being unenforceable, even though they did finish up with the words, ‘failure to comply with this order will lead to severe disciplinary action’, or

something of that kind. There were so many orders that they bred a habit of disregarding them all, which sometimes led to unfortunate results, for every now and then there would be an order that really mattered. It would have been to the benefit of good administration in the end if more thought had been given to the essentials, and less time wasted on a mass of verbiage, directed doubtless to achieving perfection – that perfection which is unattainable in a wartime citizen army.

General Headquarters was the worst offender; but a perusal of **2 NZEF** orders today must make one ruefully admit that despite our efforts – and we did try – we ourselves issued too many orders that had not a chance of being observed. We could have exercised a greater measure of selectivity, have published fewer orders, and then there might have been a chance of a few of them being obeyed.

No unit can possibly absorb the mass of stuff that gets hurled at it when it arrives overseas, either from the British headquarters under whose command it is to serve, or from its own headquarters which may have preceded it. In **Appendix VI** appears the ‘Joining Instructions’ for the Third Echelon – or ‘Contingent’ as we were trying to call it at the time. Headquarters **2 NZEF** had done its best by compiling in the preceding two months a series of what were then called ‘Special Circulars’, which were a collection of the orders and instructions that had been issued since the First Echelon arrived in Egypt. It was hoped in this way to make the task of units a little easier; but one is left with the melancholy thought that the task would have been easier still if the matter contained in the circulars had been reduced by 50 per cent.

So much for the arrival of the Third Echelon. When the Second Echelon units arrived in early 1941, they were placed under orders to go to **Greece** almost as soon as they landed, and there was no time for HQ **2 NZEF** to distribute a ‘Joining Instruction’ of a similar type. The war had now intervened to spoil any idea of a nice, tidy administrative welcome – and as far as could be seen then, or can be seen now, it did not matter a bit.

In September 1941 Headquarters started a series of 'Standing Instructions', which were added to in succeeding years. A full list is given in **Appendix VIII**, and some examples of the shorter ones in **Appendices IX to XIII**. Some were intended to be of use for personal problems, e.g., compassionate leave, marriages, compensation for loss of kit; some were to help units for certain administrative work, e.g., regimental funds, traffic accidents, welfare, control of photography; one or two were designed to collect into one place the action required of a number of people for one transaction, e.g., drafts for the **United Kingdom** or New Zealand, disbandment of units; a good number merely collected into one place a mass of separate orders dealing with pay, Second Echelon, postal service, and base kits. Probably few of the last class were ever read, whereas the others had some practical value. It appears that Headquarters was afflicted with the common complaint of issuing too much paper, and that we would have been better advised to cut the list down by half, particularly as few units ever had a complete set of the instructions, despite our attempts from time to time to find out deficiencies and replace them.

At this point it is opportune to repeat that printed orders are easier to read than cyclostyled ones. We did not have a printing unit until January 1942, which was much too late. It would have been of great help from the start, and it should be one of the units which accompanies the first contingent overseas. It is not just a luxury, for it is an admirable example of the principle that everything possible should be done to make things easy for recipients.

One aspect of this problem of the dissemination of orders to which a satisfactory answer was never found was that of passing on orders issued by GHQ. There were two facets, first the applicability of the order, and second how it was to be distributed. The first facet has been dealt with in

Chapter 11, where it is stated that a completely satisfactory answer was never found. The second facet was within our own powers. The number of copies of GHQ orders was limited, and did not reach down to units. In the end HQ **2 NZEF** assumed the task of repeating the appropriate ones in 2 NZEF Orders, one reason being that HQ 2 NZ Division would thereby be spared the task. As each issue of GHQ orders was received, the appropriate administrative head (medical, pay, legal, ordnance, etc.) was asked his views about our repeating any order that was marked as applicable to all troops, and which came within his province. At least that was the general idea; but very often in the heat of the war the officer concerned was either not consulted or was away at the time, and the order was first put aside and then forgotten altogether. On the whole it never seemed to matter, and there is no record of any trouble occurring because a GHQ order did not reach **2 NZEF** units.

Second NZEF orders might have been better arranged. Reading them today gives the impression of a bit of a muddle; and in fact we were almost as bad as GHQ, in that genuine **2 NZEF** orders containing something that mattered are mixed up with repeats of GHQ orders and other things included merely as information. On one or two occasions we issued a consolidated volume of **2 NZEF** orders, but it is doubtful if it was of any value.

If any headquarters is going to issue orders, it is better to make use of them as much as possible, and avoid a multiplicity of separate instructions and bits of paper. The ideal would be that everything, every form of order or directive, was issued through one source, so enabling the recipient to keep a careful check on what he received and make sure that he had missed nothing. That method is impossible, however, if for no other reason than that a lot of what is issued is secret or goes only to a limited number of recipients.

The crisis of July 1942 found HQ **2 NZEF** with a mass of back files and correspondence, a lot of which was either of no importance at all, or had only historical interest. We had been remiss in not having periodical

purges of files, and either sending unwanted files back to New Zealand for storage or destroying them. Anyhow, we had a good bonfire at the time.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

IT will possibly have been noted that few of the problems that have been mentioned in previous chapters were what is known in the army as 'Q' problems. The greater part of our difficulties were either matters of organisation or were personal problems, and appertained either to 'G' or to 'A' branches. This is not to say that there was a lack of activity on the Quartermaster-General's side, but merely that most of the work went smoothly and did not create any purely 2 NZEF problems. With Army Headquarters we had few discussions on any 'Q' matters, because the main 'Q' subjects were for discussion with General Headquarters overseas (e.g., movements, rations, accommodation, equipment, repairs) and New Zealand played no part in them. New Zealand supplied us with the bulk of our woollen articles of clothing, including battle dress; but, strictly speaking, this was as a result of the arrangements made by the **United Kingdom** supply authorities when contracting for uniforms from New Zealand for all troops, and was not of our own making. Officially these and other articles were supplied by New Zealand to the **United Kingdom** authorities and by them passed over to us; but the practical arrangement was made in this case that we received them direct from New Zealand.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MECHANICAL TRANSPORT

MECHANICAL TRANSPORT

Several times during the war we appealed to New Zealand to help us out with MT. On one occasion they sent us a consignment of trucks with the names of the original owners still decorating the sides – ‘XYZ, Carrier, **Lower Hutt**’ and so on. On one or two occasions they sent us the consignment direct, and on one occasion a consignment for GHQ.

We were probably extravagant over MT, and were not content until we were self-contained throughout, and until all the bits and pieces had transport of their own – chaplains, public relations, and anyone whose duties necessitated his travelling round and about with any degree of frequency. Our scales were higher than with British formations and led, as has already been mentioned, to arguments with GHQ regarding our right to the vehicles under the financial agreement. The additional cars prevented a lot of minor irritations, such as a state of affairs that left the unit chaplain to travel on any vehicle in which he could beg a seat.

But in an endeavour to economise on MT, we tried once or twice to establish a pool of cars at HQ **2 NZEF**. The rule we tried to enforce was that whether or not an officer had a car of his own depended upon the degree of urgency with which he might be called on to move, and not on seniority alone. If an officer could always give fair notice of his wish for transport, there was no point in tying up a car for him all the time; whereas if he might have to move at short notice, then a car must be ready for him. There then followed protests from senior officers who were excluded from the chosen few, and somehow or other they got their cars. To enforce the rule strictly was a hopeless task, and probably the effort was not worth it, for compared with the scandalous waste of MT that went on throughout our force and in the army generally, our little saving would not have been even one drop in the ocean.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

HEAD-DRESS

HEAD-DRESS

We started the war with the usual New Zealand head-dress of the high-crowned felt hat. At an early point it appeared that there would be some difficulties over future supplies; and in the opinion of some senior officers in the First Echelon, the felt hat was not a good headgear for a sandy country. This engendered some emotion in other senior officers, who claimed that the war would be lost if we did not continue to wear our beloved hats. In the summer of 1940 the First Echelon was issued with genuine tropical helmets. The Division then went to Greece in a combination of simpler helmets ('Bombay bowlers') and the 'fore-and-aft' British cap, the reason being that these were the normal wear of British troops, and that it was easier for us to draw them from British depots than to persist with a separate hat. Thereafter we adhered to British usage, first the 'fore-and-aft' and then the beret. Troops in Maadi retained the New Zealand hat for a long time, as reinforcements always arrived so equipped; but in general the hat became rarer, and we even shipped some consignments back to New Zealand.

A good deal of sentiment attaches to our 'funny hats'. It seems likely that we were a bit hasty in abandoning them, although it is true that they get sticky and dirty, are not suitable for use in cars and trucks, and are quite useless for members of armoured regiments. We could not help noticing that felt hats were the universal wear in South-east Asia.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

HAT BADGES

HAT BADGES

It had been decided in New Zealand while the First Echelon was training there, that **2 NZEF** should wear a universal hat badge, which was to be distinctive of New Zealand. There was reason for this. In the First World War New Zealanders had worn their peacetime regimental badges, in which except under close examination there was nothing of a distinctive New Zealand nature, artistic though many of them were. The Australians, on the other hand, had adopted a universal badge – the rising sun – which, while having nothing particularly Australian about it, was clearly distinctive and became widely known. In 1939, therefore, a badge had been designed and made in New Zealand, and had been issued to the First Echelon before departure.

This meant that all troops had to give up their regimental or corps badges, a sacrifice that did not meet with universal approval. The new badge had been issued fairly late and, so to speak, had not registered as the 'one and only', so that here and there the custom arose of sticking to the peacetime badge. Artillery had their gun, the Machine Gun Battalion had revived the crossed machine guns of the first war, and so on. As soon as this was noticed, and orders were issued to stop it, there was an outcry which soon became general. All units wanted something else – mostly their peacetime badges – while the accusation was made against the new badge that it was lacking in imagination and was not artistic. This agitation was bound up with an ill-defined feeling that the infantry titles should be changed, as the new numbers had no connection with any peacetime title. However, the answer was clear. It was too late to reopen the question of titles and thus the question of the badges of the infantry. The other corps must fall into line and all the nice unit badges must be abandoned. As time went on the universal badge achieved a position of its own, and came to be accepted as a New

Zealand distinction.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

SHOULDER PATCHES

SHOULDER PATCHES

While the First Echelon was still in New Zealand, a system of shoulder patches had been designed, intended to distinguish brigades, battalions, field regiments, etc. Patches had existed in the First Expeditionary Force, and it was natural that they should be revived for 2 NZEF. Once overseas, however, complaints started, the theme being that they did not go far enough and did not indicate sub-units to the degree desirable. We had a conference on this also early in 1940 and endeavoured to achieve both rationality and finality. All went well until after Greece and Crete, by which time the force had greatly expanded and the system showed signs of becoming too complicated. After all, there are only a few distinctive primary colours, and not many simple shapes, and the number of combinations is limited. Just when we began to think that we would have to tackle the whole thing again, the point – or rather the alleged point – of having patches at all wellnigh ceased to exist. They could not be worn on shirts, which became standard dress for at least half the year, because they would not stand up to washing, and it was too much trouble to unstitch them and then stitch them on again. The same applied to bush shirts when they became standard dress. They could still be worn on service dress or battle dress; but by the end of 1941 people had ceased to worry about them, for it was apparent that their practical value was small, and their sentimental value not very great. Patches were never officially abandoned, and they appeared on battle dress spasmodically until the end.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

SHOULDER TITLES

SHOULDER TITLES

Units had come overseas wearing the metal titles issued in New Zealand and applicable to the various corps. Partly owing to difficulties of replacement – metals were precious – and partly because the titles did not sit comfortably on shirts or bush shirts, they gradually ceased to be an article of normal wear. What we wanted was something distinctive for New Zealand, which led to the introduction of the cloth title with the words ‘New Zealand’ in white on a black background. The first issue was so made that it had to be stitched on, which again led to troubles at washing time. The final pattern was a looped title which could be slid over the shoulder straps that were a part of all types of dress. This could be easily removed and was a success. After an initial issue made in Egypt, later issues were drawn from New Zealand. Chaplains wore a loop of purple material in addition.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

VEHICLE MARKINGS

VEHICLE MARKINGS

Vehicle markings caused little trouble. For the Division the tradition established in the First World War made the choice of a fernleaf inevitable. The first complication, even if only a minor one, arose when the number of non-divisional units became appreciable. It was thought desirable that they should have a separate sign, and for some time they carried a black fernleaf on a white background, the reverse of the divisional sign. However, this was never truly distinctive, for by an optical illusion the eye often saw what it thought it ought to see, and few appreciated that the colours had been reversed. When in 1942 **Maadi Camp** became 6 NZ Division, a separate vehicle sign was necessary and the kiwi was selected; and the opportunity was taken to devise a fresh sign for **2 NZEF** units, as opposed to divisional or base ones. A minor competition was held, and on one particular day a number of vehicles were lined up outside Headquarters bearing sample signs such as Mount Cook, a tiki, and a mako shark. In the end we adopted the Southern Cross as it appears on the national flag, i.e., the four stars of the cross in red with a narrow white surround, all on a dark-blue background. It was effective, and also distinctive. Its effectiveness was doubled when, in 1943 and later, we came into touch with American troops. Their general officers carried red stars on their cars to mark their rank, ranging from one for a brigadier-general to four for a full general, all the stars in a horizontal line on a light background – the system which in fact has been adopted by the British Army. The sight of our four stars arranged in cross form was often too much for American military police, who must have thought that it represented nothing short of Commander-in-Chief The World, from the look of petrified astonishment that appeared on their faces.

In the memorial erected in **Maadi village** to commemorate the

presence of New Zealanders over the years, all three signs appear – the fernleaf, the kiwi, and the Southern Cross.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF KIT

COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF KIT

For the first three years of the war we had trouble over compensation for loss of officers' kit, including in this nurses' kit. It should be said that as other ranks were normally issued with all articles of clothing, replacement was automatic and caused no troubles. Officers and nurses, however, were responsible for their own clothing, with the exception of a few special military items, and to maintain themselves in kit were granted an annual upkeep grant. It was clear from the first that an officer losing his kit by straight-out enemy action was entitled to be compensated, a procedure that caused a lot of work after Greece and Crete. The situation was not so clear in cases where officers or nurses lost their kit by such hazards as fire or theft, and there followed some cabling to and from Army Headquarters before an answer was found – which was in brief that compensation would not be paid if the risk was an insurable one. We found a reputable insurance company in Egypt that would accept such risks, and with which we came to the understanding that losses in front of the Main Dressing Station in action would definitely be considered as arising from enemy action, in which case the State would reimburse the officer; while losses behind the Main Dressing Station, if not obviously caused by enemy action, could be covered by insurance. We thought that the company took a very liberal view of the risk they would accept. We then arranged that the Chief Paymaster would accept 'bankers' orders' to pay premiums when due.

Some officers insured; but the majority did not bother and took the risk themselves, shrugging their shoulders philosophically if they were caught. Nurses were the trouble. Despite the ruling, nurses still applied for compensation when incurring losses that were clearly insurable, an outstanding case occurring in late 1941, when the tent belonging to two nurses was burnt to the ground while they were away at the cinema.

They duly applied for compensation, and when they were refused it appealed to a succession of senior officers, and finally to New Zealand, where, however, both Army Headquarters and the Government were firm in adhering to the ruling. As a result of this and other cases, we arranged that every sister should sign a receipt for a copy of the relevant instruction, so that there could be no argument about it – or so we thought. Thereafter it became one of the duties of the Principal Matron to ensure that every sister had received a copy and had signed for it. But we were not out of the wood yet. When our hospital was moving from **Beirut to **Tripoli** in early 1943, the matron drew the attention of all sisters to the position about loss of kit, pointing out that part of the journey was to be done by train, and that loss by theft or by natural hazard was insurable. And then the worst happened. One railway truck went missing on the journey, and out of all the mass of gear of a hospital on the move it contained nurses' kits. Some nurses had insured and were compensated accordingly. The remainder duly applied to Headquarters for compensation. Again this reached New Zealand through local MPs or somehow, and again everyone there was firm. During his visit to New Zealand in 1943, in view of the emotion this subject was engendering, OICA discussed it specifically with Army Headquarters; but both sides were agreed that there was no cause to change the ruling.**

Many thought sincerely – and strongly – that the rule was a hard one, and that compensation should be given for all losses occurring on active service, no matter how they happened. On the other hand, we thought that an officer must be expected to take the usual reasonable care of his kit, and that it was a fair solution to ask him to insure to cover such risks as the company would accept. As already stated, men in general accepted the position. It was the ladies who were troublesome.

Reviewing the problem today, it seems that the ruling was a little bit too hard, and should have been relaxed to include compensation for losses which were a direct result of active service conditions – in which case the second incident mentioned above (the rail loss) would have come within the scope of compensation by the State while the first one

(the fire loss) would still have been outside it. The difficulty would have been to know where to draw the dividing line.

The basis on which compensation was paid by the State was reasonable replacement value, to be applied to a definite list of articles, generous enough in its range, but excluding articles of a semi-luxury type, valuable presents, etc. When officers' clothing stores appeared in the theatre of war, we took their prices as the ones to be followed. The abnormal losses in **Greece and **Crete** were adjudicated on by a Claims Uniformity Committee, with a membership including officers who had been through the campaign. We tried to be generous – the Prime Minister himself told us to be generous – but on the other hand we had to exclude losses due to sheer carelessness. Taking it all in all, the claims were fairly met. The Uniformity Committee continued as a permanent piece of administrative machinery.**

The Standing Instruction on the subject is in **Appendix X.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CLAIMS FROM CIVILIANS

CLAIMS FROM CIVILIANS

The people of Egypt and the **Levant** soon found out that the British Army was fair game for claims for compensation arising out of alleged damage done to the person or to belongings. No doubt the troops were often careless, sometimes rough with the inhabitants, and only too easily involved in accidents. In Cairo particularly there was always a mass of MT weaving its way in and out of an anarchic jumble of civilian donkey carts and hawkers. Accidents were inevitable.

Claims from civilians were lodged first with the British headquarters, and then, if our men were concerned, were passed over to us. For a while we tried to wrestle with these ourselves; but our knowledge of Egyptians was slight, we had no idea of local values, and had to rely in any case on the help given us by the British authorities. In the end, by mutual arrangement, the British Claims Commission handled our cases entirely. We gave it authority to settle outright any claims not above a certain figure, subsequently obtaining reimbursement from us; and we engaged ourselves to give much weight to any recommendation made by the commission when bigger amounts were involved.

The commission saved us an enormous amount of work. However, in some ways we were not satisfied with its methods or recommendations. We thought that it was too kind to the Egyptians, and we had a feeling that the necessity of maintaining good political relations with Egypt sometimes weighed with it. It appeared to us that often it was we who had a claim against an Egyptian, and not the reverse. It became our habit to examine the commission's recommendations closely, often not to accept them, but to ask that they be reconsidered. Gradually relations between the commission and Headquarters became more and more strained, until a point was reached when the commission took umbrage at one of our remarks and asked for an apology. We had undoubtedly

gone too far, and the apology was given; but all the same, we were never very happy about the position. However, the alternative was that we should handle the claims ourselves, which we did not want to do. The conclusion must be that we were in the wrong, and should have accepted the recommendations of the commission without cavilling at them.

In Italy the position was easier. The troops did not run foul of the inhabitants to anything like the same degree as in Egypt, and claims were less common.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

IDENTITY CARDS

IDENTITY CARDS

It was mentioned on page 31 that we had considered the introduction of a photographic identity card for all ranks to be pasted into the backs of paybooks, but did not go on with the idea. While it must be admitted that we never felt the lack of these cards in the years that followed, the reason probably was that we had never experienced the advantages of having them. It appears that there are advantages in such a scheme, which after all is a simple one.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

NEWSPAPER MAILS

NEWSPAPER MAILS

At any one stage during the war, the postal store in **Cairo** would be clogged up with newspapers from New Zealand, most of them already many months old owing to delays in transportation. Space on ships was at a premium, and newspapers were low in the order of priority. To attempt to readdress this mass of papers, in a way similar to that employed with letters, was manifestly a waste of time for the postal staff; and if a paper was unclaimed at the last address known, it was handed over to hospitals. Moreover, it was common knowledge that there was a great deal of duplication in the despatch of papers and journals, in that many correspondents in New Zealand might send the same paper to the one man, and that many copies of the one paper (the *Weekly News* for instance) might be received in the one small unit. One way and another a lot of the papers became undeliverable. To achieve a satisfactory answer would appear to require a degree of centralisation in New Zealand that would be unworkable. From time to time we used to ask men to let their correspondents know if they really wanted the papers that were sent to them, and possibly some did; but the accumulation in the postal store continued to the end. It might be possible for the New Zealand authorities to produce a paper covering the whole country, and to send it to units in bulk; but it is realised that this is not quite the same thing as the despatch of a local paper by a friend. One thing is sure – that the Postal Corps would welcome anything that reduced the enormous bulk of newspapers.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

In September 1942 Headquarters published an order on the difficult question of acceptance of payment for services. What was legitimate was reasonably clear, e.g., payment for a photograph accepted by the *NZEF Times*. What was irregular was also clear, e.g., acceptance of money or even gifts from contractors. In the middle, however, came a number of cases that were defined as questionable, e.g., a unit photographer making considerable profit out of selling copies of his photos to members of the unit, a hairdresser also charging so much as to give him a good profit, and so on. It appears to be wrong that a man should make money out of his fellow soldiers in these ways, but it is difficult to draw a clear dividing line between what is above board and what is of doubtful honesty. COs were asked to keep a watchful eye on all such cases.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DISBANDMENT AND RETURN TO NEW ZEALAND

DISBANDMENT AND RETURN TO NEW ZEALAND

Toward the end of 1941, after the Libyan campaign, it became clear that the Division would be having a long spell for rest and reorganisation. The opportunity was taken to circularise all senior officers and ask their views about repatriation after the war. At the moment nothing seemed more distant than going home to New Zealand; but the problem was one that required much thought and long planning, and in any case there was no harm in letting Army Headquarters have our views. The resulting paper went off to New Zealand in April 1942, and as far as 2 NZEF was concerned that was the end of it. We were informed that our contribution had been passed to the 'Rehabilitation Council' in New Zealand, where, as we had reason to believe later on, it was duly taken into account.

The details of the paper are not worth mentioning, except those that concern the order of return and the occupation of the force while awaiting repatriation. The consensus of opinion favoured 'first out, first back', and of concentrating on a scheme of educational training, although the prospects of the scheme were somewhat damned by the comment, 'at the best it can be little more than a means of filling in time'.

It is of major interest to note that some of our assumptions proved not to be justified. We thought that shipping delays would make the repatriation take up to two years from the end of the war. Actually, it took much less than a year. We assumed that 2 NZEF would spend some time on garrison duties, probably in Central Europe. Actually, when it came to the time, the Government refused to let New Zealand troops be used for this duty.

One internal problem over which there was considerable difference

of opinion was the length of time that existing units should remain as units, i.e., the stage at which men should be withdrawn for reorganisation preparatory to embarkation. It was obvious, although some COs would not agree, that the existing unit framework would have to be broken up for the journey back, and special units formed. The COs in question were gloomy about the prospects of keeping discipline in temporary units.

As it turned out, the order of return never created a problem, as the 'first out, first back' was accepted. Those wishing to go back before their turn applied for compassionate leave in the ordinary way – and HQ 2 NZEF could console itself with the thought that it had not to make the decision.

The ERS has already been discussed in

Chapter 16, where it is claimed that in the end it did more than merely fill in time, and was a satisfactory and reputable way of tiding over the period of waiting.

It has already been mentioned in

Chapter 6 that at the end of 1945 we were nearly found wanting, in that ships came so fast that we had difficulty in filling them. We had perfect schemes for keeping men employed for indefinite periods, but had never thought of the unexpected factor. In the end all was well; but it is a lesson for the future.

It is undoubtedly desirable that men should stay within the framework of their old units for as long as can safely be allowed. It was in part because of this, of course, that we were nearly caught out; but even that experience does not detract from the desirability of retaining unit identity for the maximum time possible. At Advanced Base men were reorganised into suitable units for the journey back; but it was generally possible to arrange that officers known to the majority of the men were also in the units.

For special reasons the **Maori Battalion** was allowed to embark as a unit. Its place in the order of embarkation was such that a good number of the men were later in leaving than if they had gone normally. In a rather rough and ready way this compensated for the fact that a lot of the men were getting away before their time.

Throughout the war we had had many cases of disbandment of units – disbandment in the form of the complete disappearance of the unit on one particular date. At the end of the war the disbandment was more in the nature of ‘fading away’, the popular method of all old soldiers; but even then it was desirable that the normal administrative action should be taken, and in effect this was the case. There was in existence a **Standing Instruction on Disbandment of Units** (see **Appendix XIII**) which enabled all concerned to check off the action to be taken. All promotions had in any case stopped some time before throughout the force. Equipment had been handed in as part of the general clean-up, and so on. Almost the only remaining problem, the disposal of regimental funds, has been discussed in

Chapter 16.

We had a certain amount of general equipment that belonged definitely to **2 NZEF**, and was not part of the equipment issued to us from British sources. Examples are a lot of our cars, the launch at **Suez**, and the printing machinery. These were sold to 'best advantage', the sale being conducted through a special Disposals Board in order to avoid any scandals. The money, of course, went back to the Government.

There were many duties to be carried out to the last, by which is meant after the rest of the force had embarked. In the Pay Office and Second Echelon we had to retain certain key personnel, even though we went as far as we could to staff the units with volunteers. The personnel concerned, all officers or senior NCOs, understood the position and were uncomplaining. For the Graves units we relied on volunteers, having them sign a special form agreeing to serve for a period after the war. Most of the men volunteered for laudable reasons – love, or a desire to see a bit more of the world – but a few did so because of the chances of loot and more black-market activities. Had it become necessary to retain large numbers, we would have had to be very careful whom we accepted.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATION

It has been mentioned in one or two places that the day-to-day administration of 2 NZEF proceeded in accordance with normal military custom, and that it was never intended to write a treatise on the subject; but the administration of a small specially formed national force served to cast a highlight on a few points which appear worthy of mention.

The basic point which must always be remembered was that it was a specially formed force and had an existence that at the most would be of only a few years. It differed in this respect from a regular army, and even from the wartime divisions of the British Army, where there was always a stiffening of regular personnel in units, and where the new formations were built on a foundation of the peacetime regular army.

It is a complete impossibility to expect a temporary *ad hoc* force to achieve the same standards of administration as in a peacetime army. For one thing, there is no time. Such time as there is must be devoted to training for war in its broadest sense – not that administration does not matter, and that there is not an irreducible minimum of training necessary for that also; but something must suffer, and it is inevitable that it should be administration. A comparatively low standard must be expected, and must be accepted. The aim of the headquarters should be to make things as simple as is possible for recipients and to ease the burden on formation and unit commanders.

