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**Images and Identity:  
The Demonstration of New Zealand's National Identity through the  
Propaganda of the Second World War**

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Arts in History

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## Introduction

Propaganda reached its full potential as a powerful wartime tool during the Second World War. WWII was both a total war that drew civilians into the conflict and a battle of ideologies where democracy and fascism fought for domination. This, combined with the fact that mass media such as radio and cinema had become significant, made propaganda one of the central home front concerns for wartime governments. This applied not only to the major nations at the forefront of the war, but also those – such as New Zealand – whose home fronts were on the periphery of the conflict. The emphasis that was given to the production and circulation of propaganda makes the material an important tool for historians who have come to acknowledge wartime propaganda as an important lens through which to assess the attitudes and trends of both governments and societies.

Although each nation followed similar patterns, they produced distinct trends and themes which reflect how each country perceived itself and the war it was fighting. Much of the propaganda of Commonwealth states, largely unthreatened by overseas fighting, remains unexamined as an indicator of the nations' perceptions of themselves and their war. There has never been an attempt to illuminate New Zealand's sense of national identity – which by 1939 was well-developed – during WWII through its propaganda material. Through an examination of both the propaganda material itself and the archival documents surrounding its creation and dissemination, I aim to determine the extent to which New Zealand had a sense of a distinct wartime experience.

This research is of significant scholarly value for a number of reasons, most notably because the propaganda of WWII New Zealand has never received in-depth attention from the nation's historians. I have detailed the existing historiography in the following literature review; suffice to say it is scarce. It is not enough to cover propaganda briefly within more general analyses of the home front or histories of the New Zealand media industries; the breadth and depth of the archival material cannot be fully explored in this setting. Nor is it sufficient to cover propaganda in the First World War and assume the same conclusions can be drawn about the WWII material. The shift that occurred between the World Wars with regard to New Zealand's relationship to Britain and status as a dominion was significant, something often examined by historians. The move towards independence – which was solidified just after WWII with the adoption of the Statute of Westminster in 1947 – was speeding up in the interwar period, and a significant study of New Zealand's WWII propaganda can exhibit this in a new way. The New Zealand government's management of its own propaganda, carefully attuned to the nation's population, demonstrates the growing sense of independence from Britain in a way that can be a valuable addition to any broader history of New Zealand's empire status in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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‘Propaganda’ is a term that conjures strong images and reactions, yet is difficult to succinctly define. Most often, the term has negative connotations, stemming from the vulgar falsehoods of WWI atrocity propaganda as well as the frighteningly successful campaigns of Nazi Germany and the spectre of their creator, Joseph Goebbels<sup>1</sup>. Yet the historical study of any propaganda – especially that of WWII – needs to rest on a much more solid theoretical foundation than pop culture perceptions. Therefore, in this thesis I have turned to historians of war culture and media/communications experts to guide my definition of what propaganda is. From this theoretical base I have made my own decisions as to what falls within the realms of this study of New Zealand propaganda based on the activities of the various groups responsible for its output during WWII and how the people involved defined their job. Because of this I have included not only ‘traditional’ kinds of propaganda (posters, radio advertisements, pamphlets, etc.) but also what is better labelled ‘publicity’ – less direct methods that circulated government-sanctioned information and ideas around the country to keep the war effort at the forefront of people’s minds, without directly telling them what they should or should not do or think.

The term ‘propaganda’ has undergone a number of alterations in interpretation by historians and media scholars. The term has ecclesiastical origins and propaganda has been present to some extent in warfare throughout history<sup>2</sup>, but it was during WWI - the first true total war, where citizens were not removed from the war effort – that it emerged as we know it today<sup>3</sup>. The growth of mass media and the ‘communications revolution’ of the 20<sup>th</sup> century meant that the flow of information among the military and civilians became crucial during wartime to preserve morale<sup>4</sup>. Due to the new sophistication of the media and methods of WWII propaganda, this period’s material is the most studied and dissected amongst scholars of the subject, and there is a plethora of work discussing the various definitions of propaganda. As a theoretical base for this thesis, I have extracted the central ideas from the comprehensive literature: strategic planning, a desire to change or enforce points of view, and the propagandist’s agenda<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Philip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>2</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda: Power and Persuasion*, London: The British Library, 2013, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> David Welch, ‘Opening Pandora’s Box’: Propaganda, Power and Persuasion’ in David Welch (ed.), *Propaganda, Power and Persuasion*, London: I.B. Tauris & Co, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> P. Taylor, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> The definitions I extracted these key ideas from are: ‘...the deliberate attempt to influence public opinion through the transmission of ideas and values, for a specific persuasive purpose that has been consciously thought out and designed to serve the self-interest of the propagandist.’ (Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 2); ‘...strategically devised messages that are disseminated to masses of people by an institution for the purpose of generating action benefitting its source.’ (Shawn J. Parry-Giles qtd in Garth Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, California: Sage, 2012, p. 5); ‘...the deliberate attempt to persuade people to think and behave in a desired way.’ (P. Taylor, p. 6); ‘...the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist’ (Jowett and O’Donnell, p. 7). Jowett and O’Donnell dissect their definition in great detail over 11 pages; I did not deem it necessary to break my definition down this minutely.

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I have coalesced these ideas into a broad definition for the purpose of this thesis: propaganda is the deliberate and strategic dissemination of information and ideas in an attempt to move people to think and act in a way that furthers the desires and aims of the creator. Anthony R. Pratkanis and Marlene E. Turner would add that propaganda uses ‘simple images and slogans’ that ‘play on prejudices and emotions’<sup>6</sup>, which often applies to ‘traditional’ propaganda such as posters and radio advertisements but is not applicable more widely to material I have examined such as fictional films or window displays. Leo Bogart asserts that propaganda is an art, not a science – it is ‘not a mechanical, scientific work...no manual can guide the propagandist’<sup>7</sup>. This may not only account for the term’s nebulous definition, but also indicates that propaganda is a complex business, a medium which can take many forms from the blunt instructions of posters to the subtle suggestion hidden in popular entertainment, all of which must somehow tap into the collective consciousness of a wartime population. Propaganda is not simply an effort at persuasion, although this is an often-present element. Rather than trying to change the minds of the masses, however, propaganda more often aims to reinforce and sharpen already existing beliefs<sup>8</sup>. As Aldous Huxley, writing in 1936, put it: “The propagandist is a man (who) canalises an already existing stream; in a land where there is no water, he digs in vain.”<sup>9</sup> In his book *Munitions of the Mind* Philip Taylor provides a metaphorical definition which encompasses the basic purpose of total war propaganda: “For the smoke to rise, there must first be a spark which lights the flame. Propaganda is that spark.”<sup>10</sup>

It is also important to recognise common misconceptions about propaganda in order to broaden the view of what does and does not belong in this study. By far the most common of these is that all propaganda is bad. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell point out that people often see propaganda as synonymous with lies, distortion, manipulation and brainwashing<sup>11</sup>, while Taylor emphasises that it is ‘when propaganda is employed in the service of violence...that we begin to mistrust it’<sup>12</sup>. It is true that propaganda has historically been used to fuel violent fear and hatred through deception<sup>13</sup>. However, as propaganda evolved it became evident that facts and credible arguments – material as close as desirable to the ‘whole truth’ – was the most effective<sup>14</sup>, and by WWII it was realised that the truth, used selectively when positive, was an equally powerful tool to

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<sup>6</sup> Anthony R. Pratkanis and Marlene E. Turner ‘Persuasion and Democracy: Strategies for Increasing Deliberative Participation and Social Change’, *Journal of Social Issues* 52:1 (1996), p. 190.

<sup>7</sup> Qtd in Jowett and O’Donnell, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Welch, ‘Opening Pandora’s Box’, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Qtd in Welch, ‘Opening Pandora’s Box’, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> P. Taylor, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Jowett and O’Donnell, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> P. Taylor, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Welch, ‘Opening Pandora’s Box’, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> P. Taylor, p. 15.

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propagandists, as people cannot live on ‘an undiluted diet of bad news’<sup>15</sup>. Therefore the selection of facts to broadcast, to censor, and to present in a certain way to communicate the right message was, by WWII, an as big – if not bigger – part of the propagandist’s job than fabrication. As this thesis will show, this was clearly the case in New Zealand at the time; a clipping from the *Listener* asserted in 1941 that the ‘positive propaganda’ of British pamphlets was a ‘tonic’ to the German propaganda that was ‘devoted to fakes’<sup>16</sup>.

Aside from deception, the other ‘negative’ aspect commonly ascribed to propaganda is hate-mongering, such as the use of derogatory stereotypes. This was still rampant in WWII propaganda – racial caricatures of the Japanese were common in American material (a trend that bled into Australian material but not to New Zealand’s<sup>17</sup>), and obviously much Nazi propaganda was hateful in nature. However, equally visible in WWII propaganda were ‘positive’ images, such as smiling soldiers and women ‘doing their bit’ in the home or factory. These images were the norm in New Zealand material, with little ‘negative’ propaganda being circulated by the government. To define propaganda negatively is therefore to exclude as much as is included, even in the midst of an era when ‘negative’ propaganda was common. As Taylor points out, the analyst of propaganda must be objective in their judgements<sup>18</sup>.

The most common way in which propaganda can be categorised is as black, white or grey. This categorisation was discussed by Jacques Ellul<sup>19</sup> and more recently was identified as the main form of classification by both David Welch<sup>20</sup> and Jowett and O’Donnell<sup>21</sup>; Taylor also introduces the idea of black propaganda specifically in relation to WWII propaganda<sup>22</sup>. Black propaganda is the stereotypical ‘negative’ propaganda; it encompasses the ‘big lie’ and material where the source is falsified<sup>23</sup>. Black or ‘covert’ propaganda is normally presented as originating from a source other than its own and can be difficult to identify<sup>24</sup>. It commonly takes the form of material presented in an enemy or neutral country that appears to originate from within that country and presents distorted facts or lies to damage morale. Black propaganda was not a feature of New Zealand’s propaganda in WWII, if only because of the vast distance from enemy nations, but it did feature in the British campaign, the material and general methods of which were used by New Zealand.

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<sup>15</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 34.

<sup>16</sup> ‘British Propaganda’, *The Listener*, 20 June 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 2.

<sup>17</sup> Stephanie Gibson, ‘Display Folk: Second World War Posters at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa’, *Tuhinga* 19 (2008), p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> P. Taylor, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men’s Attitudes*, New York: Vintage Books, 1973, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 32.

<sup>21</sup> Jowett and O’Donnell, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> P. Taylor, p. 225.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> P. Taylor, p. 18.

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New Zealand's campaign was instead made up mostly of white propaganda. White propaganda comes from an identifiable source and tends to be accurate, preferring to omit unpleasant truths rather than lie. It is normally presented openly by a government agency and presents what is essentially true in a way that is slanted in favour of those who produce it, presenting the propagandist as trustworthy and reliable, with right and just ideas<sup>25</sup>. The creator aims to build credibility with the audience in order to better instil and inspire the desired beliefs and actions<sup>26</sup>. This was a central tenet of New Zealand's propaganda campaigns, as the material was distributed by the government and attempted to use facts about New Zealand's war production to motivate people to get involved or increase their effort.

Grey propaganda is, unsurprisingly, a mix of black and white. The source may be unidentified rather than lied about, and facts may be more distorted than in white but not completely fabricated as in black. In grey propaganda it is often difficult if not impossible to verify the information, which may be exaggerated or full of omission<sup>27</sup>. Grey propaganda often attempts to disguise its status as propaganda by presenting itself as news or entertainment without outright lying about its origin. This is not necessarily to trick people, as in black propaganda, but to make people who may be resistant to outright white propaganda more receptive<sup>28</sup>. Fictional films that carry a biased message can be considered grey propaganda, as they are presented as entertainment while still attempting to influence the audience's thinking and behaviour. The British film industry under the Ministry of Information (MOI) was highly skilled at making these sorts of films during WWII, and many of these were screened in New Zealand under the guidance of the Department of Publicity. New Zealand's material was dominated by white material, influenced by Britain's move towards it<sup>29</sup>; the Department of Publicity was prepared to use grey propaganda when necessary, but black material was seldom used.

When defining propaganda and its types it is also necessary to consider the place of censorship. Censorship is the twin of propaganda, in that it is also focussed on the flow of information and manipulation of opinion to benefit the censor<sup>30</sup>. More accurately, it is the inverse form of propaganda, in that it creates holes that are then often filled by propaganda. Propaganda rarely tells the whole truth, and so it must be linked to censorship<sup>31</sup>; it is almost impossible for even white,

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<sup>25</sup>Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 36.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 17, 36.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 37; Jowett and O'Donnell, p. 20.

<sup>28</sup>Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 37.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>30</sup>P. Taylor, p. 10.

<sup>31</sup>P. Taylor, p. 10

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mostly truthful propaganda to exist without censorship<sup>32</sup>. A document issued by the Organisation for National Security labelled 'General Instructions Relating to Censorship and Publicity', dated September 1938, asserted that 'this purely negative action [censorship] cannot be dissociated from the positive action of disseminating useful information to our own people'; this document uses the words 'positive' and 'negative' not to mean good and bad, but rather presence and absence<sup>33</sup>. In a study of New Zealand propaganda the links between propaganda and censorship are even more explicit, as the Director of Publicity also held the role of Chief Censor.

Although 'publicity' is not identified as an aspect of propaganda by most scholars, I have chosen to address it within the New Zealand context as another form of propaganda. Those producing and circulating the material do not seem to have made any significant distinction between 'propaganda' and 'publicity'; they used the term 'propaganda' as frequently as they did 'publicity' and with no negative connotations<sup>34</sup>. Because the Department of Publicity handled both censorship and propaganda, it essentially had control over the nation's media – including not only such typical propaganda as the distribution of posters and the writing of radio speeches, but also determining which photos and newsreels would be presented to the public in newspapers and cinemas. The Department was also responsible for the circulation of photo blocks for publication in newspapers and the distribution of window displays for shopfronts. These kinds of material could arguably fall slightly outside the definition of propaganda, as there was often not as implicit a message as in true propaganda. However, the vast majority of material controlled by the Department of Publicity was circulated to keep morale up and ensure that the war effort was always on people's minds, and Taylor argues that the type of medium delivering the message does not matter – it is the intent that makes propaganda<sup>35</sup>. Giving newspapers the photos they were to publish and asking stores to put carefully crafted displays in their windows was intended to publicise the war in a way that would benefit the government, and this intention puts the publicity material firmly in the realm of propaganda. This, combined with the fact that there is a wealth of archive material on this kind of publicity, justifies my decision to include such material in my thesis.

This question of scope is one I have given careful consideration to. Although this research is focussed on propaganda material disseminated in New Zealand, I have not limited this study to material produced in New Zealand. Instead, I have included any propaganda or publicity that was officially circulated by the New Zealand government for consumption by the New Zealand public. This

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<sup>32</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> Organisation for National Security, O.N.S. 89, Copy No. 6, September 1938. C1 196, 41/9.

<sup>34</sup> Letter from Secretary to Paul, 12 November 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1; letter from Gilmour of Realtone Talkies to Paul, 13 March 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7; minutes, 11 November 1940, PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>35</sup> P. Taylor, p. 7.

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includes a great deal of British material, as well as a significant amount of Australian material and small samples of material from Canada and South Africa. Aside from the considerable limitations of focussing only on material produced in New Zealand – this was a relatively small percentage of the propaganda used in New Zealand – examining overseas propaganda allows the research to analyse the extent to which New Zealand had its own wartime identity by comparing the use of local material to that received from other nations.

The other significant decision I made regarding scope was to exclude recruitment material and focus exclusively on propaganda aimed at the home front. This was mostly for practical reasons. Firstly, recruitment material was handled by the armed forces, rather than the Publicity Department, and was abandoned when conscription was introduced by the National Service Emergency Regulations in 1940<sup>36</sup>. I also felt that there was too much discrepancy in the intentions behind recruitment and home front propaganda to examine both, and that material aimed at those at home was more suited to my analysis as it was more likely to include nuanced attitudes towards nation and empire than straightforward recruitment propaganda.

This thesis, then, will examine the way in which the New Zealand government selected, produced, and disseminated propaganda and publicity material aimed at the home front in order to determine the extent to which there was a national sense of a unique New Zealand experience in the years 1939-1945. The first chapter puts the research in context, examining the literature around propaganda and national identity as well as detailing the government bodies and figures referenced in this work. My second chapter examines the New Zealand-produced propaganda, seeking to determine what was distinct about New Zealand's publicity. This chapter gives an overview of the aspects of New Zealand material that were distinctive, including visual symbols and references to life on New Zealand's home front. This second chapter acts as a summary of how New Zealand material was identifiably made in New Zealand for a New Zealand audience.

My third chapter deals with the use of British material, which was requested by New Zealand for various reasons. I examine how British material was used to supplement the New Zealand-produced propaganda, not replace it, and how the British Ministry of Information methods and material were used to inform the working of the New Zealand Publicity Department. The most notable aspect of British material in New Zealand was the alterations made in order to make it suitable for circulation; the introduction of New Zealanders into the material was common. The film *Next of Kin*, which was significantly altered for release in New Zealand, is used as a case study to illustrate the way in which

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/conscription-conscientious-objection-and-pacifism/page-1>, viewed 3/03/2016; letter from Paul to C.H. Bateson, 24 April 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

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British material was used by the Publicity Department, and the chapter also analyses why British material was not the dominant aspect of New Zealand's publicity campaigns.

My fourth chapter examines the way in which New Zealand interacted with the propaganda of the other dominion nations. Material was frequently sent back and forth between New Zealand and the other dominions, and, as with British material, was used as examples by the Publicity Department. The New Zealand government was very aware of what worked elsewhere and whether it would also be successful in New Zealand, and I again use *Next of Kin* to demonstrate how New Zealand did not blindly follow any other nation, even Australia. I also examine the way in which New Zealand's special relationship with Australia manifested in the exchange of publicity material.

In the fifth chapter, I look at the way the New Zealand government interacted with the New Zealand public and the sense of public accountability that drove many of the nation's publicity campaigns. The government was particularly sensitive to the opinions and reactions of the public, taking note of compliments and complaints and attempting at all times to avoid what might be upsetting. New Zealand's propaganda campaigns also had a distinctly 'personal' touch, as J.T. Paul, Director of Publicity, cultivated a close relationship with the public.

Finally, in a concluding discussion chapter, I bring these concepts together with the literature to assess the extent to which the propaganda of New Zealand reflected a distinct national identity. By examining the way the Publicity Department combined publicity from Britain and the other dominions with the material produced locally, I am able to evaluate the effectiveness of a uniquely New Zealand approach, which communicated a distinct New Zealand experience of WWII – concluding that by WWII New Zealanders had a strong sense of national identity and their country's unique place in and contribution to the international war effort.

## Chapter One

### Context and Comparison: A Historiographical and Narrative Background

The historiography on Second World War propaganda has developed slowly, coming to the fore in the more media-focussed world of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Posters and other propaganda material are now seen as having value as historical and cultural sources<sup>1</sup>, yet even now historians almost universally focus on Britain, America, and the successful Nazi propaganda machine of Joseph Goebbels. Other main belligerent nations – Russia, Japan, Italy – have small bodies of work in their native languages, but nations on the geographical periphery of the conflict, such as New Zealand, are almost entirely overlooked when it comes to propaganda. What has been written is generally part of wider studies of the home front experience, and so there remains a gap for historians of wartime media culture to examine New Zealand's propaganda in much greater depth. Studies such as this one inevitably have to rely to a certain extent on the historiography that has emerged out of Britain and the other British dominions due to the scarcity of writing specific to New Zealand.

When New Zealand war media has been addressed in the historiography of the home front, propaganda has usually been ignored in favour of censorship. Nancy M. Taylor's official history of the home front covers censorship at length (it is the subject of an entire chapter) but barely addresses the creation and circulation of propaganda<sup>2</sup>. Censorship and propaganda are intrinsically connected, and to thoroughly address one, as Taylor does, while only giving brief mentions to the latter, is to give an incomplete picture of the wartime media of New Zealand. This is not to say that the media are not examined in Taylor's work. The ready availability of newspapers as primary sources makes analyses of journalism the most obvious and easy form of war media to study, and Taylor does so at length. She thoroughly examines the way in which newspapers reported on the war and the clashes between editors and J.T. Paul, the Director of Publicity, over censorship. This, however, covers only a fraction of the issue, as New Zealand's propaganda and publicity went far beyond the newspapers. Taylor does do an admirable job of analysing the newspapers and gives a thorough account of Paul as a censor, but 30 years on from the publication of the official history it is time to take into account all aspects of New Zealand's publicity.

Though not yet thoroughly covered as a topic of study, propaganda is also often touched on as part of wider studies of specific elements of home front life. For example, there is a considerable amount of literature on the experiences of women during the war, much of which addresses the propaganda aimed at getting them into the workforce, encouraging them into agricultural work, enlisting them

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<sup>1</sup>Stephanie Gibson, 'Display Folk: Second World War Posters at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa', *Tuhinga* 19 (2008), p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Nancy M. Taylor, *The Home Front*, Wellington: V.R. Ward, Government Printer, 1986, pp. 886-1014.

into military organisations, or telling them what to do with rations<sup>3</sup>. Deborah Montgomerie laid strong foundations for the examination of propaganda aimed at women with her article 'Reassessing Rosie: World War II, New Zealand, and the Iconography of Femininity'<sup>4</sup>, which examined the presentation of women in New Zealand media. Although her focus was on cartoons and advertising, many of her ideas can be adapted for studies of government propaganda, as her article argued that images 'simultaneously expressed and attempted to shape cultural realities'<sup>5</sup>, offering 'a kind of cultural shorthand' into the ideologies that were dominant within the era<sup>6</sup>. This is similar to the argument in this thesis in that propaganda's depictions of WWII New Zealand gives an insight into the dominant cultural ideas of the time. Publicity aimed at Maori has not been examined in any depth, mostly because Maori-focussed propaganda was scarce – more common than official material was oral appeals made on marae, although propaganda printed in Te Reo did exist<sup>7</sup>. Tui Gilling's 2005 preliminary survey of the Maori war effort for the Treaty of Waitangi Research Unit<sup>8</sup> hints at the recruitment drives aimed at Maori, as do Monty Soutar in the section of life at home in his history of the Maori Battalion<sup>9</sup> and Claudia Orange in 'The Price of Citizenship? The Maori War Effort'<sup>10</sup>. It is likely the recruitment propaganda aimed at Maori is the only kind with enough primary material to be researched in any depth, and so there exists little historiography to aid an examination of the presence of Maori in home front propaganda.

Those writing histories of New Zealand culture and media have been more likely to address propaganda than those focussed on the war specifically. Hamish Thompson's history of New Zealand posters examines propaganda for recruitment, victory loans, and war production, acknowledging the shift to New Zealand designs between WWI and WWII<sup>11</sup>; Geraldene Peter's chapter in *New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History* examines political films and the NFU (National Film Unit) formed in 1941<sup>12</sup>. Lars Weckbecker's book on the NFU<sup>13</sup> contains valuable findings, although his focus on the development of the documentary genre in New Zealand gives his work a specific angle which means that propaganda is only one small aspect of his wider history. These works tend to lack historical

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<sup>3</sup>Gwen Parsons, 'The New Zealand Home Front During World War One and World War Two', *History Compass* 11:6 (2013), p. 423.

<sup>4</sup>Deborah Montgomerie, 'Reassessing Rosie: World War II, New Zealand Women and the iconography of Femininity', *Gender and History* 8:1 (1996), pp. 108-132.

<sup>5</sup>Montgomerie, p. 127.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>7</sup><http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/707861>, viewed 21/03/2016.

<sup>8</sup>Tui Gilling, *The Crown, Rangitiratanga and the Maori War Effort in the Second World War: A Preliminary Survey*, Wellington: Treaty of Waitangi Research Unit, 2005.

<sup>9</sup>Mounty Soutar, *Nga Tama Toa: The Price of Citizenship*, Auckland: David Bateman Ltd, 2008.

<sup>10</sup>Claudia Orange, 'The Price of Citizenship? The Maori War Effort', in John Crawford (ed.), *Kia Kaha: New Zealand in the Second World War*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 236- 251.

<sup>11</sup>Hamish Thompson, *Paste Up: A Century of New Zealand Poster Art*, Auckland: Random House, 2003, pp. 47, 50, 51.

<sup>12</sup>Geraldine Peters, 'Political and Alternative Film Making: 1940 to 1950' in Diane Pivac with Frank Stark and Lawrence McDonald (eds.), *New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History*, Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2011, pp. 103-128.

<sup>13</sup>Lars Weckbecker, *Governing Visions of the Real*, Bristol: Intellect, 2015.

insight, focussing as they do on analysis of the work as art or the development of an industry rather than its historical context, although Peters does make multiple mentions to the focus on 'nation building' in the NFU's wartime output, arguing that this was the main impetus for the NFU's formation<sup>14</sup>.

Stephanie Gibson's article 'Display Folk: Second World War Posters at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa' is the most detailed study of New Zealand WWII propaganda posters to date, although it has several limitations. Focussing only on collector Cecil Herbert Andrews's donated collection of posters held at Te Papa, the paper examines a small amount of the total propaganda output of New Zealand, ignoring entirely things like pamphlets and film. It also focusses heavily on the biography of the collector and the ways in which the posters were displayed. Yet, as Gibson points out, the way in which Andrews displayed and distributed the propaganda posters which he acquired 'mirrored those [methods] of the Director of Publicity'<sup>15</sup>, and the article is therefore valuable as a smaller scale version of this study. The article also briefly looks at the way in which propaganda was sent between countries, another aspect considered in this thesis. Most valuable to this thesis is the in-depth examination Gibson presents of New Zealand's window displays<sup>16</sup>, which provides a model through which to examine other forms of publicity in New Zealand. Gibson's article is a vital starting point for any study of WWII propaganda in New Zealand. At various points she alludes to the exchange of material between New Zealand and Britain and the other Dominion nations, the push to display New Zealand material<sup>17</sup>, and unique aspects of New Zealand's posters<sup>18</sup>. It is from these references that this study grows.

Historians moving into detailed study of New Zealand's WWII propaganda will use Gibson's work as a solid foundation, along with the examinations of varying depth that have been produced as parts of wider studies. However, it is impossible to produce any in-depth work on propaganda in New Zealand without turning to overseas studies, if only due to the scarcity of the New Zealand historiography.

As New Zealand was a British dominion during the war, and used a great deal of British propaganda material, it is appropriate to look to the historiography of British propaganda when writing about New Zealand. The historiography to emerge from Britain is vast and covers a wide array of the social

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<sup>14</sup> Weckbecker, pp. 104, 109.

<sup>15</sup> Gibson, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> Gibson, pp. 12-14.

<sup>17</sup> For example: "New Zealand content was much desired by retailers, but international posters were also admired as part of the mix." Gibson, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> Gibson, p 14.

and political elements of propaganda<sup>19</sup>. Historians have analysed the successes and failures of the British propaganda machine, as well as the ways in which it depicted ideals of national character and the extent to which it accurately reflected the realities of wartime Britain. The use of British-based historiography is limited when looking at New Zealand propaganda; Britain, as a major power and main player in a very close-to-home war, had a very different home front experience than New Zealand and therefore produced a very different kind of propaganda. However, the British historiography is developed and sophisticated enough to have recognised propaganda material as a way of gaining insight into the ideologies of a nation and assessing how Britain saw itself. This is this study's aim, and as such there are valuable contributions to be had from the British material.

Also helpful in many ways is the examination of the historiography of the other Allied dominion nations: Australia, Canada and South Africa. These nations, all geographically removed from the war to various extents, shared many of the home front experiences of New Zealand, and propaganda material was regularly exchanged between them. Although the other dominion nations also have a minimal propaganda historiography, in combination with New Zealand's it gives a solid foundation on which to build.

Australia undoubtedly was the most culturally similar dominion to New Zealand, with a shared war history in the Anzacs and very close diplomatic relations. The obvious point of difference was the proximity of the Pacific theatre and the very real threat faced by Australians at home. As in Britain, where propaganda was shaped largely by the experience of the Blitz and the Battle of Britain, the threat of invasion and perception of being under attack was pervasive in Australia's propaganda material. The point of interest that historians of Australian propaganda overwhelmingly focus on is this 'Australianisation' of propaganda<sup>20</sup> after the entry of the Japanese into the war. Kay Saunders's article 'An Instrument of Strategy: Propaganda, Public Policy and the Media in Australia During the Second World War' tracks the change from a publicity output largely made up of British material – adapted for Australian audiences; very similar to New Zealand – in the early stages of the war to a much sharper focus on the Japanese and the danger they posed<sup>21</sup>, including extremely racist

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<sup>19</sup> It would be impossible to examine every work that analysed national character in British propaganda given the sheer volume of scholarship that exists. A very narrow sample of work on British propaganda surveyed for this review includes David Clampin, *Advertising and Propaganda in World War II: Cultural Identity and the Blitz Spirit*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014; Garry Campion, *The Good Fight: Battle of Britain Propaganda and the Few*, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009; Nicholas Pronay, 'The Land of Promise: The Projection of Peace Aims in Britain' in K.R.M. Short (ed.), *Film and Radio Propaganda in World War II*, Kent: Croom Helm Ltd, 1983, pp. 51-77; Marion Yass, *This is Your War: Home Front Propaganda in the Second World War*, London: Public Record Office, 1983; Jo Fox, *Film Propaganda in Britain and Nazi Germany*, Oxford: Berg, 2007; James Chapman, 'War' versus 'Cultural' Propaganda: Institutional and Ideological Tensions over the Projection of Britain During the Second World War' in David Welch (ed.), *Propaganda, Power and Persuasion: From World War I to Wikileaks*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014, pp. 79-95.

<sup>20</sup> Kay Saunders, 'An Instrument of Strategy: Propaganda, Public Policy and the Media in Australia During the Second World War', *War and Society* 15:2 (1997), p. 83.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

stereotypes<sup>22</sup>. Saunders examines the way in which the dehumanisation of the Japanese was criticised by some, but by no means all, Australians<sup>23</sup>, a trend towards questioning how Australians reacted to blatant propaganda which is furthered by Lynette Finch, who argues that the 'Know Your Enemy' campaign of early 1942 was a 'public relations disaster'<sup>24</sup> and Robert Crawford, who argues that the Australian audiences were too 'media-literate' to accept the 'hate campaign' against the Japanese<sup>25</sup>. Saunders also examines the way in which Australian propaganda shifted from a British to a primarily America focus<sup>26</sup>, something which this thesis will show was in stark contrast to New Zealand's enduring loyalty to Britain and British viewpoints. Although Australian historians have focussed largely on aspects of their nation's propaganda that are not shared with New Zealand's, their analysis of the effectiveness of propaganda and the public's responses demonstrate the way in which a deep understanding of national publicity material cannot be fully gained without examining those who consumed as well as those who produced. These Australian studies are therefore valuable to this thesis as they demonstrate the ways in which the beliefs and reactions of the public can be studied to add depth to an analysis of a nation's propaganda effort.

Canadian historians, like those in New Zealand, have not yet significantly examined their nation's WWII propaganda. Canada was the most autonomous dominion, and was as close to America as it was to Britain<sup>27</sup>, making its cultural situation and wartime home front relatively dissimilar from New Zealand's in many ways. While the application of Canadian scholarship to New Zealand may therefore be limited, the biographical studies of John Grierson – who was a foremost propagandist involved with both British and Canadian propaganda during the course of the war, and who also advised NZ on the creation of the NFU<sup>28</sup> – offer an interesting look at the link between Britain and its dominions when it comes to war publicity. Jo Fox's article on the ways in which Grierson stayed connected to the Ministry of Information in Britain while acting as the Commissioner of the Canadian National Film Board briefly addresses Grierson's views on British versus dominion national identity, arguing that his views evolved from 'the need to represent the essence of Britain on screen' to 'a deeper desire to understand and represent the Dominions...depicting nations in the process of defining their own national identities outside of their 'role' as British 'subjects'.'<sup>29</sup> The burgeoning

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<sup>22</sup> "You are the little monkey-men of the North," sneered a radio broadcast in 1942 (Saunders, p. 82). Nothing like this was ever seen in New Zealand.

<sup>23</sup> Saunders, p. 87.

<sup>24</sup> Lynette Finch, 'Knowing the Enemy: Australian Psychological Warfare and the Business of Influencing Minds in the Second World War', *War and Society* 16:2 (1998), p. 72.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Crawford, 'Nothing to Sell? – Australia's Advertising Industry at War, 1939-1945', *War & Society* 20:1 (2002), p. 108.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>27</sup> Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War*, London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006, p. 57.

<sup>28</sup> Peters, p. 104.

<sup>29</sup> Jo Fox, 'John Grierson, His 'Documentary Boys' and the British Ministry of Information, 1939-1942', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 25:3 (2005), p. 363.

sense of national identity in New Zealand's propaganda was also reflected to some extent in Canada, or at least in the mind of one of Canada's most prominent propagandists. Examinations of Grierson therefore are interesting in what they can say about the emergence of national identity, separate from Britain, as depicted through dominion propaganda. Laura Brandon's 'Canadian Graphic Art in Wartime'<sup>30</sup> looks primarily at the official war artists of both the First and Second World War. Brandon explains how, unlike in New Zealand, the war artists were heavily involved in the production of government publicity as those charged with producing war posters were eager to employ Canadian artists for the artwork and designs<sup>31</sup>. Brandon states that the emphasis placed on Canadian artists 'helped foster the Canadian identity and pride that, ultimately, helped achieve victory in both wars'<sup>32</sup>. Clearly she has identified in Canada the same sense of importance placed on national identity that was prevalent in New Zealand's propaganda and which is central to this thesis. The emerging nationhood of the dominion nations as expressed through propaganda is evidently worthy of scholarly attention, given its appearance in historiographies from across the Empire.

The historiography of South African WWII propaganda overwhelmingly focusses on attempts to pull together a nation fraught with racial and political divisions. Historians have addressed the way in which the South African government attempted to create a unified home front in the face of a severely fractured population. A number of articles focus on the *African Mirror* newsreels<sup>33</sup>, and Nicole Wiederroth has examined the way in which the white government appealed to its black citizens while reinforcing their inferiority, and the way in which the black population responded<sup>34</sup>. 'Imagining National Unity: South African Propaganda Efforts during the Second World War' by Suryakanthie Chetty<sup>35</sup> is a comprehensive example of the way in which the study of a nation's propaganda can incorporate the social and cultural history of the nation at war as well as the complex relationship between a government which produces propaganda and a population which receives it. Chetty presents a detailed account of South Africa's propaganda, examining the material in depth as well as its creation and dissemination. Uniquely South African themes and motifs are analysed alongside aspects borrowed from Britain, and Chetty also discusses how different symbols were used to appeal to British white South Africans, Afrikaner South Africans, black South Africans, and women from all three groups. The article is intensely focussed on how

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<sup>30</sup> Laura Brandon, 'Canadian Graphic Art in Wartime', *Canadian Military History* 19:3 (2010), pp. 41-50.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>33</sup> Such as Emma Sandon, 'African Mirror: The Life and Times of the South African Newsreel from 1910 to 1948', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 39:3 (2013), pp. 661-680.

<sup>34</sup> Nicole Wiederroth, 'Radio Broadcasting for Blacks During the Second World War: "It Could Be Dangerous..."', *Historia* 57:2 (2012), pp. 104-149.

<sup>35</sup> Suryakanthie Chetty, 'Imagining National Unity: South African Propaganda Efforts During the Second World War', *Kronos: South African Histories* 38 (2012), pp. 106-130.

state propaganda can reveal the ideologies of a nation's government and its people; Chetty argues that propaganda images 'tapped into existing imagery in popular consciousness. Drawing upon existing tropes enabled a sense of familiarity on the part of the viewer, making an image more effective.'<sup>36</sup> Although South Africa was culturally dissimilar to New Zealand, Chetty's theoretical concepts can be applied to New Zealand's material as they relate to propaganda and national identity in general. Chetty's article is therefore an excellent exemplar for this thesis of how national character can be analysed through propaganda.

As these examples demonstrate, the study of WWII propaganda outside of the great powers like Britain and Germany is still in its infancy. Only since the turn of this century have historians really started to examine propaganda from peripheral nations such as New Zealand, and as such there remains much to be written in this field. By bringing together the historiography from around the Allied world, historians can start to bring the kind of analysis given to British propaganda to the dominions. Historians are only just beginning to examine what propaganda can tell us about social and cultural (as well as political) attitudes, trends and beliefs during WWI, and if New Zealand is to continue to benefit from this field historians need to keep attuned to what is being written overseas and adapt these ideas into the study of our own national propaganda.

While it is necessary to look overseas when examining New Zealand's propaganda due to a lack of local scholarship, the question of national identity is one that has been thoroughly covered by New Zealand historians. There is a large body of work that examines the development of New Zealand's national identity, covering the period from before the Treaty of Waitangi to after WWII. I have mostly focussed on works covering the years between the Boer War and WWII, as it is within this period that the form of national identity that was present during WWII was developed. But what is 'national identity'? In his book *Banal Nationalism*, Michael Billig details the concept of nationalism that is not aggressive or revolutionary, but rather the 'ideological habits' that are embedded within the everyday lives of citizens<sup>37</sup>. National identity, he claims, could be found 'bobbing about, brought home daily on the familiar tides of banal nationalism'<sup>38</sup>. Anthony D. Smith, in his book *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, discusses the importance of 'myths and memories, symbols and values' in creating and maintaining a sense of nationalism<sup>39</sup>, all elements that were seen in New Zealand's propaganda. Keith Sinclair, in his book *A Destiny Apart* – which he claimed was the first work to

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<sup>36</sup> Chetty, p. 127.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London: Sage, 1997, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> Maxine Anne Iversen, 'Inextricable Links: Pakeha Perceptions of Identity and Their Relationships with Britain at the Time of the Statute of Westminster', MA, University of Auckland, 1996, p. 3.

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examine national identity in New Zealand<sup>40</sup>—opens with a discussion of the concept of ‘the nation’, writing that giving precise definitions of concepts like national identity is like ‘picking up a jellyfish’<sup>41</sup>. This, perhaps, is why New Zealand historians seem to remain so fascinated with the concept. The term ‘national identity’ is a nebulous one, with no objective measurement. I use the term in this thesis to mean a set of widely-held sociocultural beliefs regarding New Zealanders’ place in the world, which were recognised and reflected in the media and were thus appealed to through propaganda during WWII; I am focussed on the cultural ideas that were presented in New Zealand’s propaganda rather than some idea of what New Zealand’s national identity ‘actually’ was.

As mentioned above, Keith Sinclair was one of the first historians to write extensively on New Zealand’s national identity in 1986. This work became the basis on which the many historians who wrote narratives of national identity built on in the 1990s and 2000s. While Sinclair had a section of his book dedicated to the identity of minorities - Maori, women and children – many historians who followed him have remained focussed on a masculine Pakeha identity, particularly in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>42</sup>. Other works have taken a more general New Zealand focus, such as the collection of essays *Culture and Identity in New Zealand*, edited by David Novitz and Bill Willmott, which includes chapters on Maori and women as well as language, pop culture, art, religion, and social justice. Ron Palenski’s 2012 book *The Making of New Zealanders* is the most recent work on New Zealand national consciousness identified for this study, and it draws on the most important works from the past 30 years, developing and building on previous arguments and succinctly narrating how New Zealanders came to define themselves as unique by 1900. I have therefore relied on Palenski’s book for my concept of New Zealand’s national identity and its state of development in 1939. Palenski comprehensively details the development of national identity during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, concluding that by 1900 it was well-established.

For the most part, there is a consensus amongst New Zealand historians as to when and how a national identity developed. Sinclair wrote that ‘by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many, and probably most, New Zealanders had decided that they were a distinct people’<sup>43</sup>. In *A Destiny Apart* he cited 1880-1940 as the period in which nationalism fully emerged<sup>44</sup>, and within this time frame certain

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<sup>40</sup> Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand’s Search for National Identity*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin New Zealand, 1986, p. ix.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> These include *Pakeha: The Quest for Identity in New Zealand*, Michael King (ed.), Auckland: Penguin, 1991; Maxine Anne Iversen, ‘Inextricable Links: Pakeha Perceptions of Identity and Their Relationships with Britain at the Time of the Statute of Westminster’, MA, University of Auckland, 1996; and Claudia Bell, *Inventing New Zealand: Everyday Myths of Pakeha Identity*, Auckland: Penguin, 1996; John Andrews continued this trend into the new century with his work (*No Other Home Than This*, Nelson: Craig Potton Publishing, 2009).

<sup>43</sup> Keith Sinclair, *The Native Born: The Origins of New Zealand Nationalism*, Massey University Occasional Publication No. 8, 1986, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart*, p. ix.

events are cited repeatedly as nation-building: the rejection of Australian federation, the Boer War, the rugby tour of 1905-6, and the Anzac experience of Gallipoli<sup>45</sup>. Palenski argued a slightly different take; he wrote that these 20<sup>th</sup> century events were affirmations of an identity that by 1900 had been firmly established 'via a multiplicity of agencies and actions'<sup>46</sup>. For the purposes of this study, which identifies a very strong sense of national identity in New Zealand during WWII, it is fitting to assume that Palenski is correct and this identity had already been established and repeatedly affirmed by 1939. This thesis seeks to assess how well-established this national identity was by WWII through the examination of propaganda.

In order to study the wartime publicity in New Zealand, it is necessary to understand not only prior literature but also how the propaganda machine worked – who was involved, what was produced and how it was circulated. The most prominent body associated with the propaganda effort (and therefore the most integral to this study) was the Publicity Department, which fell under the Prime Minister's Department and was led by J.T. Paul, the Director of Publicity. The structure and function of the Department was established in 1938 under chapter 4 of the 'General Instructions Relating to Censorship and Publicity', although the Department was not formally created until the outbreak of war the following year<sup>47</sup>. This document states that the Publicity Department's primary function was 'to present the national case to the public at home and abroad', which included 'the preparation and issue of National Propaganda' as well as 'the issue of "news" and...such control of information issued to the public as may be demanded by the needs of security': propaganda, publicity and censorship<sup>48</sup>. The Department was made up of five 'divisions': Collecting, Preparation, Control, Broadcasting, and Issue<sup>49</sup>. In practice, the 'divisions' were not separate groups of staff but rather the five main duties of the Department, allocated to individuals<sup>50</sup>. In addition to these divisions was the Advisory Council, which facilitated co-operation between the government and the publicity industries and was made up of a representative each from the domestic and international newspaper industries and the film industry, selected publicists, and 'at least one woman of wide public experience'<sup>51</sup>.

All of these people and their duties answered to Paul, whose official title was the Director of Publicity but was also effectively the chief censor. Paul's duties included 'controlling and co-ordinating' the media industries, preparing and issuing material 'both as news and propaganda', and implementing and maintaining the policy of the Department and New Zealand's publicity in

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<sup>45</sup> Ron Palenski, *The Making of New Zealanders*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2012, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 4, 5.

<sup>47</sup> Organisation for National Security, O.N.S. 89, Copy No. 6, September 1938. C1 196, 41/9.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

general<sup>52</sup>. Paul had worked for a number of newspapers in New Zealand as a compositor, journalist and editor, and served on Otago's recruiting committee in WWI as well as serving on the Legislative Council before becoming the nation's propagandist<sup>53</sup>. A staunch unionist and an early member of the Labour Party<sup>54</sup>, Paul's attitudes and beliefs shaped the way in which propaganda operated in New Zealand. He was the ultimate authority in matters of publicity and censorship; all government material connected to the war effort from all departments had to be sent to him for approval before being released<sup>55</sup>, along with any requests for publicity<sup>56</sup>. Paul was, according to the Organisation for National Security, 'the channel through which [was] issued all public statements in any way concerned with the war'<sup>57</sup>.

However, Paul was not the only figure of importance in New Zealand's propaganda machine. Although he and the Publicity Department were the main authorities, there was also a War Publicity Committee which dealt more specifically with the organisation of propaganda campaigns. A memo from Prime Minister Peter Fraser stated that 'the function of this Committee is to co-ordinate publicity concerning the Government's war effort and to endeavour in this connection to arrange for the most effective use of radio, press and film agencies'<sup>58</sup>. Fraser went on to advise his ministers that if they were planning any potential publicity campaigns they should consult and co-operate with the Publicity Committee<sup>59</sup>. Paul was a member on this committee, but it was chaired by D. Wilson, the Minister of Broadcasting during the war. In addition to these two were three further propagandists, J. Robertson, B.T. Sheil, and A.D. McIntosh<sup>60</sup>. New Zealand's publicity campaigns all went through these five men at some stage, and the minutes from the Committee meetings have been a key source for this research.

A number of other smaller, more specific committees and groups also played a part in New Zealand's propaganda campaigns. Memos and minutes mention bodies such as the National Service Radio Publicity Committee<sup>61</sup>, the Film Production and Film Distribution Committees<sup>62</sup>, and the Advertising Panel<sup>63</sup>. Groups such as this had specific duties, most often tied to individual media and industries, and were all under Paul's ultimate authority. The one body, however, which did not fall directly

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<sup>52</sup> Organisation for National Security, O.N.S. 89, Copy No. 6, September 1938. C1 196, 41/9.

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3p16/paul-john-thomas>, viewed 27/03/16.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Memo from Fraser to D.G. Sullivan, 11 November 1940. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>56</sup> Memo from Fraser to Permanent Heads, 1 July 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>57</sup> Organisation for National Security, O.N.S. 89, Copy No. 6, September 1938. C1 196, 41/9.

<sup>58</sup> Memo from Fraser to D.G. Sullivan, 11 November 1940. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Minutes, 3 September 1941. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>61</sup> Memo from Fraser to Permanent Heads, 1 July 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes, 20 April 1941. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>63</sup> Minutes, 3 August 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

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under Paul was the military, which managed its own publicity to a significant extent, mostly to do with recruitment. Later in the war the military did become more concerned with creating publicity to foster support for their efforts amongst the civilian population<sup>64</sup>, however, even for the military Paul had the ultimate authority – even a major in the Security Intelligence General Staff had to send potential radio speeches to Paul for approval<sup>65</sup>.

There were also special bodies set up to co-ordinate the publicity of important campaigns, mostly those associated with government departments. The War Loan and National Savings campaigns had their own committees who, due to the monetary nature of their campaigns, mostly answered to the Reserve Bank or the Treasury, with Paul having ultimate control over what could be circulated<sup>66</sup>. The National War Loan Committee was in charge of carrying out war loan campaigns under the Governor of the Reserve Bank, and there were a large number of district and local sub-committees<sup>67</sup> – around 50 in 1944<sup>68</sup>. This was similar to the organisation of the National War Savings Committee, which had over 220 local sub-committees, the members of which were volunteers<sup>69</sup>. The War Savings Committee also involved postmasters up and down the country and was assisted by representatives from the advertising industry<sup>70</sup>. Both of these committees were responsible largely for distribution of publicity material and they worked very closely together<sup>71</sup>.

Another campaign that merited its own organisational bodies was Dig for Victory, which was organised by local Campaign Committees<sup>72</sup> under the Department of Agriculture<sup>73</sup>. The Dig for Victory campaign involved the input of a large number of different people from a variety of agricultural and horticultural backgrounds, including representatives from horticultural societies, gardeners' associations, the Department of Agriculture, and the local education boards<sup>74</sup>. As shown by the Dig for Victory and war loan campaigns, which operated largely on the provincial level, New Zealand's propaganda reached out into the community and significant numbers of average citizens became part of the propaganda machine. Although all propaganda had to be ultimately approved by Paul, the provincial nature of these campaigns meant that local leadership was significant. This is a

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<sup>64</sup> Memo for Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee, 19 July 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/1; memo from Director of Security Intelligence to Assistant Secretary of War Cabinet Secretariat, 12 June 1943. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>65</sup> Memo from Major, General Staff to Paul, 28 November 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>66</sup> Minutes, 3 September 1941. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>67</sup> R. Newell Speech Notes. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>68</sup> 1944 Victory Loan – Plan of Campaign – as presented to the National War Loan Committee by the Working and National War Savings Committees, July 1944. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>69</sup> National War Savings Bulletin, February 1944. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> National War Savings Organisation. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>72</sup> 'Dig for Victory' Campaign Committee (Wellington and Hutt Districts) minutes, 2 November 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>73</sup> "Dig for Victory" Campaign, 1944-1945 (Ag 93/3/29)

<sup>74</sup> Minutes, 28 May 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

Dig For Victory Campaign, 1944-45 – "Grow A Victory Garden", 18 August 1944. AAFZ W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29.

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major reason that this study would be incomplete without a thorough analysis of the role of the general public in propaganda, in addition to examining the Publicity Department and Paul.

In addition to those organising New Zealand's publicity and propaganda were those physically creating and distributing it at the production level. Although much of New Zealand's propaganda was created overseas, there were a handful of local media agencies producing material. Miramar Studios is the most significant of these for this study, as they produced a large amount of New Zealand's homegrown material, from posters and photograph displays to cinema slides, motion pictures and newsreels<sup>75</sup>. Miramar were also responsible for the copying of overseas material for distribution, such as the creation of prints for displays from negatives sent from Britain<sup>76</sup>.

All of these figures and organisations worked to produce the various kinds of propaganda that New Zealand used. In the new era of media technologies – such as radio and cinema – New Zealand made a conscious effort to approach publicity in a multi-media way. The campaign plan for the 1944 war loan identified visual material, spoken appeals and film as the three categories of publicity that needed to be covered<sup>77</sup>. Visual material included posters and newspaper advertisement/articles as well as 'all things which will attract the eye' (including as window displays), while the verbal material – speeches, advertisements and dramatisations – would all be broadcast over the airwaves. Film – newsreels, slides, and feature and documentary films – was considered to cover both these categories<sup>78</sup>.

While visual material was the least technologically impressive, it was no less important; having an adequate supply was considered the most challenging thing about visual publicity<sup>79</sup> and the rate at which distributors ran out of posters and pamphlets attests to their importance as propaganda. Distribution of the Ministry of Information pamphlets was dependant on how many were received from Britain – a proportional amount was sent to each organisation on the list; if there was not enough for everyone a selection was made as to which organisations would find particular material of particular interest<sup>80</sup>. This distribution list included government ministers, employers' associations, libraries, Boy Scouts, YMCAs, and various military bodies<sup>81</sup>. Posters were printed in batches as large as budgets and paper shortages would allow – 60,000 was considered an 'extensive display'<sup>82</sup> – and placed in a variety of public locations: railways, council offices, tobacconists, beauty salons, sports

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<sup>75</sup> Letter from Paul to R.W. Fenton, 19 May 1942. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3.

<sup>76</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 30 March 1943. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 4.

<sup>77</sup> 1944 Victory Loan – Plan of Campaign – as presented to the National War Loan Committee by the Working and National War Savings Committees, July 1944. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Paul to Batterbee, 5 September 1944. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 3.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Memo from B.C. Ashwin to Minister of Finance, 19 September 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14

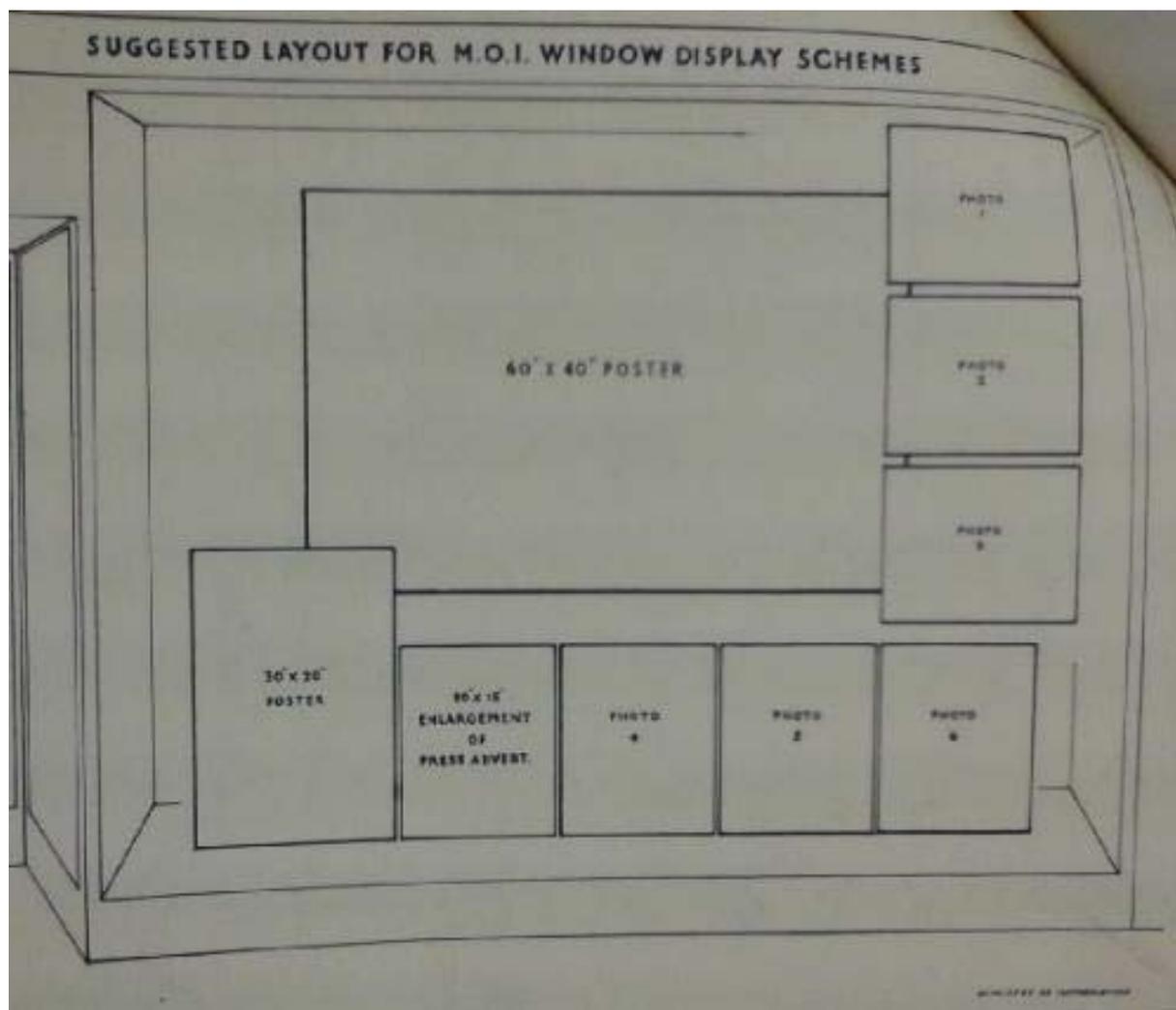


Figure 1 An example of the layout of window displays sent from the Ministry of Information in Britain.  
Source: EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

clubrooms, tailors, doctor and dentist waiting rooms, restaurants, schools, hotels<sup>83</sup>. They were distributed, for the most part, by the Women's War Service Auxiliary (WAAF), with additional coverage carried out by the post offices of each region<sup>84</sup>. Newspapers were a key medium for visual propaganda; in addition to the news articles (which were all censored and therefore were to some extent all part of the national publicity effort) there were statements, cartoons, photographs and articles inserted into the papers by Paul<sup>85</sup>. A panel consisting of the six principal agencies handled much of the placement of advertisements in newspapers on behalf of the government for campaigns such as 'Don't Talk' and national savings<sup>86</sup>. Visual displays were also a key part of New Zealand's publicity. Window displays circulated around the nation, some from Britain and others put together

<sup>83</sup> Memo from Director-General to Chief Postmasters, 21 October 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Minutes, 21 December 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1; C.O.S paper #95, 28 July 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>86</sup> Memo from B.C. Ashwin to Minister of Finance, 19 September 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14

locally. Sets of photographs with evocative captions were mounted alongside propaganda posters, often in connection with specific campaigns but also simply to keep the war effort in the public eye<sup>87</sup>. Individual displays were circulated via a rota of businesses and institutions who expressed interest, in a method modelled after the way that photo mats and blocks were circulated around the nation's newspapers<sup>88</sup>. These window displays were one of the most visible forms of publicity used in New Zealand, and form an important element of this study.

The main disadvantages to these visual and print mediums in a small rural nation such as New Zealand was the difficulty of reaching those who lived outside of the main centres and were therefore considered a lower priority for propaganda such as posters, shop window displays, and distributed pamphlets. Probably the most effective medium for reaching rural audiences was radio, which was recognised as having the capacity to go 'deep into the country'<sup>89</sup>. Radio publicity used in New Zealand included a wide variety of different approaches: speeches by government ministers and military figures, plays and dramatisations depicting patriotic New Zealanders supporting the war effort, factual programmes, radio advertisements, and patriotic songs<sup>90</sup>. The news from London was aired seven times a day, and various programmes brought the war effort into people's home regularly – 'With the Boys Overseas' consisted of twice-weekly messages from New Zealand troops; 'We Work for Victory' was a weekly feature detailing New Zealand's industrial war effort<sup>91</sup>. All of New Zealand's large publicity campaigns involved a concerted push on the airwaves, and the Controller of the National Commercial Broadcasting Service, in a letter to Wilson in 1942, was proud to list the campaigns that radio had publicised, including Bonds for Bombers, the Apple Campaign (about the disposal of surplus fruit), WAAF recruitment, Safety to Shipping, the War Library Service, and appeals for essential labour<sup>92</sup>. Radio was the most dynamic propaganda medium available in WWII and New Zealand made full and enthusiastic use of it, creating a radio publicity campaign that was sophisticated and capitalised on the nation's well-developed broadcasting facilities.

Although not as innovative as radio, film – particularly film with sound and dialogue – was still a relatively new media technology, and cinema was considerably more developed as a propaganda medium in WWII than it had been in WWI. New Zealand's resources for producing moving pictures obviously could not compare to that of Britain, and so the majority of New Zealand's feature films

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<sup>87</sup> General Exploitation. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1; memo from Paul to Nash, 5 August 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2; display of 'Battle for Britain' pictures, 29 July 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>88</sup> Display of 'Battle for Britain' pictures, 29 July 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from Ian K. Mackay to the Controller, 10 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>90</sup> Minutes, 21 December 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1; minutes, 12 October 1943 (referred by Wilson). EA1 543, 84/12/1; C.O.S paper #95, 28 July 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14; 1944 War Loan Conference – Headings for Addresses. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from Wilson to N.W. Shaw, 5 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>92</sup> Letter from Controller to Wilson, 20 May 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

were imported— although the government film studios at Miramar did produce a considerable amount of material, including the Weekly Review newsreels, shorts depicting New Zealand's war efforts attached to the newsreels, and the various slides shown in cinemas<sup>93</sup>. Slides were distributed to cinemas by Paul and his department, first to the main centres and then to the smaller theatres<sup>94</sup>. The slides were changed every two to four weeks, to ensure that every cinema in the country was showing slides continuously<sup>95</sup>. For the most part distribution of films was handled not by Paul's department but by the Film Exchanges Association of New Zealand, which was responsible for the distribution of both foreign and domestic films and dealt with film distribution companies such as 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox and Warner Brothers on behalf of the government<sup>96</sup>. Distribution to rural cinemas had its difficulties; although many smaller towns had their own picture theatres, the bulk of the cinema-goers were found in the main centres<sup>97</sup>. Because of this, small town cinemas often fell behind in the distribution circuit or were left out completely to save time and money<sup>98</sup>. Small town theatres objected to this, and Robertson of the Publicity Committee felt that it was important that 'the widest possible coverage be obtained'<sup>99</sup>, and so efforts were made to ensure that rural theatre-goers were exposed to all the same cinema propaganda as their urban counterparts. Film was an effective and valued part of New Zealand's propaganda machine – a letter from the official secretary of the New Zealand High Commissioner in Australia stated that films had come 'to form the major portion of our direct publicity'<sup>100</sup>, while Paul wrote in a letter to Fraser: 'I regard the film as the most important channel for impressing lessons.'<sup>101</sup> Therefore, despite the limitations of New Zealand's film industry, a considerable effort was made to use film as a significant propaganda medium.

In a small country like New Zealand, Paul and the rest of the nation's propagandists were forced to work with limited resources, such as outdated technology and very tight budgets. The tightest resource of all in the wartime economy was money, and those producing propaganda had to constantly settle for projects being scaled down and working to save wherever possible. Media industries had to be convinced to give a certain amount to the government for free; and by 1943 minutes from a Publicity Committee meeting stated that no money would be spent on placing

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<sup>93</sup> Letter from Paul to the Manager, 28 January 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7; Minutes, 21 December 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1; minutes, 12 October 1943 (referred by Wilson). EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>94</sup> Suggested amendment in method of distribution of National Savings Campaign slides, suggested by Mr. Robertson. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Letter from Film Exchanges Assn to Paul, 4 March 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>97</sup> Suggested amendment in method of distribution of National Savings Campaign slides, suggested by Mr. Robertson. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>98</sup> Letter from Film Exchanges Assn to Paul, 4 March 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7; suggested amendment in method of distribution of National Savings Campaign slides, suggested by Mr. Robertson. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>99</sup> Suggested amendment in method of distribution of National Savings Campaign slides, suggested by Mr. Robertson. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>100</sup> Memo from Official Secretary to Secretary for External Affairs. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>101</sup> Memo from Paul to Fraser, 15 October 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14

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advertisements in newspapers, on the radio, or in the cinema<sup>102</sup>. Money saving strategies were a common topic of discussion in Publicity Committee meetings as the propagandists tried to balance their material's effectiveness with the government's budgets. Sometimes, requests for New Zealand material from shops or newspapers were met with an apology that the resources available simply could not provide it<sup>103</sup>.