Some orders, some rules, some adherence to the custom of the service there must be. In peacetime it is possible for New Zealanders to ‘consider each case on its merits’; in war there is no time for such a luxury, and one must adopt some rule, rough and ready though it may be – and stick to it. If the rule then turns out to be hard, or does not

meet the generality of cases, the thing to do is to alter the rule, and then continue to adhere to it. Few orders, as few as possible, and strict adherence to them, will make it easy for both the enforcer of the rule and the enforcee.

It must be remembered that the perfect answer, the answer that would be completely fair to every individual case, is unattainable in wartime. To achieve it would mean such delays that the administrative machine would gradually grind to a standstill. It often used to be said at HQ **2 NZEF** that if only the enemy would 'freeze' for a few months we would have everything properly sorted out, would have every peg in the proper hole, and could make a nice clean fresh start; but the enemy, far from 'freezing', was a particularly energetic one, so we had to get on as best we could.

If there is one thing that is certain, it is that far too many administrative orders were issued during the war, the greater part being unenforceable, even though they did finish up with the words, 'failure to comply with this order will lead to severe disciplinary action', or something of that kind. There were so many orders that they bred a habit of disregarding them all, which sometimes led to unfortunate results, for every now and then there would be an order that really mattered. It would have been to the benefit of good administration in the end if more thought had been given to the essentials, and less time wasted on a mass of verbiage, directed doubtless to achieving perfection – that perfection which is unattainable in a wartime citizen army.

General Headquarters was the worst offender; but a perusal of **2 NZEF** orders today must make one ruefully admit that despite our efforts – and we did try – we ourselves issued too many orders that had not a chance of being observed. We could have exercised a greater measure of selectivity, have published fewer orders, and then there might have been a chance of a few of them being obeyed.

No unit can possibly absorb the mass of stuff that gets hurled at it when it arrives overseas, either from the British headquarters under

whose command it is to serve, or from its own headquarters which may have preceded it. In **Appendix VI** appears the 'Joining Instructions' for the Third Echelon – or 'Contingent' as we were trying to call it at the time. Headquarters **2 NZEF** had done its best by compiling in the preceding two months a series of what were then called 'Special Circulars', which were a collection of the orders and instructions that had been issued since the First Echelon arrived in Egypt. It was hoped in this way to make the task of units a little easier; but one is left with the melancholy thought that the task would have been easier still if the matter contained in the circulars had been reduced by 50 per cent.

So much for the arrival of the Third Echelon. When the Second Echelon units arrived in early 1941, they were placed under orders to go to **Greece** almost as soon as they landed, and there was no time for HQ **2 NZEF** to distribute a 'Joining Instruction' of a similar type. The war had now intervened to spoil any idea of a nice, tidy administrative welcome – and as far as could be seen then, or can be seen now, it did not matter a bit.

In September 1941 Headquarters started a series of 'Standing Instructions', which were added to in succeeding years. A full list is given in **Appendix VIII**, and some examples of the shorter ones in **Appendices IX to XIII**. Some were intended to be of use for personal problems, e.g., compassionate leave, marriages, compensation for loss of kit; some were to help units for certain administrative work, e.g., regimental funds, traffic accidents, welfare, control of photography; one or two were designed to collect into one place the action required of a number of people for one transaction, e.g., drafts for the **United Kingdom** or New Zealand, disbandment of units; a good number merely collected into one place a mass of separate orders dealing with pay, Second Echelon, postal service, and base kits. Probably few of the last class were ever read, whereas the others had some practical value. It appears that Headquarters was afflicted with the common complaint of issuing too much paper, and that we would have been better advised to cut the list down by half, particularly as few units ever had a complete

set of the instructions, despite our attempts from time to time to find out deficiencies and replace them.

At this point it is opportune to repeat that printed orders are easier to read than cyclostyled ones. We did not have a printing unit until January 1942, which was much too late. It would have been of great help from the start, and it should be one of the units which accompanies the first contingent overseas. It is not just a luxury, for it is an admirable example of the principle that everything possible should be done to make things easy for recipients.

One aspect of this problem of the dissemination of orders to which a satisfactory answer was never found was that of passing on orders issued by GHQ. There were two facets, first the applicability of the order, and second how it was to be distributed. The first facet has been dealt with in

Chapter 11, where it is stated that a completely satisfactory answer was never found. The second facet was within our own powers. The number of copies of GHQ orders was limited, and did not reach down to units. In the end HQ **2 NZEF** assumed the task of repeating the appropriate ones in 2 NZEF Orders, one reason being that HQ 2 NZ Division would thereby be spared the task. As each issue of GHQ orders was received, the appropriate administrative head (medical, pay, legal, ordnance, etc.) was asked his views about our repeating any order that was marked as applicable to all troops, and which came within his province. At least that was the general idea; but very often in the heat of the war the officer concerned was either not consulted or was away at the time, and the order was first put aside and then forgotten altogether. On the whole it never seemed to matter, and there is no record of any trouble occurring because a GHQ order did not reach **2 NZEF** units.

Second NZEF orders might have been better arranged. Reading them today gives the impression of a bit of a muddle; and in fact we were almost as bad as GHQ, in that genuine **2 NZEF** orders containing something that mattered are mixed up with repeats of GHQ orders and other things included merely as information. On one or two occasions we issued a consolidated volume of **2 NZEF** orders, but it is doubtful if it was of any value.

If any headquarters is going to issue orders, it is better to make use of them as much as possible, and avoid a multiplicity of separate instructions and bits of paper. The ideal would be that everything, every form of order or directive, was issued through one source, so enabling the recipient to keep a careful check on what he received and make sure that he had missed nothing. That method is impossible, however, if for no other reason than that a lot of what is issued is secret or goes only to a limited number of recipients.

The crisis of July 1942 found HQ **2 NZEF** with a mass of back files and correspondence, a lot of which was either of no importance at all, or had only historical interest. We had been remiss in not having periodical

purges of files, and either sending unwanted files back to New Zealand for storage or destroying them. Anyhow, we had a good bonfire at the time.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHAPTER 18 – CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER 18

Conclusions

THE preceding chapters of this volume have given our experience during the war, and have shown the difficulties that confronted us and the solutions we found, or the action we took, to overcome those difficulties. By the end of the war most of our one-time problems had ceased to be problems and had become normal procedure. Our answers may not have been perfect, as they were merely the best ones we could find at the time; but they were adequate. Had we gone on to take part in the war against **Japan**, we would have started there as we had ended in **Europe**, with all the experience we had gained in the preceding six years. Not that all would have gone smoothly thereafter, for it is a melancholy fact that problems are never-ending, and a fresh crop would certainly have arisen; but we would at least have been free of the old ones.

It cannot be claimed that all our work was the result of farsighted long-term planning. We cannot say with assurance that we foresaw in one year what was going to happen in the next. It would be 'hindsight', for instance, to claim that the base layout shown in **Appendix I** figured in a comprehensive plan in early 1940. Perhaps we had the broad idea at the back of our minds, i.e., that there would have to be some training depots and some service units to look after them; but within this rough framework the base grew unit by unit as some new need arose. Some problems – marriages and compassionate leave for instance – lasted for so long a time, and were so obviously persistent ones, that we could not help but think ahead and get ready for further difficulties. Other tasks sprang up more fortuitously – the formation of Advanced Base in early 1942, for instance. Here our experience on one occasion was of help for the next, for when the second advanced base (near **Tripoli**) had to be formed, we were ready with a plan. We can perhaps claim that by early 1942 the administrative machine was working smoothly enough not to be found lacking when anything unexpected arose; and this smooth working improved with the months and years thereafter.

If an analysis is made of the things that caused us trouble, it will be seen that the greater part could in the future be solved by action taken in New Zealand, either in peacetime or in the period between the outbreak of war and the despatch of the first contingent. The more planning that can take place in peacetime the better, alike in inter-departmental matters and within departments. This is a commonplace; but it has to be said, because it is still sometimes difficult to convince a government that planning is necessary, that it will take time and money, and that unfortunately there will be little to show the public at the time.

There are admittedly limits to the extent that a government can properly be expected to commit itself in peacetime, so that for many of the things mentioned below it may be necessary to wait until the outbreak of war; but even here it will be possible for the army itself to have a plan and to be sure for what it is going to ask. Under these conditions, the period before embarkation could be fruitful.

From the point of view of this volume, the most important action that could be taken in peacetime is that the nucleus of a headquarters staff should be in existence and functioning. One element of this staff should be a separate branch for 'Expeditionary Force' duties, as opposed to 'Field Operational' duties. Unless it has been made clear already that Expeditionary Force work, as differentiated from field work, arises at the beginning and goes on increasing, one of the objects of this volume has not been achieved. Without a separate 'NZE' staff ready at the outbreak of war, the whole burden will fall on the staff of the field formation, with the result that in increasing degree that staff will be diverted from its proper work.

The Expeditionary Force staff in peacetime need not be large. Probably one officer would suffice, to be subordinate to the senior administrative officer at the time; but it must be borne in mind that at some early point, within New Zealand or overseas, the 'NZE' staff officer will remove himself to a separate headquarters, and that the

chief staff officer at this headquarters must be of some seniority and wield considerable authority.

It may appear that the creation of a staff has preceded the appointment of a commander; but this has not been forgotten. If the commander elect can be nominated in peacetime so much the better; but he must at least be appointed very soon after the outbreak of war, so that he may work with the staff and achieve some degree of integration before going overseas. The commander must have the full confidence of the Government, with no room for any doubts on the point; and in these circumstances should be given a generous charter.

We felt the need for our own code of military law and our own 'Queen's Regulations'. Neither of these can be drawn up without long deliberation and care, and must therefore be worked out in peacetime.

In the various points that now follow, while it has already been indicated that it is not necessary that they should be settled until immediately after the outbreak of war, it would naturally be preferable that they should, wherever possible, be settled in peacetime. All that can be allowed is that there will probably be time to settle them after the war starts, and that it is realised that many decisions taken in peacetime may not be binding when the emergency arises.

There should be some form of understanding with the United Kingdom Government – or with whatever body is exercising the supreme control – on exactly what form the New Zealand contribution is going to take, i.e., to what extent the New Zealand force is to be self-contained. It can be accepted as axiomatic that New Zealanders prefer to be supported by their own nationals, and that the more the rear echelons are composed of New Zealanders the better. Certainly everything in the base camp and from that point forward should be supplied by New Zealand. Whether or not we should also supply troops for the base port and for the area between the port and the base camp is another matter; but it must be remembered that these duties have to be done, and that if we do not do our share then somebody else will have to step into the

breach. The decision taken on this point by the **New Zealand Government** will not only help the Supreme Headquarters in its long-term planning, but will give some guidance to the GOC when he is asked for help – and most assuredly he will be asked.

Our experience supports the idea that it would be better to supply one large non-divisional organisation than to do as was done last time and supply a number of small units. Provided the men are supplied, there could be no objection to our running a complete base port, for instance, rather than our supplying a few odd units to work in a variety of places. A command suitable for a brigadier should be the sort of thing at which to aim.

Should it ever arise that New Zealand supplies a completely self-contained force, including a full share of the lines of communication throughout the theatre of war, it would probably emerge that there were more troops outside the field than in it – see [page 173](#). It might then (and then only) be necessary to appoint a Force Commander separate from the Field Commander, in which case the relations between the two would need some careful working out. In circumstances similar to ours in the last war, however, the force and field commanders should be the same.

While discussions on these points are going on, it would be as well to give some thought to the question of interchange of commanders and staff between the New Zealand forces and others – presumably British.

It would be as well to settle at the same time the vexed question of interchange between New Zealand and the force overseas, for if any scheme of exchange of officers is to work, it must start at an early point and be kept very much alive. If there is too much delay, there will be strong protests from the officers serving overseas either to the admittance of officers from New Zealand into the force, or to the withdrawal of officers from the force for service in New Zealand.

To ensure the smooth running of the force overseas in the early

stages, it is important that at least the skeleton of a properly organised Base Camp organisation should go overseas at the outset, the exact time depending on the circumstances in the theatre of war. Whether or not all the units are fully organised in New Zealand is of less importance than that men should be available in sufficient numbers for these duties, and that it should not be left to the force to improvise so early in its career. Obviously the Base Headquarters should be formed in New Zealand. The circumstances of the moment will prescribe what other units should be formed. It should be remembered that service units will be wanted just as much as training depots. A quiet word may be said about the early despatch of a mobile printing unit.

At this point consideration should be given to the employment of men of medical grading just below the highest, and of officers just too old for field service; also to the employment of women in as great numbers as is possible, certainly for clerical duties at headquarters and in large base offices. It may be of advantage to form a General Service Corps for the officers so employed – a corps separate from those pertaining to field units.

The mention of women brings in its train the thought that will have to be given to their status while overseas, both within the force and outside it, always remembering that Allied armies will also be employing women.

There should be some discussions with the Government about marriage policy, especially if the force is likely to be serving in a non-European country. Marriages within the force also merit a little attention, in order to decide what action, if any, is to be taken about wives continuing to serve with the force.

The appointment of a Public Relations Officer, and the arrangements for all the various aspects of publicity – not forgetting war correspondents – should be well thrashed out before the force leaves. The exact status of all these people needs some better definition than was available last time.

Welfare in all its forms is another major issue which merits thorough examination before the force sails. There seems to be a case for a Director of Welfare, to be the officer responsible for all aspects of the work; but it will still be necessary to decide whether or not the YMCA is to continue as a separate body, or whether its work is to be merged into a wider welfare service. Our experience would seem to show that it is unwise to let one church body only enter this field, and in fact that it is unwise to go beyond one undenominational body such as the YMCA. Welfare demands a degree of centralisation which cannot be achieved if there are representatives of numerous religious bodies.

Perhaps it will not be out of place to say that emotion should be kept out of discussions such as these, and that the pros and cons should be considered dispassionately.

Under the heading of Welfare come the possible employment of women in clubs and in hospitals, the exact position of the Red Cross Commissioner, and the arrangements to ensure an unfailing supply of books. Associated with this is the question of an army canteen service. Our aim should be to run our own; but it may still be necessary to depend on British arrangements for a few months.

An Education and Rehabilitation Service should be constituted soon after mobilisation commences; but for once it can be said that it need not proceed overseas until the base has been well established. To avoid heart-burning it should be made clear that the long-term part of the service is intended only for those on the New Zealand roll for as long as active operations continue; but part of the duties of the service should be the preparation and dissemination of information bulletins for everyone in the force.

As soon as it is firmly decided that a force is to proceed overseas, the question of escorts should be taken up with the controlling authority. In both the first and the second wars this question caused controversy – in the second war at a rather late stage – and it would be as well to clear the air at an early date.

The above points – all of them – appear to be ones that will require Cabinet decisions. There are many others that can possibly be determined by military authorities alone, although it should always be borne in mind that, in the early stages, the Government is sure to be interested in everything, and that if military rulings are likely to be queried by the public or the press, it would be as well to have Government backing.

A new force will have its own troubles at the time; but some of the points which caused us most trouble and which might thus be avoided in the future are as follows:

Extra-duty pay

Numbers of chaplains

Archivist or war historian

Promotion corps for infantry

Compassionate leave

Compensation for loss of kit

Head-dress, badges, titles, patches

Status of reinforcement NCOs

Proportions of officers to be supplied from New Zealand

Size of reinforcement drafts

Photographic identity card

During the training period, some instruction should be given on the Geneva Convention.

Before the first contingent embarks, the selection of officers should be undertaken with the utmost care, and there should be no hesitation

in reducing or removing officers about whose efficiency there is any doubt.

In the initial stages overseas it will be helpful if the force can be closely concentrated, with headquarters in the same camp or the same area as the rest of the troops. For the moment one headquarters would suffice, but in two clear sections – one for the tactical training and administration of the field troops, and for their subsequent operational control, and one for the general administration of the whole force.

The formation of the main base camp should be commenced at once, units, or men for units, having been supplied already from New Zealand. Some thought might be given to possible economies by having combined depots, or by making full use of schools for all common subjects. Included in the depots should be an officer cadet training unit.

At some suitable point the separate NZEF Headquarters should be formed. It will be a matter for consideration whether or not it is to be combined with the Base Headquarters; but at the least the Chief Administrative Officer of the force should have command over all non-field units and organisations, including the one large base camp if it exists.

From that point on care will have to be taken, both by the commander and by all the staff officers, that tasks are handled by the correct headquarters – or in other words, that NZEF work is not done at the field headquarters. It should be unnecessary to say that the two headquarters should work in the closest co-operation.

During the course of the war it is most desirable that there should be a closer personal liaison with New Zealand than there was last time. Cabinet ministers, and both staff officers and heads of services from Army Headquarters, should visit the force frequently. In the intervals between visits, Force Headquarters should send back frequent liaison letters to New Zealand.

It is for consideration whether there should be a system of

confidential reports on officers, simple and not too frequent. Perhaps then some better solution of the problem of inefficient officers could be found than merely dumping them on the base.

As far as training is concerned, the objective should be to carry out the maximum amount overseas, but no draft should leave the country without thorough basic training.

After about two years' service overseas, thought should be given to a possible changeover of personnel in about another year's time. Details can then be settled without the scramble of May and June 1943.

In the disciplinary field the most difficult problem will be the question of drink. Circumstances will naturally vary from place to place; but one good general rule is that the more men can be induced to drink within the lines and to keep away from civilian bars the better. Coupled with this problem is that of ensuring that men have every facility for occupying themselves when not working. This applies particularly to New Zealanders, who need distraction to keep them out of trouble.

A special branch of headquarters is needed for 'Family Affairs', to handle such matters as marriages and compassionate leave.

In the field of general administration the policy to follow should be to issue few orders, but to see that those issued are observed. The best work that the staff of Force Headquarters can do is to be constantly on the move around the force, both in the field and on the lines of communication. Close liaison such as this will in itself take the place of orders.

It can in fact be taken as our greatest lesson that the more the various parts of the military forces can be mixed up – New Zealand and the force overseas, field and base, Force Headquarters and units, staff and services – the less will be the real problems, and the easier will be the solutions to those that will inevitably arise.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX I

Appendix I

MOST SECRET

HQ 2 NZEF
12/4/3090

ORDER OF BATTLE *as at 17 April 41*

Serial No.	Formation	Name of Unit	Official Abbreviation Where Applicable
	<i>2 NZEF Units</i>		
1		HQ 2 NZEF	HQ 2 NZEF
2		Office of the Military Secretary	MS
3		Office of the DDMS	DDMS
4		Office of the ADDS	ADDS
5		Office of the DDOS	DDOS
6		Branch of the DJAG	DJAG
7		2 NZEF Cipher Section	2 NZEF Cipher Sec
8		2 NZEF Public Relations Service	NZ Public Relations Service
9		NZ Chaplains Department	NZ Ch D
10		2 NZEF Section YMCA	NZ YMCA
11		2 Echelon 2 NZEF	O2E NZ
12		NZ Pay Office	Paymaster
13		2 NZEF Audit Branch	Auditor
14		Official Archivist	Official Archivist
15		Official Artist	Official Artist
16			
17			
18			

19

20

Div Units

21

HQ NZ Div

NZ Div

22

23

Divisional Cavalry Regiment

Div Cav

24

25

26

27

28

HQ Divisional Artillery

NZA

29

4 Field Regiment

4 Fd Regt

30

5 Field Regiment

5 Fd Regt

31

6 Field Regiment

6 Fd Regt

32

7 Anti-Tank Regiment

7 A-Tk Regt

33

1 Survey Troop

1 Svy Tp

34

**14 Light Anti-Aircraft
Regiment**

14 Lt AA Regt

35

36

37

HQ Divisional Engineers

NZE

38

5 Field Park Company

5 Fd Pk Coy

39

6 Field Company

6 Fd Coy

40

7 Field Company

7 Fd Coy

41

8 Field Company

8 Fd Coy

42

43

44

Divisional Signals

Div Sigs

45

**Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment
(Signal Section)**

Lt AA Regt Sig Sec

46

HQ 4 Infantry Brigade

HQ 4 Inf Bde

47

48

18 Battalion

18 Bn

49

19 Battalion

19 Bn

50

20 Battalion

20 Bn

51

4 Infantry Brigade Band

4 Inf Bde Band

52

HQ 5 Infantry Brigade

HQ 5 Inf Bde

53		
54	21 Battalion	21 Bn
55	22 Battalion	22 Bn
56	23 Battalion	23 Bn
57	5 Infantry Brigade Band	5 Inf Bde Band
58	HQ 6 Infantry Brigade	HQ 6 Inf Bde
59		
60	24 Battalion	24 Bn
61	25 Battalion	25 Bn
62	26 Battalion	26 Bn
63	6 Infantry Brigade Band	6 Inf Bde Band
64		
65		
66	27 Machine Gun Battalion	27 (MG) Bn
67		
68	28 Maori Battalion	28 (Maori) Bn
69	HQ Divisional Army Service Corps	NZASC
70	Divisional Ammunition Company	Amn Coy
71	Divisional Petrol Company	Pet Coy
72	Divisional Supply Column	Sup Coln
73	Reserve Motor Transport Company	Res MT Coy
74	Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, NZASC Section	Lt AA Regt ASC Sec
75		
76		
77		
78	4 Field Ambulance	4 Fd Amb
79	5 Field Ambulance	5 Fd Amb
80	6 Field Ambulance	6 Fd Amb
81		
82		
83	4 Field Hygiene Section	4 Fd Hyg Sec
84	Divisional Provost Company	Pro Coy
85	Divisional Intelligence Section	Div Int Sec

86	Divisional Postal Unit	Div Postal
87	Divisional Employment Platoon	Employ Pl
88	Divisional Troops Band	Div Tps Band
89	NZ Field Security Section	NZ Fd Security Sec
90	Mobile Bath Unit	Mob Bath
91	Mobile Laundry & Decontamination Unit	Mob Laundry
92	Salvage Unit	Salvage Unit
93	9 Light Aid Detachment attached 4 Fd Regt	9 LAD
94	10 Light Aid Detachment attached 5 Fd Pk Coy	10 LAD
95	11 Light Aid Detachment attached 4 Inf Bde	11 LAD
96	12 Light Aid Detachment attached 27 (MG) Bn	12 LAD
97	13 Light Aid Detachment attached Div Cav	13 LAD
98	14 Light Aid Detachment attached Div Sigs	14 LAD
99	15 Light Aid Detachment attached 7 A-Tk Regt	15 LAD
100	16 Light Aid Detachment attached 5 Fd Regt	16 LAD
101	17 Light Aid Detachment attached 5 Inf Bde	17 LAD
102	18 Light Aid Detachment attached 6 Fd Regt	18 LAD
103	19 Light Aid Detachment attachment 6 Inf Bde	19 LAD
104		
105		
106		
107		
108		
109	1 Field Workshop NZOC	1 Fd Wkshop
110	2 Field Workshop NZOC	2 Fd Wkshop
111	3 Field Workshop NZOC	3 Fd Wkshop

112	4 Field Workshop NZOC	4 Fd Wkshop
113		
114	Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment Workshop Section NZOC	Lt AA Regt Wkshop Sec
115		
116		
117		
118		
119		
120		
121		
122		

Non-Div Units

123	HQ Railway Construction and Maintenance Group NZE	HQ Ry C and M Gp NZE
124	9 Railway Survey Company NZE	9 Ry Svy Coy NZE
125	10 Railway Construction Company NZE	10 Ry Const Coy NZE
126	13 Railway Construction Company NZE	13 Ry Const Coy NZE
127		
128	HQ Railway Operating Group NZE	HQ Ry Op Gp NZE
129	16 Railway Operating Company NZE	16 Ry Op Coy NZE
130	17 Railway Operating Company NZE	17 Ry Op Coy NZE
131		
132	18 Army Troops Company NZE	18 A Tps Coy NZE
133	19 Army Troops Company NZE	19 A Tps Coy NZE
134		
135	21 Mechanical Equipment Company NZE	21 Mech Equip Coy NZE
136		
137		

138		
139	11 Forestry Company NZE	11 For Coy NZE
140	14 Forestry Company NZE	14 For Coy NZE
141	15 Forestry Company NZE	15 For Coy NZE
142		
143	36 Survey Battery NZA	36 Svy Bty NZA
144	NZ Patrol 'R' Long Range Desert Group	'R' Patrol LRDG
145	NZ Patrol 'T' Long Range Desert Group	'T' Patrol LRDG
146	Mobile Surgical Unit	Mob Surgical Unit
147	Mobile Dental Section	Mob Dental Sec
148		
149		
150		

*Base and
Training
Units*

151	HQ 2 NZEF Base	HQ 2 NZEF Base
152	NZ Base Field Security Section	NZ Base Fd Security Sec
153	Composite Training Depot	Comp Trng Depot
154	Signal School 2 NZEF Base	Sig School
155	Artillery Training Regiment	Arty Trng Regt
156	HQ 9 Infantry Brigade	HQ 9 Inf Bde
157	31 Infantry Training Battalion	31 Bn
158	32 Infantry Training Battalion	32 Bn
159	33 Infantry Training Battalion	33 Bn
160	Maori Training Company	Maori Trng Coy
161	Machine Gun Training Company	MG Trng Coy
162	Base Training Depot NZASC	Base Trng Depot NZASC
163	NZMC Training Cadre	NZMC Trng Cadre
164	2 NZEF School of Instruction	2 NZEF School of

165	2 NZEF Driving and Maintenance School	2 NZEF Drvg and Maint School
166		
167		
168		
169	NZ Wing Middle East Officer Cadet Training Unit	NZ Wing ME OCTU
170	NZ Detachment Reception Camp	NZ Det Reception Camp
171		
172	Base Reception Depot	Base Reception Depot
173	Base Discharge Depot	Base Discharge Depot
174	Base Employment Platoon	Base Employ Pl
175	Base Kit Section	Base Kit Sec
176	1 Works Section NZE	1 Works Sec
177	Base Post Office	NZ Base Postal
178	Base Signals Company	Base Sigs Coy
179	Base Provost Company	Base Pro Coy
180	HQ Base NZASC	HQ Base ASC
181	Field Supply Depot NZASC	Fd Sup Depot
182	Base Bakery NZASC	Base Bakery
183	Base Transport Depot NZASC	Base Tpt Depot
184	Base Ordnance Depot NZOC	Base Ord Depot
185	31 Light Aid Detachment attached HQ 2 NZEF Base	31 LAD
186	1 Camp Hospital	1 Camp Hosp
187	Base Hygiene Section	Base Hyg Sec
188	1 Camp Dental Hospital	1 Camp Dental Hosp
189	Base Depot Dental Hospital	Base Depot Dental Hosp
190	1 NZ General Hospital	1 NZ Gen Hosp
191	2 NZ General Hospital	2 NZ Gen Hosp
192	3 NZ General Hospital	3 NZ Gen Hosp
193		
194	1 NZ Convalescent Depot	1 NZ Conv Depot

195 196	1 NZ Casualty Clearing Station	1 NZ CCS
197	Medical Stores Depot	Med Stores Depot
198		
199	Port Detachment Suez	Port Det Suez
200	Base Band	Base Band
201		
202	NZ Forces Club	NZ Forces Club
203	Kiwi Concert Party	Kiwi Concert Party
204	2 Camp Dental Hospital	2 Camp Dental Hosp
205	1 Prisoner of War Camp	1 POW Camp
206		
207		
208		
209		
210		

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

MOST SECRET

HQ 2 NZEF
12/4/3090

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ORDER OF BATTLE – AS AT 17 APRIL 41

ORDER OF BATTLE

as at 17 April 41

Serial No.	Formation	Name of Unit	Official Abbreviation Where Applicable
	<i>2 NZEF Units</i>		
1		HQ 2 NZEF	HQ 2 NZEF
2		Office of the Military Secretary	MS
3		Office of the DDMS	DDMS
4		Office of the ADDS	ADDS
5		Office of the DDOS	DDOS
6		Branch of the DJAG	DJAG
7		2 NZEF Cipher Section	2 NZEF Cipher Sec
8		2 NZEF Public Relations Service	NZ Public Relations Service
9		NZ Chaplains Department	NZ Ch D
10		2 NZEF Section YMCA	NZ YMCA
11		2 Echelon 2 NZEF	O2E NZ
12		NZ Pay Office	Paymaster
13		2 NZEF Audit Branch	Auditor
14		Official Archivist	Official Archivist
15		Official Artist	Official Artist
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
	<i>Div Units</i>		
21		HQ NZ Div	NZ Div
22			
23		Divisional Cavalry Regiment	Div Cav
24			

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59

HQ Divisional Artillery
4 Field Regiment
5 Field Regiment
6 Field Regiment
7 Anti-Tank Regiment
1 Survey Troop
14 Light Anti-Aircraft
Regiment

NZA
4 Fd Regt
5 Fd Regt
6 Fd Regt
7 A-Tk Regt
1 Svy Tp
14 Lt AA Regt

HQ Divisional Engineers
5 Field Park Company
6 Field Company
7 Field Company
8 Field Company

NZE
5 Fd Pk Coy
6 Fd Coy
7 Fd Coy
8 Fd Coy

Divisional Signals
Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment
(Signal Section)

Div Sigs
Lt AA Regt Sig Sec

HQ 4 Infantry Brigade

HQ 4 Inf Bde

18 Battalion

18 Bn

19 Battalion

19 Bn

20 Battalion

20 Bn

4 Infantry Brigade Band

4 Inf Bde Band

HQ 5 Infantry Brigade

HQ 5 Inf Bde

21 Battalion

21 Bn

22 Battalion

22 Bn

23 Battalion

23 Bn

5 Infantry Brigade Band

5 Inf Bde Band

HQ 6 Infantry Brigade

HQ 6 Inf Bde

60	24 Battalion	24 Bn
61	25 Battalion	25 Bn
62	26 Battalion	26 Bn
63	6 Infantry Brigade Band	6 Inf Bde Band
64		
65		
66	27 Machine Gun Battalion	27 (MG) Bn
67		
68	28 Maori Battalion	28 (Maori) Bn
69	HQ Divisional Army Service Corps	NZASC
70	Divisional Ammunition Company	Amn Coy
71	Divisional Petrol Company	Pet Coy
72	Divisional Supply Column	Sup Coln
73	Reserve Motor Transport Company	Res MT Coy
74	Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, NZASC Section	Lt AA Regt ASC Sec
75		
76		
77		
78	4 Field Ambulance	4 Fd Amb
79	5 Field Ambulance	5 Fd Amb
80	6 Field Ambulance	6 Fd Amb
81		
82		
83	4 Field Hygiene Section	4 Fd Hyg Sec
84	Divisional Provost Company	Pro Coy
85	Divisional Intelligence Section	Div Int Sec
86	Divisional Postal Unit	Div Postal
87	Divisional Employment Platoon	Employ Pl
88	Divisional Troops Band	Div Tps Band
89	NZ Field Security Section	NZ Fd Security Sec
90	Mobile Bath Unit	Mob Bath
91	Mobile Laundry & Decontamination Unit	Mob Laundry

92	Salvage Unit	Salvage Unit
93	9 Light Aid Detachment attached 4 Fd Regt	9 LAD
94	10 Light Aid Detachment attached 5 Fd Pk Coy	10 LAD
95	11 Light Aid Detachment attached 4 Inf Bde	11 LAD
96	12 Light Aid Detachment attached 27 (MG) Bn	12 LAD
97	13 Light Aid Detachment attached Div Cav	13 LAD
98	14 Light Aid Detachment attached Div Sigs	14 LAD
99	15 Light Aid Detachment attached 7 A-Tk Regt	15 LAD
100	16 Light Aid Detachment attached 5 Fd Regt	16 LAD
101	17 Light Aid Detachment attached 5 Inf Bde	17 LAD
102	18 Light Aid Detachment attached 6 Fd Regt	18 LAD
103	19 Light Aid Detachment attachment 6 Inf Bde	19 LAD
104		
105		
106		
107		
108		
109	1 Field Workshop NZOC	1 Fd Wkshop
110	2 Field Workshop NZOC	2 Fd Wkshop
111	3 Field Workshop NZOC	3 Fd Wkshop
112	4 Field Workshop NZOC	4 Fd Wkshop
113		
114	Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment Workshop Section NZOC	Lt AA Regt Wkshop Sec
115		
116		
117		

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121

122

Non-Div Units

123	HQ Railway Construction and Maintenance Group NZE	HQ Ry C and M Gp NZE
124	9 Railway Survey Company NZE	9 Ry Svy Coy NZE
125	10 Railway Construction Company NZE	10 Ry Const Coy NZE
126	13 Railway Construction Company NZE	13 Ry Const Coy NZE
127		
128	HQ Railway Operating Group NZE	HQ Ry Op Gp NZE
129	16 Railway Operating Company NZE	16 Ry Op Coy NZE
130	17 Railway Operating Company NZE	17 Ry Op Coy NZE
131		
132	18 Army Troops Company NZE	18 A Tps Coy NZE
133	19 Army Troops Company NZE	19 A Tps Coy NZE
134		
135	21 Mechanical Equipment Company NZE	21 Mech Equip Coy NZE
136		
137		
138		
139	11 Forestry Company NZE	11 For Coy NZE
140	14 Forestry Company NZE	14 For Coy NZE
141	15 Forestry Company NZE	15 For Coy NZE
142		
143	36 Survey Battery NZA	36 Svy Bty NZA
144	NZ Patrol 'R' Long Range Desert Group	'R' Patrol LRDG

145	NZ Patrol 'T' Long Range Desert Group	'T' Patrol LRDG
146	Mobile Surgical Unit	Mob Surgical Unit
147	Mobile Dental Section	Mob Dental Sec
148		
149		
150		
	<i>Base and Training Units</i>	
151	HQ 2 NZEF Base	HQ 2 NZEF Base
152	NZ Base Field Security Section	NZ Base Fd Security Sec
153	Composite Training Depot	Comp Trng Depot
154	Signal School 2 NZEF Base	Sig School
155	Artillery Training Regiment	Arty Trng Regt
156	HQ 9 Infantry Brigade	HQ 9 Inf Bde
157	31 Infantry Training Battalion	31 Bn
158	32 Infantry Training Battalion	32 Bn
159	33 Infantry Training Battalion	33 Bn
160	Maori Training Company	Maori Trng Coy
161	Machine Gun Training Company	MG Trng Coy
162	Base Training Depot NZASC	Base Trng Depot NZASC
163	NZMC Training Cadre	NZMC Trng Cadre
164	2 NZEF School of Instruction	2 NZEF School of Instruction
165	2 NZEF Driving and Maintenance School	2 NZEF Drvg and Maint School
166		
167		
168		
169	NZ Wing Middle East Officer Cadet Training Unit	NZ Wing ME OCTU
170	NZ Detachment Reception	NZ Det Reception

	Camp	Camp
171		
172	Base Reception Depot	Base Reception Depot
173	Base Discharge Depot	Base Discharge Depot
174	Base Employment Platoon	Base Employ Pl
175	Base Kit Section	Base Kit Sec
176	1 Works Section NZE	1 Works Sec
177	Base Post Office	NZ Base Postal
178	Base Signals Company	Base Sigs Coy
179	Base Provost Company	Base Pro Coy
180	HQ Base NZASC	HQ Base ASC
181	Field Supply Depot NZASC	Fd Sup Depot
182	Base Bakery NZASC	Base Bakery
183	Base Transport Depot NZASC	Base Tpt Depot
184	Base Ordnance Depot NZOC	Base Ord Depot
185	31 Light Aid Detachment attached HQ 2 NZEF Base	31 LAD
186	1 Camp Hospital	1 Camp Hosp
187	Base Hygiene Section	Base Hyg Sec
188	1 Camp Dental Hospital	1 Camp Dental Hosp
189	Base Depot Dental Hospital	Base Depot Dental Hosp
190	1 NZ General Hospital	1 NZ Gen Hosp
191	2 NZ General Hospital	2 NZ Gen Hosp
192	3 NZ General Hospital	3 NZ Gen Hosp
193		
194	1 NZ Convalescent Depot	1 NZ Conv Depot
195		
196	1 NZ Casualty Clearing Station	1 NZ CCS
197	Medical Stores Depot	Med Stores Depot
198		
199	Port Detachment Suez	Port Det Suez
200	Base Band	Base Band
201		

~~203~~

~~NZ Forces Club
Kiwi Concert Party~~

~~NZ Forces Club
Kiwi Concert Party~~

204

2 Camp Dental Hospital

2 Camp Dental Hosp

205

1 Prisoner of War Camp

1 POW Camp

206

207

208

209

210

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX II

Appendix II

SECRET

Copy No. 24

Subject: 2 NZEF ORDER OF BATTLE (AS AT 9 MAY 45)

HQ 2 NZEF

SD 84/5

24 May 45

1. Attached is 2 NZEF Order of Battle as at 9 May 45. This is a revised Order of Battle and supersedes that of 22 Dec 44 (SD 84/5 of 23 Dec 44) and amendments thereto.

2. Please complete destruction certificate and acknowledge receipt on the form below.

3. Units are grouped under the following headings:

(A) 2 NZ DIV UNITS

(B) CMF UNITS

(i) HQ 2 NZEF

(ii) Adv Base 2 NZEF

(iii) Miscellaneous

(C) MEF UNITS

J. W. STANDISH, Capt

for Brigadier, Offr IC Adm 2 NZEF

(A) 2 NZ DIV UNITS

Serial No. Unit

2 NZEF WO ¹

25 29262 HQ 2 NZ Div
26 61666 2 NZ Div Def Pl
131 61603 2 NZ Div Cipher Sec
137 61651 2 NZ Div FS Sec
133 61604 2 NZ Div Postal Unit
127 24212 2 NZ Div Pro Coy
239 61971 1 NZ Fd Cash Office

Armoured

70 61625 HQ 4 NZ Armd Bde
72 61627 18 NZ Armd Regt
73 61628 19 NZ Armd Regt
74 61629 20 NZ Armd Regt
32 61709 NZ Fwd Del Sqn
75 61654 4 NZ Armd Bde Band

Serial No. Unit

2 NZEF WO *Artillery*

35 29284 HQ 2 NZ Div Arty
36 61608 4 NZ Fd Regt
37 24205 5 NZ Fd Regt
38 61612 6 NZ Fd Regt
39 24206 7 NZ A-Tk Regt
287 61973 NZ Arty Pipe Band

Engineers

52 29402 HQ 2 NZ Div Engrs
53 61618 5 NZ Fd Pk Coy
54 61620 6 NZ Fd Coy
55 24207 7 NZ Fd Coy
56 61622 8 NZ Fd Coy
57 93769 27 NZ Mech Eqpt Coy
58 95028 28 NZ Aslt Sqn

Signals

63 29403 2 NZ Div Sigs

Infantry

76 24201 HQ 5 NZ Inf Bde
77 61668 5 NZ Inf Bde Def Pl
78 24202 21 NZ Bn

80 24204 23 NZ Bn
92 29762 28 NZ (Maori) Bn
81 61655 5 NZ Inf Bde Band
82 61635 HQ 6 NZ Inf Bde
83 61669 6 NZ Inf Bde Def Pl
84 61637 24 NZ Bn
85 61638 25 NZ Bn
86 61639 26 NZ Bn
87 61656 6 NZ Inf Bde Band
88 93848 HQ 9 NZ Inf Bde
89 93849 9 NZ Inf Bde Def Pl
31 29309 2 NZ Div Cav Bn
79 24203 22 NZ Bn
90 29404 27 NZ Bn

Army Service Corps

102 29405 HQ Comd NZASC
103 24210 1 NZ Amn Coy
104 29407 1 NZ Pet Coy
105 29406 1 NZ Sup Coy
106 61647 4 NZ Res MT Coy
204 61681 NZ MAC Sec
107 95143 NZ Jeep Pl
207 61697 2 NZ Fd Bky Sec
108 61696 2 NZ Amn Coy

Serial No. Unit

2 NZEF WO *Medical*

116 55421 4 NZ Fd Amb
117 24211 5 NZ Fd Amb
118 55422 6 NZ Fd Amb
120 55509 4 NZ Fd Hyg Coy
218 40211 3 NZ FSU
214 61690 2 NZ FTU
217 40210 14 NZ Optician Unit
213 55526 1 NZ Mob CCS
216 61677 102 NZ Mob VD Treatment Centre

Dental

220 55595 1 NZ Mob Dental Unit

Ordinance

145 61671 2 NZ Div Ord Fd Pk

266 61689 NZ MLBU

NZEME

144 61648 2 NZ Div Wksps

223 61706 1 NZ Hy Rec Sec

148 61609 9 NZ LAD (att 4 NZ Fd Regt)

149 61619 10 NZ LAD (att 5 NZ Fd Pk Coy)

153 61624 14 NZ LAD (att 2 NZ Div Sigs)

154 24206 15 NZ LAD (att 7 NZ A-Tk Regt)

155 24205 16 NZ LAD (att 5 NZ Fd Regt)

157 61613 18 NZ LAD (att 6 NZ Fd Regt)

160 61693 38 NZ LAD (att 18 NZ Armd Regt)

161 61694 39 NZ LAD (att 19 NZ Armd Regt)

162 61695 40 NZ LAD (att 20 NZ Armd Regt)

146 61691 4 NZ Armd Bde Wksps

156 24201(L) 5 NZ Inf Bde Wksp Sec

158 61636 6 NZ Inf Bde Wksp Sec

159 93850 9 NZ Inf Bde Wksp Sec

(B) CMF UNITS

(i) HQ 2 NZEF

1 61916 HQ 2 NZEF

2 61964 MS 2 NZEF

3 61965 DMS 2 NZEF

4 61966 ADDS 2 NZEF

5 61967 ADME 2 NZEF

6 61902 Legal Dept 2 NZEF

7 61917 Cipher Sec 2 NZEF

8 61918 NZ PRS

9 61960 Ch D 2 NZEF

10 61961 YMCA 2 NZEF

12 61905 Pay Office 2 NZEF

13 61969 Chief Pmr 2 NZEF

262 61972 NZ Base Cash Office

14 61970 Financial Adviser 2 NZEF
15 61919 Auditor 2 NZEF

17 61683 ADPS 2 NZEF

18 61977 Principal Matron 2 NZEF

23 39971 Official Archives Sec 2 NZEF

24 39973 ERS 2 NZEF

238 61674 Adv 2 Ech 2 NZEF

300 61712 3 NZ Wks Sec

21 61719 HQ 2 NZEF Sig Sec

312 40212 Camp HQ 2 NZEF

22 61720 5 NZ FS Sec

293 61996 NZ Printing & Stationery Unit

310 93999 4 NZ AMCU

163 — 41 NZ LAD

313 93371 HQ 2 NZEF Tpt Sec

(ii) Advanced Base 2 NZEF

299 61711 Adv Base 2 NZEF

180 93851 NZ Adv Base Comp Trg Dep

183 95029 NZ Adv Base Arty Trg Dep

182 93853 NZ Adv Base Inf Trg Dep

181 93852 NZ Adv Base ASC Trg Dep

302 61715 NZ Adv Base Camp Hosp

279 39970 2 NZ Camp Dental Hosp

306 61721 NZ Adv Base Hyg Sec

303 61716 NZ Adv Base Wksps

307 39614 NZ Adv Base Fd Punishment Centre

308 39615 NZ Adv Base SIB

309 39616 NZ Adv Base Pro Coy

(iii) Miscellaneous

209 29283 1 NZ Gen Hosp

210 55240 2 NZ Gen Hosp

211 55241 3 NZ Gen Hosp

215 61676 101 NZ VD Treatment Centre

269 23903 1 NZ Conv Dep

270 55315 NZ Med Stores Dep

268 39618 2 NZ BOD

19 61998 NZ WAAC (Med Div)

220 61983 NZ WAAC (Welfare & Clerical Divs)
225 61974 NZ GR Unit

227 39613 NZ Graves Conc Unit
230 61992 2 NZ Fd Censor Sec
281 93370 1 NZ Interrogation Sec
282 93369 NZ Forces Club, **Florence**
290 — NZ Forces Club, **Venice**
297 93368 NZ Forces Club, **Rome**
304 61717 NZ Forces Club, **Bari**
298 61710 2 NZ Port Det
292 61959 NZ **Entertainment Unit**
305 61718 NZ Rft Transit Unit
311 39974 1 NZ PW Repat Unit
314 93847 NZ OCTU

(C) MEF UNITS

94 61675 HQ NZ Maadi Camp
11 61903 2 Ech 2 **NZEF**
132 61722 NZ Maadi Camp Cipher Sec
29 61684 HQ Coy NZ Maadi Camp
256 61700 NZAC Trg Dep
40 93372 Arty Trg Dep 2 **NZEF**
252 61938 NZ Engr Trg Dep
59 61948 NZ Maadi Camp Wks Sec
261 9351 NZ Maadi Camp Sig Sec
259 93519 NZ Inf Trg Dep
257 61701 NZ Maori Trg Dep
114 — NZ Maadi Camp Comp Coy
260 93517 NZ Cookery School
122 55242 NZ Maadi Camp Hosp
277 55243 1 NZ Camp Dental Hosp
124 55510 NZ Maadi Camp Hyg Sec
16 61968 Church Army 2 **NZEF**
265 61955 1 NZ BOD
167 61956 NZ Maadi Camp Wksps
129 61950 NZ Maadi Camp Pro Coy

285 61705 SIB 2 NZEF
291 61976 NZ Fd Punishment Centre

139 61930 NZ Maadi Camp FS Sec
263 61947 NZ Base Kit Sec
283 61906 NZ Maadi Camp Transit Dep
284 39617 2 NZ Reception Dep
286 61958 NZ Base Band
289 61698 NZ Red Cross Store
296 61904 NZ CPO
212 39972 5 NZ Gen Hosp
229 61991 1 NZ Fd Censor Sec
272 61989 2 NZ Rest Home (OR)
294 61962 NZ Forces Club, Cairo
295 61957 1 NZ Port Det
301 61714 3 NZ Port Det

¹ War Office serial numbers for 2 NZEF units. Every unit in the Commonwealth forces overseas was included in the War Office order of battle.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

SECRET

Copy No. 24

Subject: 2 NZEF ORDER OF BATTLE (AS AT 9 MAY 45)

HQ 2 NZEF

SD 84/5

24 May 45

1. Attached is 2 NZEF Order of Battle as at 9 May 45. This is a revised Order of Battle and supersedes that of 22 Dec 44 (SD 84/5 of 23 Dec 44) and amendments thereto.

2. Please complete destruction certificate and acknowledge receipt on the form below.

3. Units are grouped under the following headings:

(A) 2 NZ DIV UNITS

(B) CMF UNITS

(i) HQ 2 NZEF

(ii) Adv Base 2 NZEF

(iii) Miscellaneous

(C) MEF UNITS

J. W. STANDISH, Capt

for Brigadier, Offr IC Adm 2 NZEF

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

(A) 2 NZ DIV UNITS

(A) 2 NZ DIV UNITS

Serial No. Unit

2 NZEF WO ¹

25 29262 HQ 2 NZ Div
26 61666 2 NZ Div Def Pl
131 61603 2 NZ Div Cipher Sec
137 61651 2 NZ Div FS Sec
133 61604 2 NZ Div Postal Unit
127 24212 2 NZ Div Pro Coy
239 61971 1 NZ Fd Cash Office

Armoured

70 61625 HQ 4 NZ Armd Bde
72 61627 18 NZ Armd Regt
73 61628 19 NZ Armd Regt
74 61629 20 NZ Armd Regt
32 61709 NZ Fwd Del Sqn
75 61654 4 NZ Armd Bde Band

Serial No. Unit

2 NZEF WO *Artillery*

35 29284 HQ 2 NZ Div Arty
36 61608 4 NZ Fd Regt
37 24205 5 NZ Fd Regt
38 61612 6 NZ Fd Regt
39 24206 7 NZ A-Tk Regt
287 61973 NZ Arty Pipe Band

Engineers

52 29402 HQ 2 NZ Div Engrs
53 61618 5 NZ Fd Pk Coy
54 61620 6 NZ Fd Coy
55 24207 7 NZ Fd Coy
56 61622 8 NZ Fd Coy

57 93769 27 NZ Mech Eqpt Coy

58 95028 28 NZ Aslt Sqn

Signals

63 29403 2 NZ Div Sigs

Infantry

76 24201 HQ 5 NZ Inf Bde

77 61668 5 NZ Inf Bde Def Pl

78 24202 21 NZ Bn

80 24204 23 NZ Bn

92 29762 28 NZ (Maori) Bn

81 61655 5 NZ Inf Bde Band

82 61635 HQ 6 NZ Inf Bde

83 61669 6 NZ Inf Bde Def Pl

84 61637 24 NZ Bn

85 61638 25 NZ Bn

86 61639 26 NZ Bn

87 61656 6 NZ Inf Bde Band

88 93848 HQ 9 NZ Inf Bde

89 93849 9 NZ Inf Bde Def Pl

31 29309 2 NZ Div Cav Bn

79 24203 22 NZ Bn

90 29404 27 NZ Bn

Army Service Corps

102 29405 HQ Comd NZASC

103 24210 1 NZ Amn Coy

104 29407 1 NZ Pet Coy

105 29406 1 NZ Sup Coy

106 61647 4 NZ Res MT Coy

204 61681 NZ MAC Sec

107 95143 NZ Jeep Pl

207 61697 2 NZ Fd Bky Sec

108 61696 2 NZ Amn Coy

Serial No. Unit

2 NZEF WO *Medical*

116 55421 4 NZ Fd Amb

117 24211 5 NZ Fd Amb

118 55422 6 NZ Fd Amb

120 55509 4 NZ Fd Hyg Coy

218 40211 3 NZ FSU

214 61690 2 NZ FTU

217 40210 14 NZ Optician Unit

213 55526 1 NZ Mob CCS

216 61677 102 NZ Mob VD Treatment Centre

Dental

220 55595 1 NZ Mob Dental Unit

Ordnance

145 61671 2 NZ Div Ord Fd Pk

266 61689 NZ MLBU

NZEME

144 61648 2 NZ Div Wksp

223 61706 1 NZ Hy Rec Sec

148 61609 9 NZ LAD (att 4 NZ Fd Regt)

149 61619 10 NZ LAD (att 5 NZ Fd Pk Coy)

153 61624 14 NZ LAD (att 2 NZ Div Sigs)

154 24206 15 NZ LAD (att 7 NZ A-Tk Regt)

155 24205 16 NZ LAD (att 5 NZ Fd Regt)

157 61613 18 NZ LAD (att 6 NZ Fd Regt)

160 61693 38 NZ LAD (att 18 NZ Armd Regt)

161 61694 39 NZ LAD (att 19 NZ Armd Regt)

162 61695 40 NZ LAD (att 20 NZ Armd Regt)

146 61691 4 NZ Armd Bde Wksp

156 24201(L) 5 NZ Inf Bde Wksp Sec

158 61636 6 NZ Inf Bde Wksp Sec

159 93850 9 NZ Inf Bde Wksp Sec

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

(B) CMF UNITS

(B) CMF UNITS

(i) HQ 2 NZEF

1 61916 HQ 2 NZEF

2 61964 MS 2 NZEF

3 61965 DMS 2 NZEF

4 61966 ADDS 2 NZEF

5 61967 ADME 2 NZEF

6 61902 Legal Dept 2 NZEF

7 61917 Cipher Sec 2 NZEF

8 61918 NZ PRS

9 61960 Ch D 2 NZEF

10 61961 YMCA 2 NZEF

12 61905 Pay Office 2 NZEF

13 61969 Chief Pmr 2 NZEF

262 61972 NZ Base Cash Office

14 61970 Financial Adviser 2 NZEF

15 61919 Auditor 2 NZEF

17 61683 ADPS 2 NZEF

18 61977 Principal Matron 2 NZEF

23 39971 Official Archives Sec 2 NZEF

24 39973 ERS 2 NZEF

238 61674 Adv 2 Ech 2 NZEF

300 61712 3 NZ Wks Sec

21 61719 HQ 2 NZEF Sig Sec

312 40212 Camp HQ 2 NZEF

22 61720 5 NZ FS Sec

293 61996 NZ Printing & Stationery Unit

310 93999 4 NZ AMCU

163 — 41 NZ LAD

313 93371 HQ 2 NZEF Tpt Sec

(ii) Advanced Base 2 NZEF

299 61711 Adv Base 2 NZEF

180 93851 NZ Adv Base Comp Trg Dep
183 95029 NZ Adv Base Arty Trg Dep
182 93853 NZ Adv Base Inf Trg Dep
181 93852 NZ Adv Base ASC Trg Dep
302 61715 NZ Adv Base Camp Hosp
279 39970 2 NZ Camp Dental Hosp
306 61721 NZ Adv Base Hyg Sec
303 61716 NZ Adv Base Wksps
307 39614 NZ Adv Base Fd Punishment Centre
308 39615 NZ Adv Base SIB
309 39616 NZ Adv Base Pro Coy

(iii) *Miscellaneous*

209 29283 1 NZ Gen Hosp
210 55240 2 NZ Gen Hosp
211 55241 3 NZ Gen Hosp
215 61676 101 NZ VD Treatment Centre
269 23903 1 NZ Conv Dep
270 55315 NZ Med Stores Dep
268 39618 2 NZ BOD
 19 61998 NZ WAAC (Med Div)
 20 61983 NZ WAAC (Welfare & Clerical Divs)
225 61974 NZ GR Unit
227 39613 NZ Graves Conc Unit
230 61992 2 NZ Fd Censor Sec
281 93370 1 NZ Interrogation Sec
282 93369 NZ Forces Club, **Florence**
290 — NZ Forces Club, **Venice**
297 93368 NZ Forces Club, **Rome**
304 61717 NZ Forces Club, **Bari**
298 61710 2 NZ Port Det
292 61959 NZ **Entertainment Unit**
305 61718 NZ Rft Transit Unit
311 39974 1 NZ PW Repat Unit
314 93847 NZ OCTU