One of the biggest technological restrictions was the limitations of Miramar's capacities; multiple letters from Paul pointed out that the production of New Zealand material was only ever as good as Miramar's abilities to physically create the work<sup>104</sup>. The equipment available was 'minimal, inferior and antiquated'<sup>105</sup>; the best cameras had been taken to North Africa to film the troops and the studio had been built in the silent film era and not been sufficiently upgraded for sound recording<sup>106</sup>. With the Weekly Review newsreel a priority, tight time constraints and NFU producer E.S. Andrews' staff severely depleted, it was often impossible for special films – even shorts – to be produced<sup>107</sup>. Andrews, like Paul and the other propagandists of the nation, had to work with what he had; he told Paul in 1943, when the Director requested a special national security feature be produced, that 'we have set a pretty high standard...and I am not prepared to lower it', before proposing a low-budget and straightforward alternative to Paul's suggestions<sup>108</sup>. New Zealand was not a complete technological backwater, however; Andrews reported in 1942 that the NFU was achieving a 'growing mastery of the medium' of film that would allow them to 'indicate and underline the broad extent of New Zealand's involvement in the war'<sup>109</sup>, and the same frustrating limitations were not placed on all the nation's publicity mediums – prominent broadcaster Ian Mackay, in his report on broadcasting in New Zealand, asserted that the National Commercial Broadcasting Service had 'the men and the equipment necessary' to tackle 'ambitious' programmes<sup>110</sup>.

The literature surrounding propaganda and national identity creates a theoretical framework for this study, while an understanding of the people, processes and organisations of New Zealand's WWII publicity campaigns is a practical base on which to build. Pulling together the existing literature on New Zealand's wartime propaganda allows the gaps to be seen; an in-depth analysis of propaganda that brings together the various strands already written by Taylor, Gibson and others is required. By then turning to the literature of Britain and the other dominion nations, a fuller theoretical basis can

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<sup>102</sup> Minutes, 12 October 1943. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>103</sup> Letter from Paul to Aubrey Toy, 11 September 1941. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>104</sup> 'Window Displays', 5 March 1942. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3; memo from Paul to McIntosh, 4 December 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/7; memo from Paul to Nash, 5 August 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

<sup>105</sup> Peters, p. 108.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Letter from Andrews to Paul, 29 October 1943. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Letter from Andrews to Paul, 1 October 1942. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>110</sup> Letter from Ian K. Mackay to the Controller, 10 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

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be established, as the findings of various British and Australian historians, as well as Chetty, can be applied to New Zealand's material to better analyse its significance and fill in the gaps of New Zealand's historiography. For this study, which focusses on propaganda while discussing the concept of national identity, it is crucial to use New Zealand historians such as Sinclair and Palenski to gain a sound understanding of New Zealand's sense of national consciousness leading up to and during WWII. Palenski's assertion that, by WWII, New Zealand's national identity was firmly established forms a key element of the theory of this study. An understanding of the Publicity Department under Paul, the NFU, and the various committees that created and circulated propaganda gives context to the findings contained within this study. New Zealand's propaganda machine was straightforward, with every element coming under Paul's authority, even if only indirectly. The Publicity Department and the other organisations involved in the nation's material utilised all available forms of propaganda to the best of their ability, and New Zealand's publicity campaigns were, on the whole, well-organised. By detailing the theoretical and historical context for the material examined in this study, the findings contained within the body of this research can be better understood.

## Chapter Two

### Landscapes and Lemon-squeezers: The Distinctive New Zealand Material

Aspects of the wartime home front that were specific to or typical of the New Zealand experience formed a dominant part of the propaganda produced in New Zealand, creating propaganda that was capable of appealing to New Zealanders in a relevant, personal way. New Zealand's geographical features – size, isolation, location in the Pacific – were emphasised, as were prominent national and local leaders. Maori were often used in propaganda material as uniquely New Zealand figures, although little was produced to appeal to them directly as people. Visual symbols such as the flag, images of New Zealand, and the New Zealand soldier in his distinctive lemon-squeezer hat were also used to appeal to New Zealanders. The most notable aspects of New Zealand culture to be featured in the nation's publicity were the agricultural nature of the country, emphasised in material encouraging production, mostly of food but secondary industries were also included – and the notion of 'our boys', the New Zealand troops who those at home could only see in New Zealand material. By featuring these aspects of the New Zealand cultural identity in propaganda, Paul and his department created material that stood out as uniquely New Zealand, with identifiable characteristics that appealed to the New Zealand public on the home front.

An emphasis on New Zealand became predominant in the production of propaganda material. It was not enough to publicise the war effort – the emphasis was on specifically publicising New Zealand's war effort<sup>1</sup>, and propaganda produced in New Zealand was made with a New Zealand audience in mind. A letter from E.S. Andrews, producer at the NFU, to Paul in 1943 confirmed that films were 'made to suit the peculiarities of the New Zealand internal distributing system and to meet the tastes of New Zealand home audiences.'<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the manager of the government studios at Miramar told Paul in 1944 that he believed overseas film footage was not needed in New Zealand as 'our films are intended to portray New Zealand material and are not in the nature of an international reel'<sup>3</sup>. A film advertisement such as 'War in the Air', which warned viewers not to waste petrol, may appear generic, with little to indicate that it was made in New Zealand and not Britain<sup>4</sup>. However, the subtle presence of New Zealand, in shots such as the hangar at Ohakea or tanks manoeuvring at Waiouru<sup>5</sup>, added something nationally identifiable that would not have been present in films on the same topic imported from Britain. Clearly, being able to produce material in New Zealand, even when it did not directly refer specifically to aspect of the New Zealand home front, had propaganda

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes, 6 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Andrews to Paul, 25 April 1943. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>3</sup> Memo from Paul to Official Secretary, 10 October 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>4</sup> 'Anti-Waste short films'. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record\\_id=73050](http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record_id=73050), viewed 7/04/16.

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value. This value placed on New Zealand produced material indicates a sense of national importance and independence.

The beginnings of a distinct New Zealand culture was exploited heavily in New Zealand's publicity material, as national features, people, ideas and values were used to appeal to the people. A telegram from New Zealand's High Commissioner in London in 1942 emphasised that there were unique national aspects that marked New Zealand's propaganda as distinctively 'Kiwi'; the High Commissioner's request for film footage of New Zealand for the British Ministry of Information (MOI) asked that the material showcase New Zealand's 'most important contribution' and 'unusual activities' as well as what was 'unique'<sup>6</sup>. It was the use of what was uniquely and unusually New Zealand in propaganda that truly shows the strength of New Zealand's national identity by WWII.

One of the most inherently distinctive aspects of New Zealand that was exploited in the propaganda was the country's geographical status as a small, highly isolated nation. New Zealand's tiny population and position at the edge of the world was presented as a part of the country's cultural identity. Denis McLean wrote that 'the physical environment – a powerful landscape and the all-encompassing sea – have from the beginning been a constant presence in New Zealanders' thoughts about themselves'<sup>7</sup>, an assertion that was echoed by Ron Palenski<sup>8</sup> and reflected in the references to New Zealand's geographical place in the world in the propaganda material. Andrews stated in a letter to Paul that no New Zealand film would ever be able to showcase the nation's 'might' as it was something that 'the million-and-a-half of us just haven't got in comparison with Britain, USSR or United States'<sup>9</sup>. New Zealand's war effort, Andrews went on to say, was not 'done in the mass', and it was necessary to 'find other methods of showing that...the effort has been prodigious'<sup>10</sup>. Instead of treating New Zealand's small size as something to be ashamed of and kept out of propaganda, it became something that New Zealanders were regularly told to be proud of as it made the nation's efforts that much more impressive. "We can take pride in the contribution that has been made by this country," a press statement in 1945 asserted. "Measured in terms of physical contribution, it may not appear to be much, but assessed in relation to our resources...it has had a singular influence."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Telegram from High Commissioner to Fraser, 1 December 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>7</sup> Denis McLean, *The Prickly Pair: Making Nationalism in Australia and New Zealand*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003, p. 227.

<sup>8</sup> Ron Palenski, *The Making of New Zealanders*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2012, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from Andrews to Paul, 25 April 1943. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Press Conference Notes, 5 July 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.



Figure 1 National Savings poster encouraging New Zealanders to consider themselves lucky to be so far from the war front. <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.801452>, viewed 8/04/16

Within the Department, however, it was recognised that New Zealand's isolation and distance from the war fronts could become a problem for the nation, as it was thought that with little to no threat of invasion and no immediate danger to civilians it was easy for the public to become complacent.<sup>12</sup> This was a typically New Zealand problem that required some creative thinking from the nation's propagandists, and it was not always so easy to put a positive spin on what was essentially a hindrance to the war effort. One of the ways that the nation's geographical isolation was used in propaganda was in the suggestion that New Zealanders were lucky to be so far from the horrors of war experienced by civilians overseas. "Put yourself in the shoes of the people of England! Imagine their ordeal!" chastised a poster for National Savings (figure 1). "Then don't you want to help...to end this and to keep it away from this country?"<sup>13</sup> The poster warned the public not to take New Zealand's distance for granted and to see themselves as blessed to be able to 'have all the butter you want'<sup>14</sup>, as well as alerting people that geographical isolation could not protect them forever and they had to engage with the war effort at home to protect themselves.

Concerns about idle talk also arose partly due to New Zealand's distance from the war. "Isolation has certain advantages," read a *Dominion* article in 1941, "but there are corresponding disadvantages, one of the greatest being that we depend upon ships...and the enemy is aware of this."<sup>15</sup> The Minister of Defence addressed this, saying that New Zealanders were 'trusting people' who often

<sup>12</sup> R. Newell speech notes. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>13</sup> <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.801452>, viewed 8/04/16.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Dominion* clippings, 3 October 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

believed that because they were so far from the war, any idle talk about shipping movements would not travel<sup>16</sup>. Government and the military were worried that careless talk was prevalent because of this<sup>17</sup>. Propaganda therefore was released, mostly over the airwaves, which explicitly denied that distance meant safety, pointing out that New Zealand ships had a long way to travel – meaning more time to be attacked<sup>18</sup> – and that enemy ears were listening even in New Zealand<sup>19</sup>. New Zealanders, the propaganda suggested, were extremely fortunate to be so far from the warfront, but had to remember that British civilians or soldiers leaving New Zealand's shores were not so lucky. The use of national geographic features in New Zealand's propaganda demonstrates a strong sense of New Zealand's individual place in the world and how that impacted the national war effort. New Zealand was a small nation far removed from the war, and although this presented challenges, it was something that the nation's propagandists implied New Zealanders should be grateful for.



Figure 2 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.561201>, viewed 14/04/16.



Figure 3 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.695436>, viewed 14/04/16.

Another factor of geography which influenced New Zealand's propaganda and featured in the nation's publicity was New Zealand's status as an island in the Pacific. New Zealand's material, like Australia's, changed in response to the beginning of the war in the Pacific, but unlike Australia New Zealand did not embrace the racist Japanese caricatures of American material<sup>20</sup>. Instead, New

<sup>16</sup> Address, 2 November 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>17</sup> Memo from Director of Security Intelligence to Assistant Secretary, 12 June 1943. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14; broadcast address, 17 November 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>18</sup> Broadcast address, 17 November 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>19</sup> Undated address, EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>20</sup> Stephanie Gibson, 'Display Folk: Second World War Poster at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa', *Tuhinga* 19 (2008), p. 14.

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Zealand began to emphasise its own place in the Pacific region. When the first New Zealand forces were deployed to the Pacific in 1942, Andrews stated that it would be 'regrettable' not to attain cinematic record of New Zealanders fighting in that area, even if it was necessary to ask the US to film it<sup>21</sup>. The next year, he argued that the Pacific front of the war was 'dramatically close' to home for New Zealanders, and it was a 'quick and easy matter' for an NFU cameraman to fly to the action. The New Zealand Legation in Washington produced posters (figures 2 and 3) which emphasised New Zealand's place in the Pacific with images of palm trees. "Our main interest, of course, is the Pacific," Paul wrote in 1945 after VE Day, going on to say that he hoped to produce material directly related to New Zealand's role there<sup>22</sup>. A press conference in the same year reiterated this, as it was stated that New Zealand's security was dependant on peace and stability in the Pacific in particular<sup>23</sup>. There was a definite belief amongst propagandists in New Zealand that the Pacific theatre was of great interest and importance to the New Zealand public as it was so close to home, and material was produced accordingly that could reflect the importance of New Zealand in the Pacific, and vice versa.

Like other countries involved in the conflict, New Zealand used its political leaders and prominent national figures as recognisable points of reference in propaganda. Welch asserts that iconic figures, whether real, historical, or mythical, can 'strengthen a point about national identity'<sup>24</sup>, and although this may not have presented as strongly in New Zealand as in other nations<sup>25</sup>, figures of importance were still a notable feature of the nation's material. The plan for a film about New Zealand's war effort listed the appearance of a number of prominent figures, including shots of the Cabinet in conference and Fraser delivering an address<sup>26</sup>, and Walter Nash, at the time Minister of Finance, was often involved in radio talks and film shorts promoting the War Loans and National Savings<sup>27</sup>. There was a public appreciation for these appearances by the nation's political leaders in publicity material and people expressed a desire to see more of them. A typical example was a letter to Paul from the managing director of the Ashburton Mail and Guardian Company, who specifically requested newspaper photograph blocks of 'our own Cabinet Ministers and members of the War Council'<sup>28</sup>. One particularly prominent figure in New Zealand material, especially in film, was Michael Joseph Savage. Although he died in 1940, Savage – who had been an almost universally loved Prime Minister – continued to appear in New Zealand propaganda as an inspirational figure; footage of his

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<sup>21</sup> Letter from Andrews to Paul, 16 October 1942. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>22</sup> Letter from Paul to C.A.F. Dixon, 24 May 1945. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 8.

<sup>23</sup> Press Conference Notes, 5 July 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>24</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda: Power and Persuasion*, London: The British Library, 2013, p. 45.

<sup>25</sup> Gibson, p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> 'New Zealand's War Effort – film proposed to be made in collaboration with Fox Movietone News'. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Paul to Nash, 11 May 1943. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>28</sup> Letter from Managing Director to Paul, 15 August 1940. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

funeral was inserted into New Zealand's version of the Australian film *Anzacs March Again*<sup>29</sup>. The footage was intended to deliver the message that 'though he has passed, his people carry on'<sup>30</sup> – a clear indication that Savage had become a figure in the national consciousness, a New Zealand personality whose status and legacy was able to be called upon by the nation's propagandists to inspire and strengthen the public.

It was not only illustrious politicians who were used as recognisable individuals in New Zealand's publicity material however. Local community leaders often spoke on the radio to appeal directly to people in their area<sup>31</sup>; during the Victory Loan campaign local figures gave five-minute statements at 7pm every day of the week except Mondays and Sundays<sup>32</sup>. A letter to Wilson from a member of the public suggested that regional talks be used to increase support for the Home Guard, recommending the mayors of Wellington and Lower Hutt, the local MP, and other 'local celebrities' be used to encourage sign-ups, indicating that the public believed local figures to be as effective as national politicians<sup>33</sup>. Although politicians had national prestige, local community leaders could appeal to listeners on a much more personal level. That New Zealand's propagandists utilised local and national figures in publicity material demonstrates an understanding that foreign personalities were no longer sufficient to inspire the people of New Zealand; in New Zealand local politicians and leaders had a significant appeal to the audience as New Zealanders. This is an indicator that by WWII New Zealanders had a strong connection to their national leaders – a sign of identification with New Zealand and the New Zealand identity.

On the whole, although national and local leaders often appeared prominently in publicity material, New Zealand propaganda tended to focus more on the everyday New Zealander<sup>34</sup>. Material that featured and appealed to New Zealand women was common, but does not seem to have featured any distinct national qualities that set it apart from similar material from overseas, with the possible exception of recruitment for the Women's Land Service, which is discussed below. There were also a handful of films aimed at women<sup>35</sup>, although these did not make a concerted effort to appeal to New Zealand women's nationalism and were noticeably generic, regardless of whether they came from Britain or were produced locally. The fact that the propaganda aimed at women – which there was a great deal of – did not make specific attempts to appeal to women as New Zealanders suggests a period-typical sexism, where women were seen as not intelligent or important enough to

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<sup>29</sup> 'New Zealand's War Effort – film proposed to be made in collaboration with Fox Movietone News'. EA1 543, 84/12/7; negative for 'Anzacs March Again' – New Zealand version. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>30</sup> 'New Zealand's War Effort – film proposed to be made in collaboration with Fox Movietone News'. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>31</sup> 1944 War Loan Conference – Headings for Addresses. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>32</sup> Report of Radio Sub-Committee. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>33</sup> Letter from G.J. Gillespie to Chairman, 24 October 1940 (referred by Wilson). PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>34</sup> Gibson, p. 14.

<sup>35</sup> Such as *War Jobs for Women* (1942) and *Behind Our Planes: The Women's Auxiliary Air Force* (1943).

require anything other than the generic material from overseas. National identity was, as discussed by Sinclair in his lecture *The Native Born* as well as many feminist historians<sup>36</sup>, something masculine, strongly tied to sport and war<sup>37</sup>; to men of early 20<sup>th</sup> century New Zealand women appeared to be simply ‘women’, and they were all the same, so there appears to have been no perceived need to create specifically New Zealand material. For this reason propaganda aimed at women is not discussed in depth in this study; Deborah Montgomerie’s article, as examined in the above literature



Figure 4 Rare example of propaganda in Te Reo. The poster reads: Stop! We appeal to you. The Maori Battalion calls to you to help. Food, uniforms, guns – ammunition – and other war weapons. These are needed by our soldiers – that they may prevail and not perish through lack – that the victory may be theirs and ours. Money alone can provide the weapons – without weapons we shall perish. Read the notice about National Savings. Go to the Post Office and lend your money. (Even a shilling week by week will help.) Source: <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/Object/707861>

review, covers material featuring women in great detail, arguing that wartime images of women served to reinforce traditional gender stereotypes rather than encouraging their dissolution<sup>38</sup> – a conclusion also drawn by Suryakanthie Chetty in her study on South African propaganda<sup>39</sup>.

One group of New Zealanders whose presence in propaganda material merits closer examination is Maori. Ron Palenski has argued that the presence of Maori was ‘a point of positive difference’ between New Zealand and other nations, ‘as much a distinctive part of New Zealand as its mountains and rivers’<sup>40</sup>. The appearance of Maori was therefore one of the most distinctly New Zealand features of the country’s propaganda. Britain certainly thought so – ‘let us see some Maoris’, asked one MOI request for New Zealand footage<sup>41</sup>. The Maori Battalion were prominent in New Zealand material – window displays featured the men of the 28<sup>th</sup> at rifle training in England<sup>42</sup>, and *Country Lads*, the first NFU film, featured soldiers of the Maori Battalion as well as shots of Apirana Ngata and

<sup>36</sup> Including Katie Pickles, qtd in Palenski, p. 13.

<sup>37</sup> Keith Sinclair, *The Native Born: The Origins of New Zealand Nationalism*, Massey University Occasional Publication No. 8, 1986, p. 11.

<sup>38</sup> Deborah Montgomerie, ‘Reassessing Rosie: World War II, New Zealand Women and the iconography of Femininity’, *Gender and History* 8:1 (1996), p. 127.

<sup>39</sup> Suryakanthie Chetty, ‘Imagining National Unity: South African Propaganda Efforts During the Second World War’, *Kronos: South African Histories* 38 (2012), p. 130.

<sup>40</sup> Palenski, p. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Telegram from High Commissioner to Fraser, 1 December 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>42</sup> NZEF Photographs for Display. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

Princess Te Kirihaehae Te Puea Herangi<sup>43</sup>. Material aimed specifically at Maori also existed, but was rare; Claudia Orange has stated that the Maori War Effort Organisation underwent an ‘intense’ publicity campaign, although most of the propaganda aimed at Maori was focussed on recruitment<sup>44</sup>. A broadcasting report from Wilson records that a ‘special talk’ was delivered by P.K. Paikea, minister in charge of the Maori war effort, to reach out to Maori over the airwaves<sup>45</sup>. During the Dig for Victory campaigns Maori community leaders were sent pamphlets detailing lists of vegetables which should be grown<sup>46</sup>, and pamphlets were distributed amongst children attending native schools<sup>47</sup>. For the most part, Te Reo Maori speakers were appealed to directly by speakers on marae. One example of print material in Te Reo (figure 4) depicts a Maori Battalion soldier who, the poster informs the viewer, ‘calls to you to help’. Another example was the pamphlet *New Zealand’s War Effort*, published in 1941, which was printed in Te Reo upon request from the Maori community<sup>48</sup>. Maori gave a significant contribution to the home front war effort – more than 27,000 Maori worked in essential industries<sup>49</sup>, tens of thousands of pounds were donated to the war loans, and by the latter half of the war Maori were growing thousands of acres of vegetables<sup>50</sup>. The amount of home front propaganda aimed at Maori specifically was small, but the contribution made by Maori was significant. While the extent to which this was a result of publicity is debatable<sup>51</sup>, the inclusion of Maori in New Zealand’s publicity campaigns certainly indicates the government’s awareness that the population they were addressing was not a homogenous British mass but rather had specific elements that would not be addressed in imported material.

While recognisable New Zealanders most commonly featured in verbal publicity material, in purely visual propaganda, such as posters and pamphlets, artists made use of iconic national symbols and motifs to appeal to New Zealanders. Malcolm Mulholland has written that symbols ‘invoke a deep sense of pride to galvanise a people toward a common cause’<sup>52</sup>, and New Zealand’s propagandists evidently understood this. An effort was made to use ‘recognised commercial artists’ to design

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<sup>43</sup> Lars Weckbecker, *Governing Visions of the Real*, Bristol: Intellect, 2015, p. 80.

<sup>44</sup> Maori were not subject to conscription. Claudia Orange, ‘The Price of Citizenship? The Maori War Effort’, in John Crawford (ed.), *Kia Kaha: New Zealand in the Second World War*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 238.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from Wilson to M.N. Shaw, 5 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>46</sup> Memo from Director-General to Minister of Agriculture, 17 February 1944. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>47</sup> Letter from A. Nixon to Director of Education, 25 June 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56; letter from Director of Education to Secretary, 8 November 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>48</sup> Draft letter to *Gisborne Herald* editor, 28 November 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/20; letter from Paul to Fraser, 11 November 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/20.

<sup>49</sup> Orange, p. 241.

<sup>50</sup> Tui Guilling, *The Crown, Rangatiratanga and the Maori War Effort on the Second World War: Preliminary Survey*, Wellington: Treaty of Waitangi Research Unit, 2005, p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> Orange’s essay suggests Maori’s ability to control their own affairs through the Maori War Effort Organisation was a significant factor in Maori enthusiasm for the war effort.

<sup>52</sup> Malcolm Mulholland, ‘Challenging Our Symbols of Nationhood’ in Alistair Fox (ed.), *Symbolising New Zealand*, Dunedin: Centre for Research on National Identity, 2011, p. 17.



Figure 5 Unusual example of the New Zealand flag in propaganda.  
Source: <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/Object/741952>, viewed 8/04/16.



Figure 6 A much less prominent use of the flag in a postcard celebrating New Zealand's manufacturing might.  
Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.471828>, viewed 8/04/16.

posters<sup>53</sup>, in part because they would be able to create images that would be distinctly New Zealand and appeal to a collective sense of national pride. One of the most obvious national symbols that appeared in New Zealand propaganda was the flag. David Welch asserted that a flag is the 'most striking symbol of nationhood' which represents the 'simple expression of national identity'<sup>54</sup>. Although a waving national flag on a propaganda poster evokes the idea of national freedom, Stephanie Gibson has argued that it was rare to see the New Zealand flag on propaganda posters<sup>55</sup>; this is, to a large extent, true. The most prominent example was the first poster produced for the National Savings campaign (figure 5), which has the flag as the dominant image and tells the viewer to help 'keep this flag flying over New Zealand'<sup>56</sup>, but other examples, such as figure 6, were also circulated. Another equally recognisable symbol used more commonly in New Zealand material is New Zealand itself, in the form of a geographical outline of the country. This image featured

<sup>53</sup> Memo from Director of Security Intelligence to Assistant Secretary to War Cabinet, 28 September 1943. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.. This is in distinct contrast to Jock Phillips's findings ('The Great War and New Zealand Nationalism: The Evidence of the War Memorials' in Judith Smart and Tony Wood (eds.), *An Anzac Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45*, Clayton: Monash Publications in History, 1992, p. 24) that New Zealand artists were rarely employed to sculpt New Zealand's WWI memorials; perhaps this is an indication of the advancement of national pride – or it may just be that war memorials were considered too important for New Zealand artists, requiring the talent of Britain, whereas propaganda material was more disposable and could therefore be given to 'lesser' New Zealand artists.

<sup>54</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 46.

<sup>55</sup> Gibson, p. 18.

<sup>56</sup> <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/Object/741952>, viewed 8/04/16.

prominently in a National Savings posters which instructed the viewer to ‘Protect New Zealand’ by investing in the war. In figures 7-9, battleship, planes, and soldiers are the dominant images in front of the maps of New Zealand, visually suggesting the military that protects the nation – which needs to be paid for, by those investing in National Savings<sup>57</sup>. The map, like the flag, was an undeniably New Zealand symbol which was instantly recognisable by the viewer and would help them to identify with the cause. Seeing a symbol that so intrinsically represented their country would presumably resonate with the viewer – a fact that the New Zealand propagandist was taking advantage of when creating and distributing these posters.

More specifically wartime symbols were also used to great effect in New Zealand’s visual propaganda, such as the image of the New Zealand soldier, which featured on a number of posters. Unlike the use of prominent local figures in film and on the radio, the use of images of personnel did not rely on recognition or status of the depicted individual. Rather, it followed the advice of John Grierson, who valued the use of ‘faces’ in propaganda – not to mark out individuals, but rather to depict ‘representative types embodying traits that helped to project a government’s vision of New Zealandness’<sup>58</sup>. This was seen clearly in the cover of a pamphlet advertising New Zealand patriotic funds (figure 10), featuring the faces of a soldier, a sailor, an airman, and a servicewoman. Although there was little to visually distinguish them as New Zealanders, the box in the foreground



Figure 7 Source: <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/Object/592836>, viewed 8/04/16.

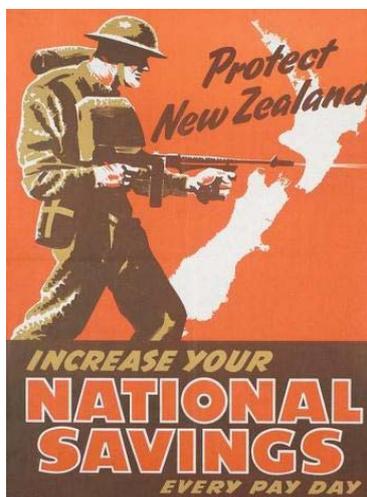


Figure 8 Source: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/33652>, viewed 8/04/16.

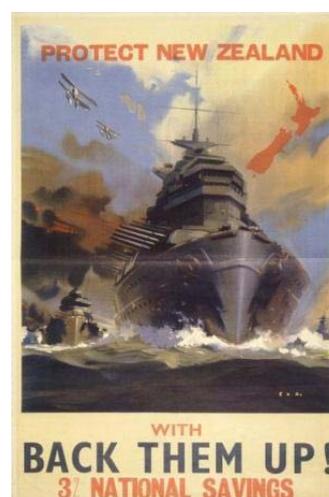


Figure 9 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.107444>, viewed 8/04/16.

<sup>57</sup> Gibson, p. 19.

<sup>58</sup> Peters, ‘Political and Alternative Film Making: 1940 to 1950’ in Diane Pivac with Frank Stark and Lawrence McDonald (eds.), *New Zealand Film: An Illustrated History*, Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2011, p. 105.



Figure 10 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.533984>. viewed 9/04/16.



Figure 11 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.498736>, viewed 9/04/16.

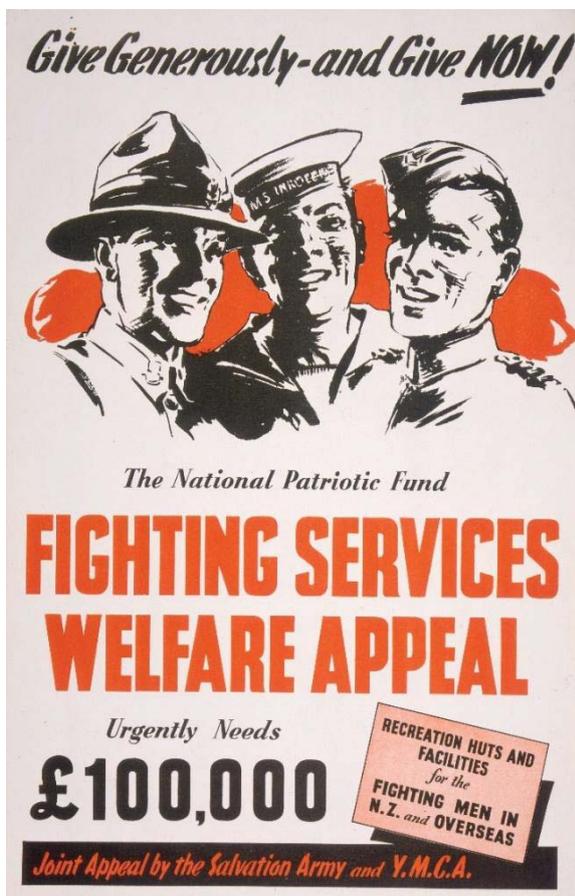


Figure 12 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.116194>, viewed 9/04/16.



Figure 13 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.548593>, viewed 9/04/16.

prominently labelled 'New Zealand Patriotic Funds' quickly marks them as such in the viewer's mind. Similarly, the 'New Zealand Fights' poster (figure 11) – which was not overtly advertising any cause – features a soldier, identified as a New Zealander only by the label on his shirt and the poster's slogan. The depiction of a New Zealand soldier with a machine gun – literally, New Zealand fighting – puts an image to the phrase and aims to inspire a general sense of national pride that the country is doing its part on the world stage<sup>59</sup>.

Soldiers in New Zealand propaganda were often made recognisable as New Zealanders not by the poster's context but by the details of their uniform – especially the distinctive lemon-squeezer hat. An appeal for the National Patriotic Fund (figure 12) used a similar technique to that of figure 10, with the 'faces' of the armed forces appearing at the top of the poster. This soldier, however, is particularly distinctive as he is depicted wearing the lemon-squeezer. First worn during WWI, the lemon-squeezer hat became a powerful symbol that hearkened back to the heroism and sacrifice of Gallipoli and was often used in recruitment posters to evoke the 'spirit of Anzac'<sup>60</sup>. Here, in a welfare appeal for soldiers, it suggests the sacrifice of those serving overseas who need the support of those at home. A much less official use of the iconic hat can be seen in a postcard (figure 13) warning against idle talk in a highly 'Kiwi', tongue-in-cheek manner. Drawn by official war artist Peter McIntyre, the image uses the lemon-squeezer to suggest camaraderie and simple 'Kiwi-ness' in an image that aims to get its 'don't talk' message across through humour rather than threat. These very different uses of the image of the lemon-squeezer hat both utilise its highly distinctive shape to appeal specifically to a New Zealand audience, who would recognise it immediately. The image of the 'Kiwi digger' was by WWII an established and recognisable symbol to New Zealanders. Jock Phillips, in his examination of WWI monuments constructed between the wars, discussed the uses of a statue of a New Zealand soldier, always distinguished by his lemon-squeezer ('invariably...a national symbol') although often little else<sup>61</sup>. Phillips's identification of the image of the Kiwi soldier in memorials indicates the recognisability of the symbol to New Zealanders post-WWI; this symbolism was effectively used by propagandists in WWII to appeal to the New Zealand public on a patriotic level.

Perhaps the most significant distinct New Zealand aspect that was exploited in the nation's propaganda material was New Zealand's status as a farming country which had the ability to produce food for the Empire. Propaganda material emphasised the green countryside and idyllic

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<sup>59</sup> <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1081552>, viewed 9/04/16.

<sup>60</sup> <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/780935>, viewed 9/04/16.

<sup>61</sup> Jock Phillips, 'The Great War and New Zealand Nationalism: The Evidence of the War Memorials' in Judith Smart and Tony Wood (eds.), *An Anzac Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45*, Clayton: Monash Publications in History, 1992, p. 20.



Figure 14 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.466468>, viewed 11/04/16.

rural nature as being a defining feature of New Zealand at peace, both pre-war and what the nation would return to when the war was won. Plans for the New Zealand version of the film *Anzacs March Again* listed shots of sheep in paddocks, milking, shearing, and rounding up cattle<sup>62</sup>. A poster with the caption ‘New Zealand fights for the future’ (figure 14) featured

barefooted children wandering along a country road in a pristine rural landscape, suggesting that New Zealand will return to its peaceful countryside nature once the war ends. The cumulative effect of such images was to reinforce the vision of New Zealand as a rural idyll in the public’s mind, an idea that dated back to the early colonial era<sup>63</sup>. The land and how it was used, propaganda reminded New Zealanders, was crucial to New Zealand’s nationhood; it was something to be cherished and protected, especially in the dark times of war. The material put out by the Publicity Department emphasised and built on the long-held national ideal that New Zealand was the closest thing to a farming paradise as it was possible to get.

Because of the nation’s highly rural nature, New Zealand material heavily emphasised the country’s role as a provider of food and other agricultural goods to the Empire and Allied nations. This was presented as something New Zealand excelled at, a unique contribution that the nation could make that was just as important as the military effort<sup>64</sup>. “In this land of ours we enjoy unique riches of soil and climate, and we can, in New Zealand, once more set the example of an outstanding effort towards winning the war,” wrote Walter Nash in a foreword to a Dig for Victory pamphlet. “We in New Zealand must strive, by every means in our power, to avoid any possibility that Britain may go short of food for her civilians or soldiers... we should be proud to join in a resolute effort to play our

<sup>62</sup>Negative for ‘Anzacs March Again’ – New Zealand version. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>63</sup> Palenski, pp. 5-6.

<sup>64</sup> A 1945 press conference emphasised that any military effort had to be balanced with New Zealand’s food production role. Press Conference Notes, 5 July 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.



Figure 15 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.254211>, viewed 11/04/16.



Figure 16 This Women's Land Service poster is typical of production propaganda. The middle section reads 'Food in the biggest gun in the whole war. Food to feed our own people, Great Britain, our Allies ... food to strengthen our drive to victory ... food to help the United Nations write the peace. An urgent call is made to all women over 17 years of age irrespective of present occupation to apply to help our farmers increase their output on dairy and general farms everywhere. Already over 900 girls are fulfilling this valuable service. It's a healthy life and a vital war job.' The poster then details the pay, conditions and benefits of the job. Source: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/33638>, viewed 11/04/16.

part on this vital food front.”<sup>65</sup>“We are the production army,” the mayor of Timaru asserted<sup>66</sup>, again linking the production of food to the military war effort. New Zealand created a great deal of material that referenced this idea; a pamphlet titled ‘Primary Production in New Zealand’ was circulated widely<sup>67</sup>, and a postcard (figure 15) which featured the typical New Zealand image of cows in a field celebrated the amount of foodstuffs produced, calling primary production the ‘sinews of war’. The propaganda campaigns to recruit women to the Land Service also displays hallmarks of the production publicity, as seen in figure 16, a recruitment poster that depicts a woman on a tractor as well as a paragraph extolling the rewarding nature of working on the land. Even towards the end of the war this focus on New Zealand’s production role did not ease; in a press conference in July 1945 it was emphasised that European countries were suffering food shortages and it was New Zealand’s

<sup>65</sup> ‘Dig for Victory – Vegetable Exhibition’ pamphlet, 1944. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from Mayor of Timaru to Nash, 18 September 1944. AEFZ W5727 22618 Box 201, 223/0208.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from Director-General to Paul, 4 July 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 7.

responsibility to 'make the most effective contribution possible towards feeding the people of the liberated countries in Europe'<sup>68</sup>. The conference notes go on to state that 'the effort being made and sustained in New Zealand is a considerable one in which we may take much credit'<sup>69</sup>.

Material emphasising and celebrating New Zealand's production role also made heavy use of what other nations had to say about New Zealand. Major-General R.P. Pakenham Walsh, in an interview published in the *Dominion* in 1945, said that Britain '[had] turned to New Zealand and...did not ask in vain', closing with: "When the full story can be told...the effort of this Dominion and the high place it holds in our supply organisation will surprise everyone...I'm sure when we tell the story the reaction of New Zealanders will be astonishment and pleasurable surprise."<sup>70</sup> This last section, on the clipping in the archival file, has been circled, presumably by a member of the Publicity Department. Such testimonials were published to foster a sense of national pride in New Zealand's effort. A document prepared for circulation in New Zealand by the Publicity Department labelled 'As Others See Us – What The World Says About New Zealand (draft)' referred to Ellsworth Huntington, a prominent American geographer, and his belief that 'the production of a New Zealand farm worker leads the world'<sup>71</sup>. Another document written for propaganda release titled 'Tributes to New Zealand's War Effort' quoted the Earl of Listowel as saying: "By putting every ounce of skill and energy into the production of meat, butter and cheese for [Britain] mainly, the New Zealanders have made it possible for us to keep our country rations at their present level. They have accepted a severe rationing of farm products for themselves in order that we may not go short."<sup>72</sup> This sacrifice New Zealanders were making by sending so much foodstuff overseas was also acknowledged in a press release that quoted Edward Stettinius, US administrator of the Lend-lease Program, who celebrated New Zealanders' willingness to send their plentiful food to American troops<sup>73</sup>.

The most prominent production propaganda in this regard was the Dig for Victory campaigns, held in 1943<sup>74</sup> and 1944-5<sup>75</sup>. Although many other nations, including Britain and Australia, had similar campaigns<sup>76</sup>, New Zealand's made heavy use of the aforementioned 'feeding the Empire' concept, creating a distinct set of material rather than simply using Britain's. The Dig for Victory campaigns were an attempt to get the public growing their own vegetables for their own consumption so that

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<sup>68</sup> Press conference notes, 5 July 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>69</sup> 'Navy'. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>70</sup> 'Tributes to New Zealand's War Effort'. PM22 8, 3/9; 'Dominion's Effort Praised – Contribution to Supply Needs'. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>71</sup> 'As Others See Us' draft. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>72</sup> 'Tributes to New Zealand's War Effort'. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>73</sup> 'America Appreciates New Zealand Civilian Sacrifice to Help Smash the Japs'. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>74</sup> Minutes, 28 May 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>75</sup> 'Dig for Victory Campaign, 1944-45. Slogan: 'Grow a victory garden''. AAFZ W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29.

<sup>76</sup> 'Dig for Victory' – National Home Gardening Campaign, 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

Gardeners "DIG FOR VICTORY" - SUGGESTED OUTLINE OF CAMPAIGN - 1943.				
		Shops.	Radio	Dept. of Agriculture.
May	11th Inaugural Conference		Scatter ads. leading up to 18th Inaugural Speech 25th Inspirational account of Wgtn. gardens.	Radio Instructional course drawn up with present radio and publication workers.
June	Dig plots for women	16th Entry forms available & posters displayed in all seedsmen & booksellers.	1st Inspirational account of British production. 8th Bright ideas for Wgtn gardens. 15th Competition & prizes announced.	
July	Voluntary advisers arranged.	One week booksellers feature gardening books	Weekly slogan repeated daily: Advs. give potted advice and call attention to	
Aug.	Travelling exhibition arranged.	Shop window garden exhibition	functions, demonstrations talks, etc. Occasional evening series of direct practical instruction.	Travelling exhibition prepared. Shop window demonstration prepared.
Sept.	Local shows - with special early vegetable prizes.			Demonstrations at local shows.
Oct.		Second Booksellers' week.	Progress reports on Competition gardens.	
Nov.	Combined show arranged (including preliminary judging of gardens.)	Exhibits of prizes etc. publicising Show & Competition.	Prize-giving relayed.	Demonstration at Show Judging of Garden finalists.
Dec.		Follow-up	Follow-up with campaign for Autumn crops.	

Figure 17 The plan for the 1943 Dig for Victory campaign, which heavily focusses on radio propaganda and public displays, demonstrations and exhibitions.

Source: AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

commercially grown produce could be sent overseas without causing shortages for the New Zealand home front<sup>77</sup>. "There will only be enough if we all help grow them," read the slogan at the bottom of the campaign's committee's letters<sup>78</sup>. The objective was to 'grow as many vegetables as possible wherever there is land' by encouraging everyone to get involved<sup>79</sup>. More specifically, in 1943 the aim was to be able to send £9,000,000 worth of foodstuffs – mostly vegetables – to the US military, in addition to providing for New Zealand's own armed forces, without causing severe shortages on the home front<sup>80</sup>. Getting every household in New Zealand to be self-sufficient was an ambitious goal which required a comprehensive propaganda plan. Minutes of the meeting inaugurating the 1943 campaign emphasised this, stating that the campaigners had to 'get the public in the frame of mind ready to receive these things', which necessitated 'the fullest possible publicity': "We have to get the people vegetable minded."<sup>81</sup> It was also considered important to use publicity to educate people on how to grow vegetables, from planning to harvesting<sup>82</sup>. The Dig for Victory campaigns utilised all the available media that other campaigns did, and were planned in much the same way as other New Zealand propaganda efforts (figure 17). Radio (including printed copies of broadcasted talks),

<sup>77</sup> Letter from Dominion Secretary to C.E. Beeby, 27 September 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Letter from Superintendent of Technical Education to Lady Principal, 26 October 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>80</sup> Memo from Secretary to Head and Sole Teachers, 10 September 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>81</sup> Minutes, 28 May 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>82</sup> Letter from Minister of Agriculture to Robinson, 9 February 1944. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

posters, and pamphlets were the most common mediums used<sup>83</sup>, but the campaign revolved around heavy use of displays, demonstrations, and competitions<sup>84</sup> to show the public what to do and give them motivation to do it. In this way, the Dig for Victory campaigns were highly localised and provincial, fitting for a campaign that was focussed on people's backyards. The Dig for Victory campaign, unlike any other war publicity, was pushed especially hard in schools, in order to foster an interest in vegetable growing in children who would go home and involve their household in the effort<sup>85</sup>. Instructional films were circulated through the Education Department<sup>86</sup>, and efforts were made to place publicity for the campaigns in the School Journal and Education Gazette<sup>87</sup>. Growing foodstuffs to help feed the Allies was an important contribution that occurred at a level at which general households, including children, could be involved.

The material produced for the Dig for Victory campaigns had much in common with the production propaganda mentioned above; publicity referred to New Zealand's 'responsibilities' as an agricultural nation to help feed the Allied forces. The Dig for Victory material, however, gave the public a specific goal to help achieve this. "The God-given fertility of our soil must now be employed to furnish the ever-increasing demands from the cookhouses of the allied fronts," proclaimed a pamphlet advertising a vegetable exhibition, a statement which echoes the generic production propaganda. The pamphlet however goes on to say: "How may this be accomplished? Only by inducing each and every householder to grow as far as may be possible sufficient for his full needs."<sup>88</sup> An advertisement for an exhibition in Wellington referred to 'New Zealand's duty to ship produce extensively to other countries'<sup>89</sup>; a circular letter stated that 'these obligations must be fulfilled' even though they would 'tax to the utmost the productive capacity of the commercial gardens' resulting in a 'probable deficiency in supplies for the general public'<sup>90</sup>. Messages like these built on the ideas of New Zealand's place as a producer for the Allied world and used the fostered sense of responsibility to rouse people into action. In this way, an aspect of New Zealand's national identity was appealed to in order to achieve the war effort required of the New Zealand public.

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<sup>83</sup> 'Dig for Victory Campaign, 1944-45. "DIG A VICTORY GARDEN"', 18 August 1944. AAFZ W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29; 'Dig for Victory Campaign, 1944-45. Slogan: 'Grow a victory garden'''. AAFZ W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29; minutes, 24 August 1944. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12; minutes, 1 July 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>84</sup> 'Dig for Victory Campaign, 1944-45: Suggested Proposals for Local Action'. AAFZ W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29.

<sup>85</sup> Letter from Dominion Secretary to C.E. Beeby, 27 September 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>86</sup> 'Dig for Victory Campaign, 1944-45. Slogan: 'Grow a victory garden'''. AAFZ W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29.

<sup>87</sup> Letter from Dominion Secretary to C.E. Beeby, 27 September 1943. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>88</sup> 'Dig for Victory – Vegetable Exhibition' pamphlet, 1944. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>89</sup> Dig for Victory – Exhibition of Vegetables and Flowers, February 1944. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.

<sup>90</sup> Letter from W.J. Campbell to Head Teachers, 16 June 1943. AAFZ W5704 412 Box 540, Ag. 93/3/12.



Figure 18 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.471825>, viewed 13/04/16.

While agricultural production was by far the biggest war industry on the home front, it was not the only one. A significant amount of war manufacturing also took place in New Zealand, and this too was featured in the country's propaganda. "New Zealand is proud of her place as a free and sovereign nation of the British Commonwealth," proclaimed a postcard advertising New Zealand's secondary production efforts (figure 18). "Through freedom she has grown from strength to strength, not only in agriculture but in industry." The government put considerable effort into publicising this industrial effort, and publicity concerning secondary industries became prominent. Window displays were a common medium for this; a set of 27 photographs depicting munitions manufacturing was circulated around the nation while another demonstrated the production of boots from the farm to the factory to

the front<sup>91</sup>, with 500,000 pairs being sent to American troops alone<sup>92</sup>. There was also print material distributed, with the Manufacturer's Association providing photographs and illustrated booklets showing secondary industries for publicity<sup>93</sup>. These depictions of manufacturing were popular, particularly the window displays amongst shops – Petties', a drapers in Gisborne, wrote to Paul requesting any display material depicting manufacturing, 'particularly those of lines in which we deal'<sup>94</sup>. Secondary industries were not as strongly tied to New Zealand's cultural identity as working the land was, yet the efforts in this area were still highly publicised. It could be that showing the growth in manufacturing and stressing the significant output of New Zealand's factories was a way to emphasise that New Zealand was making a contribution to the war effort that far surpassed its status as a 'little' country. By demonstrating how New Zealand was sending products such as boots, blankets, and munitions to American soldiers – even though New Zealand's factories could never compare to the manufacturing might of the United States – the publicity material added to the sense of national pride in New Zealand's contribution to the war effort.

<sup>91</sup> 'Window displays of munitions manufacturing'. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>92</sup> 'As Others See Us' draft. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>93</sup> Memo from Manager to Paul, 4 July 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 7; 'Hon. Minister of Supply and Munitions', 27 January 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>94</sup> Letter from Petties' Ltd to Paul, 1 October 1945. E2 93, 29/17/56.

Aspects of life on the New Zealand home front were evidently used to great effect in the nation's propaganda, and appeared to resonate with the viewers who recognised their own experiences and values in the material. However, even the role of something as important as food production in propaganda had to be balanced with an emphasis on the war itself and the portrayal of the nation's military efforts<sup>95</sup>. Therefore, an extremely important and distinctive aspect of the New Zealand propaganda campaign was the portrayal of New Zealand soldiers. The troops overseas featured prominently in New Zealand material, and were perhaps the most compelling and powerful publicity tool that New Zealand propagandists had at their disposal, which they were aware of. The Naval Secretary in 1940 asserted that the movement of troops was very much a 'family matter'<sup>96</sup>, and Fraser wrote that news about where the troops were worked as a 'stimulus to...the New Zealand war effort'<sup>97</sup>. Efforts were made to film any significant military events – such as the embarkation of troops or displays by the services – as the footage was considered highly useful as propaganda<sup>98</sup>, and any film footage of the New Zealand troops that was taken by overseas crews was requested so it could be circulated in New Zealand<sup>99</sup>. Andrews wrote in 1942 that such material was effective propaganda as it created 'a heartening picture of in the public mind of the very large share that this small country is taking in the war effort'<sup>100</sup>. In a nation with such a small population, when most people knew someone serving overseas, any material that featured the New Zealand troops was going to command attention, and this knowledge is likely the main reason that such a considerable amount of publicity material referenced 'the boys overseas'.

The nation's propagandists knew that the public would respond strongly to material that referred to the troops, and they were right. It was consistently popular with the public; a Publicity Department report estimated that window displays about the New Zealand armed forces gained the most attention, citing a 'typical comment' as: "I must admit that I am amazed at the interest shown by the public towards these photos", from the manager of Hunt's in Hastings<sup>101</sup>. The director of Auckland Cinemas Ltd – which represented eight theatres – told Paul that any item that featured the troops was immensely popular with cinema audiences<sup>102</sup>. Fraser asserted that by far the most popular

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<sup>95</sup>Telegrams from Minister of External Affairs to NZ Minister in Washington, 18 June 1945 and 9 June 1945. EA1 551, 84/12/23. The Minister of External Affairs expressed a concern that the emphasis on food production was detracting from the public's attention and contribution to the continuing military effort in the Pacific. This necessitated propaganda that would maintain the public's sense of obligation to continue supporting the military war effort; the propaganda that eventually resulted from this concern was the publication of *War Record*, which did not occur until 1946, meaning that although this publication was examined for this study it was not included in any detail.

<sup>96</sup>Letter from Naval Secretary, 8 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>97</sup>Telegram from Fraser to Australian PM, 8 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>98</sup>Minutes, 29 October 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>99</sup>Letter from Andrews to Paul, 1 October 1942. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

<sup>101</sup>'Window Displays', 5 March 1942. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3.

<sup>102</sup>Letter from Director to Paul, 2 February 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

regular radio show broadcast on war matters was 'Anzacs Calling Home', which consisted of messages from overseas troops<sup>103</sup>. Hearing directly from the men, and potentially from their loved one, had a significant effect on the morale of those at home and the feature was possibly the most popular publicity material in New Zealand – listeners, James Shelley reported, begrudged every moment taken up by the announcer instead of 'the boys'<sup>104</sup>. Requests for material – especially film – that featured New Zealand troops were common; the general manager of Theatre Management Ltd, for example, asked Paul whether any newsreel footage of the troops was available<sup>105</sup>. Clearly, the ability for the public to catch a glimpse or hear the voice of their loved ones overseas – something which had not been possible in previous wars – was a powerfully important aspect of publicity material. Using the New Zealand troops in propaganda therefore guaranteed a captive audience, probably more so than with any of the other uniquely New Zealand references that were used.

Publicity material often celebrated the heroic efforts of New Zealand's troops, implicitly telling the New Zealand public that they should be proud of 'their boys' as a way to not only raise morale but also to encourage greater contribution to the war effort at home, to match that of the New Zealand men overseas. Publications detailing the troops' 'stirring exploits' were circulated, including 'Battle for Crete' and 'Campaign in Greece'; these surveys were narratives of the NZEF's efforts which included photographs and maps and were intended to showcase the bravery and loyalty of the New Zealand servicemen to create a deep sense of pride in the New Zealand reader<sup>106</sup>. Statements from overseas leaders praising the troops were published, such as New Zealand High Commissioner to London Sir Harry Batterbee's assertion that the NZEF had 'covered itself with glory' and the Navy and RNZAF had 'made the name of New Zealand famous in all the countries of the earth'<sup>107</sup>, and Field Marshall Montgomery's declaration that no soldiers of the Empire 'were finer than the fighting men from New Zealand'<sup>108</sup>. Montgomery went on to say that the 'full story of [the NZEF's] achievements will make men and women in the home country swell with pride'<sup>109</sup>, which, of course, was the point of publishing such accolades. This practise of publishing foreign praise had an historical precedent; Keith Sinclair has described how newspapers published comments from generals and officers in both the Boer War and WWI<sup>110</sup> – a publicity tactic that by its third usage in WWII was evidently proven to be effective. Along with such tributes and stories, the government released statements celebrating the military honours bestowed to New Zealand troops. "I am sure,"

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<sup>103</sup>Telegram from Fraser to High Commissioner, 4 August 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>104</sup>Memo from Shelley to Permanent Head, 29 July 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>105</sup>Letter from Theatre Management Ltd General Manager to Paul, 7 August 1941. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>106</sup>'Battle for Crete, Story of NZ Division' – Another Interim Survey. EA1 551, 84/12/24.

<sup>107</sup>'Tributes to New Zealand's War Effort', 16 July 1954. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>108</sup>Field Marshall Montgomery quote. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Sinclair, *The Native Born*, p. 3.

the Minister of Defence said when releasing the numbers of award recipients, “that the whole country will feel a justifiable pride in the magnificent record of achievement.”<sup>111</sup> Lars Weckbecker, in his history of the NFU, has pointed out how ‘our boys’ were used to advance national identification, as their image ‘serve[d] to advance a sense of pride, faith and heroism’<sup>112</sup>. This was evidently true not only of film, where the faces of New Zealand’s troops could be shown and their voices heard, but in various other forms of propaganda as well.

As such tales of heroism and sacrifice were published, the public were told that they had to ‘back up the boys overseas’<sup>113</sup> by contributing to the war effort in various ways. The mayor of Timaru wrote a speech which encouraged listeners to give to the War Loan by telling them that returning soldiers will ‘expect to find that we have protected their money and their security...there must be jobs waiting for them’.<sup>114</sup> In a similar vein, an address to New Plymouth rotary clubs by M.R. Newell reminded listeners ‘how well the boys overseas are doing their part’: “What an inspiration this should be to us to do our duty in connection with this War Loan.”<sup>115</sup> References to the New Zealand troops often suggested that New Zealanders at home had to be ‘worthy’<sup>116</sup> of the sacrifices being made by soldiers overseas by actively contributing to the war effort.

Having established this idea in the public’s consciousness, other publicity material worked to remind them of it by keeping the New Zealand troops visible at home. Window displays heavily featured New Zealand troops; a special display showing troops in Greece and Crete, for example, was circulated, depicting the men travelling to and from Greece as well as training and fighting scenes<sup>117</sup>. This set was made up of pictures originally intended for reproduction in newspapers, but they proved so popular that they were deemed worthy of nationwide exhibition<sup>118</sup>. The fact that Paul specified that prominent place also had to be given to a National Savings poster within the exhibition demonstrates that the display of troop photographs was in itself a subtle form of propaganda. Film was also an effective medium for conveying this message; plans for the New Zealand version of *Anzacs March Again* listed numerous shots of the NZEF training, parading, and departing<sup>119</sup>. The men of the NZEF were ever-present in New Zealand’s propaganda, a feature which could appeal directly to New Zealand in a way material from overseas would be unlikely to do. If artistic depictions of the

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<sup>111</sup> ‘Draft Statement’. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>112</sup> Weckbecker, p. 88.

<sup>113</sup> Help to Win The War Campaign Window Display Contest, 6th to 11th October, 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

<sup>114</sup> Letter from Mayor of Timaru to Nash, 18 September 1944. AEFZ W5727 22618 Box 201, 223/0208.

<sup>115</sup> R. Newell speech notes. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Letter from Paul to T.V. Tate, 24 July 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>118</sup> Letter from Paul to the Manager, 18 September 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

<sup>119</sup> ‘New Zealand’s War Effort – film proposed to be made in collaboration with Fox Movietone News’. EA1 543, 84/12/7; negative for ‘Anzacs March Again’ – New Zealand version. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

## Chapter Two

New Zealand soldiers were important in visual propaganda, as discussed above, then material that showed the soldiers themselves – their real faces and voices – was vital. No other country's material could show New Zealanders 'their boys', which was at the end of that day what most New Zealanders at home wanted to see. Any war effort propaganda that encouraged saving, growing, producing or supporting would have been less effective if the public were not engaged enough in the war effort to listen, and depictions of New Zealand troops at their best – training hard, succeeding, smiling – was possibly the most valuable publicity that Paul's department could produce, as it showed New Zealanders what they wanted to see: their boys, happy and making their people proud.

This chapter is not a comprehensive list of all the propaganda and publicity that New Zealand produced during WWII; rather, it is an attempt to summarise the distinctive features of the nation's home front which were utilised by the Publicity Department and other propagandists to appeal to the public's sense of cultural identity. The examples in this chapter demonstrate the ways in which the nation's propagandists used aspects that were recognisable to the average New Zealanders – the country's geographical features, well-known figures and faces, visual images – in order to more effectively deliver a propaganda message. As will be discussed in greater depth in the concluding discussion, the government's use of New Zealand features in propaganda material indicated an awareness of the value of such features in the minds of the public. Propaganda in wartime is most effective when it appeals to the patriotic consciousness of the audience, and the fact that New Zealand material featured distinctly New Zealand aspects, such as the flag or the countryside, indicates that there was an identification with a national character amongst the country's public. This is particularly evident when the use of distinct New Zealand features is compared to the presence of Britain in New Zealand's propaganda material, as the next chapter will demonstrate.

### Chapter Three

#### Empire and Edits: British Material in New Zealand

In order to assess the extent to which New Zealand had developed its own distinctive national identity by WWII it is also necessary to examine the reverse – how significant was the identification with Britain at this point? The part played by propaganda material imported from Britain, and how it was used in New Zealand, can provide an understanding of the extent to which New Zealanders still saw themselves as British subjects, and the extent to which the New Zealand identity was prevalent by comparison. British material was requested by New Zealand and used to supplement the New Zealand material in generic campaigns. MOI material was used for a number of reasons – it was cheap, effective, and popular, and could be used as an example for the New Zealand Publicity Department. MOI material that already featured New Zealanders – usually due to an Empire focus – was often more easily used in New Zealand than more generic British material, although MOI material was most effective in New Zealand when it was altered by the Publicity Department to suit the national consciousness, normally by adding references to New Zealanders. There were a number of issues that prevented British material from being more useful in New Zealand, and it is evident that, on the whole, New Zealand material was preferred for its practicality and its relevance to New Zealanders.

The relationship between New Zealand and Britain remained significant in New Zealand's national identity during WWII and beyond. Jock Phillips described the nationalism that emerged out of WWI as 'a nationalism of a loyal colony...of Britons of the South'<sup>1</sup>. Keith Sinclair argued that an Empire identity 'was rarely felt to be incompatible with a separate national identity'<sup>2</sup>, and Ron Palenksi has taken this idea further, describing the difference between a national identity and nationalism. Palenksi wrote that identity in New Zealand came before true nationalism, when Britain stopped being part of New Zealand's identity<sup>3</sup>. New Zealand national identity, as Palenksi wrote, 'developed in tandem with the concept of imperial nationalism under which citizens of New Zealand saw themselves as both New Zealanders and British'<sup>4</sup>. As Sinclair wrote, by WWII New Zealanders did not see themselves as British in terms of being English or Scottish<sup>5</sup>; their British identity was instead intrinsically connected to their conception of themselves as New Zealanders.

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<sup>1</sup>Jock Phillips, 'The Great War and New Zealand Nationalism: The Evidence of the War Memorials' in Judith Smart and Tony Wood (eds.), *An Anzac Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45*, Clayton: Monash Publications in History, 1992, p. 23

<sup>2</sup>Keith Sinclair, *The Native Born: The Origins of New Zealand Nationalism*, Massey University Occasional Publication No. 8, 1986, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ron Palenksi, *The Making of New Zealanders*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2012, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>Sinclair, *The Native Born*, p. 8.

A significant amount of propaganda and publicity material from Britain was shown in New Zealand, partly because New Zealand requested it. It was not uncommon for the Publicity Committee, when arranging publicity for certain campaigns, to decide to use British material. In 1941, when the War Cabinet initiated the Safety for Shipping campaign, a member of the Committee brought up the fact that three British films on idle talk had recently been received by the Department, and they agreed to use these in the campaign<sup>6</sup>; for the same campaign, the Publicity Department circulated cartoons about careless talk by British cartoonist Fougasse<sup>7</sup>, believing that careless talk 'may not be so serious a matter in this outpost'<sup>8</sup> and therefore did not require specific New Zealand material. Sometimes Paul or others sought out British material for certain campaigns – in 1943, the Committee decided to try and find MOI films for a rationing campaign<sup>9</sup> – however, there are few recorded instances of New Zealand propagandists deciding to use overseas material for campaigns that were not delivering very general messages. Campaigns that told the public to be careful of idle talk or mindful of rationing dealt with generic concerns, typical of countries at war, and so Paul and others were comfortable using foreign material, but for more nationally-specific campaigns, such as Dig for Victory or those focussing on production, efforts were made to use all local material. It could be implied that British material was preferred only when a direct appeal to New Zealanders was not thought to be any more effective than generic material– which was uncommon.

Far more common than New Zealand requesting propaganda was Britain simply sending it and telling the government to do with it what they would. As early as 1940, the MOI offered to send most of their films<sup>10</sup> along with any material filmed by their film units to New Zealand<sup>11</sup>. Harry Batterbee, the British High Commissioner of New Zealand, also sent a great deal of material to Paul during the war. In 1940, for example, he offered Paul seven new MOI posters<sup>12</sup> and 5000 copies of pamphlet *Might of the Army* in 1940<sup>13</sup>, as well as up to 10,000 copies per month of the MOI's publication *War Pictorial*<sup>14</sup>. Paul agreed that 10,000 copies could easily be distributed each month, and also requested that copies of *Neptune*, which focussed mostly on sea warfare<sup>15</sup>, be sent in

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<sup>6</sup> Minutes, 3 September 1941. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>7</sup> Memo from Paul to Fraser, 15 October 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/12/14.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Paul to Peter Kirkcaldie, 17 June 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>9</sup> Minutes, 21 December 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>10</sup> Publicity committee meeting notes, 19 August 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>11</sup> Memo from Official Secretary to External Affairs Secretary, 15 August 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Batterbee to Paul, 27 August 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from Batterbee to Paul, 20 September 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Batterbee to Paul, 27 August 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

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similar numbers<sup>16</sup>. Batterbee also sent the photographs which formed the first war exhibition shown in London for display in New Zealand<sup>17</sup>.