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

(C) MEF UNITS

(C) MEF UNITS

94 61675 HQ NZ Maadi Camp

11 61903 2 Ech 2 NZEF

132 61722 NZ Maadi Camp Cipher Sec

29 61684 HQ Coy NZ Maadi Camp

256 61700 NZAC Trg Dep

40 93372 Arty Trg Dep 2 NZEF

252 61938 NZ Engr Trg Dep

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259 93519 NZ Inf Trg Dep

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260 93517 NZ Cookery School

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277 55243 1 NZ Camp Dental Hosp

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16 61968 Church Army 2 NZEF

265 61955 1 NZ BOD

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129 61950 NZ Maadi Camp Pro Coy

285 61705 SIB 2 NZEF

291 61976 NZ Fd Punishment Centre

139 61930 NZ Maadi Camp FS Sec

263 61947 NZ Base Kit Sec

283 61906 NZ Maadi Camp Transit Dep

284 39617 2 NZ Reception Dep

286 61958 NZ Base Band

289 61698 NZ Red Cross Store

296 61904 NZ CPO

212 39972 5 NZ Gen Hosp

229 61991 1 NZ Fd Censor Sec

272 61989 2 NZ Rest Home (OR)

294 61962 NZ Forces Club, **Cairo**

295 61957 1 NZ Port Det

301 61714 3 NZ Port Det

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX III – LIST OF NON-DIVISIONAL, BASE, AND LINE-OF-COMMUNICATION UNITS

Appendix III

LIST OF NON-DIVISIONAL, BASE, AND LINE-OF-COMMUNICATION UNITS

A. Non-Divisional Units formed in New Zealand at the request of the United Kingdom Government

- (i) HQ Railway Construction and Maintenance Group 9 Railway Survey Company 10 Railway Construction Company 13 Railway Construction Company**
- (ii) 14 Forestry Company (Note: 11, 14, and 15 Companies went to England, but 11 and 15 did not join 2 NZEF)**
- (iii) HQ Railway Operating Group 16 Railway Operating Company 17 Railway Operating Company**
- (iv) 18 Army Troops Company**
- (v) 19 Army Troops Company**
- (vi) 21 Mechanical Equipment Company**
- (vii) 36 Survey Battery**

B. Non-Divisional Units formed overseas by 2 NZEF for service under General Headquarters

Long Range Desert Group

Greek Training Team

Graves Registration and Enquiry Unit

Graves Concentration Unit

Prisoners of War Repatriation Unit

Prisoners of War Interrogation Section

Censor Sections

C. Non-Divisional Units formed overseas by 2 NZEF for temporary service under General Headquarters in special campaigns

Air Support Control Signals

Field Maintenance Centres

Detail Issue Depots

Water Issue Sections

Ambulance Train

Prisoner of War Camps

D. Corps or other Extra Units formed by 2 NZEF mainly for the purpose of supporting 2 NZ Division in the field

Tank Delivery Troop (later Forward Delivery Squadron)

Armoured Troops Recovery Unit (later Heavy Recovery Section)

Tank Transporter Company

Section Motor Ambulance Convoy

Field Bakery Section

Mobile Surgical Unit

Field Surgical Unit

Field Transfusion Unit

Mobile Dental Unit

Advanced Ordnance Depot

E. Line-of-Communication Units

Hospitals

Casualty Clearing Station

Convalescent Depot

Venereal Disease Treatment Units

Optician Unit

Rest Homes

Anti-Malaria Control Units

Rest Camps, Leave Camps, or Change-of-Air Camps

Ordnance Depots

Port Detachments

Reinforcement Transit Unit

Clubs

Entertainment Unit

F. Base Units

HQ Maadi Camp

HQ Advanced Base

Training Depots (at **Maadi or **Advanced Base** or both)**

Armoured Corps

Artillery

Engineers

Infantry — Headquarters and three depots

Machine Gun

Maori

Signals

Army Service Corps (incl Cookery School)

Medical

Ordnance

Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Provost

Officer Cadet Training Unit

School of Instruction

Signal School

Driving and Maintenance School

Camouflage Training Unit

Reception Depot

Discharge Depot

Base Kit Section (or Store)

Base Bakery (later Catering Depot)

Medical Stores Depot

Red Cross Store

Printing Unit

Service Units for:

Ciphers	Special Investigation
Signals	Field Punishment
Field Security	Supply
Legal	Transport
Pay	Hospital
Postal	Hygiene
Works	Dental
Workshops	Laundry
Ordnance	Bands
Provost	Welfare — various

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

A. NON-DIVISIONAL UNITS FORMED IN NEW ZEALAND AT THE REQUEST OF THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT

A. Non-Divisional Units formed in New Zealand at the request of the United Kingdom Government

- (i) HQ Railway Construction and Maintenance Group 9 Railway Survey Company 10 Railway Construction Company 13 Railway Construction Company**
- (ii) 14 Forestry Company (Note: 11, 14, and 15 Companies went to England, but 11 and 15 did not join 2 NZEF)**
- (iii) HQ Railway Operating Group 16 Railway Operating Company 17 Railway Operating Company**
- (iv) 18 Army Troops Company**
- (v) 19 Army Troops Company**
- (vi) 21 Mechanical Equipment Company**
- (vii) 36 Survey Battery**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

B. NON-DIVISIONAL UNITS FORMED OVERSEAS BY 2 NZEF FOR SERVICE UNDER GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

B. Non-Divisional Units formed overseas by 2 NZEF for service under General Headquarters

Long Range Desert Group

Greek Training Team

Graves Registration and Enquiry Unit

Graves Concentration Unit

Prisoners of War Repatriation Unit

Prisoners of War Interrogation Section

Censor Sections

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

C. NON-DIVISIONAL UNITS FORMED OVERSEAS BY 2 NZEF FOR TEMPORARY SERVICE UNDER GENERAL HEADQUARTERS IN SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS

*C. Non-Divisional Units formed overseas by 2 NZEF for temporary
service under General Headquarters in special campaigns*

Air Support Control Signals

Field Maintenance Centres

Detail Issue Depots

Water Issue Sections

Ambulance Train

Prisoner of War Camps

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

D. CORPS OR OTHER EXTRA UNITS FORMED BY 2 NZEF MAINLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUPPORTING 2 NZ DIVISION IN THE FIELD

D. Corps or other Extra Units formed by 2 NZEF mainly for the purpose of supporting 2 NZ Division in the field

Tank Delivery Troop (later Forward Delivery Squadron)

Armoured Troops Recovery Unit (later Heavy Recovery Section)

Tank Transporter Company

Section Motor Ambulance Convoy

Field Bakery Section

Mobile Surgical Unit

Field Surgical Unit

Field Transfusion Unit

Mobile Dental Unit

Advanced Ordnance Depot

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

E. LINE-OF-COMMUNICATION UNITS

E. Line-of-Communication Units

Hospitals

Casualty Clearing Station

Convalescent Depot

Venereal Disease Treatment Units

Optician Unit

Rest Homes

Anti-Malaria Control Units

Rest Camps, Leave Camps, or Change-of-Air Camps

Ordnance Depots

Port Detachments

Reinforcement Transit Unit

Clubs

Entertainment Unit

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

F. BASE UNITS

F. Base Units

HQ Maadi Camp

HQ Advanced Base

Training Depots (at **Maadi or **Advanced Base** or both)**

Armoured Corps

Artillery

Engineers

Infantry — Headquarters and three depots

Machine Gun

Maori

Signals

Army Service Corps (incl **Cookery School)**

Medical

Ordnance

Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Provost

Officer Cadet Training Unit

School of Instruction

Signal School

Driving and Maintenance School

Camouflage Training Unit

Reception Depot

Discharge Depot

Base Kit Section (or Store)

Base Bakery (later Catering Depot)

Medical Stores Depot

Red Cross Store

Printing Unit

Service Units for:

Ciphers	Special Investigation
Signals	Field Punishment
Field Security	Supply
Legal	Transport
Pay	Hospital
Postal	Hygiene
Works	Dental
Workshops	Laundry
Ordnance	Bands
Provost	Welfare — various

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX IV — APPRECIATION OF STRENGTH AND REINFORCEMENT SITUATION — BASED ON FIGURES AS AT 27 FEBRUARY 1943

Appendix IV

APPRECIATION OF STRENGTH AND REINFORCEMENT SITUATION

Based on Figures as at 27 February 1943

SECRET
HQ 2 NZEF
17 Mar 43

Serial Formation No.		War Establishment	Posted Strength		Surplus		Deficiencies	
Col. 1	Column 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
		Offrs	OR	Offrs	OR	Offrs	OR	Offrs
	1 Armoured	143	2057	128	2256		199	
	2 Artillery: Field	217	3403	221	2728	4		
	3 Survey	13	259	13	255			
	4 Engineers: Div—Field	24	899	27	779	3		
	5 Non-Div— Field	14	582	14	543			
	6 Ry C and M Gp	14	561	14	550			
	7 Ry Op Gp	17	744	19	742	2		
	8 Ry Svy Gp	7	64	5	62			
	9 21 Mech Equip Coy	10	248	9	246			
	10 Signals: Field	26	762	22	606			
	11 Infantry: Field	194	4008	188	2960			
	12 Motor	34	727	25	707			
	13 Maori	35	754	34	716			

14 MG Bn	29	704	29	535		
15 ASC: Field	106	3769	115	3312	9	
16 Medical: Field	140	1223	121	1150		
17 NZANS	200		197			
18 Dental: Field	23	66	24	59	1	
19 Ordnance: Field	7	129	5	95		
20 NZEME: Field	34	812	29	634		
21 Provost: Field	4	112	2	93		
SUB-TOTAL	1291	21883	1241	19028	19	199
22 Chaplains' Dept (incl Church Army)	54	6	48	5		
23 Pay Corps	12	149	8	117		
24 Postal Corps	7	189	5	155		
25 NZWAAC	6	224	6	216		
26 HQ Formations	70	401	79	409	9	8
27 Base and Miscellaneous	231	2827	180	2450		
TOTAL	1671	25679	1567	22380	28	207

Notes: (1) Adjustments have been made for new Div Sigs WE and for Inf Tps Rec Sec. (2) Unposted RMOs and NZANS have been shown in X(iv) Column. (3) No allowance has been made for increment which must be added to Armoured Corps for different combinations of AFVs.

Author's Explanatory Notes: (1) No wastage is shown for serials 22 to 27, partly because it was in any case small, and partly because replacements largely came from that portion of the wastage of field units that did not return to the field. To be really exact, however, it would have been better to have included some small wastage for these serials. (2) Columns 11 and 12. X(iv) list are reinforcements in depots. (3) Columns 19 and 20 – three months' wastage. These figures are the estimated losses for the three months next ahead, i.e., beginning 28 February 1943. (4) Columns 21, 22, 23, and 24. The totals of these columns show a slight surplus at the end of the three months. Columns

21 and 22, totalling 660, are set against columns 23 and 24, totalling 443. The implication is that we had just enough reinforcements at the moment for the next three months. In this case, as it happened, our actual casualties were less than the estimate, and another reinforcement draft arrived just as the three months was up.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX V — 2 NZEF — CASUALTY STATEMENT—ALL CAMPAIGNS — FIGURES AS AT 2 JUN 45

Appendix V

2 NZEF

Casualty Statement—All Campaigns

Figures as at 2 Jun 45

SECRET
HQ 2 NZEF
SD 85/1
15 Jun 45

To List 'Z'

Detail	Western Desert 'A' Campaign	Greece Campaign	Crete Campaign	Western Desert 'B' Campaign	Western Desert 'C' Campaign	Western Desert 'D' Campaign	West Desert Camp
Killed (incl died of wounds and died PW)	7	272	605	1006	967	86	
Prisoners of War (incl wounded PW)		1793	2123	1932	1641	71	
Missing		33	145	46	53	4	
Wounded (Safe)	15	391	980	1619	2329	359	
Total	22	2489	3853	4603	4990	520	
Campaigns:	Western Desert 'A' Campaign 3 Dec 40 to 14 Jan 41						
	Greece Campaign 6 Apr 41 to 18 May 41						
	Crete Campaign 30 Apr 41 to 2 Jun 41						

Western Desert 'B' Campaign	18 Nov 41 to 14 Feb 42
Western Desert 'C' Campaign	20 Jun 42 to 31 Aug 42
Western Desert 'D' Campaign	1 Sep 42 to 22 Oct 42
Western Desert 'E' Campaign	23 Oct 42 to 21 Nov 42
Western Desert 'F' Campaign	22 Nov 42 to 14 Jan 43
Western Desert 'G' Campaign	15 Jan 43 to 2 Feb 43
Western Desert 'H' Campaign	3 Feb 43 to 19 Mar 43
Tunisian I Campaign	20 Mar 43 to 18 Apr 43
Tunisian II Campaign	19 Apr 43 to 13 May 43
Aegean Campaign	18 Sep 43 to 11 Nov 43
Italy I Campaign	12 Nov 43 to 31 Jan 44
Italy II Campaign	1 Feb 44 to 10 Apr 44
Italy III Campaign	11 Apr 44 to 16 Jun 44
Italy IV Campaign	17 Jun 44 to 24 Aug 44
Italy V Campaign	25 Aug 44 to 26 Oct 44
Italy VI Campaign	27 Oct 44 to 10 Mar 45
Italy VII Campaign	1 Apr 45 to 2 May 45

Note: Minor corrections were made to these figures after the war, as shown in the Statement of Strengths and Losses in the Armed Services and Mercantile Marine, Parliamentary paper H—19 B, 1948

Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX VI

Appendix VI

3/54/509

HQ 2 NZEF

27 Sep 40

Third Contingent

2 NZEF

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

1. On arrival in **Maadi Camp** you will be greeted with a large volume of instructions entitled 'Special Circulars' which are in fact Standing Orders for Troops while under training. For convenience these Special Circulars each deal with one particular subject or branch of work. A list is attached as **Appendix A**.

2. These circulars embody

(All appropriate and relevant orders issued by HQ British Troops in
a) Egypt, and

(All Divisional or NZEF Orders, and memoranda having the force of
b) orders, that are still in force at the time of your arrival. They are all therefore very much alive and are not just masses of interesting or uninteresting words. The majority are the result of the experience of the First Contingent.

3. At the first possible moment after arrival in **Maadi** the following circulars will be *read through aloud at a series of conferences to be attended by all officers*. This has been found to be the only way in which incoming units can quickly get a grip of the mass of orders that has to be absorbed.

T Medical and Health (to be read first)

D Pay

J EFI (late NAAFI)

K Civil Relations

L Discipline

R Leave

S Dress

U Economy

X Military Security

CC Matters affecting officers

DD Camp Routine

EE Miscellaneous

The other circulars are more of interest to administrative staffs, or can be left until a later date.

4. In the meantime, however, there are certain points of first importance which should be *noted now*, and passed on to all concerned. These are contained in the succeeding paragraphs.

- (i) A complete black-out is in force in **Maadi Camp**. It is realised that for the first evening or two it will be difficult to enforce this, as troops will be settling in; but after a few evenings it will be enforced rigidly.
- (ii) The utmost care must be taken to avoid loose talk, conversations with strangers, disclosure of military information in public, etc. 'Fifth Columnists' exist here in large numbers, and *no-one* should be accepted at his face value.
- (iii) The utmost care must be taken to avoid giving offence to Egyptian nationals. Egypt is an independent state and our ally, and the fact that we enjoy certain immunities does not entitle us to disregard either the laws of the land or the rules of decent behaviour.
- (iv) A map showing bounds in **Cairo** is being issued immediately on arrival.
- (v) Officers must carry pistols at all times when out of camp. Steel helmets or gas masks need not be carried.
- (vi) Leave to proceed out of Camp to **Cairo** may be granted to 50% of strength from (incl) Monday to (incl) Thursday, but leave is *until lights out only*. On Fridays and Saturdays late leave may be granted to 80% of strength until the arrival of the last train,

which leaves at 0130 hrs. On Sundays leave may be granted to 80% of strength, *but to lights out only.*

- (vii) Arrangements are being made to organise tours to places of interest. An Entertainments Officer has been appointed, and will be communicating direct with units later.
- (viii) There is a bus and taxi-bus service between the bus stand and **Maadi** station, the charge being 1 Pt each way. In addition there are ordinary taxis for hire. (See **Special Circular DD.**)
- (ix) Reveille in camp at present is at 0630 hrs and lights out at 2315 hrs. These times *must* be adhered to; but otherwise routine is at COs' discretion.
- (x) The speed limit in **Maadi Camp** is 25 mph.
- (xi) Precautions regarding food and flies are of primary importance. Circular T must therefore be read *immediately on arrival.*
- (xii) Arrangements are being made for all men to be addressed regarding the dangers of venereal disease. Prophylactic outfits are being supplied to all units. Arrangements will be made within units to issue these to men on request.
- (xiii) Personnel evacuated to hospital will take arms and equipment, and will in due course be returned to units through 2 NZEF Base.
- (xiv) The headquarters in **MAADI Camp** is 'HQ 2 NZEF' NOT 'HQ NZ Div'. Correspondence addressed in the latter fashion will go off to the **Western Desert.**
- (xv) Units will indent on the Base Ordnance Officer for the following items immediately on arrival:

Helmets steel	1
Respirators AG	1
Arm bands (white)	1
Shorts KD	2
Shirts tropical	2
Drawers cellular short	2
Hosetops (prs)	1

Indents will be submitted in triplicate on AFG 997 or 994. Each section will be submitted on a different sheet and sizes where applicable must be stated. Indents will be based on the *actual* strength of the unit not on its theoretical strength.
- (xvi) Ration indents (excl petrol and oils) have been already sent in for rations for consumption to and including Wednesday Oct 2. Separate ration indents should at once be sent to the Field Supply depot for rations to be consumed on Thursday and Friday Oct 3

and 4. Thereafter indents go in as follows AB 55C:

Indent required Monday for consumption on Thursday

Indent required Tuesday for consumption on Friday

Indent required Wednesday for consumption on Saturday and Sunday

Indent required Thursday for consumption on Monday

Indent required Friday for consumption on Tuesday

Indent required Saturday for consumption on Wednesday

Transport All transport requirements must be made IN WRITING (message form) to Composite Coy NZASC with a minimum of twelve hours notice. Coy situated at the most Western end of camp (area E).

- (xvii) There is a camp laundry established, other ranks' washing being free, officers washing 5 Pt per 20 articles. The Camp Adjutant will advise routine on request (see also **Special Circular DD**).
- (xviii) At the moment of writing, postage to New Zealand is NOT free. Ordinary letters cost 1 Pt per 20 grammes (seven tenths of 1 oz), a special stamp for Army Post (Army Seals) being used, obtainable at EFI buildings. Air mail letters cost 4 Pt per 20 grammes – out of which *one* 1 Pt stamp must be an 'Army Seal'.
- (xix) Officers attached to British Units or on courses are entitled to a special allowance of 2s. per day. Officers *must* pay their mess bills before leaving the mess to which attached. There is NO scheme in the NZEF by which mess bills in such cases are paid by the Paymaster. Casual meals in units in the **Western Desert** or elsewhere MUST be paid for at the mess rate.
- (xx) At the present moment, compensation for loss of officers kit is payable only
- (If the loss is the result of enemy action, or
 - a)
 - (If the loss arises out of a risk which is not insurable. The
 - b) matter is the subject of correspondence with New Zealand; but officers are warned that no compensation is at the moment payable in cases of fire, theft, etc., *even though it may occur on duty*. They are advised to take out small 'all risks' policies with a company such as the General; the annual rate being about 25s. per £100.

,

**Colonel
AA and QMG.**

APPENDIX A TO JOINING INSTRUCTIONS 27 SEP 40

List of Special Circulars

A Movement Instructions
B Accounting for Stores
C Indents on Ordnance
D Pay and Regimental Funds
E Detention Barracks
F DAG 2nd Echelon
G Postal
H Burials
J Expeditionary Force Institute
K Civil Relations
L Discipline
M MT – Maintenance
N MT – Miscellaneous
P Accounting for Clothing
Q Ordnance – Miscellaneous
R Leave
S Clothing and Dress
T Medical and Health
U Economy
V Supplies
W MT – Mileage
X Military Security
AA Fire
BB Courts Martial and Military Law
CC Officers
DD Camp Routine
EE Miscellaneous
FF War Accounting
GG List of Returns

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

3/54/509

HQ 2 NZEF

27 Sep 40

Third Contingent

2 NZEF

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS

1. On arrival in **Maadi Camp** you will be greeted with a large volume of instructions entitled 'Special Circulars' which are in fact Standing Orders for Troops while under training. For convenience these Special Circulars each deal with one particular subject or branch of work. A list is attached as **Appendix A**.

2. These circulars embody

(All appropriate and relevant orders issued by HQ British Troops in
a) Egypt, and

(All Divisional or NZEF Orders, and memoranda having the force of
b) orders, that are still in force at the time of your arrival. They are all therefore very much alive and are not just masses of interesting or uninteresting words. The majority are the result of the experience of the First Contingent.

3. At the first possible moment after arrival in **Maadi** the following circulars will be *read through aloud at a series of conferences to be attended by all officers*. This has been found to be the only way in which incoming units can quickly get a grip of the mass of orders that has to be absorbed.

T Medical and Health (to be read first)

D Pay

J EFI (late **NAAFI)**

K Civil Relations

L Discipline

R Leave

S Dress

U Economy

X Military Security

CC Matters affecting officers

DD Camp Routine

EE Miscellaneous

The other circulars are more of interest to administrative staffs, or can be left until a later date.

4. In the meantime, however, there are certain points of first importance which should be *noted now*, and passed on to all concerned. These are contained in the succeeding paragraphs.

- (i) A complete black-out is in force in **Maadi Camp**. It is realised that for the first evening or two it will be difficult to enforce this, as troops will be settling in; but after a few evenings it will be enforced rigidly.
- (ii) The utmost care must be taken to avoid loose talk, conversations with strangers, disclosure of military information in public, etc. 'Fifth Columnists' exist here in large numbers, and *no-one* should be accepted at his face value.
- (iii) The utmost care must be taken to avoid giving offence to Egyptian nationals. Egypt is an independent state and our ally, and the fact that we enjoy certain immunities does not entitle us to disregard either the laws of the land or the rules of decent behaviour.
- (iv) A map showing bounds in **Cairo** is being issued immediately on arrival.
- (v) Officers must carry pistols at all times when out of camp. Steel helmets or gas masks need not be carried.
- (vi) Leave to proceed out of Camp to **Cairo** may be granted to 50% of strength from (incl) Monday to (incl) Thursday, but leave is *until lights out only*. On Fridays and Saturdays late leave may be granted to 80% of strength until the arrival of the last train, which leaves at 0130 hrs. On Sundays leave may be granted to 80% of strength, *but to lights out only*.
- (vii) Arrangements are being made to organise tours to places of interest. An Entertainments Officer has been appointed, and will be communicating direct with units later.
- (viii) There is a bus and taxi-bus service between the bus stand and **Maadi** station, the charge being 1 Pt each way. In addition there are ordinary taxis for hire. (See **Special Circular DD**.)
- (ix) Reveille in camp at present is at 0630 hrs and lights out at 2315 hrs. These times *must* be adhered to; but otherwise routine is at COs' discretion.

- (x) The speed limit in **Maadi Camp** is 25 mph.
- (xi) Precautions regarding food and flies are of primary importance. Circular T must therefore be read *immediately on arrival*.
- (xii) Arrangements are being made for all men to be addressed regarding the dangers of venereal disease. Prophylactic outfits are being supplied to all units. Arrangements will be made within units to issue these to men on request.
- (xiii) Personnel evacuated to hospital will take arms and equipment, and will in due course be returned to units through 2 NZEF Base.
- (xiv) The headquarters in **MAADI Camp** is 'HQ 2 NZEF' NOT 'HQ NZ Div'. Correspondence addressed in the latter fashion will go off to the **Western Desert**.
- (xv) Units will indent on the Base Ordnance Officer for the following items immediately on arrival:

Helmets steel	1
Respirators AG	1
Arm bands (white)	1
Shorts KD	2
Shirts tropical	2
Drawers cellular short	2
Hosetops (prs)	1

Indents will be submitted in triplicate on AFG 997 or 994. Each section will be submitted on a different sheet and sizes where applicable must be stated. Indents will be based on the *actual* strength of the unit not on its theoretical strength.

- (xvi) Ration indents (excl petrol and oils) have been already sent in for rations for consumption to and including Wednesday Oct 2. Separate ration indents should at once be sent to the Field Supply depot for rations to be consumed on Thursday and Friday Oct 3 and 4. Thereafter indents go in as follows AB 55C:

Indent required Monday for consumption on Thursday

Indent required Tuesday for consumption on Friday

Indent required Wednesday for consumption on Saturday and Sunday

Indent required Thursday for consumption on Monday

Indent required Friday for consumption on Tuesday

Indent required Saturday for consumption on Wednesday

Transport All transport requirements must be made IN WRITING (message form) to Composite Coy NZASC with a minimum of twelve hours notice. Coy situated at the most Western end of

- (xvii) **Camp (area C) Camp laundry established, other ranks' washing being free, officers washing 5 Pt per 20 articles. The Camp Adjutant will advise routine on request (see also **Special Circular DD**).**
- (xviii) **At the moment of writing, postage to New Zealand is NOT free. Ordinary letters cost 1 Pt per 20 grammes (seven tenths of 1 oz), a special stamp for Army Post (Army Seals) being used, obtainable at EFI buildings. Air mail letters cost 4 Pt per 20 grammes – out of which *one* 1 Pt stamp must be an 'Army Seal'.**
- (xix) **Officers attached to British Units or on courses are entitled to a special allowance of 2s. per day. Officers *must* pay their mess bills before leaving the mess to which attached. There is NO scheme in the NZEF by which mess bills in such cases are paid by the Paymaster. Casual meals in units in the **Western Desert** or elsewhere **MUST** be paid for at the mess rate.**
- (xx) **At the present moment, compensation for loss of officers kit is payable only**
- (If the loss is the result of enemy action, or
 - a)
 - (If the loss arises out of a risk which is not insurable. The
 - b) matter is the subject of correspondence with New Zealand; but officers are warned that no compensation is at the moment payable in cases of fire, theft, etc., *even though it may occur on duty*. They are advised to take out small 'all risks' policies with a company such as the General; the annual rate being about 25s. per £100.

,

**Colonel
AA and QMG.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX A TO JOINING INSTRUCTIONS 27 SEP 40 – LIST OF SPECIAL CIRCULARS

APPENDIX A TO JOINING INSTRUCTIONS 27 SEP 40

List of Special Circulars

- A Movement Instructions**
- B Accounting for Stores**
- C Indents on Ordnance**
- D Pay and Regimental Funds**
- E Detention Barracks**
- F DAG 2nd Echelon**
- G Postal**
- H Burials**
- J Expeditionary Force Institute**
- K Civil Relations**
- L Discipline**
- M MT – Maintenance**
- N MT – Miscellaneous**
- P Accounting for Clothing**
- Q Ordnance – Miscellaneous**
- R Leave**
- S Clothing and Dress**
- T Medical and Health**
- U Economy**
- V Supplies**
- W MT – Mileage**
- X Military Security**
- AA Fire**
- BB Courts Martial and Military Law**
- CC Officers**
- DD Camp Routine**
- EE Miscellaneous**
- FF War Accounting**

GG List of Returns

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX VII

Appendix VII

SECRET

HQ 2 NZEF

40/16,

30 May 43

Scheme for Exchange of Personnel

INSTRUCTION No 9

(Code word for scheme—RUAPEHU)

Points to be Brought to the Notice of Personnel Going on Leave to New Zealand (or UK)

Notes:

(1) List of Instructions issued to date:

Instruction No 1—to List 'Z'

Instruction No 2—on limited distribution from MS 2 NZEF

Instruction No 3—on limited distribution

Instruction No 4—to list 'Z'

Instruction No 5—on limited distribution from MS 2 NZEF

Instruction No 6—on limited distribution

Instruction No 7—to Training Depots only

Instruction No 8—to list 'Z'

(2) This circular is NOT to be exposed on Unit notice boards, but

may be made available for perusal in Orderly Rooms, etc.

(3) This circular is in part a compilation drawn from preceding instructions.

To List 'Z'

Procedure for Compiling Draft

(1) On return to New Zealand (or **UK**), personnel will receive three months leave on full pay and allowances from date of disembarkation in New Zealand (or **UK**). At the end of this period they will in general be liable to further overseas service. Those who wish to return to the **Middle East** will be given the fullest consideration, and their wishes will, as far as possible, be observed.

(2) The order of return for other ranks, which has been laid down in New Zealand, is to be in the following categories drawn from First, Second and Third Echelons *counting as one body*:

A Men married on embarkation in First, Second and Third Echelons who have had active field service with 2 NZ Div or Non Div Unit. By 'active field service' is meant service in the officially defined theatre of war during First Libya, **Greece, Crete**, Second Libya, Battle for Egypt, and **Alamein to Tunisia**.

B Men married on embarkation in the three echelons who have not had service as above, i.e., those who either served with 2 NZ Div and Non Div Unit in a static period *or* who have not served with a field unit at all.

C Men who were single on embarkation and who have had service as in A above.

D Men who were single on embarkation and who have had service as in B above.

(3) Men who embarked with the First, Second, and Third Echelons, but have been back to New Zealand and have rejoined **2 NZEF**, count for the purposes of this scheme as serving as from their later embarkation only.

(4) Personnel to be sent back with the forthcoming draft are:

~~(8)~~ **All those in category A and B**
(9) **A part (about two-thirds) of those in category C.**

(5) **Those to go back in category C have been drawn by ballot under the strictest supervision. A correct number of men to be drawn was allotted to every Corps of 2 NZEF (Armd Corps, Artillery, Infantry, etc.) depending upon the numbers in the Corps still serving.**

(6) **Separate ballots were held in the majority of cases for single NCOs and for certain technicians, to ensure that too great a proportion was not drawn in the common ballot.**

(7) **In most cases the proportion of NCOs to go back is lower than for the rank and file. The reason for this should be obvious—to ensure that the efficiency of units was not endangered by losing too many NCOs at once.**

(8) **It is of interest to note that for the same reason the proportion of officers to be sent back is by far the lowest of all. About *two-thirds of rank and file* affected are being sent back, about *one half of NCOs* and only about *one-quarter of officers*.**

(9) **In general no one is allowed to 'contract out' of the draft, i.e., to stay in the **Middle East**; but if a man has been married here, and his wife is still resident here, he may apply *in writing* to stay here. In this case another man will be drawn in the ballot to take his place.**

(10) **Men who have been married since embarkation count as single men for the purposes of this scheme, i.e., have been placed in the single men's ballot.**

(11) **Men who are at OCTU or who have passed the selection board for OCTU, will NOT be eligible to go back with the draft.**

(12) **Men who are at courses of instruction will be eligible to go back with the draft.**

(13) **Men who enlisted in **UK** will be given the option of going to NZ or **UK**. Men who embarked in New Zealand, but whose next-of-kin is**

shown by records as in **UK**, may similarly be given the option of going to either country.

Ranks

(14) All NCOs holding temporary rank on embarkation with the draft will revert to their substantive rank.

Security

(15) *The safety of the voyage to New Zealand depends on secrecy.* A staggering amount of loose talk has already taken place, and must cease at once. No mention of the move, or of impending departure of individuals, etc., must be mentioned outside Base Camps.

(16)

- (Any form of communication to New Zealand, especially by cable or a) airgraph, indicating that the writer is coming home, is prohibited.**
- (All cables and airgraphs in any way offending against the above are b) being stopped by Base Censor, and will not be sent forward.**
- (The use of EFM text No. 137 (Hope to see you soon) is prohibited until c) further notice.**

(17) Names of men who are going back will, in due course, be cabled to New Zealand by HQ 2 NZEF, and next-of-kin will be advised in New Zealand.

Censorship, etc.

(18) Personnel are NOT to carry letters or parcels on behalf of friends, etc., for delivery in New Zealand, even if such letters or parcels have been censored within the unit. All these letters and parcels MUST go through ordinary postal channels and will probably travel by the same vessel.

(19) No unauthorised arms or equipment, including enemy weapons, etc., are to be taken back to NZ.

(20) In order to ensure that paras (18) and (19) are observed, kit inspection will be held prior to embarkation and again on the voyage.

(21) Personnel are entitled to take back presents for their own families and friends.

Pay

(22) Credit in pay books at date of embarkation counts as sterling, i.e., personnel get the benefit of the exchange of 4s. 11d. in each pound sterling.

(23) During the voyage troops will be able to draw only the net pay earned on the voyage.

(24) Personnel are advised not to embark with Egyptian currency. There is no assurance that this can be exchanged on board, while in New Zealand the banks allow only £1 2s. 4d. for an Egyptian pound £1 note.

(25) When troops are about to embark in the Middle East no advantage will be gained by remitting money to New Zealand. The same exchange will be obtained through the AB 64 and will be available on arrival. Pay Office will not accept remittances to New Zealand from those about to embark.

(26) It should be noted that when personnel embark in NZ for overseas they are paid in NZ in full up to the amount of credit in their paybooks, i.e., they are NOT allowed to carry any credit in their paybooks on embarkation.

Luggage

(27) Other ranks will be allowed to take one sea kit and two universal kitbags. Private gear is taken at owner's risk, and no compensation is payable for loss.

Postal

(28) In due course there will be distributed to everyone a form regarding re-direction of mail. Men are strongly advised to fill in this form and return it to the Chief Post Office 2 NZEF. In the event of no advice being received by Chief Post Office, mail will be dealt with as follows:

(Letters will be returned to the sender

a)

(Parcels will be distributed to men of the unit to which the

b) addressee belonged.

Marriages

(29)

(It will not be possible for arrangements to be made in time for

a) returning personnel to marry fiancées who are civilians or who are service personnel not in 2 NZEF. If personnel desire to carry on with their marriage arrangements, they must be withdrawn from the draft.

(It may be possible to make arrangements in the case of fiancées who
b) are members of 2 NZEF, but no guarantee can be given in this case, and it may again be necessary to withdraw personnel from the draft. If the fiancée is not herself returning to NZ as a member of the draft, it will be most unlikely that after marriage she will be able to accompany her husband with the draft.

Customs Duty

(30) All ranks will be advised that on arrival in NZ exemption from duty and sales tax will be granted in respect of dutiable goods up to the value of £10, provided that the amount of duty and sales tax so remitted does not in any case exceed £5. Full particulars must, however, be supplied of all goods other than personal effects which have been worn or are in use. Copies of C Form 151 will be supplied on arrival in NZ for this to be done.

Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

SECRET

HQ 2 NZEF

40/16,

30 May 43

Scheme for Exchange of Personnel

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

INSTRUCTION NO 9 – (CODE WORD FOR SCHEME—RUAPEHU) – POINTS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE NOTICE OF PERSONNEL GOING ON LEAVE TO NEW ZEALAND (OR UK)

INSTRUCTION No 9

(Code word for scheme—RUAPEHU)

Points to be Brought to the Notice of Personnel Going on Leave to New Zealand (or UK)

Notes:

- (1) List of Instructions issued to date:**
 - Instruction No 1—to List ‘Z’**
 - Instruction No 2—on limited distribution from MS 2 NZEF**
 - Instruction No 3—on limited distribution**
 - Instruction No 4—to list ‘Z’**
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 - Instruction No 6—on limited distribution**
 - Instruction No 7—to Training Depots only**
 - Instruction No 8—to list ‘Z’**
- (2) This circular is NOT to be exposed on Unit notice boards, but may be made available for perusal in Orderly Rooms, etc.**
- (3) This circular is in part a compilation drawn from preceding instructions.**

To List ‘Z’

Procedure for Compiling Draft

- (1) On return to New Zealand (or UK), personnel will receive three**

months leave on full pay and allowances from date of disembarkation in New Zealand (or **UK**). At the end of this period they will in general be liable to further overseas service. Those who wish to return to the **Middle East** will be given the fullest consideration, and their wishes will, as far as possible, be observed.

(2) The order of return for other ranks, which has been laid down in New Zealand, is to be in the following categories drawn from First, Second and Third Echelons *counting as one body*:

A Men married on embarkation in First, Second and Third Echelons who have had active field service with 2 NZ Div or Non Div Unit. By 'active field service' is meant service in the officially defined theatre of war during First Libya, **Greece**, **Crete**, Second Libya, Battle for Egypt, and **Alamein** to **Tunisia**.

B Men married on embarkation in the three echelons who have not had service as above, i.e., those who either served with 2 NZ Div and Non Div Unit in a static period *or* who have not served with a field unit at all.

C Men who were single on embarkation and who have had service as in A above.

D Men who were single on embarkation and who have had service as in B above.

(3) Men who embarked with the First, Second, and Third Echelons, but have been back to New Zealand and have rejoined **2 NZEF**, count for the purposes of this scheme as serving as from their later embarkation only.

(4) Personnel to be sent back with the forthcoming draft are:

(a) All those in category A and B,

(b) A part (about two-thirds) of those in category C.

(5) Those to go back in category C have been drawn by ballot under the strictest supervision. A correct number of men to be drawn was allotted to every Corps of **2 NZEF** (Armd Corps, Artillery, Infantry, etc.) depending upon the numbers in the Corps still serving.

(6) Separate ballots were held in the majority of cases for single

NCOs and for certain technicians, to ensure that too great a proportion was not drawn in the common ballot.

(7) In most cases the proportion of NCOs to go back is lower than for the rank and file. The reason for this should be obvious—to ensure that the efficiency of units was not endangered by losing too many NCOs at once.

(8) It is of interest to note that for the same reason the proportion of officers to be sent back is by far the lowest of all. About *two-thirds of rank and file* affected are being sent back, about *one half of NCOs* and only about *one-quarter of officers*.

(9) In general no one is allowed to ‘contract out’ of the draft, i.e., to stay in the **Middle East; but if a man has been married here, and his wife is still resident here, he may apply *in writing* to stay here. In this case another man will be drawn in the ballot to take his place.**

(10) Men who have been married since embarkation count as single men for the purposes of this scheme, i.e., have been placed in the single men's ballot.

(11) Men who are at OCTU or who have passed the selection board for OCTU, will **NOT be eligible to go back with the draft.**

(12) Men who are at courses of instruction will be eligible to go back with the draft.

(13) Men who enlisted in **UK will be given the option of going to NZ or **UK**. Men who embarked in New Zealand, but whose next-of-kin is shown by records as in **UK**, may similarly be given the option of going to either country.**

Ranks

(14) All NCOs holding temporary rank on embarkation with the draft will revert to their substantive rank.

Security

(15) *The safety of the voyage to New Zealand depends on secrecy. A staggering amount of loose talk has already taken place, and must cease at once. No mention of the move, or of impending departure of individuals, etc., must be mentioned outside Base Camps.*

(16)

- (Any form of communication to New Zealand, especially by cable or a) airgraph, indicating that the writer is coming home, is prohibited.**
- (All cables and airgraphs in any way offending against the above are b) being stopped by Base Censor, and will not be sent forward.**
- (The use of EFM text No. 137 (Hope to see you soon) is prohibited until c) further notice.**

(17) Names of men who are going back will, in due course, be cabled to New Zealand by HQ 2 NZEF, and next-of-kin will be advised in New Zealand.

Censorship, etc.

(18) Personnel are NOT to carry letters or parcels on behalf of friends, etc., for delivery in New Zealand, even if such letters or parcels have been censored within the unit. All these letters and parcels MUST go through ordinary postal channels and will probably travel by the same vessel.

(19) No unauthorised arms or equipment, including enemy weapons, etc., are to be taken back to NZ.

(20) In order to ensure that paras (18) and (19) are observed, kit inspection will be held prior to embarkation and again on the voyage.

(21) Personnel are entitled to take back presents for their own families and friends.

Pay

(22) Credit in pay books at date of embarkation counts as sterling, i.e., personnel get the benefit of the exchange of 4s. 11d. in each pound sterling.

(23) During the voyage troops will be able to draw only the net pay earned on the voyage.

(24) Personnel are advised not to embark with Egyptian currency. There is no assurance that this can be exchanged on board, while in New Zealand the banks allow only £1 2s. 4d. for an Egyptian pound £1 note.

(25) When troops are about to embark in the **Middle East no advantage will be gained by remitting money to New Zealand. The same exchange will be obtained through the AB 64 and will be available on arrival. Pay Office will not accept remittances to New Zealand from those about to embark.**

(26) It should be noted that when personnel embark *in NZ for overseas* they are paid in NZ in full up to the amount of credit in their paybooks, i.e., they are **NOT allowed to carry any credit in their paybooks on embarkation.**

Luggage

(27) Other ranks will be allowed to take one sea kit and two universal kitbags. Private gear is taken at owner's risk, and no compensation is payable for loss.

Postal

(28) In due course there will be distributed to everyone a form regarding re-direction of mail. Men are strongly advised to fill in this form and return it to the Chief Post Office **2 NZEF. In the event of no advice being received by Chief Post Office, mail will be dealt with as follows:**

(Letters will be returned to the sender

a)

(Parcels will be distributed to men of the unit to which the

b) addressee belonged.

Marriages

(29)

(It will not be possible for arrangements to be made in time for

a) returning personnel to marry fiancées who are civilians or who are service personnel not in **2 NZEF**. If personnel desire to carry on with their marriage arrangements, they must be withdrawn from the draft.

(It may be possible to make arrangements in the case of fiancées who
b) are members of **2 NZEF**, but no guarantee can be given in this case, and it may again be necessary to withdraw personnel from the draft. If the fiancée is not herself returning to NZ as a member of the draft, it will be most unlikely that after marriage she will be able to accompany her husband with the draft.

Customs Duty

(30) All ranks will be advised that on arrival in NZ exemption from duty and sales tax will be granted in respect of dutiable goods up to the value of £10, provided that the amount of duty and sales tax so remitted does not in any case exceed £5. Full particulars must, however, be supplied of all goods other than personal effects which have been worn or are in use. Copies of C Form 151 will be supplied on arrival in NZ for this to be done.

Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration **2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX VIII – LIST OF STANDING INSTRUCTIONS

Appendix VIII

LIST OF STANDING INSTRUCTIONS

Accounting for QM Stores – Base and Line-of-Communication units

Applications for return to New Zealand on Compassionate Grounds

Censorship

Compensation for Loss of Kit – **NZANS**

Compensation for Loss of Officers' Kit

Control of Photography

Correspondence with British, Dominion and Colonial Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees in **Germany and **Italy****

Correspondence with British, Dominion and Colonial Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees in Japanese Hands

Disbandment of Units

Discipline – General

Drafts (non-medical) proceeding to New Zealand

Education and Rehabilitation Service

Marriages

Medical

NZ Women's Army Auxiliary Corps

Organisation of Base Kit Section and Disposal of Kits of Deceased,

Prisoner of War, and Missing Personnel

Pay and Allowances

Postal Arrangements

Preparation and Issue of Railway Warrants

Printing and Stationery Service

Publicity and Archives

Regimental Funds

Replacement of Casualties

Return of Personnel to New Zealand or [United Kingdom](#) on Medical Grounds

Rules for NZ Forces' Clubs and Handling of Bulk Canteen Stores

Second Echelon Procedure

Traffic Accidents and Claims in MEF

Traffic Accidents in [Italy](#)

Welfare Work

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX IX

Appendix IX

CONFIDENTIAL

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

Applications for Return to New Zealand on Compassionate Grounds

(Issued in conjunction with 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 117 of 1943)

To List 'Z'

HQ 2 NZEF

Ref: A 47/1

10 Feb 43

These Instructions cancel previous Standing Instructions and embody all Instructions and Orders issued up to and including 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 117 of 1943.

A—General Considerations

(1) Although in recent months there has been a considerable increase in applications for compassionate leave to NZ, on investigation few have proved to be based on grounds substantial enough to warrant the return of the applicant.

(2) It is obvious that by any standard, many soldiers are at present making applications on insufficient grounds. The following general comments are made for the information of Commanding Officers:

(If 2 NZEF continues to serve outside NZ for a long period, there a) may be few of its members who will not at some time consider themselves entitled to compassionate leave on account of

bereavement, anxiety concerning the welfare of children, financial insecurity or some other domestic and personal reason. It is obviously impracticable for large numbers of personnel to be returned to NZ on compassionate grounds.

(To grant leave in any but exceptional circumstances would be
b) unfair to those men having stronger claims who have not so far applied. The knowledge that such leave could be granted would only swell the volume of applications now being received and would lead to even greater delay in the progress of the investigation which must be carried out in New Zealand in the interest of all parties.

(As time wears on the natural longing of men to see their relatives
c) and families once again will result in a steady increase in applications unless it is continually emphasised that only serious considerations of real urgency bring about the soldier's return to New Zealand.

(There is a natural tendency for letters from New Zealand to
d) exaggerate distressing circumstances, and in the conditions of life in the **Middle East** personal anxieties also tend to become exaggerated. Further, it has been found that, in the lapse of time taken by correspondence and inquiries, difficulties have, to some extent, been eased and domestic problems solved.

(3) It requires to be emphasised that:

(The number of applications which result in the return of a soldier
a) to NZ is very small.

(The following are NOT, in themselves, considered adequate reasons
b) for a soldier's return:

(i) Bereavement.

(ii) Illness of next-of-kin or relative's desire for the return of a soldier.

(iii) Anxiety about the welfare of children.

(iv) The intention to institute divorce proceedings.

(v) Anxiety about the conduct of a business or similar enterprise.

(vi) The desire to legitimise a child.

(Soldiers must face the facts of bereavement and ill health in the
c) ranks of their next-of-kin and/or other relatives. These are the natural, if unfortunate, accompaniments of ordinary existence, and particularly so is this the case in respect of aged or elderly parents. Few men of mature age can expect to be absent from their homeland for any number of years without the early demise or sickness of

parents becoming a probability rather than a possibility. These considerations therefore cannot be advanced as grounds for compassionate leave with any expectation of success in other than the most unusual cases.

(d) The welfare and care of children, whether coming in the train of bereavement, or arising out of neglect or misconduct on the part of wives, or attributable to any other cause, is not to be regarded as a consideration which will *ensure* a man's return. The Child Welfare Dept is fully equipped to give every attention to cases brought to its notice, and those soldiers who are so concerned may rely on the arrangements made for the care and well being of their children.

(e) It should be pointed out that agencies exist in New Zealand whereby soldiers' interests are safeguarded. For example, in very many cases, inquiries concerning the welfare of children reveal that arrangements have already been made to ensure that they are adequately cared for. Again, if a soldier desires to institute divorce proceedings he should be informed that the necessary action may be taken in the **Middle East**.

(f) Business considerations are not acceptable as grounds for return. All men in the Army are making some sacrifice, and the man with business anxieties is facing a concomitant of war shared with thousands of others similarly placed.

(4) Where return to NZ is recommended, it is generally found that there is a combination of factors of the kind mentioned in **para (3) (b)**. There follow three typical examples of soldiers whose applications have resulted in their return to NZ:

Pte A. brother killed; 1 brother missing; 1 brother prisoner of war; 1 brother invalided to NZ from **2 NZEF**; 2 brothers still serving with **2 1 NZEF**; father in ill health; family business failing.

Pte B. Father died suddenly; mother and sister both invalids; one young brother; family's livelihood dependent on a "one-man" enterprise.

Pte C. Wife deserted two small children while Pte C in **Middle East**; children ill cared for; no relatives in NZ.

B—Procedure

(5) The following is the procedure whereby applications for return to New Zealand on compassionate grounds are referred to the proper authority and the appropriate action taken:

(The application, accompanied by a full statement of supporting reasons, is made through the applicant's CO and forwarded by the usual channels to HQ 2 NZEF, accompanied by the CO's recommendation. The applicant is advised to forward also letters or other evidence which may support his case.

(If the application appears to be well-founded and/or is supported by the applicant's CO, HQ 2 NZEF requests Army Headquarters, NZ, to investigate the case and to make a recommendation. In cases of urgency HQ 2 NZEF communicates with AHQ NZ by cable.

(Investigations are made in NZ by the National Service Department through the District Secretary of the Manpower Committee, and Army Headquarters' recommendations are based on the report of that Department.

(If the recommendation from AHQ NZ is favourable, the application is approved by HQ 2 NZEF and a passage is arranged at the first opportunity.

(In urgent cases AHQ NZ forward recommendation by cable, but in all cases there follows by surface mail a copy of the report by the District Manpower Committee which has investigated the circumstances surrounding the application. This report will, in whole or in part, be sent forward by HQ 2 NZEF to the Commanding Officer concerned so that the soldier may know that his interests have received adequate consideration.

(6) In regard to the conduct of inquiries in New Zealand the following observations should be noted by Commanding Officers:

(Suitable general instructions are invariably issued to investigating Officers.

(Cases receive detailed and sympathetic investigation.

(Although at times it has been necessary for the National Service Department to make use of the Social Security and Police Departments, investigations are usually conducted in person by senior officers of the National Service Department.

(Every effort is made by this Department to expedite investigations. It must, however, be realised that delay is often inevitable on account of slowness of mail services, inability to trace witnesses, changes of address, and the reluctance of witnesses to give full information.

(7) Emphasis should be given to the following:

(Applicants should forward with their applications letters and
a) other evidence which may support their statements.

(Frequently significant facts are omitted or vaguely defined by
b) applicants, e.g., a witness is referred to only by his or her Christian name, or the address of the most important witness is not given.

(Some applicants attempt to strengthen applications by references
c) to their failing health, sense of strain, etc. All such references will be deleted by HQ 2 NZEF. Applications should be made on compassionate, NOT on medical grounds. If the applicant believes that his health is failing, he has the recourse of reporting to RMO and further action will be taken, if necessary. There is no means of combining medical with compassionate grounds.

(8)

(In cases of extreme distress of mind over the health or welfare of
a) relatives, HQ 2 NZEF asks for information from New Zealand by cable.

(These cases refer to soldiers who have not applied for leave to
b) return to NZ and who, for some reason have not received information which they have considered themselves entitled to expect.

(It should be pointed out that such investigations conducted by
c) the National Service Department are carried out as tactfully and thoroughly as possible and with the least possible publicity.

(This clause, however, is not to be interpreted as meaning that HQ
d) 2 NZEF will enquire by cable concerning the health and welfare of relatives of 2 NZEF personnel, whatever the circumstances.

(Only in special circumstances will such cables be despatched. If
e) the information sought is such as may be obtained by the soldier himself by cable or by other means, HQ 2 NZEF will take no action, but if he has tried and failed, or if he has evidence that he has been supplied with inaccurate or incomplete information, he may apply for investigation by HQ 2 NZEF.

(9) Since COs are in a better position than most to assure themselves of the applicant's sincerity and to some extent of the validity of the application, they are requested to bring the foregoing considerations to the notice of prospective applicants who may consult them.

If thereby men can be induced to place their problems, domestic or otherwise, alongside those of the enslaved peoples of Europe and take a positive view of realities, in many cases they will find their difficulties so reduced in proportion as to be readily overcome on the spot, and

many may decide NOT to continue with their applications.

Notwithstanding this, in ALL cases where the soldier desires to continue, applications will be forwarded to HQ **2 NZEF** with the CO's recommendation, as a case that appears ill-founded may be badly presented, or the applicant may be reticent about the full circumstances of his domestic situation.

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Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration **2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

CONFIDENTIAL

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

Applications for Return to New Zealand on Compassionate Grounds

(Issued in conjunction with 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 117 of 1943)

To List 'Z'

HQ 2 NZEF

Ref: A 47/1

10 Feb 43

These Instructions cancel previous Standing Instructions and embody all Instructions and Orders issued up to and including 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 117 of 1943.

A—General Considerations

(1) Although in recent months there has been a considerable increase in applications for compassionate leave to NZ, on investigation few have proved to be based on grounds substantial enough to warrant the return of the applicant.

(2) It is obvious that by any standard, many soldiers are at present making applications on insufficient grounds. The following general comments are made for the information of Commanding Officers:

(If 2 NZEF continues to serve outside NZ for a long period, there a) may be few of its members who will not at some time consider themselves entitled to compassionate leave on account of bereavement, anxiety concerning the welfare of children, financial insecurity or some other domestic and personal reason. It is obviously impracticable for large numbers of personnel to be returned to NZ on compassionate grounds.

(To grant leave in any but exceptional circumstances would be

b) unfair to those men having stronger claims who have not so far applied. The knowledge that such leave could be granted would only swell the volume of applications now being received and would lead to even greater delay in the progress of the investigation which must be carried out in New Zealand in the interest of all parties.

(As time wears on the natural longing of men to see their relatives c) and families once again will result in a steady increase in applications unless it is continually emphasised that only serious considerations of real urgency bring about the soldier's return to New Zealand.

(There is a natural tendency for letters from New Zealand to d) exaggerate distressing circumstances, and in the conditions of life in the Middle East personal anxieties also tend to become exaggerated. Further, it has been found that, in the lapse of time taken by correspondence and inquiries, difficulties have, to some extent, been eased and domestic problems solved.

(3) It requires to be emphasised that:

(The number of applications which result in the return of a soldier a) to NZ is very small.

(The following are NOT, in themselves, considered adequate reasons b) for a soldier's return:

(i) Bereavement.

(ii) Illness of next-of-kin or relative's desire for the return of a soldier.

(iii) Anxiety about the welfare of children.

(iv) The intention to institute divorce proceedings.

(v) Anxiety about the conduct of a business or similar enterprise.

(vi) The desire to legitimise a child.

(Soldiers must face the facts of bereavement and ill health in the c) ranks of their next-of-kin and/or other relatives. These are the natural, if unfortunate, accompaniments of ordinary existence, and particularly so is this the case in respect of aged or elderly parents. Few men of mature age can expect to be absent from their homeland for any number of years without the early demise or sickness of parents becoming a probability rather than a possibility. These considerations therefore cannot be advanced as grounds for compassionate leave with any expectation of success in other than the most unusual cases.