Britain was extremely eager to have their MOI's material sent to and seen in New Zealand. "We are very anxious that the films we make here and send out to New Zealand should be of the maximum use in the Dominion, reaching as many cinema screens and people as possible," the MOI told New Zealand in 1944<sup>18</sup>. British archival sources would likely reveal whether this was simply an attempt to be helpful, or whether it was more paternalistic – a notion that New Zealand was not capable of producing its own material of any quality, and had to be provided for. Regardless, New Zealand was, for the most part, happy to receive British material, although it was specified that overseas propaganda should be distributed by Paul and his Department rather than being sent directly from England to the New Zealand exhibitors<sup>19</sup>. This was possibly because the nuances of the nation's companies, organisations and individuals were far better understood by the Publicity Department than the foreign MOI, and it would allow Paul and his office to have control over what material went where, or was not released at all. In this way, New Zealand could have control over its own propaganda campaigns, even if the material was being produced in Britain.

Often, British publicity supplemented the New Zealand material, adding bulk and keeping the war effort in the public eye without directly addressing New Zealanders or imparting any new propaganda messages. New Zealand radio broadcast special talks recorded by the BBC, but only 'if considered of sufficient interest to New Zealand'<sup>20</sup>. As 217 of these talks were broadcast between February and April 1942<sup>21</sup>, much of the material from Britain was evidently of interest. New Zealand cinemas also screened the MOI's *Weekly Film News* alongside the *Weekly Review*<sup>22</sup>, and MOI shorts were attached to various cinema programmes<sup>23</sup>. However, these British films were not considered as important as New Zealand productions – a report from the Film Exchanges Association stated that MOI films were circulated around the country much more slowly than NFU films and missed many theatres<sup>24</sup>. It was decided that the standard MOI films did not need to be distributed in the same way as NFU films, and that trying to get every one into every theatre would 'involve the setting up of an expensive organisation which is not warranted'<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Memo from Paul to Batterbee, 30 August 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from Batterbee to Paul, 7 May 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>18</sup> Memo from Official Secretary to Secretary of External Affairs, 23 October 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>19</sup> Letter from Paul to Batterbee, 3 April 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 2.

<sup>20</sup> Letter from Wilson to Mr. M.N. Shaw, 5 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Minutes, 11 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Paul to managers, 28 January 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Film Exchanges Association of New Zealand to Paul, 4 March 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

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A large amount of print publicity from Britain was also used to supplement what was being produced in New Zealand, such as the blocks of photographs that were circulated around the newspapers by Paul<sup>26</sup> and various posters, which Paul stated were ‘helpful in conveying ideas for publicity’<sup>27</sup> – helpful, rather than ‘vital’ or ‘necessary’. Pamphlets from the MOI were sent to MPs, unions, clubs, and other organisations, but were not considered relevant or important enough to warrant nationwide distribution, as were most New Zealand-produced pamphlets<sup>28</sup>. Often, New Zealand could avoid the cost of producing publicity containing general information by using British material; the first MOI pamphlet that was circulated in New Zealand, for example, was titled *The Outbreak of War* and gave factual – though highly biased – information about the events leading up to September 1939, including speeches and statements made by Allied leaders when war was declared<sup>29</sup>. It was considered an ‘important and historical record’<sup>30</sup> and the Department was out of copies by December 1939<sup>31</sup>, with many requests for further copies<sup>32</sup>. As publicity, it was clearly valuable and the story of the war’s beginnings would not have been told more effectively by a New Zealand publication, yet it was not vital war effort propaganda. This is typical of New Zealand’s use of unaltered British material – as supplementary publicity that added to the overall impact of the propaganda without defining it.

There were various reasons as to why New Zealand’s propagandists chose to utilise British material. Cost was one aspect; as mentioned above resources were often tight in New Zealand and the British propaganda machine had a much bigger budget. The Publicity Committee discussed this at a meeting with theatre managers and Batterbee, with Robertson stating that film prints coming from Britain would cost less than from Australia and nothing could be produced in New Zealand for a comparative cost – and that it would yield better results to source them from Britain ‘both from an economic and exhibition point of view’<sup>33</sup>. Another practical reason was that British material on general subjects oftendid the job perfectly well, freeing up New Zealand producers for more specifically national material. Paul stated in 1942 that few posters were being printed in New Zealand as ‘many of the excellent posters received from the Ministry of Information serve our purposes admirably’<sup>34</sup>. There was also the fact that Britain was extremely good at creating propaganda. Writing about the quasi-documentary feature film *Target for Tonight*, Paul said that the film was ‘an outstanding production...of high publicity and entertainment value’ which deserved ‘the

<sup>26</sup> Letter from Paul to Roma Gillespie, 8 February 1944. EA1 547, 84/12/13.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Paul to Mrs D. Miller, 26 November, 1943. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 6.

<sup>28</sup> Minutes, 9 September 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>29</sup> Letter from Paul to NZ Manufacturer’s Federation Secretary, 29 November 1939. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>30</sup> Letter from NZ Farmers’ Union Provincial Secretary to Paul, 25 January 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>31</sup> Letter from Deputy Director of Publicity to A.W. Nisbet, 12 December 1939. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>32</sup> Distribution list. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. J. Calcroft, 11 December 1942. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 4.

utmost publicity because of its quality, purpose, and indirect assistance to men overseas'<sup>35</sup>. When Britain was capable of putting out such high-quality propaganda – especially in a medium like film, which was particularly challenging to New Zealand – it made sense to utilise what was being offered at low costs.

British material was also used less directly as an example for New Zealand's propagandists to follow. It was common to use the material and methods used in Britain as a guideline when creating material locally. Descriptions of what was being done in Britain were circulated around New Zealand's propagandists as an inspiration and guideline. When combatting careless talk, Paul suggested a series of shorts in which 'dangerous' letters were read out to show what should not be sent, saying that depictions of the censorship staff at work had been used in Britain<sup>36</sup>. In his report

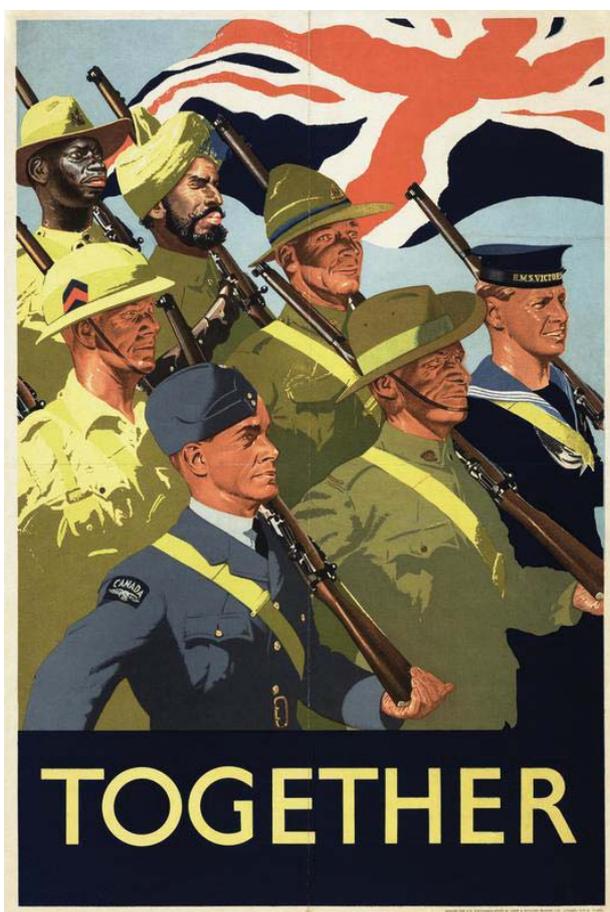


Figure 1 Britain's 'Together' poster, featuring a New Zealand soldier in the distinctive lemon squeezer hat. Source: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27971>, viewed 25/04/2016.

on broadcasting in New Zealand, prominent broadcaster Ian Mackay singled out the BBC radio newsreel as the 'most successful and ambitious daily newsreel undertaken by radio anywhere in the world' and stated that 'there is great scope for a similar or modified form of news broadcast in New Zealand'<sup>37</sup>. British models were often closely followed in New Zealand: when *Target for Tonight* was released in New Zealand Paul advertised the film in the same way as Britain did<sup>38</sup>; when negotiating how to distribute films around the country and who would cover screening costs, Theatre Management's J.H. Mason said it was important to 'ascertain...what the contract was at Home and whether the British exhibitor was being supplied free of cost', and a decision was made with the acknowledgement that 'it was the practice at Home'<sup>39</sup>. New Zealand also followed Britain's example when dealing with

<sup>35</sup> Letter from Paul, 7 January 1942. EA1 551, 84/12/22.

<sup>36</sup> Letter from Paul to Andrews, 13 October 1943. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>37</sup> Letter from Mackay to the Controller, 10 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from Paul to E.J. Brereton, 7 November 1941. EA1 551, 84/12/22.

<sup>39</sup> Minutes, 6 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

security publicity, sending guides to editors on what should and should not be published 'following the example of the United Kingdom Ministry of Information'<sup>40</sup>. By using British material as an example to follow, New Zealand could take advantage of the MOI's experience and skill in creating propaganda while still being able to create material that was relevant to New Zealanders.

British material was considered most effective in New Zealand when it acknowledged New Zealander's contribution to the Empire effort. A good example of such material was the MOI short *From the Four Corners*, in which Leslie Howard, a renowned English actor, spoke to soldiers from New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. Over a pint in London he learnt about their lives and countries, asking why they signed up to fight for Britain. They all denied that they enlisted solely 'to answer the motherland's call to arms', though Howard suggested that they were in uniform to protect the Empire's 'ancient foundations and most worthy liberty'.<sup>41</sup> Other material also reflected such themes of unity and the Empire's duty to fight for its 'motherland'. In 1940, the MOI periodical *Illustrated* produced an issue that exclusively covered the Empire, of which New Zealand requested 5000 copies<sup>42</sup>. One significant piece of British propaganda with an Empire focus was the 'Together' poster (figure 1). This poster was deemed 'suitable for use in New Zealand' by the Publicity Committee<sup>43</sup> and so Paul requested 1200 copies for distribution in NZ<sup>44</sup>. It proved popular; a schoolmaster who had requested patriotic posters from Paul expressed great disappointment when the 'Together' poster was not amongst those sent and wrote to Paul asking for it specifically, stating that it was the one he 'wanted most for its very fine message'<sup>45</sup>. 'Empire' was clearly still important to New Zealanders, a midway point between British and New Zealand identities. British material that was about the Empire, including New Zealand, appears to have been considered more relevant to the New Zealand public than that which had no connections to New Zealand.

British material that focussed on the Empire was far more likely to feature New Zealanders directly, and therefore was more commonly circulated unchanged in New Zealand. This was especially noticeable in the window displays sent from Britain. The Battle of Britain display had a section titled 'Partners', which consisted of a number of photographs of dominion and colony nations contributing to the air effort – "Britain is not alone in this battle," the captions read. "Members of the family partnership have made it their war too."<sup>46</sup> The set included a photograph captioned 'New

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<sup>40</sup> Chiefs of Staff Committee – Service Publicity, 8 March 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record\\_id=101078](http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record_id=101078), viewed 25/04/2016.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from Batterbee to Paul, 30 July 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>43</sup> Minutes, 1 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Paul to Batterbee, 12 November 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from Russell Able to Paul, 4/ October 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

<sup>46</sup> 'The Battle of Britain' captions. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

Zealanders...other contingents of “Anzacs”<sup>47</sup>. Other window displays which focussed exclusively on the Commonwealth, such as ‘The Empire Soldier’ and ‘The Empire Airman’, also included New Zealanders<sup>48</sup>; ‘The Empire Airman’ featured a photograph of Flt. Sgt. Clode from Invercargill having a cup of tea after a raid on Frankfurt<sup>49</sup>. New Zealand airmen also appeared in the short film *Maximum Effort*, which portrayed the Commonwealth crew (including four New Zealanders, one of whom was Maori) of a Lancaster during a raid<sup>50</sup>. The film was considered a ‘tribute to the work of New Zealand bomber crews’<sup>51</sup>.

New Zealanders were not common in British material, meaning when they did appear it added a great deal of interest. A window display titled ‘RAF Raid on German Dams’ had an image depicting two New Zealand airmen who took part in the raid, and when this photograph was lost during the set’s circulation Paul wrote that the display’s value had been ‘very seriously minimise[d]’ or even ‘destroyed’<sup>52</sup>. The film *For Freedom*, released in 1940, was said by Paul to have an extra element of value because the commentator, Vice Admiral J.E.T. Harper, had an association with New Zealand<sup>53</sup>; Harper was a Christchurch native and the first New Zealander to attain the rank of Admiral<sup>54</sup>. When New Zealand and New Zealanders were featured in propaganda from Britain, it gave the message that New Zealand was ‘worthy’ on the world stage, that this small nation was working hard to impress the powerful ‘motherland’. British material that featured New Zealand was valuable as propaganda because it demonstrated to New Zealanders that their efforts were appreciated not just in their country but also overseas, by one of the most powerful Allied powers. It is arguable that British material that featured New Zealanders was useful not because it came from the nation that New Zealanders still considered ‘home’, but because it acknowledged their status as New Zealanders, a distinct group who were recognised by Britain as being unique.

Not all British material was suitable for New Zealand distribution. It was common for New Zealand’s propagandists to alter British material to better suit the New Zealand public’s tastes or to more effectively deliver a message. Britain was eager for its publicity to be used in New Zealand, and the MOI were happy for New Zealand to alter it however they saw fit as long as they used it. Batterbee stated in a Publicity Committee meeting that once material was sent to New Zealand, Britain felt like it had done its part and it was up to New Zealand to do the rest<sup>55</sup>; the MOI’s Film Division said that

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<sup>47</sup> ‘The Battle of Britain’ captions. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>48</sup> ‘The Empire Soldier’; ‘The Empire Airman’. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 6.

<sup>49</sup> ‘The Empire Airman’. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 6.

<sup>50</sup> [http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record\\_id=65687](http://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record_id=65687), viewed 25/04/2016.

<sup>51</sup> Telegram from Jordan to External Affairs, 22 February 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>52</sup> Letter from Paul to the Manager of Messrs. Hunts, 4 October 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 7.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from Paul to, 5 June 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>54</sup> Letter from Major W.E.S. Furby to Paul, 2 June 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>55</sup> Minutes, 6 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

they ‘should be very glad if [New Zealand] would use our films in any way they please’<sup>56</sup>. The MOI also acknowledged that material would often be more useful to New Zealand if it was edited, altered or added to locally<sup>57</sup>. In short, New Zealand was able to use British material in whatever way they wished<sup>58</sup>. This indicates a level of British respect for New Zealand’s autonomy; Britain understood that New Zealand had distinct needs to satisfy its public and the MOI trusted that the Publicity Department was able to use its material effectively without instruction.

One of the easiest ways to alter British material to make it more effective in New Zealand was to add New Zealanders. A British window display on tanks was, according to a Publicity Department memo, ‘improved immensely’ by adding photographs of tanks manned by New Zealanders<sup>59</sup>, and the British film *Desert Victory*, which dealt with the war in Egypt and the Middle East, was significantly edited by the Publicity Department to add a New Zealand focus: the maps shown were revised to include the New Zealand Division positions, and the commentary was altered to mention New Zealanders four times. It was noted by Andrews as a pity that the New Zealand troops did not tend to wear their lemon-squeezers as a habit, ‘making it difficult for the uninitiated to identify them’ even though they



Figure 2 Original British poster. Source: <https://www.awm.gov.au/blog/2013/06/18/blackwell-cgm/>, viewed 22/04/16.



Figure 3 The altered New Zealand poster, advertising a different cause and with the addition of New Zealand. Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.107443>, viewed 8/04/16.

featured in the film in ‘considerable numbers’<sup>60</sup>. The addition of New Zealand to British material also evident in the alteration of the ‘Back Them Up’ posters from RAF recruitment to a National Savings advertisement, made relevant to New Zealanders with the addition of the map of New Zealand<sup>61</sup>, as seen in figures 2 and 3. These

<sup>56</sup> Memo from Official Secretary to Secretary of External Affairs, 23 October 1944. EA1 543. 84/12/7.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Memo from McIntosh to Paul, 22 November 1944. EA1 543, 8/4/12/7.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Picture Display Photographs’, 28 September 1942. EA1, 84/12/12, part 3.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from Andrews to Paul, 13 January 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/3.

<sup>61</sup> Letter from National Savings Secretary to Paul, 13 November 1941. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3.

posters were sent to New Zealand blank except for the image and the phrase 'Back Them Up!'; the MOI were not only happy to have their material altered – they were actively encouraging it. Stephanie Gibson referred to this kind of material – a mix of British and New Zealand – as 'hybrid' propaganda<sup>62</sup>. The recruitment drive for the Women's Land Service included the use of British MOI films with an added 'leader' which linked the films to the New Zealand campaign:

"Like their cousins in Britain, the women of New Zealand are doing a wonderful job of war work. There is a vital necessity at the present time for women to join the N.Z. Women's Land Service to assist the farmer in essential primary production. The women of New Zealand can be relied upon to respond as they have responded in England."<sup>63</sup>

For this study, some of the most significant and enlightening examples of the adaptation of British material were the changes made to the film *Next of Kin*. Warning against the dangers of idle talk, *Next of Kin* gave the Publicity Department 'cause for more than ordinary consideration' when it was released in 1942<sup>64</sup>. Theatre Management Ltd suggested a number of changes be made to the film when invited to tender for the New Zealand distribution rights: that the title be changed, that the film be cut, and that it should be marketed purely as entertainment<sup>65</sup>. Paul and the Department agreed with this and granted Theatre Management the distribution rights<sup>66</sup> before setting out to make the required changes to the film.

It was decided to change the title of the film to *Mr. Davis?*, as it was more marketable – this title sounded less like 'declared propaganda' and more like entertainment<sup>67</sup>. Theatre Management felt like a title such as *Next of Kin* – with its implications of the informing of family members of soldier deaths – would 'keep possible patrons away' and 'did not lend itself to preliminary publicity'<sup>68</sup>. *Mr Davis?* was considered 'more intriguing' and far less like propaganda<sup>69</sup>. A number of cuts were made to the film; in particular what Paul called 'overdone battlescenes'<sup>70</sup>. It was also decided that the introduction and postscript be cut. These were introduced to the film by the MOI as a disclaimer, because they were concerned that the film's plots could give the false impression that 'foolish chattering about information of value to the enemy is widely prevalent in the United Kingdom and

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<sup>62</sup>Stephanie Gibson, 'Display Folk: Second World War Posters at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa', *Tuhinga* 19 (2008), p. 18.

<sup>63</sup> Letter from Paul to R.W. Fenton, 6 September 1943. EA1 368, 64/8/10, part 1b.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 16 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>65</sup> Letter from J.H. Mason to Paul, 9 October 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 16 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 9 October 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

that a powerful enemy spy organisation exists'<sup>71</sup>. This made Britain very insistent that the film remain unchanged, a contrast to their usual attitudes towards altering material. Paul and the other New Zealanders involved in the film's distribution felt that these additions were unnecessary in the New Zealand context and removed them<sup>72</sup>; Paul could 'not see any purpose in telling an audience at the opening of a picture designed to make the strongest possible impression on that audience that what they are about to see is something which did not actually happen'<sup>73</sup>. The MOI objected to this; they felt that without the additions the film gave a 'false impression' and pointed out that the other dominions and the US had used the disclaimers<sup>74</sup>. Paul assured the MOI that there was no ill intent towards them or their judgement with this decision – it was simply 'the result of most careful consideration of...the public to whom it [was] presented'<sup>75</sup>. Paul wrote in October 1942 that he 'hope[d] that judgement is borne out and that the film is a success'<sup>76</sup>. He did not have to worry; *Mr Davis?* was released with great success and earned £3301 for the National Patriotic Board<sup>77</sup>.

Clearly, Paul and the Department's knowledge and understanding of the New Zealand public and the nation's propaganda culture allowed them to adapt British material to be more effective in New Zealand. The addition of references to New Zealand demonstrated the understanding of the nation's propagandists that above all the public wanted to see themselves and their boys represented in the publicity material they were consuming. Paul and the others were well aware that what may have worked in Britain would not necessarily work in New Zealand, and they were confident in their ability to read the public and alter overseas material to fit its tastes. The significant alterations made to *Next of Kin* – as well as the other examples given above – demonstrates the extent to which New Zealanders differed from their counterparts in Britain, and the awareness of this in the Publicity Department. The example of *Next of Kin* indicates a distinct national character in New Zealand. The New Zealand public were not regarded as being interchangeable with the British, and this meant that significant alterations had to be made in order to make British material effective propaganda in New Zealand.

Although British material had its place in New Zealand's propaganda campaign, there were a number of issues that presented themselves. One question that the nation's propagandists had to ask was whether or not British material was meeting New Zealand's needs; often it could not. There was always an awareness that the MOI's needs could change rapidly and their material could shift its

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<sup>71</sup> Letter from Assistant Secretary to Paul, 14 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>74</sup> Letter from High Commission to Paul, 1 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>76</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 9 October 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>77</sup> Letter to Mr. Hayden, 24 January 1945; letter from R.L. Grant to Paul, 19 January 1945. EA1 542, 84/12/1.

focus 'to a more distinct British type of publicity' at any point due to their proximity to the war front<sup>78</sup>, and so New Zealand could not rely on British material always meeting all of the nation's needs. Additionally, as mentioned above, material that did not feature New Zealand was not considered as valuable and was often dismissed completely. In 1940 Paul asserted that 'it is not very important that we should have large supplies of [MOI] posters because they are of more interest and value in the Homeland than in our own country'<sup>79</sup>; Batterbee wrote in 1943 that a booklet that did not cover the Empire was 'less suitable than it otherwise would be for sale or distribution to the public here in New Zealand'<sup>80</sup>. It was advised that more window displays should be produced in New Zealand because 'too many from England [were] inclined to get stale'<sup>81</sup>. As detailed above, it was often better to change or completely discard British material than try to use it in the nation for which it was not intended.

One problem with using British material in New Zealand, that was often debilitating, was the fact that getting material to the other side of the world took a great deal of time, and material could easily go out of date by the time it reached New Zealand. Mail from England was irregular and infrequent<sup>82</sup>, and Paul acknowledged that 'so many subjects are not topical [by the time] they become available here'<sup>83</sup>. Sometimes the problem was not so bad; Paul stated that photo blocks for the smaller newspapers sent from Britain were not significantly more out of date than the photographs available to daily papers<sup>84</sup>, and for some material it was possible to alter the dated section to keep it relevant. Although in July 1940 some photo blocks had to be removed from circulation given the changed state of the war with the fall of France, Paul instructed that others simply had to have their captions amended – getting rid of references to France, for example<sup>85</sup>. Some material was considered to be timeless, such as the window displays on the Blitz, which Paul believed to be 'one of the most impressive and outstanding exhibitions of photographs ever held in this country' even though by 1943 it was 'years old' – "wherever shown it has attracted the widest possible interest though the criticism of being out-of-date could be levelled against it," Paul stated<sup>86</sup>. Generic material that did not make specific references to current events were also much less likely to date badly; in a meeting with the Publicity Committee J.H. Mason of Theatre Management Ltd said that for British propaganda that was 'just of topical interest', getting it out to New Zealand

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<sup>78</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. C.A.P. Dixon, 24 May 1945. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 8.

<sup>79</sup> Memo from Paul to Batterbee, 30 August 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Batterbee to C.N. Beeby, 26 January 1943. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 3.

<sup>81</sup> Draft, 'Window Displays'. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 5.

<sup>82</sup> Letter from Managing Director to Paul, 15 August 1940. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>83</sup> Letter from Paul to General Manager, 28 June 1941. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Aubrey Toy, 11 September 1941. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>85</sup> Letter from Paul to Editors, 2 July 1940. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>86</sup> Letter from Paul to L.G. Armstrong, 30 November 1943. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 6.

quickly did not matter as it would not noticeably date<sup>87</sup>. However, there was certain material that became unusably dated very quickly. The medium that suffered from the time and distance issue the most was film, as British shorts were often attached to weekly newsreels – the only way to get them to New Zealand cinema screens was by airmail from Britain<sup>88</sup>, and even then by the time a newsreel got around all the major cinemas six months may have past, making the newsreels completely out-of-date and meaning that the attached short would not be screened in a large number of the nation's cinemas. Although there were various ways to minimise the problem, the sheer distance that British material had to travel to be used in New Zealand was always a difficulty, and it meant that often it was more efficient to use local material.

The way that British material was used in New Zealand demonstrates the extent to which New Zealand was breaking away from the 'motherland' and emphasising its own distinct national identity. Although a great deal of MOI material was circulated throughout New Zealand, the Publicity Department clearly had a preference for propaganda which had an Empire focus or featured New Zealanders, making it more relevant to the New Zealand public. When British material was not relevant enough to New Zealand, the Publicity Department freely altered it, inserting references to New Zealand and editing whatever would not appeal to New Zealanders. Although there were advantages to using British material – it was often cheap, added bulk to the propaganda circulating the nation, and could free up New Zealand's often-stretched resources for producing local material – New Zealand could not rely on it. It went out of date quickly, was often irrelevant, and could not address New Zealanders as familiarly as local material. The Publicity Department took advantage of the MOI material when it suited them, and if it could be made more useful it was altered. However, New Zealand material was always preferable. The way that New Zealand used British material demonstrates the close relationship that still existed between the two nations, but also shows how New Zealand was confident in its own nationhood.

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<sup>87</sup> Minutes, 6 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

## Chapter Four

### Alterations and Australians: The Dominion Connection

By WWII, the British dominions had begun to creep out of Britain's shadow and become more distinct nations. This applied not only to New Zealand, as discussed above, but also to Australia, Canada and South Africa. As a result, all these nations produced their own national war propaganda, and with their increasing sense of dominion identity, they interacted with each other, sharing and exchanging publicity material between themselves. New Zealand therefore featured a great deal of material from the other dominions as well as from Britain. The other dominions frequently requested New Zealand's propaganda for display, and New Zealand, aware that its material was distinct and valuable, often offered it to the other dominions of their own initiative. Notes about what the other dominions were doing, both for their material and their methods, were circulated around New Zealand's propagandists and the publicity activities of these nations could be used as justification if New Zealand's material was criticised by the public or by Britain. But, as was the case with Britain, New Zealand did not use foreign material without analysing its suitability for its domestic audiences, and Paul and his department were always willing to assess that something was not appropriate for circulation in New Zealand. There is significant evidence that the public valued the dominion connection and were eager to see material from these nations, although not all the dominions were of equal standing in New Zealand's national consciousness, with Australia being the closest relationship – although even this connection did not override New Zealand's strong sense of individual agency.

There was a great deal of swapping and trading of material between New Zealand and the other dominions during the war, and New Zealand recognised that the material they produced was of such quality that it deserved to be exported. It was common for New Zealand to offer its propaganda material to the other dominions, expecting them to want it. This was particularly noticeable with material that was specific to New Zealand, such as the *New Zealand at War* pamphlet, which was one of the foremost Department of Publicity publications. Upon being dispatched to South Africa, it was sent to the nation's leading newspapers and given a wide circulation<sup>1</sup>. It got favourable reviews from a number of South African newspapers and free extracts were given out across the country<sup>2</sup>. *New Zealand's War Effort*, another key Department of Publicity pamphlet, was also distributed to the other dominions – the RSA sent one each to its South African and Canadian branches, as well as copies to England, the US, and countries in South America<sup>3</sup>. New Zealand's circulation of their own

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<sup>1</sup>Letter to Paul, 19 November 1943. EA1 551, 84/12/21.

<sup>2</sup>Memo, 14 March 1944. EA1 551, 84/12/21.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Secretary to Paul, 25 November 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/20.

material to the other dominions demonstrates a confidence and pride in the propaganda being produced locally. The fact that the material most commonly sent overseas was pamphlets specifically about New Zealand indicates how strong New Zealand's sense of distinct national identity had become by WWII, as material unique to New Zealand was seen as interesting and valuable enough that other dominion nations would want it.

New Zealand received a great deal of dominion material as well as offering their own. The Publicity Committee decided that 'good use' could be made of Australian war propaganda films, which were possibly more relevant to New Zealanders than British films<sup>4</sup>, and Paul told the Australian Department of Information (ADOI) that up to twenty copies of each war poster produced in Australia could be used in New Zealand, as 'experience has shown that exhibitions...are much appreciated by the public and serve a useful purpose'<sup>5</sup>. Displays from the other dominions were common; in 1943 the Manufacturer's Association was sent displays titled 'South Africa's War Effort' and 'The South Africans in East Africa' along with 295 Canadian and 202 South African photographs<sup>6</sup>, and sets of 'Colonial' posters were circulated around shops by Paul<sup>7</sup>. Pamphlets from the dominions which pertained to New Zealand's home front experience were also circulated, such as a publication titled *Put Food in its Place*, a Canadian pamphlet that reminded readers that 'WE EAT TO FIGHT' and informed them how to effectively prepare and ration food<sup>8</sup>. An Australian pamphlet titled *Keeping Information from the Enemy* was also circulated amongst the media as a guide to censorship<sup>9</sup>, demonstrating how methods as well as material were imported from the other dominions. If the use of British material indicated a lasting identification with Britain, then New Zealand's use of material from the other dominion nations pointed to a sense of shared identity with Australia, Canada and South Africa that was related to their similar national state. The use of dominion material in New Zealand indicates that there was public interest in how Australia, Canada and South Africa were waging war, which implies a connection to and identification with those nations. Such a connection suggests that New Zealand saw itself as a dominion nation as well as a part of Britain –linked to Britain, but also tied to the other countries that shared its state of nationhood and were in similar wartime circumstances to New Zealand.

New Zealand felt that there was enough similarity between the dominion nations to use material and methods of Australia, Canada and South Africa as examples. Upon the appointment of New Zealand's war correspondent in 1940, Fraser telegraphed Australian Prime Minister Robert

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<sup>4</sup> Minutes, 9 September 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from Paul to C.H. Bateson, 24 April 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Paul to R. Alston, 9 June 1943. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 5.

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Paul to Messrs Whites Ltd, 21 September 1942. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Put Food in its Place*. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>9</sup> Memo for the Station Director, 9 July 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

Menzies, asking to ‘please supply conditions of appointment [of] your official correspondent whether he is member of Australian armed forces or civilian in uniform’<sup>10</sup>, and Menzies replied with a detailed explanation of how Australia managed their correspondent<sup>11</sup>. When the film *Target for Tonight* was released in New Zealand, a detailed description of its Australian advertising campaign was sent to Paul, including articles that ran in the papers<sup>12</sup>. Other dominions were also looked to, though less frequently; Ian Mackay’s survey of broadcasting included numerous references to Canada, such as the existence of a mobile broadcasting unit and programmes broadcast to civilians which ‘clarified’ the war situation in an ‘interesting way’. Such a programme, Mackay believed, ‘would be welcomed in New Zealand’<sup>13</sup>. Mackay also made reference to the way in which Canada kept its overseas troops connected to home, explaining in his report that the CBC had a weekly news service broadcast to the Canadians training in Britain<sup>14</sup>. Similarly, it was noted that the Australians training in Canada were catered to with a broadcast prepared by the Australian Broadcasting Commission and read by one of the secretaries in the Australian High Commissioner’s office in Ottawa<sup>15</sup>. “Why not a special session for New Zealanders handled by our own radio representative in Canada?” Mackay asked<sup>16</sup>.

When new ideas were bought up amongst the Publicity Committee or other propaganda producers, they were often justified by pointing out that similar things were being done in Australia, Canada or South Africa. In 1941 B.T. Sheil suggested that short film trailers be attached to the end of newsreels to publicise the National Savings Campaign, ‘such as are used in Australia’<sup>17</sup>, and a suggestion in the Third Liberty Loan’s *Handbook of Action* to run a poster competition for children was endorsed by mentioning that this too had been done ‘very effectively in Australia’<sup>18</sup>. The methods of the other dominions was also used as justification when New Zealand material was criticised. This was the case when the booklets *New Zealand At War* and *New Zealand’s War Effort* were accused of having a political agenda. “Every British country has published similar booklets,” Paul retorted when the *Gisborne Herald* claimed the pamphlet ‘could contribute nothing to the war effort’<sup>19</sup>. “I have received the sixth edition of a booklet similar to our own entitled ‘Canada At War’.”<sup>20</sup> He elaborated on this two years later, stating that ‘Australia frequently issues a bulletin [so]

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<sup>10</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Menzies, 22 April 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>11</sup> Telegram from Menzies to Fraser, 24 April 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from M.A. Toomey to Paul, 18 November 1941. EA1 551, 84/12/22.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from Mackay to the Controller, 10 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Mackay to the Controller, 10 June 1942. AADL W2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Minutes, 10 April 1941. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>18</sup> Third Liberty Loan Handbook of Action. ABTW W46567057 Box 1.

<sup>19</sup> Article in the *Gisborne Herald*, 20 November 1941, filed by Publicity Department. EA1 550, 84/12/20.

<sup>20</sup> Draft letter to editor of *Gisborne Herald*, 28 November 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/20.

there does not seem to be any sound ground for the protest<sup>21</sup>. Similarly, when defending the decisions to refuse the exhibition of certain films in New Zealand, Australia's decision to do likewise was used as justification<sup>22</sup>. New Zealand's use of dominion material and methods in this way indicates that the national situations were considered similar enough for methods to be effective across the dominions. The dominion connection, therefore, appears to have been significant and was likely, by WWII, a part of New Zealand's identity as a nation both linked to and distinct from Britain. However, as discussed above in relation to Britain, New Zealand had a distinct sense of individuality which prevented it from using overseas material without analysing whether it was right within the national context. There were no assumptions that New Zealand was exactly the same as the other dominions, which is demonstrated by the ways in which New Zealand's propagandists altered, questioned, and rejected material from the dominions. As with British material, alterations and editing were common. *I Had a Son*, a film screened extensively in Australia for the War Loan campaign, was re-edited for use in New Zealand<sup>23</sup>, and the Publicity Committee were not content to screen the Australian version of *Anzacs March Again*, using it instead as 'a basis for a New Zealand production'<sup>24</sup>. Material was rarely used without deep consideration of the benefits and downsides of overseas propaganda. Sheil, at the beginning of the Safety for Shipping campaign, wrote that his original plan was to use film trailers he had brought back to New Zealand after visiting Australia. However, a year after bringing home the Australian trailers, he asked the film sub-committee for their opinion on the viability of this plan. "I had no idea," Sheil wrote, "of whether film would be available locally, of the cost, or whether or not the film production sub-committee would concur with its use."<sup>25</sup> Material from elsewhere was not automatically assumed to be suitable, and often it wasn't. The trailers were deemed ineffective, with Andrews stating that they were no better than still images and the message delivered was too brief to be memorable – "more effective methods could be used, for instance short complete films," which presumably could be produced locally<sup>26</sup>. The other dominion's experiences were valued as guidelines, but the material brought into New Zealand had to meet local standards. New Zealand's propagandists were sure that they knew the needs and wants of their nation, and were determined to only disseminate material that would work in New Zealand. There was a confidence in their own abilities to provide suitable propaganda for their country, and they did not feel the need to blindly use foreign material or do exactly what the other dominions did. This indicates the extent to which New Zealand had become confident in its own

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<sup>21</sup> Letter from Paul to Miss E.M. Prenton, 20 September 1943. EA1 551, 84/12/21.

<sup>22</sup> Letter from Secretary of Film Exchanges Association to Chairman of Film Industry Board, 8 January 1941. IA1 3358, 64/14/3.

<sup>23</sup> Report of Film Sub-Committee. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>24</sup> Memo from Paul to Fraser, 1 April 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>25</sup> Minute from Sheil to War Publicity Committee, 18 September 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>26</sup> Memo for Wilson, 24 September 1941. EAW261923, 84/1/14.

identity – New Zealand knew what was best for New Zealand, and although as a small nation it still took a great deal of cues from other countries, it was confident that it knew what it wanted for itself.

The adaptation of *Next of Kin*, as discussed in chapter two, demonstrates this national confidence. Throughout the process of altering the film to suit a New Zealand audience, Paul followed the film's release and success in Australia, asking the ADOI for their thoughts on the film<sup>27</sup>. J.S. Allan, of the ADOI, sent Paul publicity for the film to keep him 'au fait with the *Next of Kin* position in Australia'<sup>28</sup>. In the belief that Australia's audiences were closer to New Zealand's than any other nation's, the ADOI's advice regarding their position on the title and the introduction and postscript were sought by Paul when making decisions on these aspects of the film. With pressure from Britain mounting to keep the film as it was, Paul likely needed the opinion – and, hopefully, the support – of a country much more comparable in situation; Australia had the same position in the war as well as a similar national character, making the ADOI the best people to ask about the film. Getting the support of Australia with regards to the proposed changes to the film would make New Zealand's position stronger when arguing with Britain that they were necessary.

However, in December 1942, the ADOI informed Paul that they did not deem his planned alterations necessary. The ADOI was 'keeping the title as it is', and had agreed with the army and the Australian distributors that the postscript and introduction were 'desirable', the only line that needed to be removed was the reference to the film's origin as a training film for the British army – as this would affect the film's entertainment value<sup>29</sup>. Even so, the ADOI did decide to keep the 'context...rather than the actual wording suggested by MOI', but this was because the MOI's original paragraphs were 'too long and would merely weary an audience'<sup>30</sup>. There were aspects of the film Australia and New Zealand agreed on, such as the need to market the film as entertainment rather than overt propaganda. Although Australia, unlike New Zealand, did not feel that the foreword and postscript harmed this aim, they were aware that several of the more gory scenes had to be cut<sup>31</sup>, although it is difficult to ascertain whether the cuts made by Australia were the same as those made by New Zealand; Australia only cut 'the more starkly realistic portions'<sup>32</sup> of what Paul described as 'overdone battlescenes'<sup>33</sup>. The letter informing Paul of Australia's stance on his proposed changes ended by stating that the ADOI would 'be very interested to hear the final disposal of *Next of Kin* in New

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<sup>27</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 16 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>28</sup> Letter from Allan to Paul, 2 January 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>29</sup> Letter from ADOI to Paul, 19 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Letter from ADOI to Paul, 19 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>33</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

Zealand and shall certainly report...how it is going in Australia<sup>34</sup>, indicative of the close relationship between the two nations.

New Zealand may have consulted with Australia on the alterations to the film, but in the end neither the ADOI's belief that the title was suitable nor the fact that the three other dominions all kept the foreword and postscript<sup>35</sup> stopped New Zealand from making the alterations they wanted to. "The film tastes of Australia and New Zealand cannot possibly be compared," Paul wrote in February 1943<sup>36</sup>. Yet they kept a close eye on the film's progress in Australia, noting how it was being received. A review by the *Sunday Telegraph*, which was cut out and saved, noted that the 'foreword points out that its lesson is today peculiarly applicable to Australia' and praised the film for its authenticity and 'matter-of-fact' approach to the subject matter<sup>37</sup>. However, a letter from J.S. Allan stated that '*Next of Kin* cannot be classed as a howling theatrical success in Australia'<sup>38</sup>. According to Allan, the film only received 'fair' audiences in Sydney and was unable to compete with Shirley Temple and Bing Crosby films showing at the same time<sup>39</sup>. Allan called this 'understandable', as people who had to face the war all day at home or work wanted 'escapism in the evening'<sup>40</sup>. Paul carefully noted all this, and stated that the Australian experience with the film 'makes our experiment all the more interesting'<sup>41</sup>. *Next of Kin* was an example of how New Zealand prioritised its own beliefs about material – not without regard for what other nations thought, but confident that it knew its own people best. Neither the British demands nor the lack of support from Australia would deter Paul and his department from doing what they felt was best for New Zealand's propaganda effort. There was a strong sense that New Zealanders had distinct needs, and if material had to be significantly altered to meet these needs, that took priority over what other nations felt was right for New Zealanders.

Although New Zealanders had unique tastes which were catered to by the Publicity Department, there is evidence that there was a strong connection to the other dominion nations and were eager to see material from and about Australia, Canada and South Africa. The Publicity Department handled a number of requests for dominion material; the amount was similar to the number of requests for material from Britain. When organising the Waikato Winter Show, the secretary of the show's organisation association wrote to Paul, stating that they had 'any amount of stands suitable

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<sup>34</sup> Letter from ADOI to Paul, 19 December 1942. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>35</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>36</sup> Letter from Paul to Batterbee, 6 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>37</sup> Josephine O'Neill, *Next of Kin* review, *Sunday Telegraph*. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from Paul to R.W. Fenton, 6 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Letter from Paul to Allan, 8 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

for posters and photographs'<sup>42</sup>. They already had a selection of Australian display material, and were asking to procure 'a collection of Canadian cartoons and posters'<sup>43</sup>. The Waikato Winter Show, which billed itself as 'the world's greatest dairy produce show'<sup>44</sup>, would have attracted large audiences, and the fact that the organisers were making efforts to display dominion material indicates that these large audiences were interested in the other dominion nations. Leaders and figureheads of the dominions were popular amongst New Zealanders; the managing director of the *Ashburton Mail* newspaper sent a letter to Paul requesting 'blocks of personalities' for printing in the newspaper, wanting to put images of the dominion nation's leaders in his paper<sup>45</sup>. The assistant manager of Hay's Limited in Christchurch was more specific, asking for display material that featured John Curtin, Australian Prime Minister, and Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada, as well as figures such as Fraser and Freyberg<sup>46</sup>. As discussed by David Welch – see chapter one – the prominent figures used in propaganda can 'strengthen a point about national identity'<sup>47</sup>. Both of these examples show an individual seeking material of dominion leaders, not for their own consumption but for reproduction in a form that many members of the public will see – a newspaper and window display. Both of these men, therefore, presumably believed that leaders of the other dominion nations would be good publicity material that the wider public wanted to see. This suggests that there was a connection to the dominions, a sense of identification and camaraderie with those nations that were in similar national situations to New Zealand.

As this discussion indicates, the dominion that New Zealand was most closely linked to was Australia. Archival files refer to Australian material and methods almost as much as to the British – it was relatively common for documents to refer to British and Australian material, while omitting Canada or South Africa; for example, a note from Paul to the Minister of Supply that accompanied the dispatch of material 'recently received from London and Australia'<sup>48</sup>. Australia commonly featured in New Zealand's publicity, which no other dominion did – a telegram from the Minister of External Affairs in 1945 stated that two to three minutes of Australian news was broadcast daily in New Zealand, but 'no regular special publicity [was] given Canada'<sup>49</sup>. Significantly, the exchange of material between New Zealand and Canada or South Africa was often handled by Britain<sup>50</sup>, but in dealing with Australia, New Zealand mostly handled its own affairs. The Publicity Committee worked

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<sup>42</sup> Letter from Secretary to Paul, 28 April 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from Managing Director to Paul, 15 August 1940. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Assistant Manager to Paul, 26 September 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 7.

<sup>47</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda: Power and Persuasion*, London: The British Library, 2013, p. 45.

<sup>48</sup> Memo from Paul to D.G. Sullivan, 17 March 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 6.

<sup>49</sup> Telegram from External Affairs to New Zealand High Commissioner in Ottawa, 14 March 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>50</sup> Telegram from London High Commissioner to Fraser, 30 April 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

with the ADOI to send material back and forth between the two countries<sup>51</sup>, and there were agreements between the two nations with regards to what could be distributed: in 1940 Fraser contacted Robert Menzies to check whether the showing of film material of the Second Echelon leaving Wellington harbour would breach the 'our uniform conditions regarding permissible details of ships in news photographs'<sup>52</sup>. Britain acknowledged the close relationship between New Zealand and Australia, often sending material to Australia in the knowledge that it would then be passed to New Zealand and expecting the two Pacific dominions to work together given their national similarities and geographical closeness. In 1944, for example, R.M Campbell, official secretary in the MOI, sent a memo to the New Zealand Department of External Affairs informing them that it was prepared to supply film material made in the European and Middle Eastern theatres of war, with the suggestion that since the material would be sent to Australia anyway, and since New Zealand screened a number of Australian newsreels, the New Zealand and Australian governments should work from the same copies of the film material, sharing the laboratory costs and saving Britain money in air freight<sup>53</sup>. New Zealand and Australian propagandists therefore often worked closely together, with a reciprocal relationship that was arguably more significant even than that of New Zealand and Britain, the powerful provider of publicity.

There was also an acknowledgement of this close relationship in the public mind. Australian material was popular with New Zealanders, who often listened to Australian broadcasts – considered 'fairly closely related to our own war effort' – for news on the war front<sup>54</sup>. Australian newsreels were common in New Zealand theatres, as many cinemas had an Australian Fox News contract which included the Australian newsreels with New Zealand short films attached<sup>55</sup>. In 1944 the Wellington City Library acquired a set of photographs for display from the High Commissioner of Australia, to be 'replaced from time to time by further set of photographs from the same source'<sup>56</sup>. The fact that the capital's city library went to the effort to get Australian display material, and have it regularly updated, indicates that such material was popular amongst the public. This is supported by a newspaper article published in May 1941, which praised a display of Australian material as 'interesting, instructive, and, above all, encouraging'<sup>57</sup>. While making confident assertions about the beliefs and interests of the public is best done through examining personal documents rather than government archive files, this evidence does suggest that there was an interest in Australian

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<sup>51</sup> Minutes, 29 October 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>52</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Menzies, 16 May 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>53</sup> Memo from R.M. Campbell to External Affairs Department, 15 August 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>54</sup> Letter from Ian K. Mackay to the Controller, AADL W 2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

<sup>55</sup> Letter from Hollywood Theatre Proprietor to Paul, 5 February 1942; letter from Realtone Talkies to Paul, 13 March 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>56</sup> Letter from Paul to R.W. Fenton, 26 June 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 6.

<sup>57</sup> 'With the A.I.F.' – Display of Photographs – Wide Field Covered, 8 May 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

material, and the fact that little similar evidence regarding an enthusiasm for Canadian or South African material exists indicates that the interest in Australian material was the result of the New Zealand public being aware of the close relationship between them and Australia.

There was an ideological notion of the similarities between New Zealand and Australia that drove this close relationship. It was often assumed that the situation in Australia was similar enough for their needs to be the same as New Zealand's; Fraser wrote in 1941 that 'this Government were under the impression that their views...were shared by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia'.<sup>58</sup> A press conference held in 1945 articulated this sense of similarity and closeness to the public: "Our future in the Pacific is intimately associated with Australia, with whom...we share a great deal of unity," the notes read<sup>59</sup>. The relationship with Australia was close and valued in New Zealand. Both nations shared a British colonial history as well as the binding experience of the Anzac campaign. Andrew Stewart discusses – in a chapter titled 'The Private Anzac Club' – how by 1944 both New Zealand and Australia were ready to assert their autonomy as nations separate from Britain<sup>60</sup>. Stewart describes how both nations signed the Anzac Pact, a commitment to close consultation in common matters, without the involvement of Britain<sup>61</sup>, emphasising the close relationship that the Pact was indicative of<sup>62</sup>. Judith Smart and Toby Wood, introducing their collection of essays on the Anzac wartime relationship, pointed out the 'shared similar historical experiences...cultural affinity and close personal relations' between New Zealand and Australia, which underscored the interactions between the two Pacific dominions throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>63</sup>. The way New Zealand involved Australia in their propaganda processes demonstrates this close and valued relationship.

However, New Zealand and Australia were not the same. As the first chapter of this study demonstrates, New Zealand prioritised its own propaganda material, and although content from Australia was important it was only one component of New Zealand's propaganda campaign, and decisions for what was to be circulated in New Zealand came down to Paul and the other New Zealand authorities. Paul discussed this idea in a 1941 letter to the ADOI, in which he explained the censorship of a film titled *Citizen X*. Paul refused the film certification in New Zealand, having decided the psychological effect of the film's content would be too damaging to the nation's morale. He wrote that 'it was impressed upon [him] strongly[by the ADOI] that the film had been shown in

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<sup>58</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 19 February 1941. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>59</sup> Press Conference Notes, 5 July 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>60</sup> Andrew Stewart, *Empire Lost: Britain, the Dominions and the Second World War*, London: Continuum, 2008, p. 115.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>63</sup> Judith Smart and Tony Wood, 'Introduction and Acknowledgements' in Judith Smart and Tony Wood (eds.), *An Anzac Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45*, Clayton: Monash Publications in History, 1992, p. 2.

Australia without protest and that this should influence [his] decision', but he still refused to allow the film to be exhibited in New Zealand and eventually got the support of Fraser and various Cabinet ministers<sup>64</sup>. New Zealand remained protective over its own propaganda autonomy; when Australia tried to restrict what could and could not be broadcast about troop movements New Zealand rejected their proposals, stating that 'the proposals seem to them to be entirely unsuitable and based perhaps upon a misunderstanding of their point of view'<sup>65</sup>. Australia was important to New Zealand, and the two nations had a shared sense of Anzac identity. But, as discussed in chapter two with regard to Britain, New Zealand maintained its strong sense of unique national identity even within such a close relationship. Stewart describes the various ways in which New Zealand and Australia acted as separate entities<sup>66</sup>, and Denis McLean, in his study on the nationalism of the two nations, concluded that at the outbreak of war 'the spirit of Anzac was absent', with neither country reaching out to reform WWI's joint Anzac forces or co-ordinate regional efforts<sup>67</sup>. This tension in the relationship between Australia and New Zealand is reflected in the way in which New Zealand interacted with their neighbour's propaganda. New Zealand did not let other nations dictate to it or accept any material without being sure that it was right for New Zealand. There was a strong sense of national pride and individuality, a determination to take what was needed – material or advice, an example – from other nations with which it had a close relationship, but always in such a way as to maintain control over what propaganda it put out for consumption by its people.

There were strong connections to the Empire in WWII New Zealand, demonstrated through the relationship with dominion material as well as that from Britain. As with British material, propaganda from the other dominion nations was circulated, altered, and used as an example. By WWII, the other dominions – particularly Australia – had a significant place in New Zealand's national consciousness. The example of *Next of Kin* demonstrates how both Britain and Australia loomed large in New Zealand's decision-making process, as Paul turned to the ADOI for advice when faced with British guidelines. As various historians have recognised, the link to Australia was considerable by WWII; the Pacific neighbour was starting to challenge Britain for the role of New Zealand's most significant international connection. Yet in its treatment of propaganda it appeared that New Zealand was past the point where another country could define its people or actions. As was the case with British material, nothing from the dominions was circulated unless the Publicity Department was satisfied that it was right for the New Zealand public. The relationship with the

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<sup>64</sup> Letter from Paul to E.J. Brereton, 7 November 1941. EA1 551, 84/12/22.

<sup>65</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Menzies, 8 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>66</sup> Stewart, p. 30, 120, 121-2, 123, 125.

<sup>67</sup> Denis McLean, *The Prickly Pair: Making Nationalism in Australia and New Zealand*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003, pp. 111-2, 115.

## Chapter Four

Empire was significant, but New Zealand was confident in its own place in the world, and would not prioritise other nations over the needs of its own people and national character.

## Chapter Five

### Compliments and Complaints: Propaganda and the New Zealand Public

Propaganda is not solely about the producer. There is always a consumer, and for propaganda to be effective it must reach an audience that will respond. Paul and his propagandists operated under a heightened awareness of public opinion and how their audience would respond to different publicity material. The Publicity Department actively sought people's opinions, and the public were frank in their feedback to Paul and his department. By taking this into account, New Zealand's propagandists developed a sense of what material would work and what needed to be avoided. They stayed away from material that would upset or offend audiences, and strove to make publicity material fresh and entertaining to maintain public interest. Above all, Paul and his men prized white propaganda, that which was open and driven by facts. Paul knew that without the support of his audience no material would be effective, and this contributed to a highly personal approach when dealing with the New Zealand public. This not only indicates the fact that the nation's propagandists had to be aware of the distinct New Zealand national consciousness to do their job, but also demonstrates how New Zealanders of the era expected their government to be accountable to the public. This appears to have been a notable aspect of New Zealand in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. New Zealand was a very small nation, where people appeared to have expected their government to respect their opinions when they were voiced. This created a national atmosphere of accountability, and this is demonstrated in the way that the nation's propagandists had the public reaction and mindset at the forefront of their plans.

There was a sense among the nation's propagandists that they had a responsibility to the New Zealand public, the needs and expectations of whom often took precedence over the demands of other nations. An example of this was seen in 1940, when Britain attempted to censor New Zealand's announcements about its troop movements. In this case the New Zealand Governor-General wrote to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, informing Britain that New Zealand could not agree to censor the fact that the First Echelon had disembarked in Egypt<sup>1</sup>. He asserted that 'New Zealand wish to make it plain that they have repeatedly assured the public that the troops are to have a further period of intensive training', and argued that a failure to inform the public of troop movements would make it 'exceedingly difficult if not impossible to refrain from stressing this point if criticism should be made'<sup>2</sup>. It was imperative that promises made to the public be fulfilled, and when the New Zealand public had been led to expect certain information, it needed to be given. This

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<sup>1</sup> Telegram from Governor-General to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 11 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

was articulated again in 1943: “The Government is strongly of opinion that the New Zealand people are entitled within the limits of security to be told all the facts associated with the New Zealand war effort,” read a reply to criticisms of the *New Zealand at War* pamphlet<sup>3</sup>.

It appears there was a sense of obligation to the public, a belief that the public deserved to be well-informed and a determination to ensure that they were. In her work on the WWII Official War Histories, Rachael Bell described the sense of obligation that was felt towards the public as an educated democracy who would consume the histories, writing that the Histories had to ‘[uphold] a responsibility to those in the present’<sup>4</sup>. Although Bell was examining the history of the war, rather than the publicity for it, her conclusions on the sense of an intelligent and astute New Zealand public are reflected in the findings of this study. Similar conclusions surrounding the emphasis on educated citizenship in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were reached by Carol Mutch in her summary of citizenship education in New Zealand; Mutch found that by WWII civic education was heavily influenced by progressive liberal ideas of ‘democratic consensus’ inspired by Fraser’s vision<sup>5</sup>. She also concluded that the state of citizenship education throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century mirrored New Zealand’s national identity<sup>6</sup>, indicating that the emphasis on democratic consensus in the 1930s reflected a general cultural trend towards the promotion of an educated democracy. Chris Brickell’s work on New Zealand’s army education schemes emphasised how ‘the figure of the responsible, educated citizen sat at the centre’ of the schemes<sup>7</sup>, reflecting the ‘government’s wish to foster aware and self-governing citizens’ in the post-war era<sup>8</sup>. The Publicity Department’s view of its audience as intelligent and worthy of respect emerged from the culture that these authors have identified in New Zealand in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lars Weckbecker, who wrote a history of the NFU in wartime, concluded that the creation of propaganda in New Zealand was ‘not a top-down implementation’, indicating that the government knew it could not simply dictate to the public what they should think and feel, and instead needed to listen and respond appropriately to what the audience was saying<sup>9</sup>. New Zealand’s propagandists provided information to a public that they knew would hold them accountable.

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<sup>3</sup> Draft reply to Official Secretary, Government House, 15 September 1943. EA1 551, 84/12/21.

<sup>4</sup> Rachael Bell, ‘Memory, History, Nation, War: The Official Histories of New Zealand in the Second World War 1939-1945’, PhD thesis, Massey University, 2012, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Carol Mutch, ‘What Does A Decade of Research Reveal About the State of Citizenship Education in New Zealand?’, *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* 48:2 (2013), p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>7</sup> Chris Brickell, ‘Soldier to Civilian: Army Education and Postwar New Zealand Citizenship’, *History of Education* 39:3 (2010), p. 365.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 363.

<sup>9</sup> Weckbecker, *Governing Visions of the Real*, Bristol: Intellect, 2015, p. 70.

In order to provide the publicity the New Zealand public would not reject, Paul and his department had to know and understand the national consciousness. In order to do this, they paid close attention to the way in which New Zealanders reacted to propaganda that was circulated. This was not a uniquely New Zealand aspect of publicity campaigns; Ian McLaine's history of the British MOI detailed how the government produced lengthy reports on public opinion<sup>10</sup>. The British, however, were more focussed on making sure that morale was being maintained, while, as this thesis demonstrates, Paul and his department wanted to make sure that their work was being well-received. It was important to Paul to record the opinions of the public, and he often directly asked those who were exhibiting or distributing material how they felt the public were responding. He wrote in 1939 that he was keen to hear expressions of opinion due to a 'desire to note what people in general are thinking'<sup>11</sup>, and often sent notes to his distributors saying that he 'should be pleased to receive [their] comments in due course'<sup>12</sup>. If public support for an area of the war effort seemed to be lacking, Paul was therefore in a position to rectify the problem. Any waning of morale was to be avoided, and the nation's propagandists had a tacit understanding that they were expected to take responsibility for this. In order to do so, Paul and his department had to be tuned in to how their material was being received and how the public attitudes were leaning.

It was not uncommon for propaganda released by Paul's department to be received unfavourably, necessitating a change of approach or a re-evaluation of their methods. Paul often fielded complaints from the public – particularly the distributors of publicity, such as theatre owners and shop managers – which highlighted if material was being poorly received. One major element that could go wrong – as discussed at various points in this thesis – was the time factor on much publicity material, as topics became out of date, irrelevant, or lost their impact. The Illustrations Editor of the *Dominion* wrote in 1940 to complain that the subject of a cartoon sent by Paul 'had been so fully dealt with in letterpress from the same viewpoint that it would be superfluous to publish it in graphic form'<sup>13</sup>, while the manager of Hallenstein Bros. wrote to Paul in 1944 to inform him that the display in the store's windows was 'losing its sting'<sup>14</sup>. Those who provided propaganda to the public would inform Paul if audiences were not responding; in 1940 Paul received a letter claiming that a series of petrol conservation films should not continue to be exhibited after it was found that the government became 'the subject of most uncomplimentary remarks when these films appear[ed] on

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<sup>10</sup> Ian McLaine, *Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979, pp. 2-3.

<sup>11</sup> Letter from Paul to Ben Roberts, 12 December 1939. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Paul to C. Crawford, 5 November 1940; letter from Paul to J.R. Keenan and J.W. Wood, 20 November 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1; letter from Paul to R.E. Hunt, 1 September 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from Illustrations Editor to Paul, 3 September 1940. EA1547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 3 October 1944. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 7.

the screen'<sup>15</sup>. It wasn't just the propaganda distributors who were willing to make complaints; although it was less common for members of the general public to write to Paul it did happen, such as a long letter from a G.J. Gillespie which argued that 'the war effort publicity is only working at a 50% efficiency' and that 'apathy about the Home Guard is typical of the apathy about many aspects of our war effort'<sup>16</sup>. Mr. Gillespie went on to describe in detail what he felt should be done to remedy this.

The files show that such complaints were taken seriously by Paul, demonstrating the respect Paul had for the New Zealand public as an audience with strong preferences which had to be catered to. Many complaints were discussed by the Publicity Committee and recorded in the minutes of the Committee's meetings. For example, in 1940 B.T. Sheil discussed the creation of broadcast material depicting factory workers after a complaint that there was feelings in the public that 'there was no place in [the WWSA] for factory girls'<sup>17</sup>. Complaints about the nation's publicity were received, discussed, and addressed with interest, illustrating not only that the nation's propagandists were concerned about getting it right but also that they respected their audience. New Zealand was not a nation in which the public were expected to passively consume whatever material the government deigned to give them. New Zealanders appeared to take themselves seriously, both individually and collectively, as an important part of the war effort. They felt that their opinions were important and that they had the right to be listened to. The conversation, therefore, was two-way, with the New Zealand public more than willing to tell the government when the material was not meeting their expectations.

Positive audience reactions were also keenly noted by the Publicity Department, as evidence that their propaganda campaigns were effective. Praise from the public was enthusiastically received, with newspaper articles that described and praised publicity material, normally displays, cut out and filed by the Department<sup>18</sup>. Letters, such as one from a Mr. C.H. Andrews in Wellington, which praised the value of window displays, were read in a Publicity Committee meeting<sup>19</sup>. The Department's archival files are filled with such letters from shops, newspapers, theatre owners and other distributors who wrote in to communicate how well propaganda material was being received. A sample of 40 letters written to Paul included 15 letters, mostly from shop owners whose windows held displays, informing Paul that the public found the publicity material highly interesting; nine

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<sup>15</sup> Letter to Paul, 26 September 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from G.J. Gillespie to Paul, 24 October 1940 (Wilson's date). PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>17</sup> Minutes, 9 September 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>18</sup> 'Air Raid Damage', *Waikato Times*, 28 August 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2. 35:15; 'War Photographs', *Dominion*, 10 December 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>19</sup> Minutes, 16 September 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

which stated that there were often large crowds to view the material; and eight telling Paul that the publicity had received favourable comments from members of the public. There was also a number of letters which informed Paul that the sender would like to receive more similar material in the future, which indicates that to distributors, such as the shop managers who displayed material in their windows, the publicity material brought value to the community and their business. Words such as 'popular', 'enthusiastic', and 'appreciative' reappear again and again in the letters examined, with compliments far outweighing complaints. The archival evidence therefore strongly suggests that, on the whole, despite the occasional complaints, the response to publicity was strongly positive in New Zealand. This can be seen as a testament to Paul and the Department's understanding of what the public wanted to see.