(The welfare and care of children, whether coming in the train of

d) bereavement, or arising out of neglect or misconduct on the part of wives, or attributable to any other cause, is not to be regarded as a consideration which will *ensure* a man's return. The Child Welfare Dept is fully equipped to give every attention to cases brought to its notice, and those soldiers who are so concerned may rely on the arrangements made for the care and well being of their children.

**(It should be pointed out that agencies exist in New Zealand
e) whereby soldiers' interests are safeguarded. For example, in very many cases, inquiries concerning the welfare of children reveal that arrangements have already been made to ensure that they are adequately cared for. Again, if a soldier desires to institute divorce proceedings he should be informed that the necessary action may be taken in the **Middle East**.**

**(Business considerations are not acceptable as grounds for return.
f) All men in the Army are making some sacrifice, and the man with business anxieties is facing a concomitant of war shared with thousands of others similarly placed.**

(4) Where return to NZ is recommended, it is generally found that there is a combination of factors of the kind mentioned in **para (3) (b). There follow three typical examples of soldiers whose applications have resulted in their return to NZ:**

**Pte brother killed; 1 brother missing; 1 brother prisoner of war; 1
A. brother invalided to NZ from **2 NZEF**; 2 brothers still serving with **2 1 NZEF**; father in ill health; family business failing.**

**Pte Father died suddenly; mother and sister both invalids; one young
B. brother; family's livelihood dependent on a "one-man" enterprise.**

Pte Wife deserted two small children while Pte C in **Middle East;
C. children ill cared for; no relatives in NZ.**

B—Procedure

(5) The following is the procedure whereby applications for return to New Zealand on compassionate grounds are referred to the proper authority and the appropriate action taken:

**(The application, accompanied by a full statement of supporting
a) reasons, is made through the applicant's CO and forwarded by the usual channels to HQ **2 NZEF**, accompanied by the CO's recommendation. The applicant is advised to forward also letters or**

other evidence which may support his case.

(If the application appears to be well-founded and/or is supported
b) by the applicant's CO, HQ 2 NZEF requests Army Headquarters, NZ, to investigate the case and to make a recommendation. In cases of urgency HQ 2 NZEF communicates with AHQ NZ by cable.

(Investigations are made in NZ by the National Service Department
c) through the District Secretary of the Manpower Committee, and Army Headquarters' recommendations are based on the report of that Department.

(If the recommendation from AHQ NZ is favourable, the
d) application is approved by HQ 2 NZEF and a passage is arranged at the first opportunity.

(In urgent cases AHQ NZ forward recommendation by cable, but in
e) all cases there follows by surface mail a copy of the report by the District Manpower Committee which has investigated the circumstances surrounding the application. This report will, in whole or in part, be sent forward by HQ 2 NZEF to the Commanding Officer concerned so that the soldier may know that his interests have received adequate consideration.

(6) In regard to the conduct of inquiries in New Zealand the following observations should be noted by Commanding Officers:

(Suitable general instructions are invariably issued to
a) investigating Officers.

(Cases receive detailed and sympathetic investigation.
b)

(Although at times it has been necessary for the National Service
c) Department to make use of the Social Security and Police Departments, investigations are usually conducted in person by senior officers of the National Service Department.

(Every effort is made by this Department to expedite
d) investigations. It must, however, be realised that delay is often inevitable on account of slowness of mail services, inability to trace witnesses, changes of address, and the reluctance of witnesses to give full information.

(7) Emphasis should be given to the following:

(Applicants should forward with their applications letters and
a) other evidence which may support their statements.

(Frequently significant facts are omitted or vaguely defined by

b) applicants, e.g., a witness is referred to only by his or her Christian name, or the address of the most important witness is not given.

(Some applicants attempt to strengthen applications by references to their failing health, sense of strain, etc. All such references will be deleted by HQ 2 NZEF. Applications should be made on compassionate, NOT on medical grounds. If the applicant believes that his health is failing, he has the recourse of reporting to RMO and further action will be taken, if necessary. There is no means of combining medical with compassionate grounds.

(8)

(In cases of extreme distress of mind over the health or welfare of a) relatives, HQ 2 NZEF asks for information from New Zealand by cable.

(These cases refer to soldiers who have not applied for leave to b) return to NZ and who, for some reason have not received information which they have considered themselves entitled to expect.

(It should be pointed out that such investigations conducted by c) the National Service Department are carried out as tactfully and thoroughly as possible and with the least possible publicity.

(This clause, however, is not to be interpreted as meaning that HQ d) 2 NZEF will enquire by cable concerning the health and welfare of relatives of 2 NZEF personnel, whatever the circumstances.

(Only in special circumstances will such cables be despatched. If e) the information sought is such as may be obtained by the soldier himself by cable or by other means, HQ 2 NZEF will take no action, but if he has tried and failed, or if he has evidence that he has been supplied with inaccurate or incomplete information, he may apply for investigation by HQ 2 NZEF.

(9) Since COs are in a better position than most to assure themselves of the applicant's sincerity and to some extent of the validity of the application, they are requested to bring the foregoing considerations to the notice of prospective applicants who may consult them.

If thereby men can be induced to place their problems, domestic or otherwise, alongside those of the enslaved peoples of Europe and take a positive view of realities, in many cases they will find their difficulties so reduced in proportion as to be readily overcome on the spot, and many may decide NOT to continue with their applications.

Notwithstanding this, in ALL cases where the soldier desires to continue,

applications will be forwarded to HQ 2 NZEF with the CO's recommendation, as a case that appears ill-founded may be badly presented, or the applicant may be reticent about the full circumstances of his domestic situation.

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**Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX X — STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF — COMPENSATION FOR THE LOSS OF OFFICERS' KITS

Appendix X

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

Compensation for the Loss of Officers' Kits

(Issued in conjunction with 2 NZEF Order No. 173 of 1944)

HQ 2 NZEF

Q67/3

31 Mar 44

To List 'Z'

Note: These instructions cancel Standing Instructions for **2 NZEF**—**Compensation for the loss of Officers' Kit, reference 31/14/5089 of 20 Aug 41**—and embody all instructions and orders issued up to and including **2 NZEF Orders Serial 18/44**.

(1) The circumstances under which officers may be compensated for loss of kit are:

(a) Loss or damage resulting directly from enemy action and such as is not attributable in any way to neglect on the part of the owner to exercise such care in the custody of his effects as the exigencies of the service permit.

(b) Loss occasioned through it being abandoned under orders.

(2) Loss or damage of kit under other circumstances will not be accepted as a basis for claims, and officers are advised to insure their kits against any such loss or damage. Compensation will not be allowed if indemnification in respect of the loss has been, or can be, obtained from other sources, e.g., insurance. Theft of articles from NZ Base Kit

Store or loss of kit in transit from CCS to hospital, for instance, are insurable risks, and compensation will not be allowed.

(3) Appendix 'A' to this memorandum sets out the authorised scale of clothing and necessaries to be provided and maintained by an officer of the 2 NZEF. ¹

(4) On departing for a sphere of active operations, an officer may take with him kit up to a maximum weight of 65 lb in the case of an officer of the rank of Lt-Col and above, and 50 lb in the case of all other officers. Special instructions will be issued if, in any circumstances, the above is to be exceeded.

(5)

(When the conditions as laid down in para (4) apply, compensation will a) be limited to the articles set out in Appendix 'B' hereto. ²Claims for loss or damage to the remaining authorised articles, which will be normally left at NZ Base Kit Store during operations, will only be accepted when such loss is directly due to enemy action and is NOT otherwise insurable.

(Subject to suitable depreciation, compensation for the loss by enemy b) action of privately owned instruments and text books may be granted to officers of the NZ Medical Corps up to £5 for instruments and £5 for books. Similar compensation up to the same scale may be paid to other technical officers who use privately owned books and instruments for Public Service, when free issues to individual officers are NOT available from store, or where the issue of private instruments and/or books was necessary owing to short supply of authorised unit equipment.

(6)

(Articles held by officers in excess of those laid down in Appendix 'A' a) or 'B' hereto, or of such as are covered by para (5) (b) above, are retained at the officers' own risk. No claims for compensation in respect of articles in excess of schedules will be admitted under any circumstances.

(b) The total amount of compensation payable will NOT in any circumstances exceed the value of £50 stg. this being the amount paid on receiving first commission in 2 NZEF. The term 'total

amount' comprises:

- (i) Any grant made in cash, and**
- (ii) Value of articles replaced from Ordnance stores, where these are NOT normally a free issue.**

(7) The principle of compensation is NOT to indemnify an officer for all that he may have lost, but rather to enable him to re-equip himself for service in the field. In consequence, an officer who becomes incapacitated will receive only such monetary grant (or articles in replacement of others lost) as may be necessary in his incapacitated state. The balance may be granted at a later date if he becomes fit and again enters a theatre of active operations. The authority which approves of compensation will decide at the time what items of clothing, or articles of equipment, should be regarded as necessary for an officer who is incapacitated or may delegate this duty to a uniformity committee. Compensation will be assessed at sterling rate.

(8) When an officer is evacuated on account of wounds or sickness from the Base Area before he has an opportunity to provide himself with the articles of clothing which are authorised as compensation, his monetary grant for such articles may be adjusted to conform with local prices by the local military authority authorised to make such adjustments.

(9) Whenever compensation is approved, articles will be replaced as far as possible from Ordnance store. In other cases, compensation will be limited to the amount payable locally for a reasonably serviceable article of a like nature to that lost or damaged. Excessively high prices for such items as presentation articles cannot be allowed.

(10) Clothing (including boots) worn out through fair wear and tear and discarded will be replaced by the owner from his uniform upkeep allowance and will NOT be included in claims for compensation even though order to abandon kit may have been issued.

(11) The above general instructions may be amplified from time to time to cover special circumstances, such as the fact that permission

was granted to take an advanced base kit, or that instructions were issued deleting certain items from the list given in Appendix 'B'.

(12)

- (Officers who have suffered loss of kit under circumstances entitling
- a) them to be compensated, therefore, will submit claims on NZEF Forms 27 and/or 28. After being completed by the claimant and certified by his CO, claims will be forwarded through the usual channels to the *Claims Uniformity Committee HQ 2 NZEF* or in the case of Officers in MEF to *Claims Uniformity Committee HQ NZ Maadi Camp*.
- (The Committee will comprise:
- b) (i) In the case of 2 NZEF CMF— *President: An Officer of HQ 2 NZEF* *Member: An Officer of 2 NZ Div* *Member: An Officer of NZ Pay Corps*
- (ii) In the case of 2 NZEF MEF— *President: An Officer of HQ NZ Maadi Camp* *Member: An Officer who has recently served in the field, to be appointed by HQ NZ Maadi Camp* *Member: An Officer of NZ Pay Corps*
- (Claims when passed by the committee will be sent to Chief Paymaster
- c) 2 NZEF or Paymaster HQ NZ Maadi Camp who will advise claimant where settlement may be obtained.

(13) Form 27 covers items which can normally be replaced from Ordnance stocks, a list of such items being enumerated in [para \(2\)](#) thereof. Form 28 covers those items for which a monetary grant may be claimed, a list of such items being enumerated in [para \(2\)](#) thereof.

(14) Claims will be reviewed by a Uniformity Committee to be set up at the time. The committee will decide upon the value to be paid for individual articles, and if circumstances allow, will notify claimants of these values before claims are presented.

(15) A considerable responsibility is thrown upon COs to ensure that while on the one hand the officer is compensated to a reasonable degree, on the other hand the State is not put to unjustified expense.

(16) An officer who removes his equipment for his greater comfort is not absolved from his responsibility for the safe custody of such

equipment, and if in consequence of his removing his equipment he gets separated from it or loses it or it becomes damaged, he has no claim for compensation or replacement at Public expense and is liable to be called upon to show that the loss, etc., was NOT due to negligence on his part.

(17) Claims for articles which are replaceable from Ordnance stocks will be replaced under arrangements made by ADOS, NZ Div or Base Ordnance Depots.

(18) Pending settlement of claims officers should proceed to re-equip themselves without delay. In special cases, where officers find themselves short of money, the Paymaster will make an advance of up to £10 against claims submitted, pending the final decision of the Uniformity Committee. Such advance, where required, will be drawn from the Paymaster by Special Voucher, and NOT as an overdrawal of pay.

(19) Officers will lodge their claims as soon as possible while facts are fresh in their minds. All claims should be submitted within at least three months.

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Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF

¹ Appendix 'A' is not reproduced.

² Not reproduced.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX XI – STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF – REPLACEMENT OF CASUALTIES

Appendix XI

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

Replacement of Casualties

(Issued in conjunction with 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 88 of 1942)

HQ 2 NZEF

27/16/1152

12 Aug 42

To List 'Z'

Note: These Instructions cancel previous Instructions (ref 43/5/6545 dated 3 Oct 41) and embody all Orders and Instructions issued up to and including 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 88 of 1942.

General

(1) The rapidity with which casualties can be replaced depends largely upon their early notification on one of the various Army forms despatched to 2 Ech, 2 NZEF, viz:

AF W3006

3008

3009

3010

3011

(2) It is therefore essential that these forms be rendered by the most speedy means available.

(3) All demands for reinforcements must be rendered to 2 Ech, 2 NZEF, which is the sole authority for the number of reinforcements to be supplied.

(4) All personnel are 'off strength':

(On death

a)

(As soon as they are evacuated beyond Regimental Aid Posts, or

b)

(Otherwise placed on 'X' Lists,

c) and are then replaceable as regards numbers by a reinforcement to be sent up later from the Base. Replacement by ranks is dealt with below as regards Officers in paras (16) to (21), as regards WOs and S/Sjts in paras (22) to (27), and as regards NCOs of Serjeant and below in paras (28) to (33).

(5) It is most undesirable for units to leave vacancies open for the return of certain personnel, particularly NCO personnel. Despite what may be believed at the time, there is no guarantee that the men evacuated will return within a reasonable period. Machinery exists for making at least an acting or temporary promotion at a very early stage, and for making it substantive subsequently, and full advantage should be taken of this procedure.

(6) Part C of AF W3009 provides for the nomination of certain other ranks 'Whose return to the unit is particularly requested. *To use this as a nominal roll of all personnel absent from the Unit makes it valueless.* In order to meet the wishes of units as regards nominated personnel, it is necessary for 2 Ech, 2 NZEF to advise the Reinforcement Depot concerned that such personnel are required as soon as possible. The roll of 'Particularly Requested' personnel should be used only to request the return of certain specialists (other ranks below the rank of S/Sjt).

(7) AF W3012 must be rendered by units for notifying casualties of attached personnel, a copy being forwarded to the parent unit of such attached personnel.

(8) Formation Headquarters should immediately replace losses by demanding replacements from units under their command, who in turn obtain replacements in the normal manner.

(9) It is stressed that units should make use of Part D of AF W3009 in demanding tradesmen, etc., but this should not deter COs from training suitable personnel for the immediate filling of essential specialist vacancies. Care should be taken to ensure that the total number so demanded in Part D agrees with the total of Column 4 Part A, 'Reinforcements required.'

(10) All ranks on discharge from Hospital will, in the majority of cases, proceed to the Convalescent Depot. From there they are moved if graded I or IA to the **Reception Depot, where they are re-equipped with basic equipment and made dentally fit. When these processes are complete they are transferred to the appropriate Training Depot, and subject to the need for refresher courses, become available for replacement drafts.**

(11) On receipt of weekly Field Return from unit the following procedure will be followed by 2 Ech **2 NZEF.**

(Officer deficiencies shown on AF W3008 will be notified to the
a) Military Secretary.

(From AF W3009 a statement of deficiencies up to the rank of Sjt
b) will be compiled and passed to the appropriate Training Depot together with Parts C and D of Field Return.

(A summary of deficiencies of all units as in **para (b)** will be passed
c) to HQ 6 NZ Div also.

(Deficiencies of S/Sjts and WOs will be referred to HQ **2 NZEF**.
d)

(12) Training Depots will assemble drafts, drawing:

(On ex-personnel of the unit concerned, and

a)

(From any trained personnel of the Corps, except in the case of
b) Infantry, where they will draw on the trained personnel of the linked battalions (e.g., 18/21/24 NZ Bns). The factor governing posting the draft will be length of time in the Depot, irrespective of rank.

(13) HQ 6 NZ Div will arrange for drafts to be sent forward as frequently as is required according to urgency and size.

(14) Should there be any really urgent need for replacement of casualties such as unexpectedly severe battle casualties, action as in **para (11)** will be taken by 2 Ech 2 NZEF on the daily strength state (AF W3006), i.e., 2 Ech will not wait for the Weekly Field Return. It is permissible for units in such exceptional circumstances to draw the attention of 2 Ech to the need for early replacements. HQ 2 NZ Div will in an emergency indicate the priority of demand, i.e., if, on AF W3006 reinforcements are shown to be required, HQ 2 NZ Div will advise Advance Base, if any, or HQ 6 NZ Div which units require reinforcements most urgently.

(15) In the event of the field force being far in advance of the Base, it may become necessary to establish advanced depots of personnel, in order to avoid the lag involved in the journey from the Base. The despatch of personnel from such advanced depots will still be governed by the authority of 2 Ech 2 NZEF or Adv 2 Ech 2 NZEF.

Officers

(16) The replacement of Officers whose casualties have created vacancies for promotion is dealt with in Regulations for 2 NZEF, Sections E, F, G.

(17) Officers evacuated beyond RAPs or otherwise placed on 'X' List, at once create vacancies on the strength of the field unit and are immediately replaceable by another officer from the Base, who will be *attached* for 14 days, after which period, if the officer evacuated is still not available, he will be *posted*.

(18) Part C of AF W3008 allows COs to nominate any officer whose return to the unit is particularly requested. In general only 2 i/cs of Coys and upwards and specialist officers are to be so nominated.

(19) The Military Secretary is kept informed of all casualties to officers or requests from COs on AF W3008, and of the arrival of officers in the Training Depots.

(20) He will, as vacancies occur, select the officers to go forward to Units taking into account rank, period of time spent in the Training Depot and any special requests received. In the event of First-Reinforcements being held at an Advanced Base, OC Adv Base will decide with the Commanding Officer in the Field which officers will go forward. MS will send forward officers in replacement to Advanced Base.

(21) In the case of Infantry, replacements may be drawn from among the ex-officers of the Battalion which has the vacancy, from the ex-officers of the linked Battalions which form the group, or from reinforcement officers of the group. In the case of other arms, the officers selected will be the most suitable of those available in the Corps as a whole.

Warrant Officers and Staff Serjeants

(22) As soon as a WO or S/Sjt is evacuated beyond RAP, a vacancy exists for a temporary promotion (2 NZEF Regs J 11-13). Substantive vacancies are created in a number of ways, further details being contained in Regulations for 2 NZEF, Para J2.

(23) If either temporary or substantive promotion is required a recommendation will be forwarded through the usual channels to HQ 2 NZEF. If so desired, pending the result of the application, acting rank may be given at once by the authorities enumerated in 2 NZEF Reg J 28.

(24) If there is in the Reception Depot or in the Training Depots a man of substantive rank into which it is desired to make the promotion,

and who in the case of Infantry has been a member of any of the three linked Battalions of the group, and in the case of other arms comes from the appropriate Corps, his name will be submitted to the CO concerned. If there is available a WO or S/Sjt on X (iv) list with the Training Depot concerned and if such WO or S/Sjt was originally on the strength of the unit showing the deficiency, he will be sent forward as a replacement with the first draft. If he is an ex-member of another unit, the CO may submit reasons why he should not be sent forward, but unless the reasons include lack of technical knowledge for the proposed employment, the man must normally be accepted as the replacement.

(25) If a S/Sjt or WO is to be sent forward from Training Depots, a temporary promotion of the man whom it was desired to promote will be approved, on application being made to HQ 2 NZEF, to stand until the arrival of the replacement.

(26) If there is no man available to be sent forward the promotion as applied for will normally be approved. In the case of a temporary promotion HQ 2 NZEF will arrange for a man holding the substantive higher rank to be sent forward at once should any such become available, subject to the same right of comment by the CO as in (24) above.

(27) The reason for this procedure is to ensure that too great a number of S/Sjts and WOs does not exist at any one time. As will be seen later, COs are at liberty to make substantive promotion up to the rank of Serjeant, without reference to the fact that at the moment there may be fit Serjeants in Training Depots. Should Serjeants later come forward with replacement drafts, a temporary surplus in a unit can be carried pending absorption of the surplus; whereas in the case of WOs and S/Sjts, it is most undesirable that units should be carrying a surplus or that fit WOs and S/Sjts should spend too long at the Base pending vacancies. The supply of WOs and S/Sjts thus requires a degree of regulation in some respects resembling that of officers.

NCOs up to the Rank of Serjeant (Inclusive)

(28) Promotions up to the rank of Serjeant inclusive are in the hands of COs and may be made for reasons given in Regulations for 2 NZEF, paras J2–20.

(29) NCOs up to the rank of Serjeant will be sent forward with replacement drafts in the normal course of events, i.e., no notice will be taken of the number of these ranks in the Units at the time. (See para (12) above.)

(30) If after the arrival of a reinforcement draft a unit finds that its establishment of NCOs of any particular rank is exceeded, any temporary NCOs of that rank will revert to the next lower rank until the correct establishment is reached. If, after the reversion of temporary NCOs, there is still a surplus of the rank in question, no further promotions may be made until the surplus is absorbed by wastage.

(31) As has already been indicated, in para (5) herein, it is most undesirable that vacancies should be held open pending the return of certain personnel. Once an NCO is evacuated beyond RAP he is off the strength of the unit, goes on to the 'X' list, and is immediately replaceable as a NCO by temporary promotion in the unit, and as an individual by a replacement from the Base.

(32) NCOs in Training Depots are liable to be taken as replacements for any unit of the Corps, except in the case of Infantry where they are liable to be taken for replacements in any of the three linked Battalions.

(33) Every effort will be made nevertheless to return an NCO to his former unit, and drafts will be completed as far as possible from ex-members of the unit in question.

Rank and File

(34) Unless they are specialists, rank and file are replaceable by any available personnel from the Corps or from the linked battalion groups. As with NCOs, replacement drafts will be first taken from the personnel

who formerly served with the unit concerned, and then from any other personnel from the Corps or group, but no guarantee can be given that a man will return to his ex-unit. Length of time in the Training Depot will be in general the deciding factor in determining at what stage men are sent forward.

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**Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

(Issued in conjunction with 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 88 of 1942)

HQ 2 NZEF

27/16/1152

12 Aug 42

To List 'Z'

***Note:* These Instructions cancel previous Instructions (ref 43/5/6545 dated 3 Oct 41) and embody all Orders and Instructions issued up to and including 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 88 of 1942.**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

GENERAL

General

(1) The rapidity with which casualties can be replaced depends largely upon their early notification on one of the various Army forms despatched to 2 Ech, 2 NZEF, viz:

AF W3006

3008

3009

3010

3011

3012

(2) It is therefore essential that these forms be rendered by the most speedy means available.

(3) All demands for reinforcements must be rendered to 2 Ech, 2 NZEF, which is the sole authority for the number of reinforcements to be supplied.

(4) All personnel are 'off strength':

(On death

a)

(As soon as they are evacuated beyond Regimental Aid Posts, or

b)

(Otherwise placed on 'X' Lists,

c) and are then replaceable as regards numbers by a reinforcement to be sent up later from the Base. Replacement by ranks is dealt with below as regards Officers in paras (16) to (21), as regards WOs and S/Sjts in paras (22) to (27), and as regards NCOs of Serjeant and below in paras

(28) to (33).

(5) It is most undesirable for units to leave vacancies open for the return of certain personnel, particularly NCO personnel. Despite what may be believed at the time, there is no guarantee that the men evacuated will return within a reasonable period. Machinery exists for making at least an acting or temporary promotion at a very early stage, and for making it substantive subsequently, and full advantage should be taken of this procedure.

(6) Part C of AF W3009 provides for the nomination of certain other ranks 'Whose return to the unit is particularly requested. *To use this as a nominal roll of all personnel absent from the Unit makes it valueless.* In order to meet the wishes of units as regards nominated personnel, it is necessary for 2 Ech, 2 NZEF to advise the Reinforcement Depot concerned that such personnel are required as soon as possible. The roll of 'Particularly Requested' personnel should be used only to request the return of certain specialists (other ranks below the rank of S/Sjt).

(7) AF W3012 must be rendered by units for notifying casualties of attached personnel, a copy being forwarded to the parent unit of such attached personnel.

(8) Formation Headquarters should immediately replace losses by demanding replacements from units under their command, who in turn obtain replacements in the normal manner.

(9) It is stressed that units should make use of Part D of AF W3009 in demanding tradesmen, etc., but this should not deter COs from training suitable personnel for the immediate filling of essential specialist vacancies. Care should be taken to ensure that the total number so demanded in Part D agrees with the total of Column 4 Part A, 'Reinforcements required.'

(10) All ranks on discharge from Hospital will, in the majority of cases, proceed to the Convalescent Depot. From there they are moved if

graded I or IA to the **Reception Depot**, where they are re-equipped with basic equipment and made dentally fit. When these processes are complete they are transferred to the appropriate Training Depot, and subject to the need for refresher courses, become available for replacement drafts.

(11) On receipt of weekly Field Return from unit the following procedure will be followed by 2 Ech **2 NZEF**.

(Officer deficiencies shown on AF W3008 will be notified to the
a) Military Secretary.

(From AF W3009 a statement of deficiencies up to the rank of Sjt
b) will be compiled and passed to the appropriate Training Depot together with Parts C and D of Field Return.

(A summary of deficiencies of all units as in para (b) will be passed
c) to HQ 6 NZ Div also.

(Deficiencies of S/Sjts and WOs will be referred to HQ **2 NZEF**.
d)

(12) Training Depots will assemble drafts, drawing:

(On ex-personnel of the unit concerned, and
a)

(From any trained personnel of the Corps, except in the case of
b) Infantry, where they will draw on the trained personnel of the linked battalions (e.g., 18/21/24 NZ Bns). The factor governing posting the draft will be length of time in the Depot, irrespective of rank.

(13) HQ 6 NZ Div will arrange for drafts to be sent forward as frequently as is required according to urgency and size.

(14) Should there be any really urgent need for replacement of casualties such as unexpectedly severe battle casualties, action as in para (11) will be taken by 2 Ech **2 NZEF** on the daily strength state (AF W3006), i.e., 2 Ech will not wait for the Weekly Field Return. It is permissible for units in such exceptional circumstances to draw the attention of 2 Ech to the need for early replacements. HQ 2 NZ Div will in an emergency indicate the priority of demand, i.e., if, on AF W3006 reinforcements are shown to be required, HQ 2 NZ Div will advise Advance Base, if any, or HQ 6 NZ Div which units require reinforcements

most urgently.

(15) In the event of the field force being far in advance of the Base, it may become necessary to establish advanced depots of personnel, in order to avoid the lag involved in the journey from the Base. The despatch of personnel from such advanced depots will still be governed by the authority of 2 Ech 2 NZEF or Adv 2 Ech 2 NZEF.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

OFFICERS

Officers

(16) The replacement of Officers whose casualties have created vacancies for promotion is dealt with in Regulations for 2 NZEF, Sections E, F, G.

(17) Officers evacuated beyond RAPs or otherwise placed on 'X' List, at once create vacancies on the strength of the field unit and are immediately replaceable by another officer from the Base, who will be *attached* for 14 days, after which period, if the officer evacuated is still not available, he will be *posted*.

(18) Part C of AF W3008 allows COs to nominate any officer whose return to the unit is particularly requested. In general only 2 i/cs of Coys and upwards and specialist officers are to be so nominated.

(19) The Military Secretary is kept informed of all casualties to officers or requests from COs on AF W3008, and of the arrival of officers in the Training Depots.

(20) He will, as vacancies occur, select the officers to go forward to Units taking into account rank, period of time spent in the Training Depot and any special requests received. In the event of First-Reinforcements being held at an Advanced Base, OC Adv Base will decide with the Commanding Officer in the Field which officers will go forward. MS will send forward officers in replacement to Advanced Base.

(21) In the case of Infantry, replacements may be drawn from among the ex-officers of the Battalion which has the vacancy, from the ex-officers of the linked Battalions which form the group, or from reinforcement officers of the group. In the case of other arms, the officers selected will be the most suitable of those available in the Corps as a whole.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

WARRANT OFFICERS AND STAFF SERJEANTS

Warrant Officers and Staff Serjeants

(22) As soon as a WO or S/Sjt is evacuated beyond RAP, a vacancy exists for a temporary promotion (2 NZEF Regs J 11–13). Substantive vacancies are created in a number of ways, further details being contained in Regulations for 2 NZEF, Para J2.

(23) If either temporary or substantive promotion is required a recommendation will be forwarded through the usual channels to HQ 2 NZEF. If so desired, pending the result of the application, acting rank may be given at once by the authorities enumerated in 2 NZEF Reg J 28.

(24) If there is in the Reception Depot or in the Training Depots a man of substantive rank into which it is desired to make the promotion, and who in the case of Infantry has been a member of any of the three linked Battalions of the group, and in the case of other arms comes from the appropriate Corps, his name will be submitted to the CO concerned. If there is available a WO or S/Sjt on X (iv) list with the Training Depot concerned and if such WO or S/Sjt was originally on the strength of the unit showing the deficiency, he will be sent forward as a replacement with the first draft. If he is an ex-member of another unit, the CO may submit reasons why he should not be sent forward, but unless the reasons include lack of technical knowledge for the proposed employment, the man must normally be accepted as the replacement.

(25) If a S/Sjt or WO is to be sent forward from Training Depots, a temporary promotion of the man whom it was desired to promote will be approved, on application being made to HQ 2 NZEF, to stand until the arrival of the replacement.

(26) If there is no man available to be sent forward the promotion as applied for will normally be approved. In the case of a temporary

promotion HQ 2 NZEF will arrange for a man holding the substantive higher rank to be sent forward at once should any such become available, subject to the same right of comment by the CO as in (24) above.

(27) The reason for this procedure is to ensure that too great a number of S/Sjts and WOs does not exist at any one time. As will be seen later, COs are at liberty to make substantive promotion up to the rank of Serjeant, without reference to the fact that at the moment there may be fit Serjeants in Training Depots. Should Serjeants later come forward with replacement drafts, a temporary surplus in a unit can be carried pending absorption of the surplus; whereas in the case of WOs and S/Sjts, it is most undesirable that units should be carrying a surplus or that fit WOs and S/Sjts should spend too long at the Base pending vacancies. The supply of WOs and S/Sjts thus requires a degree of regulation in some respects resembling that of officers.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

NCOS UP TO THE RANK OF SERJEANT (INCLUSIVE)

NCOs up to the Rank of Serjeant (Inclusive)

(28) Promotions up to the rank of Serjeant inclusive are in the hands of COs and may be made for reasons given in Regulations for 2 NZEF, paras J2–20.

(29) NCOs up to the rank of Serjeant will be sent forward with replacement drafts in the normal course of events, i.e., no notice will be taken of the number of these ranks in the Units at the time. (See para (12) above.)

(30) If after the arrival of a reinforcement draft a unit finds that its establishment of NCOs of any particular rank is exceeded, any temporary NCOs of that rank will revert to the next lower rank until the correct establishment is reached. If, after the reversion of temporary NCOs, there is still a surplus of the rank in question, no further promotions may be made until the surplus is absorbed by wastage.

(31) As has already been indicated, in para (5) herein, it is most undesirable that vacancies should be held open pending the return of certain personnel. Once an NCO is evacuated beyond RAP he is off the strength of the unit, goes on to the 'X' list, and is immediately replaceable as a NCO by temporary promotion in the unit, and as an individual by a replacement from the Base.

(32) NCOs in Training Depots are liable to be taken as replacements for any unit of the Corps, except in the case of Infantry where they are liable to be taken for replacements in any of the three linked Battalions.

(33) Every effort will be made nevertheless to return an NCO to his former unit, and drafts will be completed as far as possible from ex-members of the unit in question.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

RANK AND FILE

Rank and File

(34) Unless they are specialists, rank and file are replaceable by any available personnel from the Corps or from the linked battalion groups. As with NCOs, replacement drafts will be first taken from the personnel who formerly served with the unit concerned, and then from any other personnel from the Corps or group, but no guarantee can be given that a man will return to his ex-unit. Length of time in the Training Depot will be in general the deciding factor in determining at what stage men are sent forward.

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**Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX XII – STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF – REGIMENTAL FUNDS

Appendix XII

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

Regimental Funds

HQ 2 NZEF

Ref: Q 77/17

26 Jan 45

To List 'Z'

(Note: These Instructions cancel previous Standing Instructions (ref Q 77/17, of 12 Jun 43) and embody all Instructions and Orders issued up to and including 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 215 of 1945).

General

(1) All Regimental Funds will be vested in the Commanding Officer which term for the purpose of these Instructions means the Officer Commanding the Unit for the time being.

(2) All moneys received for Regimental Funds will be lodged in the first instance with the Chief Paymaster 2 NZEF or Field Cashier in the field, and may be drawn on by requisition signed by the Commanding Officer.

(3) Subject to any special arrangement made with the Chief Paymaster, Units will notify the NZ Pay Office or Field Cashier as the case may be of amounts they wish to draw in cash at the same time as they requisition for pay.

(4) Units so desiring may for their own convenience withdraw portions of the money held by the Chief Paymaster and lodge same to

the credit of a current account at Barclay's Bank. Care must be taken that the bank holds specimen signatures of Officers operating on the account. COs will advise the Audit Branch **2 NZEF** when such accounts are opened, and when they are closed. *Other Funds* must NOT be mixed with Regimental Funds in the bank account.

(5) The Commanding Officer will decide in what manner the fund is to be spent, bearing in mind that it is intended for improvements in the general welfare of the men. Funds will not be used for the purchase of stores or equipment which normally form part of equipment tables, nor for office appliances, etc., nor will such funds be used in any circumstances to make good shortages of Imprest Moneys, Postal Receipts, Mess Funds or any other separate accounts. Cash payments to individuals of the unit will not be permitted.

(6) Regtl Funds are in fact a trust fund controlled by the CO, and to expend this money on items similar to those mentioned in **para (5)** above is to exceed the limits of the purpose for which they may be applied.

(7) The principle to be followed, therefore, is to spend freely, but not wastefully from funds, whilst still exercising strict control over the purposes to which the funds are applied in order to ensure that they are in fact used for improvements in the general welfare of the men as a whole.

(8) In all matters affecting Regimental Funds, HQ **2 NZEF** is the final authority, and all questions in respect of expenditure from such funds will therefore be addressed accordingly. On the other hand Audit Branch **2 NZEF** may well be consulted regarding methods of accounting, etc.

(9) Money required to enable Units to purchase Sports gear or Sports trophies, or to meet incidental expenses for competitions, will normally be provided from the Regimental Funds of the Unit. Application may, however, be made for grants from National Patriotic Funds in the case of:

(**Special competitions arranged by Bde Gps.**

a)

(**Isolated Units.**

b)

(**Small Units which for any special reason have not sufficient
c) financial resources.**

Applications for any such grants should be made to the Sec., Welfare Committee, HQ 2 NZEF, and should include sufficient information to enable a decision to be made promptly. The state of Regimental Funds in 2 NZEF as a whole is kept under review, and arrangements are made to ensure that funds are maintained at a sufficiently high figure.

(10) All Regimental Fund accounts whether with the Chief Paymaster or in Barclay's Bank are subject to *audit by the Audit Branch of 2 NZEF.*

(11) Units in CMF requiring payments to be made in **Middle East will forward with NZEF Form 147 when applicable, the relative invoice for the supply or service rendered. When paid, the voucher, together with the invoice, will be returned to the Unit, and thus be available to support the quarterly Accounts submitted for Audit Board's action.**

Regimental Funds Account

(12) The CO of the Unit is responsible for the proper application of Regimental Funds. He may delegate the responsibility for recording transactions and for the general management of the funds to a subordinate officer or to a Unit Committee. Such delegation however will not relieve the CO of his responsibility for the proper administration and use of the funds.

(13) When a change of duty occurs, and the exigencies of the Service permit, the Offr ic Regimental Funds will write up his accounts to the date of the change, will sign the cash book and will obtain from the incoming officer ic Regimental Funds a receipt for the cash, equipment and books, etc., handed over. The same procedure will be followed when there is a change of CO.

(14) In the event of Regimental Funds Accounts, records, stock, equipment or cash being lost through enemy action or any other cause Commanding Officers will, when necessary, convene Courts of Enquiry to determine the facts. The findings of such Courts of Enquiry will be submitted to the appropriate HQ (i.e., HQ 2 NZEF, HQ 2 NZ Div, or HQ NZ Maadi Camp) for any action that may be necessary. A copy of the findings will be forwarded by the HQ concerned to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF for reference and retention.

(15) Advances to Unit Canteens from Regimental Funds, in order to purchase initial stocks, must be repaid as quickly as possible from Canteen profits as they accrue, thus minimising the risk of Regimental Funds suffering if canteen stocks or cash are lost through any cause.

Cash Book and Voucher Files

(16) Cash Book and Voucher files will be maintained as part of the accounts.

(17)

- (The Cash Book records particulars of receipts and expenditure. A a) simple specimen page is attached as Appendix 'A'. ¹ Sufficient description should be entered against each payment to disclose fully the nature of the transaction and the relevant voucher referred to by its number.**
- (Additional columns will be inserted on both sides of the Cash Book in b) the case where Units have a current Bank Account, and also columns can be added, if desired, for assembling the same type of transactions (both receipts and payments)—see alternative specimen page, Appendix 'B'. ²**
- (The totals of these columns are then readily available for compiling c) the Summary of Receipts and Payments referred to in Para (20).**

(18)

- (All vouchers supporting payments, e.g., receipted bills, should be a) numbered and filed. These numbers will be entered in the Cash Book against the respective entries.**

- (Vouchers will be initialled by the Officer-in-Charge of the Regimental
b) Funds accounts before submission to Unit Audit Boards, and by CO before audit by Audit Branch 2 NZEF. Vouchers for messing and other purchases from natives or from the markets in instances where proper receipts are quite unobtainable should be endorsed by the CO or Officer i/c Regimental Funds as follows: 'Above goods have been received, the prices are fair and reasonable, and the money was actually expended.'

Receipts and Payments Account and Balance Sheet

(19) Receipts and Payments Account and Balance Sheet will be prepared quarterly for presentation to Unit Audit Board or as required by Audit Branch 2 NZEF.

(20)

- (Receipts and payments account will show in summarised form the
a) receipts and payments as entered in the Cash Book.
(The account will commence with the balance of cash and the Chief
b) Paymaster's account balanced from the last period to which will be added the receipts for the period. On the payments side will appear in summarised form, the payments for the period, the account being finally balanced by the insertion of the cash in hand and Chief Paymaster's credit at the end of the period. See specimen Receipts and Payments Account, Appendix 'C'.³

(21) The Balance Sheet should be submitted to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF in its simplest form after being signed by the CO and will show cash and Paymaster's balances and all outstanding amounts due to or from the Regimental Fund. Assets such as equipment need not be valued and included in the Balance Sheet, but a list of such items will accompany the balance sheet, certified by the CO as being in possession of the Unit on the date of the Balance Sheet. A certificate signed by the CO will also be submitted that the cash on hand was verified by inspection. See specimen Balance Sheet, Appendix 'C'.

(22) For the information of the Unit, the CO will, as soon as possible after completion of the quarterly Unit Audit Board action, publish in Routine Orders a Balance Sheet (including a list of assets) and a simple

statement of the receipts and payments for the period under review.

Unit Audit Board

(23) Every three months COs will assemble an Audit Board of not fewer than three representatives of all ranks of the Unit to examine the Regimental Funds Account in accordance with para (19).

(24) This Board will examine all vouchers, check entries in Cash Book, satisfy itself that all assets and liabilities required to be shown are in the Balance Sheet and that the cash credits are actually available.

(25) When the Board has completed its Audit it will rule off and certify the cash book.

(26) When the exigencies of the service permit the CO will submit within 21 days of the last day of each quarter to HQ 2 NZEF, HQ 2 NZ Div, or HQ NZ Maadi Camp (whichever is appropriate), a certificate that the Unit Audit Board's action has been duly completed.

(27) After the regular three-monthly audit of the Regimental Funds Accounts, all books of accounts, supporting vouchers and relevant documents will be deposited with Unit Records at NZ Base Kit Sec.

(28) It is also recommended that in the event of a Unit leaving for a field of active operations, Regimental Funds Accounts, etc., should in any case be deposited at the Base. It will be realised that by doing so the possibility of such documents being lost is greatly minimised.

Audit Branch 2 NZEF

(29) This Branch will from time to time call for the books of the Regimental Funds Account.

(30) All documents laid down in paras (16) to (21) will be prepared and completed up to the date laid down. When asked for they will then be forwarded to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF, those mentioned in paras (20)

and (21) being forwarded *in duplicate*.

Disbanded Units

(31) The Regimental Fund balances of 2 NZEF Units, which are disbanded, will be paid to Chief Paymaster 2 NZEF, who will hold such balances for general distribution.

(32) Where there are special circumstances, such as the transfer of a considerable number of men from the disbanded unit direct to another unit, the CO of the disbanded unit may make recommendations to HQ 2 NZEF as to the disposal of balances. Action will then be taken as directed by HQ 2 NZEF.

(33) An inventory of Regimental Fund Equipment, etc., held, will be prepared and submitted to HQ 2 NZEF for instructions as to disposal.

(34) Final accounts will be prepared in accordance with the provisions of these Instructions and these, together with supporting documents will be submitted by the OC of the disbanded Unit to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF for Audit.

(35) See also **Standing Instructions for 2 NZEF 'Disbandment of Units'**.

Unit Funds other than Regimental Funds

(36) In the case of units which have canteen or other private funds within the unit (as distinct from Regimental Funds) the following instructions will apply.

(37) The CO of a unit will be responsible for the proper application of such unit canteen and other private funds, and he will ensure that proper accounts and records are kept of all transactions.

(38) The CO will institute a frequent check on the cash and stocks held by the canteens, and cause returns of sales and stocks to be

submitted to him regularly.

(39) When a change in the management of a canteen occurs, the outgoing committee will prepare accounts to the date of the changeover and the incoming committee will sign a receipt for the cash and stocks taken over.

(40) The CO will every three months appoint a Unit Audit Board of not fewer than three representatives of all ranks of the unit.

(41) The Board will examine all vouchers, check entries in the Cash Book, satisfy itself that all assets and liabilities required to be shown are in the Balance Sheet and that cash credits and stock on hand in canteens are actually available.

(42) When the Board has completed its audit it will submit a report to the CO on the result of the audit.

(43) For the information of the unit, the CO will as soon as possible after completion of the quarterly audit Unit Audit Board action, publish in Routine Orders a Balance Sheet (including a list of stock and assets on hand), and a simple statement of the receipts and payments for the period under review.

(44) Providing the exigencies of the service permit, the CO will submit within 21 days of the last day of each quarter to HQ 2 NZEF or HQ 2 NZ Div (whichever is appropriate) a certificate that the Unit Audit Board's action has been duly completed.

(45) For the purposes of this Order quarters will end on 31 Mar, 30 Jun, 30 Sep, 31 Dec.

**Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF**

¹ Not reproduced.

² Not reproduced.

³ Not reproduced.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[SECTION]

HQ 2 NZEF

Ref: Q 77/17

26 Jan 45

To List 'Z'

(Note: These Instructions cancel previous Standing Instructions (ref Q 77/17, of 12 Jun 43) and embody all Instructions and Orders issued up to and including 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 215 of 1945).

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

GENERAL

General

(1) All Regimental Funds will be vested in the Commanding Officer which term for the purpose of these Instructions means the Officer Commanding the Unit for the time being.

(2) All moneys received for Regimental Funds will be lodged in the first instance with the Chief Paymaster 2 NZEF or Field Cashier in the field, and may be drawn on by requisition signed by the Commanding Officer.

(3) Subject to any special arrangement made with the Chief Paymaster, Units will notify the NZ Pay Office or Field Cashier as the case may be of amounts they wish to draw in cash at the same time as they requisition for pay.

(4) Units so desiring may for their own convenience withdraw portions of the money held by the Chief Paymaster and lodge same to the credit of a current account at Barclay's Bank. Care must be taken that the bank holds specimen signatures of Officers operating on the account. COs will advise the Audit Branch 2 NZEF when such accounts are opened, and when they are closed. *Other Funds* must NOT be mixed with Regimental Funds in the bank account.

(5) The Commanding Officer will decide in what manner the fund is to be spent, bearing in mind that it is intended for improvements in the general welfare of the men. Funds will not be used for the purchase of stores or equipment which normally form part of equipment tables, nor for office appliances, etc., nor will such funds be used in any circumstances to make good shortages of Imprest Moneys, Postal Receipts, Mess Funds or any other separate accounts. Cash payments to individuals of the unit will not be permitted.

(6) Regtl Funds are in fact a trust fund controlled by the CO, and to expend this money on items similar to those mentioned in para (5) above is to exceed the limits of the purpose for which they may be applied.

(7) The principle to be followed, therefore, is to spend freely, but not wastefully from funds, whilst still exercising strict control over the purposes to which the funds are applied in order to ensure that they are in fact used for improvements in the general welfare of the men as a whole.

(8) In all matters affecting Regimental Funds, HQ 2 NZEF is the final authority, and all questions in respect of expenditure from such funds will therefore be addressed accordingly. On the other hand Audit Branch 2 NZEF may well be consulted regarding methods of accounting, etc.

(9) Money required to enable Units to purchase Sports gear or Sports trophies, or to meet incidental expenses for competitions, will normally be provided from the Regimental Funds of the Unit. Application may, however, be made for grants from National Patriotic Funds in the case of:

(a) Special competitions arranged by Bde Gps.

(b) Isolated Units.

(c) Small Units which for any special reason have not sufficient financial resources.

Applications for any such grants should be made to the Sec., Welfare Committee, HQ 2 NZEF, and should include sufficient information to enable a decision to be made promptly. The state of Regimental Funds in 2 NZEF as a whole is kept under review, and arrangements are made to ensure that funds are maintained at a sufficiently high figure.

(10) All Regimental Fund accounts whether with the Chief Paymaster or in Barclay's Bank are subject to audit by the Audit Branch of 2 NZEF.

(11) Units in CMF requiring payments to be made in Middle East will forward with NZEF Form 147 when applicable, the relative invoice for the supply or service rendered. When paid, the voucher, together with the invoice, will be returned to the Unit, and thus be available to support the quarterly Accounts submitted for Audit Board's action.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

REGIMENTAL FUNDS ACCOUNT

Regimental Funds Account

(12) The CO of the Unit is responsible for the proper application of Regimental Funds. He may delegate the responsibility for recording transactions and for the general management of the funds to a subordinate officer or to a Unit Committee. Such delegation however will not relieve the CO of his responsibility for the proper administration and use of the funds.

(13) When a change of duty occurs, and the exigencies of the Service permit, the Officer in Charge of Regimental Funds will write up his accounts to the date of the change, will sign the cash book and will obtain from the incoming officer in Charge of Regimental Funds a receipt for the cash, equipment and books, etc., handed over. The same procedure will be followed when there is a change of CO.

(14) In the event of Regimental Funds Accounts, records, stock, equipment or cash being lost through enemy action or any other cause Commanding Officers will, when necessary, convene Courts of Enquiry to determine the facts. The findings of such Courts of Enquiry will be submitted to the appropriate HQ (i.e., HQ 2 NZEF, HQ 2 NZ Div, or HQ NZ Maadi Camp) for any action that may be necessary. A copy of the findings will be forwarded by the HQ concerned to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF for reference and retention.

(15) Advances to Unit Canteens from Regimental Funds, in order to purchase initial stocks, must be repaid as quickly as possible from Canteen profits as they accrue, thus minimising the risk of Regimental Funds suffering if canteen stocks or cash are lost through any cause.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CASH BOOK AND VOUCHER FILES

Cash Book and Voucher Files

(16) Cash Book and Voucher files will be maintained as part of the accounts.

(17)

- (The Cash Book records particulars of receipts and expenditure. A**
- a) simple specimen page is attached as Appendix 'A'. ¹ Sufficient description should be entered against each payment to disclose fully the nature of the transaction and the relevant voucher referred to by its number.**
- (Additional columns will be inserted on both sides of the Cash Book in**
- b) the case where Units have a current Bank Account, and also columns can be added, if desired, for assembling the same type of transactions (both receipts and payments)—see alternative specimen page, Appendix 'B'. ²**
- (The totals of these columns are then readily available for compiling**
- c) the Summary of Receipts and Payments referred to in [Para \(20\)](#).**

(18)

- (All vouchers supporting payments, e.g., receipted bills, should be**
- a) numbered and filed. These numbers will be entered in the Cash Book against the respective entries.**
- (Vouchers will be initialled by the Officer-in-Charge of the Regimental**
- b) Funds accounts before submission to Unit Audit Boards, and by CO before audit by Audit Branch [2 NZEF](#). Vouchers for messing and other purchases from natives or from the markets in instances where proper receipts are quite unobtainable should be endorsed by the CO or Officer i/c Regimental Funds as follows: 'Above goods have been received, the prices are fair and reasonable, and the money was actually expended.'**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT AND BALANCE SHEET

Receipts and Payments Account and Balance Sheet

(19) Receipts and Payments Account and Balance Sheet will be prepared quarterly for presentation to Unit Audit Board or as required by Audit Branch 2 NZEF.

(20)

- (Receipts and payments account will show in summarised form the a) receipts and payments as entered in the Cash Book.**
- (The account will commence with the balance of cash and the Chief b) Paymaster's account balanced from the last period to which will be added the receipts for the period. On the payments side will appear in summarised form, the payments for the period, the account being finally balanced by the insertion of the cash in hand and Chief Paymaster's credit at the end of the period. See specimen Receipts and Payments Account, Appendix 'C'. ³**

(21) The Balance Sheet should be submitted to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF in its simplest form after being signed by the CO and will show cash and Paymaster's balances and all outstanding amounts due to or from the Regimental Fund. Assets such as equipment need not be valued and included in the Balance Sheet, but a list of such items will accompany the balance sheet, certified by the CO as being in possession of the Unit on the date of the Balance Sheet. A certificate signed by the CO will also be submitted that the cash on hand was verified by inspection. See specimen Balance Sheet, Appendix 'C'.

(22) For the information of the Unit, the CO will, as soon as possible after completion of the quarterly Unit Audit Board action, publish in Routine Orders a Balance Sheet (including a list of assets) and a simple statement of the receipts and payments for the period under review.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

UNIT AUDIT BOARD

Unit Audit Board

(23) Every three months COs will assemble an Audit Board of not fewer than three representatives of all ranks of the Unit to examine the Regimental Funds Account in accordance with para (19).

(24) This Board will examine all vouchers, check entries in Cash Book, satisfy itself that all assets and liabilities required to be shown are in the Balance Sheet and that the cash credits are actually available.

(25) When the Board has completed its Audit it will rule off and certify the cash book.

(26) When the exigencies of the service permit the CO will submit within 21 days of the last day of each quarter to HQ 2 NZEF, HQ 2 NZ Div, or HQ NZ Maadi Camp (whichever is appropriate), a certificate that the Unit Audit Board's action has been duly completed.

(27) After the regular three-monthly audit of the Regimental Funds Accounts, all books of accounts, supporting vouchers and relevant documents will be deposited with Unit Records at NZ Base Kit Sec.

(28) It is also recommended that in the event of a Unit leaving for a field of active operations, Regimental Funds Accounts, etc., should in any case be deposited at the Base. It will be realised that by doing so the possibility of such documents being lost is greatly minimised.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

AUDIT BRANCH 2 NZEF

Audit Branch 2 NZEF

(29) This Branch will from time to time call for the books of the Regimental Funds Account.

(30) All documents laid down in paras (16) to (21) will be prepared and completed up to the date laid down. When asked for they will then be forwarded to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF, those mentioned in paras (20) and (21) being forwarded *in duplicate*.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DISBANDED UNITS

Disbanded Units

(31) The Regimental Fund balances of 2 NZEF Units, which are disbanded, will be paid to Chief Paymaster 2 NZEF, who will hold such balances for general distribution.

(32) Where there are special circumstances, such as the transfer of a considerable number of men from the disbanded unit direct to another unit, the CO of the disbanded unit may make recommendations to HQ 2 NZEF as to the disposal of balances. Action will then be taken as directed by HQ 2 NZEF.

(33) An inventory of Regimental Fund Equipment, etc., held, will be prepared and submitted to HQ 2 NZEF for instructions as to disposal.

(34) Final accounts will be prepared in accordance with the provisions of these Instructions and these, together with supporting documents will be submitted by the OC of the disbanded Unit to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF for Audit.

(35) See also Standing Instructions for 2 NZEF 'Disbandment of Units'.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

UNIT FUNDS OTHER THAN REGIMENTAL FUNDS

Unit Funds other than Regimental Funds

(36) In the case of units which have canteen or other private funds within the unit (as distinct from Regimental Funds) the following instructions will apply.

(37) The CO of a unit will be responsible for the proper application of such unit canteen and other private funds, and he will ensure that proper accounts and records are kept of all transactions.

(38) The CO will institute a frequent check on the cash and stocks held by the canteens, and cause returns of sales and stocks to be submitted to him regularly.

(39) When a change in the management of a canteen occurs, the outgoing committee will prepare accounts to the date of the changeover and the incoming committee will sign a receipt for the cash and stocks taken over.