It is worth noting some specific letters from the sample to more fully demonstrate the enthusiasm with which the public responded to propaganda in New Zealand. As mentioned above, many wrote to Paul describing large crowds gathered round window displays; two letters from Brown Ewing & Co. in Dunedin stand out in particular – one, from 1940, stated that their window was 'never without people looking through the glass' and wished that their own displays attracted the same level of interest<sup>20</sup>; the other, a year later, exclaimed that 'it was remarkable how attractive they were to the people -- who all day long -- and during the evening -- had their faces glued to the windows'<sup>21</sup>. Sometimes the response from the public was so good that the distribution plans were disrupted as shops wanted to hold onto displays for longer than had been planned for. Paul had to apologise for delays to other shops on the distribution list because 'the pictures have held the interest of the public in several places for longer than [a fortnight]'<sup>22</sup>; J. Ballantyne & Co. in Christchurch justified their hold-up of displays by explaining that 'public interest never lagged'<sup>23</sup>. M. Fry, the manager of Meteor Theatre in Palmerston North, described how 'at the end of each [of the short films] you can count on a good round of applause'<sup>24</sup>, and Auckland Cinemas Ltd wrote that there was 'no doubt at all of the value of these films from a 'morale' point of view'<sup>25</sup>. The window displays were praised by Kirkpatrick and Stevens in Auckland for 'remind[ing] our public that there is still a war to be won' after VE Day<sup>26</sup>, while an accountant from Invercargill wrote to Paul to say that the MOI publication *Neptune* had 'value in sustaining the essential determination to succeed in our war effort'<sup>27</sup>, which

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<sup>20</sup> Letter from the Manager to Paul, 1 November 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>21</sup> Letter from the Manager to Paul, 1 September 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2.

<sup>22</sup> Letter from Paul to Director, 19 November 1941. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 30 July 1945. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 8.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from M. Fry to Paul, 3 February 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>25</sup> Letter from Director to Paul, 2 February 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>26</sup> Letter from Managing Director to Paul, 27 July 1945. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 8.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Public Accountant to Paul, 10 October 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 2.

demonstrates how foreign material was still linked to the New Zealand war effort in the public's mind. "We feel sure [the material] achieved the object desired," wrote Petties' Ltd in Gisborne in 1940<sup>28</sup>, succinctly summing up the public feedback described in this chapter on how effective New Zealand's publicity was.

By being so receptive to the feedback that was given about New Zealand's publicity, Paul and his department became well aware of what would create a negative reaction in the public. In a Publicity Committee meeting in 1940, Wilson predicted that any material which was going to date quickly was going to cause dissatisfaction: "If there is a time factor, there was going to be difficulty with the public."<sup>29</sup> Avoiding unnecessary repetition was important; screening films simultaneously at multiple cinemas was ruled out to avoid people seeing the same film several times<sup>30</sup> and only one 'Salute to Victory' radio short was broadcast a day to keep them from becoming mere background noise<sup>31</sup>. As Paul and his department came to recognise patterns in the acceptance of material and were able to predict likely responses, they began advising other agencies about what would and would not work. When there were calls for greater publicity for the 'Don't Talk' campaigns by the defence sector, Paul was consulted and reported that 'the general response to a campaign such as this will be a curiosity, even a demand, to know what all this fuss is about... My experience...leads me to the opinion that there are fewer rumours in circulation at the present time than at any period during the past two years'<sup>32</sup>. He went on to recommend 'a policy of continued emphasis on the evils of rumour and the necessity for silence...without any limit of the launching of a planned campaign'<sup>33</sup>. The issue of careless talk, and how to deal with it, came up on multiple occasions, with Paul cautioning the Prime Minister at one point against explicit propaganda. "In a campaign of this character careful attention and thought must be given to the psychological reactions," he wrote about the proposed campaign. "I feel convinced that if a campaign as contemplated was launched it would give rise to a comparative flood of careless talk speculation regarding its necessity and purpose."<sup>34</sup> Paul, and by extension his department, were recognised as being experienced with the reactions of the public, dealing as they did with both the compliments and complaints of an audience who were not hesitant about speaking their minds. The Publicity Department's intimate knowledge of what the unique New

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<sup>28</sup> Letter from Secretary to Paul, 12 September 1940. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 1.

<sup>29</sup> Minutes, 6 November 1940. PM22 8, 3/9.

<sup>30</sup> Letter from J.H. Mason to Mr. Toomay, 6 August 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>31</sup> Report of Radio Sub-Committee. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>32</sup> Memo from Paul to Major Foulkes, 31 October 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Memo from Paul to Fraser, 15 October 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

Zealand audiences were and were not likely to want to see meant that they could effectively produce and circulate material from home and abroad.

The heightened sensitivity that Paul and his department had for the reactions of the public resulted in a sense of obligation to deliver propaganda that was respectful of them as media consumers. There was an aversion amongst New Zealand's propagandists towards any material that would be too upsetting or distasteful, or anything that appeared to insult the audience's intelligence and integrity by verging too far into grey propaganda. Although Paul was hesitant to censor the media too autocratically<sup>35</sup>, he was willing to stop any material that he considered outside the realms of propriety. This sensitivity to 'negative' propaganda was not unique to New Zealand; as discussed in the introduction the trend after WWI was towards more factual and sensitive material. David Welch discussed how this was particularly noticeable in Britain, the nation from which New Zealand took its publicity cues. With a disgust for WWI's lurid images along with an increased awareness of human psychology, the British moved towards a propaganda model which eschewed atrocity material<sup>36</sup> in favour of facts, an emphasis on news publicity, and an avoidance of material that the public would consider crude or unnecessarily upsetting. The BBC adopted a policy of truth<sup>37</sup> and the MOI asserted that propaganda should tell 'as near as possible, the whole truth'<sup>38</sup>. David Clampin has described how 'propagandistic messages had to be 'realistic' and 'credible' if they were to solicit an appropriate response'<sup>39</sup>, while Ian McLaine discussed the MOI's move from exhortation to explanation, which treated the audience as rational and intelligent consumers who would make the right choices if given all the facts<sup>40</sup>. This, as will be shown, was the example followed in New Zealand; the Chiefs of Staff wrote in 1941 that 'we consider [the systematic spreading of false information] psychologically bad'<sup>41</sup> and, when disagreements over the announcements of troop movements arose, Fraser asserted that withholding important information from the public would cause 'intense' anxiety<sup>42</sup>. However, Welch also pointed out that 'harmful and unbelievable truths' were the exception<sup>43</sup>: "the public cannot accept an undiluted diet of bad news", he wrote<sup>44</sup>, and this idea was strictly adhered to by Paul and his department, with the technique of selection – where the

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<sup>35</sup> Letter from Paul to W.P. Alexander, 15 December 1943. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 3. 7:7; letter from Paul to A.O. Yardley, 3 April 1941. EA1547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>36</sup> Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, California: Sage, 2012, p. 253.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 254.

<sup>38</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 34.

<sup>39</sup> David Clampin, *Advertising and Propaganda in World War II: Cultural Identity and the Blitz Spirit*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> McLaine, p. 250.

<sup>41</sup> C.O.S Paper #95, 28 July 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>42</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 7 March 1941. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>43</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 33.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

propagandist would hide a fact which is damaging to morale through silence rather than lying<sup>45</sup> – being fully and effectively utilised in New Zealand.

Paul ensured that the public were not exposed to any information that he felt would harm morale or make them anxious or upset. He told the Film Exchanges Association that war scenes in the film *Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>* would be ‘too harrowing’ for relatives of troops overseas, and the film was refused certification in New Zealand in 1941<sup>46</sup>. References to Japanese radio propaganda being broadcast to New Zealand were blocked in 1942, not only to discourage people from listening to the broadcasts but also because the Publicity Committee decided that ‘direct reference to the Japanese propaganda statements was likely to detrimentally affect public morale’<sup>47</sup>. In 1945 Paul issued a statement to newspaper editors about the reporting of prisoners of war, as he was concerned that people had been complaining about the publication of details concerning brutal treatment of prisoners by the enemy<sup>48</sup>. There had been complaints that ‘our women-folk are suffering extreme anxiety in regard to their next-of-kin’ and people had requested that reports of weak and ill prisoners being executed by the SS be withheld both to prevent damage to morale and the war effort and also ‘on the grounds of humanity alone’<sup>49</sup>. Paul requested that all editors took the feelings of the public into account ‘with a view to alleviating any unnecessary anxiety and additional suffering by the next-of-kin’<sup>50</sup>. The details of the way Allied prisoners of war were treated caused issues for Paul, as the two important tenets of propaganda – tell the truth, but not if it’s upsetting – were in this case conflicting. The publication of details regarding the way POWs were treated was ‘delicate and difficult’: “Delicate because no humane person would desire to add to the mental suffering endured by next of kin of prisoners of war over a long period, and difficult because at the same time the people of our country should not be kept in ignorance.”<sup>51</sup> This is an excellent example of how Paul was concerned not just that the

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<sup>45</sup> Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 33.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Secretary to Chairman of Film Industry Board, 8 January 1941. IA1 3358, 64/14/3.

<sup>47</sup> Minutes, 4 November 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>48</sup> Memo to editors from Paul, 16 April 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>49</sup> Memo to editors from Paul, 16 April 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Letter from Paul to Secretary of War Purposes Committee, 24 April 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.



Figure 1 Source: <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.472039>, viewed 26/05/2016.



Figure 1 <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.533462>, viewed 26/05/2016.

publication of upsetting details would harm morale and the war effort, but also that it would have a strong negative emotional reaction amongst the people and cause unnecessary suffering to the people of New Zealand. It was, in accordance with David Welch's conclusions, better to say nothing than tell the upsetting truth.

The post-WWI aversion to atrocity propaganda and sensationalist details also led New Zealand's propagandists to strive for taste and decency in the material they circulated. Regulations for the publicity treatment of POWs being interned in New Zealand were strict to preventing the media from parading internees as wartime trophies, stating that no photos or film footage were to be taken inside POW camps, except by approved official photographers, and any photos taken outside the camp would be censored if they were 'derogatory to a prisoner'<sup>52</sup>. These regulations reflected New Zealand's overall attitude towards depicting the enemy. Stephanie Gibson asserted in her study of New Zealand propaganda that 'enemies were not directly demonised'<sup>53</sup> – a stark contrast to the depictions of the Japanese in Australia, discussed in the literature review. There were occasional instances of stereotypical images in the New Zealand material; figures 1 and 2 depict Japanese caricatures in advertisements issued by the Ministry of Supply – which would have been at least tacitly approved by the Publicity Department – but in comparison to the material that was circulated in Australia and America these cartoons were relatively tame. *Weekly Review 140: Easter Action on*

<sup>52</sup> Memo from O.N.S. Secretary for Adjutant-General, 1 February 1945. EA1 665, 89/1/6.

<sup>53</sup> Stephanie Gibson, 'Display Folk: Second World War Posters at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa', *Tuhinga* 19 (2008), p. 14.

*Bougainville* did depict dead (Japanese) soldiers and references to 'little yellow men', after much debate in the NFU as to whether this was permissible<sup>54</sup>. Lars Weckbecker acknowledged that the images would have disturbed New Zealand viewers; this film was an anomaly in New Zealand's propaganda and was not released until 1944, late in the war<sup>55</sup>. The fact that it only emerged after long discussion about its appropriateness indicates that this was not standard fare for New Zealand material.

There were a range of reasons why the government was so averse to the racist material that was so common elsewhere; it is possible that given their geographical proximity to the Pacific theatre and the much higher threat to their nation the Australians were much more inclined to demonise the Japanese than New Zealand – relatively safe from the Pacific conflict – was. Ashley Jackson has pointed out that New Zealand never experienced direct enemy aggression and Australia had a more developed idea of how POWs were treated by the Japanese, as 22,000 Australians went into Japanese captivity, with 8000 dying<sup>56</sup>. It also may demonstrate how New Zealand was much more inclined to follow Britain, who also largely eschewed such material. It could be theorised that racist material was more acceptable in a nation such as Australia or America, where Aboriginal and African American people were still considered second-class citizens<sup>57</sup>. Overall, however, New Zealand's rejection of such material reflects the way in which New Zealand's propagandists aimed to keep their material palatable and sensitive.

Related to this was a desire to provide propaganda messages in an entertaining way. Wilson expressed the belief that 'listeners will be satiated with war publicity and propaganda and may diminish in numbers if a proper balance is not kept between war broadcasts and bright musical and other forms of entertainment'<sup>58</sup>, and Paul wrote in 1943 that 'the fact that people desire entertainment is inescapable'<sup>59</sup>. Publicity radio addresses were mixed with dramatisations of life during war<sup>60</sup> and war shorts were paired with comedies such as Laurel and Hardy in cinemas<sup>61</sup> in order to try and deliver the serious and necessary messages of a total war effort without overwhelming the audience. Paul was not, however, particularly tolerant of those who wanted to

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<sup>54</sup> Weckbecker, p. 85.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Jackson compared this to the 'small number' of New Zealand's 8000 POWs who fell into Japanese hands. Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War*, London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006, p. 495.

<sup>57</sup> Aboriginal people were not given the vote across Australia until 1965 (<http://www.aec.gov.au/indigenous/history.htm>, viewed 30/07/16), and the American army was segregated until 1948 (<http://www.nationalww2museum.org/assets/pdfs/african-americans-in-world.pdf>, viewed 30/07/16).

<sup>58</sup> Letter from Wilson to M.N. Shaw, 9 June 1942. AADL W5739 412 Box 78, Ag. 93/3/29.

<sup>59</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 8 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>60</sup> Minutes, 21 December, 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>61</sup> Letter from Paul to R.M. Stewart, 11 August 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

avoid war publicity altogether. "The war being the biggest thing in our lives today must necessarily be the chief topic on the films," he wrote to J.S. Allan in 1943. "The least responsible section of your communities may desire to escape from the war, but it will remain with us until the last shot is fired."<sup>62</sup> With an awareness that too much gritty reality would be too depressing to be effective propaganda, the Publicity Department often found a compromise by relying on white propaganda, which gave the facts in a straightforward and open way.

As discussed above, the dominant methods of publicity in Britain during WWII were focussed on what scholars now term white propaganda – less blatantly propagandistic than black material, with a focus on the news as propaganda and giving people the facts in order to keep up morale. New Zealand followed this British model, and appeared to pride itself on its commitment to white propaganda. The secretary of the National War Savings Office wrote to Paul in 1943, telling him that the Publicity Department displays served a 'valuable purpose in informing the public of the trend of events, reminding them of the immensity of the effort...and to sustain morale'<sup>63</sup>. "In my mind," he went on to say, "the absence of direct propaganda in most of your displays is its most commendable feature."<sup>64</sup> The importance of keeping New Zealand's material informative, rather than sloganeering and aggressive, was also articulated by Andrews of the NFU, who 'strongly advise[d] that we keep our screen material entirely free of direct exhortation': "As I see it, our major task is to show that the National Film Unit has something to say each week that is honest, informative... We can be more effective in the long run by making films which...lead to an inescapable conclusion in the mind of the audience, than by omitting the news and telling the audience what to do."<sup>65</sup> Lars Weckbecker, in his history of the NFU, emphasised how the department was focussed on 'avoiding overt propaganda, exaggeration and sensationalism – characteristics that would likely undermine the perception of an authentic and unbiased representation of the real'<sup>66</sup>. This was the characteristic viewpoint of not just the NFU, but the entire propaganda apparatus of New Zealand.

It was believed that this white, news-focussed propaganda approach was what was desired by the New Zealand public; this was the feedback received from those distributing the material. Anything perceived as being too overt was quickly rejected by the public; a review in *The Herald of New Zealand's War Effort* stated that the booklet was 'more like the propaganda of an election manifesto than a critical appreciation addressed to intelligent men'<sup>67</sup>, which was evidently how many members

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<sup>62</sup> Letter from Paul to J.S. Allan, 8 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

<sup>63</sup> Letter from Secretary to Paul, 24 March 1943. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 4.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Memo for Wilson, 24 September 1941. EAW2619 23, 84/1/14.

<sup>66</sup> Weckbecker, p. 72

<sup>67</sup> NZ War Pamphlet – 'Misdirected Effort' – Publicity Publication, *The Herald*, 20 November 1941. EA1 550, 84/12/20.

of the public saw themselves. The manager of Whakatane Amusements Ltd, who ran two cinemas, responded to Paul's requests for feedback by suggesting that film subjects would be 'far more acceptable to the public if they were offered in a newsreel fashion'<sup>68</sup>, and in 1942 the manager of Amalgamated Theatres Ltd passed on comments from the public, which he summarised as praise that films were 'most educational in fact and truth, and that's what the people really want'<sup>69</sup>: "There is no need to hide or hold anything from them, for they can understand and know what is being done in their behalf."<sup>70</sup> Andrews, of the NFU, expressed a belief that the audience of his department's films was 'nearly always intelligent'<sup>71</sup>. This viewpoint, which appears to be reflected in the methods of the Publicity Department and New Zealand's other propaganda outlets, suggests a significant level of respect for the public of New Zealand. It indicates that New Zealand audiences were considered to be intelligent and astute media consumers, to whom lying would be both pointless and insulting. New Zealand propagandists treated their audiences as mature and judicious, capable of extracting a propaganda message from the facts of the news without having to be told what to do as well as being above material that was salacious or crude. This indicates the way in which New Zealand's propagandists viewed their audience with respect as fellow New Zealanders, who were familiar with the war situation and wanted to support their country's war effort readily, rather than a mindless mass who could be lied to and manipulated in whatever direction they needed to be pushed.

The propaganda material of New Zealand reflects this view of the public. When campaigns were being planned, the need for white propaganda – truth, facts, and an openness about intentions – was often emphasised. This was something New Zealand's propagandists prided themselves on; Andrews boasted that the *Weekly Review* was 'one of the few reels in the world which has made a determined and fairly successful attempt to present the war...as it really is'<sup>72</sup>. There are numerous examples of New Zealand propagandists emphasising the importance of truth and openness. In 1943, when the Publicity Committee were discussing a campaign on rationing, it was decided that the Minister of Supply would make a ten-minute announcement over the radio after the war news broadcast in order to explain the need and rationale of the restrictions<sup>73</sup>. The War Loan of 1944 was also introduced through straightforward explanation; the first week of the campaign was dedicated to 'factual publicity covering economic principles'<sup>74</sup> which would not include any 'heavy selling', but

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<sup>68</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 9 February 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 14 February 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Weckbecker, p. 72.

<sup>72</sup> Weckbecker, p. 83.

<sup>73</sup> Minutes, 21 December 1943. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>74</sup> 1944 War Loan Conference Heading for Addresses. ABTW W4656 563 Box 21.

instead feature a series of questions about the Loan answered by ‘an official of Victory Loan Headquarters’<sup>75</sup>. The 1945 Victory Loan took this idea further, the report on the success of the Loan having noted that ‘following recommendations made subsequent to the 1944 Loan both press and radio were employed on advertising of a more factual nature’<sup>76</sup>. Messages or addresses to the public within publicity material referred to how factual the propaganda campaigns were, in order to build and establish trust with the audience and assure the public that their propagandists would not lie to them – but rather tell them the factual details they needed to know to be informed and aware members of the nation. For example, the foreword to the National War Savings Bulletin, written by the New Zealand National War Savings Committee Chairman, stated that the booklet contained ‘facts and figures of what has been achieved so far in the savings campaign in New Zealand’<sup>77</sup>. This epitomises the white propaganda discussed by Welch and Jowett and O’Donnell, and demonstrates that New Zealand followed the example of Britain in treating its people with respect.

Being highly aware of and respectful to the public was perhaps made easier for New Zealand’s propagandists by the fact that the population was so small. New Zealand had an estimated population of 1,700,000 people in 1945<sup>78</sup>, and this contributed to a political environment where people felt entitled to their say and the propagandists felt accountable. The small size of New Zealand’s population at the time meant that the public felt intensely connected to the war, as nearly everyone was close to someone who was serving in the forces. The impact of having such a small population is exemplified in the way New Zealand responded to Britain’s directives regarding the publication of troop movement. When told to withhold details about the movement of New Zealand troops, New Zealand responded by telling Britain that they did not appreciate the publicity needs of a country as small as New Zealand<sup>79</sup>. The movement of New Zealand troops was described as ‘a family matter’, with details such as dates and names being common knowledge<sup>80</sup>. Letters from the troops made such information widely known, and Fraser felt it was senseless to withhold widely known information from the media as it would leave room for ‘idle rumour’ and speculation on why the government was not giving such information<sup>81</sup> as well as cause anxiety for those at home<sup>82</sup>. This was of such significant concern to the government that the Governor-General asked whether there would be any objection to parents and next of kin being told directly where their loved ones were if

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<sup>75</sup> Report of Radio Sub-Committee. ABTW W4656 563 Box 21.

<sup>76</sup> Report – 1945 Victory Loan. ABTW W4656 563 Box 21.

<sup>77</sup> National War Savings Bulletin, February 1944, pg. 1. ABTW W4656 563 Box 21.

<sup>78</sup> [http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/population/estimates\\_and\\_projections/historical-population-tables.aspx](http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/population/estimates_and_projections/historical-population-tables.aspx), viewed 1/06/16.

<sup>79</sup> Despatch of 1<sup>st</sup> Echelon – Publicity, N.A. 030/50/5, 8 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Australian PM, 8 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>82</sup> Telegram from Fraser to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 19 February 1941. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

Britain refused to allow troop movement to be publicised<sup>83</sup>. In a nation as small as New Zealand, information spread fast and the public were aware if information was being withheld by the government. This contributed to a heightened sense of public accountability within the nation's propagandists.

As demonstrated by the government's willingness to directly contact next of kin if necessary, New Zealand's small population also contributed to a particularly close relationship between the propagandists and the public. This close connection was important to New Zealand's propaganda effort and was often emphasised as a key component of campaigns' successes: in the 1943 Third Liberty Loan's *Handbook of Action*, the page entitled 'Recipe for Success' told volunteers who were publicising the Loan to 'retain the goodwill of your customers'<sup>84</sup>, and the 'personal contact angle' was deemed 'most important of all' in planning the 1944 War Loan<sup>85</sup>. The War Savings campaign of the same year also instructed committees to develop 'that so essential personal approach'<sup>86</sup>. There are numerous examples in the archival material of Paul and other figures involved in the nation's propaganda personally communicating with both publicity distributors – shop owners, theatre managers, newspaper editors – and members of the public. Often, it was simply to acknowledge their help or enthusiasm – in 1942 Paul wrote to G.W. Nicol of the *Marlborough Press* to 'express [his] appreciation of the kind sentiments expressed in [Nicol's] letter', going on to say that his working relationship with Nicol had 'left nothing to be desired'<sup>87</sup>; in 1944 Nash wrote to the Managing Director of British Australian Lead Manufacturer's Ltd to personally thank him for dedicating time on the company's radio programme to the war effort publicity<sup>88</sup>. Other times, Paul gave personal attention to the requests or needs of the general public, such as his promise to Miss B. Leatherbarrow to send her any posters which could be spared in the future<sup>89</sup> or sending posters to a high school in Raurimu and suggesting where they could purchase cellophane to brighten up their display<sup>90</sup>. This highly personal approach, where members of the public were addressed warmly and appreciatively, was valued by the public, and people often expressed their thanks to Paul for the way he treated them. The manager of the Auckland Savings Bank wrote to Paul to thank him for his 'valued and practical help' and for Paul's 'personal attention'<sup>91</sup>, while Hallenstein Bros.'s manager wrote that he 'would like to take this opportunity of expressing my deep appreciation of the

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<sup>83</sup> Telegram from Governor-General to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 4 October 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>84</sup> Third Liberty Loan Handbook of Action. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>85</sup> 1944 War Loan Conference – Headings for Addresses, ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>86</sup> National War Savings Bulletin, February 1944. ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>87</sup> Letter from Paul to G.W. Nicol, 9 July 1942. EA1 547, 84/12/13, part 2.

<sup>88</sup> Letter from Nash to Douglas Guthrie, 6 September 1944. AEFZ W5727 22618 Box 201, 223/0208.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from Paul to B. Leatherbarrow, 4 September 1942. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 3.

<sup>90</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. A.E.C. Clark, 7 October 1943. EA1 545, 84/12/12, part 5.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 26 September 1945. E2 93, 29/17/56.

courteous manner in which you have always replied to my requests for display material'<sup>92</sup>. A.S. Harrison-Lee, an old soldier who offered to loan Paul photos of military badges for publicity, simply wanted to thank Paul for his kindness: "Very many thanks for your very kind letter," he wrote. "I as an old soldier deeply appreciate your kind thoughts and sentiments."<sup>93</sup>

Such an intimate connection between propagandist and public seems to have been an aspect of New Zealand's campaigns that was not reflected in other nations examined in this study, such as Britain, where the MOI's structure and the size of their audience made the kind of personal connections Paul established with New Zealanders essentially impossible. The MOI was a much more complicated bureaucracy than the Publicity Department, employing a large number of people<sup>94</sup> – Valerie Holman called it 'sprawling'<sup>95</sup>, and Ian McLaine detailed the numerous divisions within the MOI and the various controllers and officers who ran the different branches<sup>96</sup>. It also lacked one central figure who was in control of all that went on: the MOI had a Director-General, a Minister, a Controller of the General Production Division, and a Controller of Distribution<sup>97</sup>, and those in charge came and went rapidly; there had been four Ministers of Information, for example, and five Directors-General by July 1941<sup>98</sup>. By comparison, Paul, who was the sole controller of both censorship and propaganda, had any public correspondence regarding either of these matters forwarded to him, and was in a position to establish his position and connections over the course of the entire war. Numerous examples of the bungling mistakes of the MOI early in the war<sup>99</sup> contributed to an often unfavourable public opinion in Britain, meaning that when a member of the public had a problem with the propaganda, rather than writing to complain and receiving an apologetic response – as was done in New Zealand – British audiences were inclined to find satisfaction for their grievances by making fun of the MOI<sup>100</sup>. All of this created an atmosphere surrounding Britain's propaganda that was very different to that of New Zealand.

Similarly, a comparison to South Africa's publicity campaigns suggests the distinctiveness of the Publicity Department's relationship with the public. Suryakanthie Chetty wrote that the Director of Military Intelligence, E.G. Malherbe, 'envisioned propaganda as flowing from the state and the

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<sup>92</sup> Letter from Hallenstein Bros. to Paul, 25 September 1945. E2 93, 29/17/56.

<sup>93</sup> Letter from A.S. Harrison-Lee to Paul. EA1 546, 84/12/12, part 7.

<sup>94</sup> Mariel Grant, 'Towards a Central Office of Information: Continuity and Change in British Government Information Policy, 1939-51'. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 34:1 (1999), p. 49.

<sup>95</sup> Valerie Holman, 'Carefully Concealed Connections: The Ministry of Information and British Publishing, 1939-1946'. *Book History*, 8:1 (2005), p. 200.

<sup>96</sup> McLaine, pp. 4-5.

<sup>97</sup> Grant, p.52; Holman, p. 205.

<sup>98</sup> Holman, p. 203

<sup>99</sup> These are detailed in McLaine's introduction.

<sup>100</sup> McLaine, p. 7.

military to the public, an easily manipulated audience'<sup>101</sup>. The disparate audiences contained within the fractured country made it impossible, according to Chetty, to effectively run a top-down publicity campaign, and South Africa's propaganda attempts to unite the nation behind the war effort were, at best, 'variable' and at worst a failure<sup>102</sup>. In comparing the way in which the MOI and the South African propaganda machine were run to the methods of New Zealand's Publicity Department, it seems apparent that the close personal connection that Paul and New Zealand's other propagandists created with the public was something not easily done in other nations.

Studies of propaganda are incomplete if they do not acknowledge the audiences as well as the producers. If propagandists aim to reflect what is already within the public consciousness, assessing the reactions of their audience can reveal the extent to which a government is in tune with its people. The Publicity Department prided itself on its understanding of and connection to New Zealanders; complaints and compliments were meticulously documented and attended to. It was considered both important and opportune to acknowledge New Zealanders' view of themselves as intelligent and valued members of an educated democracy and to treat them with respect by providing white propaganda that was both informative and entertaining and did not contain offensive or upsetting material. In a nation with a population as small as New Zealand's, the relationship between propagandist and public was unusually close. Paul evidently prided himself on his connection to New Zealanders and his ability to understand and meet their needs. The way in which New Zealand's propaganda was produced and selected to best satisfy New Zealanders' collective consciousness in a highly reciprocal system – a two-way conversation, rather than a top-down series of instructions – indicates the extent to which New Zealand had its own distinct national identity by WWII. The role of the public in New Zealand's publicity campaigns was vital, and the way in which the Publicity Department understood and respected that was a distinct element of propaganda in New Zealand.

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<sup>101</sup> Suryakanthie Chetty, 'Imagining National Unity: South African Propaganda Efforts During the Second World War', *Kronos: South African Histories* 38 (2012), pp. 107, 130.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter Six

### Images and Identity: Linking Propaganda and National Identity

National identity, as discussed in the introduction of this study, is a multi-faceted and complex concept. This thesis is not attempting to give a complete account of the state of New Zealand's nationhood during WWII; to do so would require an analysis of political positions, diplomatic machinations and social attitudes far beyond the scope of this research. Rather, this study attempts to use a single aspect of life during wartime – propaganda – to determine the extent to which, by WWII, a distinctive New Zealand identity had emerged as implicitly recognised by both the government and the people.

Propaganda is an ideal lens through which to view national identity. Unlike other ways of historically demonstrating this concept, such as diplomatic negotiations, which focus on the positions of the government, or sporting enthusiasm, which emphasises only the passions of the masses, propaganda bridges the gap between government and public, as material is produced by the former for the latter, with the audience having a significant influence over what the propagandists produce. By examining propaganda, we can get an insight into how both the government and the public perceived New Zealand's national identity. The way in which the Publicity Department worked with the governments of Britain and other dominion nations demonstrates the extent of the relationships with these nations, while examining the content decisions being made by the Publicity Committee provides insight into what those in government believed were important to New Zealanders. The reactions of the public, on the other hand – be it complaints or enthusiasm – is evidence of the interest of New Zealanders in their own nation and their Empire.

Wartime home front propaganda is generally nationalistic as it aims to unite the public behind their country's war effort. Notions of helping and protecting the nation's aims – as well as those of the fighting men overseas – dominate home front propaganda: 'your country needs you'. Propaganda can work to change people's minds, but it is most effective when it reinforces and sharpens what already exists in the public consciousness<sup>1</sup>: "The propagandist is a man (who) canalises an already existing stream; in a land where there is no water, he digs in vain."<sup>2</sup>In WWI the stream of New Zealand's public consciousness flowed towards Empire; by WWII it had shifted towards a pride and identification with New Zealand as a nation. The propaganda material of the two wars reflect this development in New Zealand's national identity. By examining New Zealand's propaganda, it is possible to identify what elements were prominent within the public consciousness as these were

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<sup>1</sup>David Welch, "Opening Pandora's Box: Propaganda, Power and Persuasion" in David Welch (ed.), *Propaganda, Power and Persuasion*, London: I.B. Tauris & Co, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Aldous Huxley, qtd in Welch, 'Opening Pandora's Box', p. 11.

appealed to by the nation's propagandists, who were aware that reflecting pre-existing beliefs and values was easier than attempting to instil new ones. Propaganda attempts to direct the public consciousness by reflecting dominant cultural ideas. This makes it an effective tool for historians examining concepts such as national identity. Suryakanthie Chetty argued that 'it is through [propaganda] images that one is able to grapple with the complex constructions of identity by the war's participants'<sup>3</sup>. What was depicted in New Zealand's WWII material, therefore, is a good indicator of how New Zealanders saw themselves and what they valued.