(40) The CO will every three months appoint a Unit Audit Board of not fewer than three representatives of all ranks of the unit.

(41) The Board will examine all vouchers, check entries in the Cash Book, satisfy itself that all assets and liabilities required to be shown are in the Balance Sheet and that cash credits and stock on hand in canteens are actually available.

(42) When the Board has completed its audit it will submit a report to the CO on the result of the audit.

(43) For the information of the unit, the CO will as soon as possible after completion of the quarterly audit Unit Audit Board action, publish in Routine Orders a Balance Sheet (including a list of stock and assets

on hand), and a simple statement of the receipts and payments for the period under review.

(44) Providing the exigencies of the service permit, the CO will submit within 21 days of the last day of each quarter to HQ 2 NZEF or HQ 2 NZ Div (whichever is appropriate) a certificate that the Unit Audit Board's action has been duly completed.

(45) For the purposes of this Order quarters will end on 31 Mar, 30 Jun, 30 Sep, 31 Dec.

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**Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX XIII – STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF – DISBANDMENT OF UNITS

Appendix XIII

STANDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2 NZEF

Disbandment of Units

(Issued in conjunction with 2 NZEF Orders Serial No. 173 of 1944)

**HQ 2 NZEF
SD 81/25
31 Mar 44**

To

HQ 2 NZEF 'A'

HQ 2 NZEF 'Q'

HQ 2 NZEF 'SD'

MS 2 NZEF

DMS 2 NZEF

Chief Pmr 2 NZEF

2 Ech 2 NZEF

DADOS 2 NZEF

ADPS 2 NZEF

HQ 2 NZ Div (3)

HQ NZ Maadi Camp (6)

ADME 2 NZEF

ADDS 2 NZEF

Adv 2 Ech 2 NZEF

Auditor 2 NZEF (2)

DJAG 2 NZEF

NZ PRS

Official Archives Sec 2 NZEF

(1) Officers of Disbanded Units will be posted in accordance with instructions issued separately by the Military Secretary.

(2) Transfer of OR personnel of the Units concerned will be in accordance with instructions issued by HQ 2 NZEF 'A'.

(3) WOs and NCOs will retain substantive rank.

(4) WEF a date to be fixed by HQ 2 NZEF and to be known as the 'first day of disbandment,' the War Establishment of WOs and NCOs may be completed by making whatever substantive promotions are necessary. No substantive promotions may be made with effect from a date later than the first day of disbandment.

(5) Temporary ranks will be relinquished and ED pay cease WEF whatever date personnel cease to perform the special duties for which higher rank or ED pay was granted, and will in any case cease on the date of official disbandment as notified in 2 NZEF Orders.

(6) OsC Units will consult Offr i/c 2 Ech as to rendering of final returns. All old casualty returns, etc, which are NOT required by 2 Ech will then be destroyed. Other Unit records which are considered to have historical value will then be deposited at NZ Base Kit Sec.

(7) All equipment (except medical), both controlled and non-

controlled will be returned to a New Zealand BOD. Future disposal of this equipment will be as arranged by HQ 2 NZEF 'Q' in conjunction with DADOS, BOD. Details in respect of either of these transactions will be furnished to Chief Pmr 2 NZEF by HQ 2 NZEF 'Q'.

(8) Any medical equipment in possession will be returned to NZ Med Stores Depot.

(9) Courts of Enquiry will be held to enquire into and report on any shortages in G1098 (or I 1248) equipment, or any other equipment or stores held on charge by the unit. Proceedings will be forwarded to HQ 2 NZEF 'Q'.

(10) Regimental Fund Books will be balanced and final accounts prepared. These accounts, as also balance of cash, equipment, sports gear, etc., held by the unit, will be dealt with as outlined in para (23) of Standing Instructions for 2 NZEF 'Regimental Funds' ref Q 77/17 of 12 Jun 43, which reads:

(23)

- (The Regimental Fund balances of 2 NZEF Units, which are disbanded,
a) will be paid to Chief Paymaster 2 NZEF, who will hold such balances for general distribution.
- (In the event of special circumstances arising, such as a considerable
b) number of men being transferred direct to another Unit, other than a Base Depot, then HQ 2 NZEF will be asked by OC disbanded Unit for a direction regarding the disposal of balances.
- (An inventory of Regimental Fund equipment etc., held, will be
c) prepared and submitted to HQ 2 NZEF for instructions as to disposal.
- (Final accounts will be prepared in accordance with the provisions of
d) these instructions, and these, together with supporting documents, will be submitted by the OC of the disbanded Unit to the Audit Branch 2 NZEF for audit.'

(11) Unit censor stamps, Unit Photographers' permits and any other accountable documents will be returned to HQ 2 NZEF.

(12) Assets of Officers' and Serjeants' Messes will be liquidated in a manner to be approved by a formal mess meeting. All debts will be paid.

A certificate will be rendered to HQ 2 NZEF that both these actions have been done.

(13) When all the action set out in paras (1) to (12) above is complete, the CO will report the fact to HQ 2 NZEF, and the unit will be officially disbanded.

**Brigadier,
Officer in Charge Administration 2 NZEF**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

APPENDIX XIV – APPOINTMENTS IN 2 NZEF

Appendix XIV

APPOINTMENTS IN 2 NZEF

Note Where the terminal date of an appointment is not known it has
1. been assumed that the officer held this appointment until it was abolished in the course of the disbandment of **2 NZEF**.

Note In some cases the official title of an appointment was changed
2. at various periods, and duties were rearranged from time to time.

Note Until about September 1940, **2 NZEF** duties were carried out by
3. the appropriate member of the staff of the New Zealand Division.

General Officer Commanding

Lt-Gen Sir Bernard Freyberg (promoted Lieutenant-General 1 Mar 1942)	22 Nov 1939–22 Nov 1945
Maj-Gen W. G. Stevens	22 Nov 1945–28 Feb 1946

Officer in Charge of Administration

Brig W. G. Stevens (promoted Brigadier 4 Jun 1941)	1 Oct 1940–6 Aug 1943
Brig N. W. McD. Weir	6 Aug 1943–22 Nov 1943
Brig W. G. Stevens (promoted Major-General 17 Oct 1945)	22 Nov 1943–21 Nov 1945

Appointment subsequently merged with that of GOC **2 NZEF**.

Assistant Adjutant-General

Lt-Col S. M. Satterthwaite	11 Aug 1941–18 Oct 1941
Maj R. G. C. McNab	16 Oct 1942–7 Dec 1942
Maj A. J. Crisp	7 Dec 1942–23 Feb 1943
Lt-Col H. E. Crosse (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 1 Apr 1943)	23 Feb 1943–12 Dec 1943
Lt-Col R. P. R. McGlashan	12 Dec 1943–10 Jan 1944

Lt-Col H. E. Crosse	10 Jan 1944–9 Apr 1944
Lt-Col R. P. R. McGlashan	9 Apr 1944–25 May 1944
Lt-Col A. E. B. Burge	25 May 1944–5 Jul 1945
Lt-Col J. Brooke-White	5 Jul 1945 to disbandment

Assistant Quartermaster-General

Lt-Col A. S. Muir	16 Oct 1942–10 Feb 1943
Maj A. J. Crisp	23 Feb 1943–23 May 1943
Lt-Col A. S. Muir	23 May 1943–24 Sep 1943
Lt-Col J. C. Holmes	26 Sep 1943–10 Jan 1944
Lt-Col A. S. Muir	24 Jan 1944–16 Feb 1944
Maj G. H. Panckhurst	20 Feb 1944–31 Mar 1944
Lt-Col A. S. Muir	31 Mar 1944–24 Sep 1944
Lt-Col C. C. Marsack	24 Sep 1944–30 May 1945
Lt-Col B. R. Bullot	3 Jun 1945–17 Oct 1945
Maj J. A. Maich	17 Oct 1945 to disbandment

Special Assistant to Officer in Charge of Administration

(under several titles, including Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General and General Staff Officer III (Staff Duties))

Capt A. C. Highet	3 Feb 1941–31 Jul 1943
(promoted Lieutenant 1 Oct 1941; Captain 21 Feb 1942)	

Military Secretary

Col Sir Stephen Allen	6 Mar 1940–12 Jul 1941
Lt-Col L. F. Rudd	12 Jul 1941–7 Aug 1943
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 18 Oct 1941)	
Maj P. D. Hall	7 Aug 1943–23 Nov 1943
Lt-Col L. F. Rudd	23 Nov 1943–25 Mar 1944
Lt-Col R. P. R. McGlashan	25 Mar 1944–8 Sep 1945
Lt-Col W. C. Savage	8 Sep 1945 to disbandment

Deputy Judge Advocate-General

Lt-Col C. A. L. Treadwell (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 2 Aug 1941)	Dec 1939–2 Apr 1942
Lt-Col C. B. Barrowclough (promoted Major 1 May 1942; Lieutenant-Colonel 2 Apr 1943)	2 Apr 1942–9 May 1945
Maj W. C. Wylie	9 May 1945–10 Oct 1945
Maj T. P. McCarthy	10 Oct 1945–22 Jan 1946

Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General, 2 Echelon

Maj W. H. Alexander (promoted Major 1 Oct 1940)	13 Mar 1940–12 May 1941
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Assistant Adjutant-General, 2 Echelon

Lt-Col W. H. Alexander	12 May 1941–18 Apr 1943
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Officer in Charge 2 Echelon

Lt-Col W. H. Alexander	18 Apr 1943–21 Nov 1943
Lt-Col H. E. Crosse	12 Dec 1943–10 Jan 1944
Lt-Col A. E. B. Burge	22 Feb 1944–25 May 1944
Lt-Col D. G. Morrison (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 11 Jun 1944)	2 Jun 1944–13 Aug 1945
Lt-Col G. W. Foote	13 Aug 1945 to disbandment

Paymaster

Lt-Col F. Prideaux	1 Oct 1940–1 Jul 1941
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Chief Paymaster and Financial Adviser

Col F. Prideaux	1 Jul 1941–4 Jun 1943
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(promoted Colonel 26 Apr 1942)

Lt-Col J. S. Martin	4 Jun 1943–13 Oct 1943
Col F. Prideaux	13 Oct 1943–1 May 1945
Lt-Col R. B. Whitehead	1 May 1945 to disbandment

Chief Auditor

Hon. Lt-Col H. C. Steere (promoted Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel 24 Mar 1942)	1 May 1941–4 Aug 1945
Hon. Maj R. Ward	4 Aug 1945 to disbandment

Public Relations Officer

Hon. Capt J. H. Hall	6 Mar 1941–18 May 1941
Lt W. G. Lovie	16 Jun 1941–9 Sep 1941
Maj M. S. Carrie	9 Sep 1941–4 Jun 1943
Capt E. G. Webber	21 Aug 1943–10 Feb 1945
Capt G. L. Weir	10 Feb 1945 to disbandment

Archivist

Capt E. H. Halstead (promoted Captain 1 Sep 1941)	10 Feb 1941–4 Jun 1943
Lt E. H. McCormick	18 Aug 1943–3 Jun 1944
Maj E. H. Halstead (promoted Major 23 Sep 1944)	3 Jun 1944–1 Jan 1945
Lt W. G. McClymont (promoted Lieutenant 13 Aug 1945)	1 Jan 1945–20 Dec 1945

Assistant Director of Education and Rehabilitation Service

Lt-Col R. B. Schulze (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 1 Apr 1945)	Dec 1943–25 Oct 1945
Lt-Col C. H. Williams	25 Oct 1945–29 Dec 1945

Overseas Commissioner National Patriotic Fund Board

Col F. Waite Jun 1940–May 1946
(promoted Colonel 4 Jul 1944)

(Brig A. S. Falconer replaced Colonel Waite during his absence on furlough and later while he was on duty in the **United Kingdom**.)

Deputy Director of Medical Services

Brig K. MacCormick 10 Oct 1940–8 Apr 1942
(promoted Brigadier 26 Jun 1941)

Director of Medical Services

Brig K. MacCormick	8 Apr 1942–10 May 1942
Brig H. S. Kenrick	10 May 1942–18 Sep 1942
Brig K. MacCormick	18 Sep 1942–17 Apr 1943
Brig H. S. Kenrick	17 Apr 1943–22 May 1945
Brig G. W. Gower	22 May 1945–11 Oct 1945

(promoted Brigadier 1 Jun 1945)

Deputy Director of Medical Services

Col F. B. Edmundson 11 Oct 1945 to disbandment

Matron-in-Chief

Miss E. M. Nutsey 19 Dec 1940–22 Nov 1943

Principal Matron

Miss E. C. Mackay 22 Nov 1943–2 Jun 1945
Miss M. Chisholm 2 Jun 1945–7 Dec 1945
Miss I. MacKinnon 12 Dec 1945 to disbandment

Assistant Director of Dental Services

Lt-Col J. F. Fuller 1 Oct 1940–4 Jun 1943

(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 26 Jul 1941)
Lt-Col W. G. Middlemass 4 Jun 1943–1 Mar 1944
Lt-Col J. F. Fuller 1 Mar 1944–4 Oct 1944
Lt-Col D. W. Earle 4 Oct 1944–11 Dec 1945

Senior Chaplain to the Forces

Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard 1 May 1940–2 Mar 1942
Rev. J. W. McKenzie 3 Mar 1942–30 Apr 1944
Rev. G. A. D. Spence 30 Apr 1944–16 Oct 1945
Rev. H. G. Taylor 16 Oct 1945–18 Jan 1946

Chief Postal Officer

Capt J. H. Shelker 5 Jan 1940–27 Oct 1941

(promoted Lieutenant 26 Aug 1940; Captain 26 Sep 1940)

Assistant Director of Postal Services

Maj A. V. Knapp 27 Oct 1941–8 Jan 1944
(promoted Major 1 Apr 1942)
Maj H. S. Harbott 8 Jan 1944–27 Mar 1944
Lt-Col A. V. Knapp 27 Mar 1944–15 Feb 1945
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 1 Aug 1944)
Maj W. H. McClure 15 Feb 1945 to disbandment

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services

Col T. J. King 1 Jan 1941–10 Jul 1942
(promoted Colonel 1 Aug 1941)

(Lt-Col A. H. Andrews was appointed Officer in Charge NZOC 2 NZEF in addition to his appointment as ADOS 2 NZ Division, 10 Jul–1 Dec 1942)

Assistant Director of Ordnance Services

Lt-Col J. O. Kelsey	10 Jul 1942–27 Mar 1944
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 10 Sep 1942)	
Lt-Col D. E. Harper	27 Mar 1944–1 Oct 1944
Lt-Col J. O. Kelsey	1 Oct 1944–14 Aug 1945
Lt-Col E. G. Lewis	14 Aug 1945–1 Sep 1945

Commander Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Lt-Col A. H. Andrews	1 Dec 1942–4 Jun 1943
Lt-Col N. L. W. Uniacke	4 Jun 1943–19 Jul 1944
Lt-Col A. H. Andrews	19 Jul 1944–11 Sep 1945
Lt-Col E. D. McWha	11 Sep 1945–15 Jan 1946

Commandant 2 NZEF Base

Brig N. S. Falla Feb 1940–4 Jun 1941

Commandant Maadi Camp

Brig A. S. Falconer	10 Jun 1941–11 Aug 1942
Brig W. G. Stevens	11 Aug 1942–9 Feb 1943
Brig G. B. Parkinson	9 Feb 1943–13 Mar 1943
Brig W. G. Stevens	13 Mar 1943–6 Aug 1943
Brig N. W. McD. Weir	6 Aug 1943–5 Aug 1944
Brig W. G. Gentry	5 Aug 1944–10 Feb 1945
Brig J. M. Mitchell	10 Feb 1945–10 Jul 1945
Brig G. B. Parkinson	10 Jul 1945–9 Nov 1945
Brig J. M. Mitchell	9 Nov 1945–20 Jan 1946
Lt-Col J. C. Porter	20 Jan 1946 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING

General Officer Commanding

Lt-Gen Sir Bernard Freyberg	22 Nov 1939–22 Nov 1945
(promoted Lieutenant-General 1 Mar 1942)	
Maj-Gen W. G. Stevens	22 Nov 1945–28 Feb 1946

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTRATION

Officer in Charge of Administration

Brig W. G. Stevens (promoted Brigadier 4 Jun 1941)	1 Oct 1940–6 Aug 1943
Brig N. W. McD. Weir	6 Aug 1943–22 Nov 1943
Brig W. G. Stevens (promoted Major-General 17 Oct 1945)	22 Nov 1943–21 Nov 1945

Appointment subsequently merged with that of GOC 2 NZEF.

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL

Assistant Adjutant-General

Lt-Col S. M. Satterthwaite	11 Aug 1941–18 Oct 1941
Maj R. G. C. McNab	16 Oct 1942–7 Dec 1942
Maj A. J. Crisp	7 Dec 1942–23 Feb 1943
Lt-Col H. E. Crosse	23 Feb 1943–12 Dec 1943
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 1 Apr 1943)	
Lt-Col R. P. R. McGlashan	12 Dec 1943–10 Jan 1944
Lt-Col H. E. Crosse	10 Jan 1944–9 Apr 1944
Lt-Col R. P. R. McGlashan	9 Apr 1944–25 May 1944
Lt-Col A. E. B. Burge	25 May 1944–5 Jul 1945
Lt-Col J. Brooke-White	5 Jul 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL

Assistant Quartermaster-General

Lt-Col A. S. Muir	16 Oct 1942–10 Feb 1943
Maj A. J. Crisp	23 Feb 1943–23 May 1943
Lt-Col A. S. Muir	23 May 1943–24 Sep 1943
Lt-Col J. C. Holmes	26 Sep 1943–10 Jan 1944
Lt-Col A. S. Muir	24 Jan 1944–16 Feb 1944
Maj G. H. Panckhurst	20 Feb 1944–31 Mar 1944
Lt-Col A. S. Muir	31 Mar 1944–24 Sep 1944
Lt-Col C. C. Marsack	24 Sep 1944–30 May 1945
Lt-Col B. R. Bullot	3 Jun 1945–17 Oct 1945
Maj J. A. Maich	17 Oct 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTRATION

Special Assistant to Officer in Charge of Administration

(under several titles, including Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General and General Staff Officer III (Staff Duties))

Capt A. C. Highet

**3 Feb 1941–31 Jul
1943**

**(promoted Lieutenant 1 Oct 1941; Captain 21 Feb
1942)**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MILITARY SECRETARY

Military Secretary

Col Sir Stephen Allen	6 Mar 1940–12 Jul 1941
Lt-Col L. F. Rudd (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 18 Oct 1941)	12 Jul 1941–7 Aug 1943
Maj P. D. Hall	7 Aug 1943–23 Nov 1943
Lt-Col L. F. Rudd	23 Nov 1943–25 Mar 1944
Lt-Col R. P. R. McGlashan	25 Mar 1944–8 Sep 1945
Lt-Col W. C. Savage	8 Sep 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DEPUTY JUDGE ADVOCATE-GENERAL

Deputy Judge Advocate-General

Lt-Col C. A. L. Treadwell (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 2 Aug 1941)	Dec 1939–2 Apr 1942
Lt-Col C. B. Barrowclough (promoted Major 1 May 1942; Lieutenant-Colonel 2 Apr 1943)	2 Apr 1942–9 May 1945
Maj W. C. Wylie	9 May 1945–10 Oct 1945
Maj T. P. McCarthy	10 Oct 1945–22 Jan 1946

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL, 2 ECHELON

Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General, 2 Echelon

Maj W. H. Alexander **13 Mar 1940–12 May 1941**
(promoted Major 1 Oct 1940)

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT-GENERAL, 2 ECHELON

Assistant Adjutant-General, 2 Echelon

Lt-Col W. H. Alexander 12 May 1941–18 Apr 1943

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

OFFICER IN CHARGE 2 ECHELON

Officer in Charge 2 Echelon

Lt-Col W. H. Alexander	18 Apr 1943–21 Nov 1943
Lt-Col H. E. Crosse	12 Dec 1943–10 Jan 1944
Lt-Col A. E. B. Burge	22 Feb 1944–25 May 1944
Lt-Col D. G. Morrison	2 Jun 1944–13 Aug 1945
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 11 Jun 1944)	
Lt-Col G. W. Foote	13 Aug 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PAYMASTER

Paymaster

Lt-Col F. Prideaux 1 Oct 1940–1 Jul 1941

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHIEF PAYMASTER AND FINANCIAL ADVISER

Chief Paymaster and Financial Adviser

Col F. Prideaux	1 Jul 1941–4 Jun 1943
(promoted Colonel 26 Apr 1942)	
Lt-Col J. S. Martin	4 Jun 1943–13 Oct 1943
Col F. Prideaux	13 Oct 1943–1 May 1945
Lt-Col R. B. Whitehead	1 May 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHIEF AUDITOR

Chief Auditor

Hon. Lt-Col H. C. Steere (promoted Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel 24 Mar 1942)	1 May 1941–4 Aug 1945
Hon. Maj R. Ward	4 Aug 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

Public Relations Officer

Hon. Capt J. H. Hall	6 Mar 1941–18 May 1941
Lt W. G. Lovie	16 Jun 1941–9 Sep 1941
Maj M. S. Carrie	9 Sep 1941–4 Jun 1943
Capt E. G. Webber	21 Aug 1943–10 Feb 1945
Capt G. L. Weir	10 Feb 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ARCHIVIST

Archivist

Capt E. H. Halstead (promoted Captain 1 Sep 1941)	10 Feb 1941–4 Jun 1943
Lt E. H. McCormick	18 Aug 1943–3 Jun 1944
Maj E. H. Halstead (promoted Major 23 Sep 1944)	3 Jun 1944–1 Jan 1945
Lt W. G. McClymont (promoted Lieutenant 13 Aug 1945)	1 Jan 1945–20 Dec 1945

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION SERVICE

Assistant Director of Education and Rehabilitation Service

Lt-Col R. B. Schulze **Dec 1943–25 Oct 1945**
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 1 Apr 1945)

Lt-Col C. H. Williams **25 Oct 1945–29 Dec 1945**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

OVERSEAS COMMISSIONER NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD

Overseas Commissioner National Patriotic Fund Board

Col F. Waite

Jun 1940–May 1946

(promoted Colonel 4 Jul 1944)

(Brig A. S. Falconer replaced Colonel Waite during his absence on furlough and later while he was on duty in the **United Kingdom.)**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

Deputy Director of Medical Services

Brig K. MacCormick **10 Oct 1940–8 Apr 1942**
(promoted Brigadier 26 Jun 1941)

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

Director of Medical Services

Brig K. MacCormick	8 Apr 1942–10 May 1942
Brig H. S. Kenrick	10 May 1942–18 Sep 1942
Brig K. MacCormick	18 Sep 1942–17 Apr 1943
Brig H. S. Kenrick	17 Apr 1943–22 May 1945
Brig G. W. Gower	22 May 1945–11 Oct 1945
(promoted Brigadier 1 Jun 1945)	

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

Deputy Director of Medical Services

Col F. B. Edmundson 11 Oct 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

MATRON-IN-CHIEF

Matron-in-Chief

Miss E. M. Nutsey 19 Dec 1940–22 Nov 1943

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

PRINCIPAL MATRON

Principal Matron

Miss E. C. Mackay 22 Nov 1943–2 Jun 1945

Miss M. Chisholm 2 Jun 1945–7 Dec 1945

Miss I. MacKinnon 12 Dec 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DENTAL SERVICES

Assistant Director of Dental Services

Lt-Col J. F. Fuller	1 Oct 1940–4 Jun 1943
(promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 26 Jul 1941)	
Lt-Col W. G. Middlemass	4 Jun 1943–1 Mar 1944
Lt-Col J. F. Fuller	1 Mar 1944–4 Oct 1944
Lt-Col D. W. Earle	4 Oct 1944–11 Dec 1945

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

SENIOR CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES

Senior Chaplain to the Forces

Rt. Rev. G. V. Gerard 1 May 1940–2 Mar 1942

Rev. J. W. McKenzie 3 Mar 1942–30 Apr 1944

Rev. G. A. D. Spence 30 Apr 1944–16 Oct 1945

Rev. H. G. Taylor 16 Oct 1945–18 Jan 1946

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

CHIEF POSTAL OFFICER

Chief Postal Officer

Capt J. H. Shelker

**5 Jan 1940–27 Oct
1941**

**(promoted Lieutenant 26 Aug 1940; Captain 26
Sep 1940)**

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF POSTAL SERVICES

Assistant Director of Postal Services

Maj A. V. Knapp (promoted Major 1 Apr 1942)	27 Oct 1941–8 Jan 1944
Maj H. S. Harbott	8 Jan 1944–27 Mar 1944
Lt-Col A. V. Knapp (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 1 Aug 1944)	27 Mar 1944–15 Feb 1945
Maj W. H. McClure	15 Feb 1945 to disbandment

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ORDNANCE SERVICES

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services

Col T. J. King

1 Jan 1941–10 Jul 1942

(promoted Colonel 1 Aug 1941)

(Lt-Col A. H. Andrews was appointed Officer in Charge NZOC 2 NZEF in addition to his appointment as ADOS 2 NZ Division, 10 Jul–1 Dec 1942)

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ORDNANCE SERVICES

Assistant Director of Ordnance Services

Lt-Col J. O. Kelsey (promoted Lieutenant-Colonel 10 Sep 1942)	10 Jul 1942–27 Mar 1944
Lt-Col D. E. Harper	27 Mar 1944–1 Oct 1944
Lt-Col J. O. Kelsey	1 Oct 1944–14 Aug 1945
Lt-Col E. G. Lewis	14 Aug 1945–1 Sep 1945

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COMMANDER ROYAL ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

Commander Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Lt-Col A. H. Andrews	1 Dec 1942–4 Jun 1943
Lt-Col N. L. W. Uniacke	4 Jun 1943–19 Jul 1944
Lt-Col A. H. Andrews	19 Jul 1944–11 Sep 1945
Lt-Col E. D. McWha	11 Sep 1945–15 Jan 1946

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COMMANDANT 2 NZEF BASE

Commandant 2 NZEF Base

Brig N. S. Falla Feb 1940–4 Jun 1941

PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

COMMANDANT MAADI CAMP

Commandant Maadi Camp

Brig A. S. Falconer	10 Jun 1941–11 Aug 1942
Brig W. G. Stevens	11 Aug 1942–9 Feb 1943
Brig G. B. Parkinson	9 Feb 1943–13 Mar 1943
Brig W. G. Stevens	13 Mar 1943–6 Aug 1943
Brig N. W. McD. Weir	6 Aug 1943–5 Aug 1944
Brig W. G. Gentry	5 Aug 1944–10 Feb 1945
Brig J. M. Mitchell	10 Feb 1945–10 Jul 1945
Brig G. B. Parkinson	10 Jul 1945–9 Nov 1945
Brig J. M. Mitchell	9 Nov 1945–20 Jan 1946
Lt-Col J. C. Porter	20 Jan 1946 to disbandment

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PROBLEMS OF 2 NZEF

[BACKMATTER]

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