Britain and the Empire were still a strong part of New Zealand's identity, but it was, by WWII, an unmistakably smaller element within a distinctly New Zealand national identity. However, it would be a very bold historian who would claim that by WWII any trace of British identity had been erased from New Zealand's national conception of itself. Ties to Britain were still important; economically and diplomatically New Zealand was still reliant on Britain and the country's security was considered inextricably linked to the might of Britain<sup>4</sup>. New Zealand's government was increasingly independent, yet still perceived Britain as an authority and guiding force; the public maintained an emotional connection to the 'motherland'<sup>5</sup>. This is reflected in the way in which British material was used by the New Zealand propagandists. The Publicity Department was prepared to utilise material sent by the British MOI – particularly for campaigns such as Safety for Shipping, which delivered a general and simple message that did not necessarily need to appeal to nationalism to be effective. The MOI's insistence that the Publicity Department alter their material however they saw fit indicates a respect for New Zealand's autonomy; by giving New Zealand the right to use MOI material however was best suitable for their nation, Britain was acknowledging the existence of a unique New Zealand national identity. British material very rarely came at a cost to New Zealand and was of good quality; the Publicity Department knew that it was an easy way to get a message across without expending their own precious resources, which then could be reserved for producing material that was not available from Britain – such as that focussing on New Zealand troops or home front endeavours. Material from the MOI was a bonus for New Zealand's campaigns rather than the main focus, adding to the bulk of material in the public's eye. This added to the overall impact of New Zealand's propaganda, but the main messages were delivered by material produced in New Zealand. New Zealand needed its own national stories to appeal to New Zealanders.

By WWII, New Zealand's relationship with Britain had evolved significantly. New Zealand went into WWII as a more independent nation than in 1914, when King George had declared war on Germany

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<sup>3</sup>Suryakanthie Chetty, 'Imagining National Unity: South African Propaganda Efforts During the Second World War', *Kronos: South African Histories* 38 (2012), p. 106.

<sup>4</sup>Andrew Stewart, *Empire Lost: Britain, the Dominions and the Second World War*, London: Continuum, 2008, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

on New Zealand's behalf. In 1939, New Zealand declared war for itself, an indication that it was a nation stepping out of the shadow of the 'motherland'<sup>6</sup>. However, New Zealand had not yet signed the Statute of Westminster – offered in 1931 – and so it was still a nation with intrinsic ties to Britain. On the whole, the propaganda interaction between Britain and New Zealand, particularly the way the Publicity Department chose to selectively utilise MOI material as a supplement to their own publicity, demonstrated the relationship between the two nations at the time of WWII. Britain offered material to its small dominion, who took it gladly – but used it as it saw fit.

The interaction between the Publicity Department and the MOI demonstrates how Britain and New Zealand co-operated on a practical level; however, Britain was essentially peripheral to New Zealand's propaganda effort – MOI material was used, but material produced in New Zealand seldom emphasised the connection to Britain. This is a crucial point when analysing Britain's place in New Zealand's national identity during WWII: the diplomatic relationship was strong and important, but it was a practical relationship that was used in the running of the propaganda effort, rather than being a part of the publicity itself. The occasional exception – such as the poster imploring New Zealanders to 'put themselves into [Britain's] shoes' and give to National Savings<sup>7</sup> – did use the relationship as a propaganda tool, but for the most part the emphasis was closer to home. The connection to Britain was not strong enough to motivate New Zealanders to act for the war effort; it was no longer the dominant element of their national identity.

New Zealand's relationship to Britain was bound up with ideas of Empire – a sense of loyalty and belonging as a member of Britain's 'family'. The distinction between identification with Britain and with Empire was an important one; both were part of New Zealand's national consciousness by WWII but they were not interchangeable. Empire identity was strong in New Zealand in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; New Zealand was considered by Britain to be the 'dutiful' dominion<sup>8</sup>. In 1928 New Zealand's Empire support was described as 'a passion almost a religion' by Sir Leopold Amery<sup>9</sup>, indicating the strength of the Empire identity pre-WWII. In WWII propaganda, the enduring connection to Britain was most obvious in the relationship between the Publicity Department and the MOI, but a sense of belonging to the British Empire was much more prominent within the material itself. The British material that was used most frequently and widely in New Zealand was that which referred to the Empire as a whole; British material that focussed on the Empire was more suitable for use in New Zealand as it included and acknowledged New Zealanders' contribution to their 'motherland'. While a great deal of MOI propaganda – almost anything except the most generic

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<sup>6</sup> Stewart, p. 25.

<sup>7</sup> <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.801452>, viewed 8/04/16; refer to p.28 of this study.

<sup>8</sup> Stewart, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

material for non-specific campaigns – had to be altered to be relevant to New Zealand, that which featured the Empire was usually deemed suitable as it was, and was unlikely to be rejected. This is indicative of the shift that New Zealanders had undergone from seeing themselves as British to being a separate part of the Empire. If, by WWII, the dominant identity within New Zealand had been a British one, the MOI material that was strongly British would have been able to be circulated unchanged, for the consumption of a public that had the same values and attitudes as those in England. This, however, was evidently not the case. New Zealanders were considered unlikely to respond as well to material aimed at the British consciousness<sup>10</sup>; they no longer shared the identity of those back ‘home’. New Zealanders had shed their colonial identity as a British people, and had moved on to a more independent view of themselves. Material that appealed to their identification with the British Empire, such as *From the Four Corners* or the iconic ‘Together’ poster<sup>11</sup>, seemed therefore more effective at capturing the hearts and minds of New Zealanders.

It does, however, need to be acknowledged that the most appealing aspect of MOI material with an Empire focus was when it presented and acknowledged New Zealand’s efforts. If an Empire identity was the mid-way point between being British and being New Zealanders, then the use of MOI Empire-focussed propaganda indicates that New Zealand had already moved significantly towards seeing themselves as a unique nation, within the British Empire. Of the British material, that which focussed on Empire was the most useful; of the Empire propaganda, it was material that included New Zealanders that was the most commonly used, and therefore was presumably the most effective. This reflects the fact that although both British and Empire identity was still present within the national consciousness, the distinctly New Zealand identity was at the forefront.

This Empire identification was also reflected in New Zealand’s dealings with the other dominions. The way in which New Zealand exchanged material with Australia, Canada and South Africa was similar to the interactions with Britain, reflecting the fact that by WWII New Zealand was confident enough in its own place in the world to deal with its fellow dominions on its own in the same way as it dealt with Britain. Material from the other dominions – most prominently Australia, although publicity from Canada and South Africa did appear – was circulated around New Zealand in much the same way that MOI material was. Paul and his men carefully selected what they believed was suitable for the New Zealand public, picking and choosing from the myriad of material sent to them from overseas. They also used the material and experiences of the other dominions as examples and guidelines for their own publicity campaigns, taking the best of both Britain and the dominions and

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<sup>10</sup> Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10; letter from Russell Able to Paul, 4/ October 1941. EA1 544, 84/12/12, part 2; letter from Paul to, 5 June 1940. EA1 549, 84/12/18, part 1.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to p. 52 of this study.

using it to improve their material. The use of material from Australia, Canada and South Africa reflected an increased awareness of the connection between New Zealand and the other dominions, as New Zealand gave nearly the same attention to the dominion propaganda machine as it did to that of Britain. The connection to the other dominions was a part of New Zealand's conception of itself as part of the British Empire; these nations shared this bond with New Zealand and were in similar positions. The dominion 'idea', as Andrew Stewart describes it, was based on various factors, such as 'patriotism, loyalty, custom, religion and race'<sup>12</sup>. Analysis of propaganda shows that New Zealand still considered this dominion concept valuable and it was still a tenet of the country's identity. There was a sense of connection that was reflected in the fact that New Zealand looked to the other dominions in their propaganda efforts; no nation outside of the dominion 'club' had an impact on New Zealand publicity in a comparable way.

The dominion with the greatest impact on New Zealand propaganda was undoubtedly Australia. This is perhaps unsurprising; New Zealand and Australia had enjoyed a close relationship throughout their colonial histories. The two nations shared a history and culture, including the powerful Anzac legacy. Isolated from the rest of the Empire at the bottom of the world, New Zealand looked to Australia as well as Britain for support. As the evidence from New Zealand's propaganda campaigns shows, the relationship with Australia was more than the dominion connection with Canada and South Africa, who may have appeared too culturally, historically, and geographically removed from New Zealand for a deeper relationship to form<sup>13</sup>. The archival evidence of chapters two and three suggests that by WWII, Australia and Britain loomed equally large in the New Zealand national consciousness, as both nations were looked to for propaganda material and methods.

The use of Australian DOI material also demonstrates the similarities between the New Zealand and Australian people. Unaltered Australian material was used frequently in New Zealand, such as newsreels and radio broadcasts<sup>14</sup>; the national consciousness of the two nations was similar enough that Australian material was effective on New Zealand audiences – possibly to a greater extent than British material. There was an acknowledged shared element of identity between Australians and New Zealanders, and the government of New Zealand believed that for the most part the publicity needs of Australian and New Zealand people were essentially the same<sup>15</sup>. This is in contrast to the way that the majority of British material had to be altered to make it more applicable and relevant to New Zealanders. This indicates that by WWII the minds of New Zealanders were believed to be

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<sup>12</sup> Stewart, p. ix.

<sup>13</sup> Stewart, pp. 10-11.

<sup>14</sup> Telegram from External Affairs to New Zealand High Commissioner in Ottawa, 14 March 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1; memo from R.M. Campbell to External Affairs Department, 15 August 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Ian K. Mackay to the Controller, AADL W 2814 563 Box 21, 31/1/11, part 2.

more in tune with Australians' than Britons', demonstrating the move away from seeing themselves as British and towards an identity more connected to their own place in the world – an identity forged by (amongst other things) distance and the colonial experience, which was shared with Australia. The free and frequent exchange of material between the two nations – which by far made up the bulk of New Zealand's dealings with the other dominions – demonstrates the extent to which New Zealand and Australian beliefs and values were shared. Britain also acknowledged the connection<sup>16</sup>, and so have historians in the decades since the war: Andrew Stewart, Judith Smart, and Toby Wood have all written extensively on the close connection between the New Zealand and Australian governments and people<sup>17</sup>. The propaganda relationship between New Zealand and Australia, reflective of the connection between the two countries, further demonstrates New Zealanders' move away from a British identity to one that was more focussed on their place in the Pacific – a shift in focus from the distant memory of 'Home' to the reality of the land in which they lived.

Even within this close relationship, however, New Zealand's separate identity asserted itself. New Zealand could not rely solely on Australian material; the audience, though similar, were not identical. The most prominent example of this is New Zealand avoiding the racist depictions of the enemy that were common in Australia. There were a few isolated examples of such material in New Zealand, but on the whole the Publicity Department did not engage in the kind of racist rhetoric that the Australian propagandists did<sup>18</sup>. From the archival evidence examined for this study, there does not appear to be any evidence that Australia, who may have been aware of the more conservative attitudes of New Zealand's Publicity Department, attempted to send its racist material to New Zealand, so it is difficult to ascertain whether it would have been rejected by Paul as too upsetting or controversial. However, from the general avoidance of producing such material in New Zealand, and the fact that Paul was always willing to reject material that he did not feel was suitable for New Zealand audiences, it is likely that this would have been the case. The issue of racist propaganda is the clearest example of how New Zealander and Australia differed; their values – though often similar – did not necessarily align. Various historians have pointed out the differences and disagreements between New Zealand and Australia during WWII. If New Zealand and Australia had been perfectly in sync with one another, sharing an identity, New Zealand would have used considerably more ADOI material. The fact that Paul and his men utilised roughly the same amount

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<sup>16</sup> Memo from R.M. Campbell to External Affairs Department, 15 August 1944. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Stewart, *Empire Lost: Britain, the Dominions and the Second World War*, London: Continuum, 2008; Judith Smart and Tony Wood, 'Introduction and Acknowledgements' in Judith Smart and Tony Wood (eds.), *An Anzac Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45*, Clayton: Monash Publications in History, 1992, pp. 1-8.

<sup>18</sup> Stephanie Gibson, 'Display Folk: Second World War Posters at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa', *Tuhinga* 19 (2008), p. 14.

of British and Australian material, while New Zealand-produced material was significantly more prominent, indicates that even within New Zealand's closest relationships, there was still a distinct sense of national identity within New Zealand.

There is a wealth of evidence amongst the propaganda of WWII that demonstrates New Zealand's distinct national identity, only a portion of which been utilised in a study of this size. The evidence that is presented within the preceding chapters, however, amply demonstrates this unique New Zealand identity which was present in the minds of the people and recognised and acknowledged by the government. The fourth chapter of this thesis detailed how vocal New Zealanders were in their reactions to propaganda, and how the Publicity Department had a great deal of respect for their opinions of their audience. Outside the most fearsome dictatorship, propaganda cannot work without an awareness of public opinion – even in Nazi Germany, Goebbels and his Ministry of Information were highly aware of responses and reactions to the material they were issuing. What is noteworthy in the interplay between propagandist and public in New Zealand is the extent to which Paul and his department were connected to their audience.

A historical emphasis on white propaganda in New Zealand – telling the people the facts, and using the truth to motivate and convince the audience – was rooted in the British experiences with negative reactions to propaganda post-WWI<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, although it was a key element of the New Zealand publicity campaigns, it was not the defining New Zealand feature. It does, however, link with the Publicity Department's focus on feedback and constant adaptation to suit the national consciousness to demonstrate an important aspect of the New Zealand experience: the sense that the nation was an educated democracy, where citizens deserved to be informed. Paul and his department, reflecting a general attitude prevalent within the government, believed that the public deserved respect and consideration; propaganda material was to be entertaining yet factual, straightforward yet not upsetting or insensitive. This thesis has served to show that that significant respect was shown towards the public by the propagandists, which influenced all of New Zealand's circulated material. The public were communicated with like reasonable and educated adults, entrusted with facts in the knowledge that they would make the right decisions. It would be tempting to label this a pandering element of the propaganda, telling the audience that they're clever and special enough to be told the truth in order to engender greater trust and therefore compliance. Yet the archival communications within the Publicity Department do not support this theory, with the public frequently being referred to in terms that indicate that Paul and his men did indeed believe that New Zealanders were deserving of respect, truthfulness and

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<sup>19</sup>Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 33.

sensitivity<sup>20</sup>. Historian Ian McLaine identified a level of respect towards the public amongst the MOI in Britain; in New Zealand it was amplified with the belief that New Zealand was an educated democracy – an aspect of New Zealanders' view of themselves that has been identified in other studies of writing on war<sup>21</sup>. The way the Publicity Department saw the public encapsulates this element of the New Zealand consciousness, as the success of New Zealand's propaganda campaigns relied on the interplay between government and people.

Having such a sense of respect for the public contributed to a close relationship that had a significant impact on the propaganda campaigns of New Zealand. This was also strengthened by the small size of New Zealand, which brought Paul close to his audience. There was a strong sense that the war effort was a 'family matter'<sup>22</sup>; almost everyone was close to someone serving in the forces and knew the details of troop movements. Paul was hesitant to enforce too strict a censorship policy, and was also particularly lenient when it came to information circulated through personal contact with troops<sup>23</sup>. This led to a national environment where there was little point in trying to create anything other than fact-based white propaganda – if what the government was saying proved to be incongruous with what people were being told by their family, friends and neighbours, trust in publicity would be lost and the people would feel like their intelligence was being insulted. To say nothing, on the other hand, would create suspicion over why what they already knew was being withheld, and so in a small nation where details of the war spread quickly throughout communities, the only effective option was open and honest publicity, where anything that became common knowledge was best acknowledged by the government. This is an example of how New Zealand's specific situation – as a nation that was small, both geographically and population-wise – affected the strategies and campaigns of the propaganda. The evidence from New Zealand certainly indicates that in this small nation, decisions on what to tell the public were heavily influenced by their local knowledge of what was happening.

Contact between the public and the Publicity Department – particularly Paul – was extensive and frequent. The structure of the Publicity Department, where Paul was essentially in sole control of the nation's propaganda efforts, encouraged a personal connection with the public, who had one accessible figure to whom they could direct their feedback – unlike in Britain, where the MOI's

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<sup>20</sup> Letter from Manager to Paul, 14 February 1942. EA1 543, 84/12/7; Lars Weckbecker, *Governing Visions of the Real*, Bristol: Intellect, 2015, p. 72; memo to editors from Paul, 16 April 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1; letter from Paul to Secretary of War Purposes Committee, 24 April 1945. EA1 543, 84/12/1.

<sup>21</sup> Such as Rachael Bell's work on the war histories, Carol Mutch's work on citizenship education, and Chris Brickell's work on army education schemes.

<sup>22</sup> Despatch of 1<sup>st</sup> Echelon – Publicity, N.A. 030/50/5, 8 February 1940. EA1 543, 84/12/4.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Paul to W.P. Alexander, 15 December 1943. EA1 550, 84/12/18, part 3; letter from Paul to A.O. Yardley, 3 April 1941. EA1547, 84/12/13, part 2.

sprawling structure and bad reputation appears to have prevented this sort of relationship<sup>24</sup>. David Clampin described how the MOI could rarely create and sustain 'active, enthusiastic, and direct engagement' amongst the British people<sup>25</sup>. Compliments and criticisms were received by Paul with great frequency, and though such letters were often from publicity distributors, such as newspaper editors, shop owners or cinema managers, the general public also contributed a significant amount of the correspondence. The volume of letters that went back and forth between Paul and the public is indicative of the public's willingness to voice their opinion – they felt important enough that their compliments would be appreciated, and they were unafraid to complain when the material somehow failed to meet their expectations. This is reflective of the level of respect afforded to the public by the government – in New Zealand's educated democracy, the public felt that they deserved to have a vocal opinion. In New Zealand, propaganda was not a top-down process, where the government dictated to the masses what should be done. Although this kind of coercion propaganda was, even by WWII, widely acknowledged as less effective<sup>26</sup>, the extent to which Paul and the Publicity Department were accountable to the public is significant, and is likely the result of the level of respect being given to such a small population.

The close relationship between public and propagandist went beyond a willingness to send feedback. The establishment and maintaining of a personal relationship with the public was considered a vital part of New Zealand's publicity campaigns, an element that made propaganda more effective<sup>27</sup>. Paul in particular made an effort to cultivate friendly personal relationships with those who distributed and consumed the material. By expressing sentiments of appreciation, assistance, and warmth, Paul created trust and faith, encouraging people to co-operate and establishing an approachable front for the nation's propaganda campaigns. Propaganda in New Zealand, therefore, did not emerge from a sprawling, bureaucratic entity like the MOI in Britain – Paul was the friendly face of the Publicity Department, willing to listen and advise. This, combined with the emphasis on white propaganda and respect for the public, helped to make propaganda in New Zealand acceptable and positive, a necessary part of the war effort rather than something sinister or misleading. Although ascertaining the true extent of public opinion is acknowledged as difficult<sup>28</sup>, the evidence strongly indicates that reactions to propaganda in New Zealand were largely positive. This is in contrast to the experiences of the MOI, which – according to Ian McLaine –

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<sup>24</sup>Ian McLaine, *Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War II*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979, pp. 4-5, 7.

<sup>25</sup>David Clampin, *Advertising and Propaganda in World War II: Cultural Identity and the Blitz Spirit*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014, p. 21.

<sup>26</sup>Welch, *Propaganda*, p. 28.

<sup>27</sup>1944 War Loan Conference – Headings for Addresses, ABTW W4656 7057 Box 1.

<sup>28</sup>Clampin, p. 2.

often suffered from unfavourable public opinion<sup>29</sup>, or the South African propaganda efforts, which Chetty argues ultimately failed<sup>30</sup>, or even the ADOI, whose racist campaigns were ‘a public relations disaster’<sup>31</sup>. This indicates that a number of elements that were distinctly New Zealand – the notion of an educated democracy, the lack of government bureaucracy and separation, the small size of the population – combined to create a positive relationship between the propagandists and the public which was to some extent distinctive to New Zealand and reflected the national character. The way that aspects of the New Zealand consciousness had a tangible effect on the nation’s propaganda demonstrates how the government acknowledged and responded to the fact that their people were unique, not interchangeable with population elsewhere – they had distinct needs and wants for their propaganda material because they were New Zealanders, and the New Zealand government had to respond accordingly.

The majority of propaganda material circulated around the country during WWII was, in various ways, also distinctly New Zealand. Publicity from Britain and the dominions was not uncommon, but it was often altered to be more relevant to New Zealanders. NZ took advantage of being able to alter MOI material as they saw fit, always assessing whether material coming in from overseas was suitable for the New Zealand audience. The frequent addition of New Zealand into foreign material demonstrates the extent to which the nation’s identity had developed by WWII. Propaganda needed to appeal to the audience’s values and beliefs in order to be effective; in order to make overseas material appealing, the Publicity Department added references to New Zealand. This indicates that New Zealanders in WWII valued their own nationality and had significant pride in their country. Showing New Zealanders images of themselves would have been pointless if they had not possessed a conception of themselves as distinct from other nations.

A number of the elements discussed above are drawn together in the case study of *Next of Kin*, as examined in both chapters two and three of this study. Concern over the distressing nature of some scenes combined with a desire to market the film as entertainment led to Paul’s plan to significantly alter the film, despite the objections of Britain and Australia’s decision to release the film mostly as it was. That New Zealand was the only nation that decided *Next of Kin* needed significant alteration<sup>32</sup> to meet the local audience’s needs demonstrates a strong sense of individuality and national confidence. Paul turned to Australia in the face of pressure from Britain, but when the ADOI did not

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<sup>29</sup>McLaine, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup>Chetty, p. 106.

<sup>31</sup>Lynette Finch, ‘Knowing the Enemy: Australian Psychological Warfare and the Business of Influencing Minds in the Second World War’, *War and Society* 16:2 (1998), p. 72; see also Kay Saunders, ‘An Instrument of Strategy: Propaganda, Public Policy and the Media in Australia During the Second World War’, *War and Society* 15:2 (1997), p. 87; Robert Crawford, ‘Nothing to Sell? – Australia’s Advertising Industry at War, 1939-1945’, *War & Society* 20:1 (2002), p. 108.

<sup>32</sup>Letter from Paul to Mr. Sedgwick, 3 February 1943. EA1 544, 84/12/10.

agree that Paul's significant changes were necessary, he and his department remained resolute and released the film as they believed it would best resonate with New Zealand. The Publicity Department had a strong belief that their audience had specific needs and wants; New Zealanders' viewing tastes were not seen as mirroring that of overseas audiences, as their sense of national identity influenced their collective consciousness. When it came to circulating overseas material, New Zealand put its faith in its knowledge of its own people. What the Department believed local audiences wanted was more important than what Britain said or Australia's position on the matter. *Next of Kin* is a prime example of how New Zealand prioritised its own beliefs about material, confident that it knew its own people best. This is indicative of a strong sense of national identity.

New Zealand did not only take foreign material and alter it to suit the country's audience; the most prominent material that appeared in New Zealand was that which was produced domestically by the Publicity Department and other various government bodies. There was an emphasis on the importance of producing material locally, and though propaganda from Britain and the dominions was useful – often helping cut costs or increasing the volume of material in circulation – it was not the priority. To most effectively motivate the New Zealand people to be active in the war effort, it was necessary to appeal to them as New Zealanders and inspire a sense of national – rather than Empire or dominion – pride. As the first chapter of this thesis demonstrated, the amount of propaganda created by the New Zealand government was significant, despite restrictions on resources such as money and equipment. The utilisation of overseas material at no cost to cover generic wartime messages, such as 'don't talk', gave the Publicity Department more freedom to produce material that could not be imported – that which appealed to New Zealanders' sense of national pride and identification. New Zealanders were addressed as inhabitants of a small, isolated nation, as people of the land, as the keepers of the Empire's larder, as the loved ones that their boys were fighting for.

The distinct imagery of the nation's propaganda presented New Zealand as something worth fighting for: the flag, the rolling green countryside, the unique presence of the Maori culture. These images were presented to New Zealanders as symbols of their nation, things that only they could protect. "Because these things...are our own, they will relate themselves subtly to the war effort," Andrews of the NFU wrote<sup>33</sup>, articulating the idea that that which was most familiar was most effective. Figures of national and local prominence looked down from posters and cinema screens, their voices coming through the radio addressing New Zealanders as New Zealanders, and the men of the NZEF were a constant presence, even though they were stationed on the other side of the world. They're

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<sup>33</sup>Weckbecker, p. 70.

there for you, New Zealanders were told, both implicitly and overtly: they fight for your freedom, your sons and brothers and husbands; they fight for this flag and this land. Images of the lemon-squeezer invoked pride, gratitude and responsibility by reminding New Zealanders at home of the sacrifices made by the boys overseas and the Anzacs of the generation before. The combined effect of these images of New Zealand, repeated in posters, radio broadcasts, cinema films and slides, and window displays throughout the war, was the entrenchment in the public mind of a New Zealand that was worth fighting for, a nation that everyone belonged to and had a responsibility to protect.

This was not a concept that could be created from propaganda alone – the ability of New Zealand’s propagandists to utilise national motifs and concepts to mobilise the population indicates that the national identification with New Zealand already existed in the public consciousness. Walker Connor wrote that a nation exists where ‘a sufficient number has internalised the national identity in order to cause nationalism to become an effective force for mobilizing the masses’<sup>34</sup>. By WWII, the propaganda produced in New Zealand indicates that nationalism, as reflected in the various distinctly New Zealand images that appeared in the material, was effective at mobilising the public. Studying the propaganda efforts of New Zealand in WWII therefore illustrates what many historians have argued: by 1939, New Zealand’s sense of a distinct national identity, separate from Britain, was well established.

As an as yet understudied aspect of New Zealand’s home front, greater insight on New Zealand’s WWII publicity could be gained by further building on Nancy Taylor’s writing on censorship and Stephanie Gibson’s work on posters with a detailed history of the Publicity Department or by a biographical work on Paul, making use of his personal archives held at Otago University. The analysis of national identity could also be further developed through comparison studies – the comparison of material from WWI and WWII, or a detailed account of the workings of the British MOI or Australian DOI compared to New Zealand’s Publicity Department. More specific studies could go into detail on material aimed at women, Maori, the working class or farmers, in the same vein as Deborah Montgomerie’s work specifically on advertising aimed at women in wartime. Propaganda, which during wartime aims to mobilise the people by reflecting a country’s loyalties, values, and beliefs, is a valuable tool for historians seeking to understand the social or political landscape of a nation. It is hoped that this thesis, which uses propaganda to demonstrate the state of New Zealand’s national identity in WWII, will encourage other historians to utilise propaganda as a tool to gain a greater insight into New Zealand’s WWII home front.

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<sup>34</sup>Maxine Anne Iversen, ‘Inextricable Links: Pakeha Perceptions of Identity and Their Relationships with Britain at the Time of the Statute of Westminster’, MA, University of Auckland, 1996, p.17.

## Conclusion

This study set out to determine the extent to which New Zealand's WWII propaganda reflected a distinct sense of national identity. To create a sound theoretical base on which to build, the work of historians who had studied propaganda both in New Zealand and overseas was drawn on. This established the core concepts of propaganda itself as well as the ways in which propaganda could reflect social and cultural notions. David Welch's theories on propaganda during WWII were synthesised with Stephanie Gibson's findings on the poster collection held at Te Papa, along with the theoretical lenses of Suryakanthie Chetty's work on South African material. To strengthen the conclusions of this study, works of New Zealand historians who have previously examined the country's national identity were examined, particularly the pioneering work of Keith Sinclair and the more recent book by Ron Palenski, whose argument that New Zealand's national identity was well-established by WWII was key.

The framework of the literature was then applied to the primary material on New Zealand's publicity campaigns – the propaganda itself and the archival files surrounding its creation and dissemination. To do so, I investigated propaganda through four angles. The first examined the material that was created in New Zealand, to determine what aspects of the locally-produced propaganda were indicative of the country's awareness of a distinctive New Zealand identity. The second analysed the way in which the Publicity Department used material sent by the British MOI, to ascertain both the extent to which New Zealand's relationship with Britain was dominant within the national consciousness and whether British material aimed at British audiences was considered effective in New Zealand. Thirdly, this concept was also applied to material from the other dominion nations which was used in New Zealand, to question whether New Zealand's relationships with Australia, Canada and South Africa had become a significant element of the country's national identity. Finally, I considered the audience who were consuming New Zealand's propaganda, questioning the way in which New Zealanders responded to the Publicity Department's campaigns and the extent to which the character of the public influenced the decisions of the Department. These four aspects of investigation were then synthesised in a concluding discussion chapter, which applied the theory of the literature to the archival findings to come to a conclusion about national identity in New Zealand's WWII propaganda.

The four angles which I approached the subject from yielded a number of key findings that led to my final conclusion. Examining the material produced locally revealed that New Zealand created significant amounts of propaganda revolving around themes and images which were identifiably New Zealand. New Zealand was highly present in the material circulated by the Publicity

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Department, indicating that appealing to a sense of national pride and identity was seen as an effective method of motivating New Zealanders to support the war effort. The connection to Empire was also significant by WWII; material that emphasised New Zealand as a member of the British Empire was more widely circulated than other material received from the MOI which suggests that by WWII New Zealanders' relationship to Britain was more focussed on their place in the Empire. The way in which the Publicity Department altered MOI and dominion material to make it more suitable for circulation in New Zealand indicates that there was an awareness that New Zealand audiences had specific tastes that could not be satisfied with overseas material. Finally, in examining the relationship between the Publicity Department – particularly Paul – and the New Zealand public, it becomes apparent that New Zealanders believed themselves to be intelligent and worthy of respect from their government. The nation's propagandists reflected this by creating a system that was not enforced from above, but rather was highly responsive to the opinions and desires of the public.

By examining these four aspects of propaganda in New Zealand in depth, I have demonstrated that a distinct sense of New Zealand identity was prominent in the nation's propaganda, and this was believed to be an effective way to appeal to New Zealanders. The resounding consensus of historians is that, by WWII, New Zealand's national identity was well-developed and prominent amongst the people. The conclusion of this study – that New Zealanders did indeed see themselves as New Zealanders, as did the government – is not ground-breaking, or a radical new theory. In many ways, it has served as an extended case study in the much wider history of New Zealand's national identity; propaganda can act as an illustration for historians' narrative of nationalism. Both the material itself and the creation and distribution process that surrounded New Zealand's propaganda exemplify the perception of a distinct identity amongst the New Zealand people; imported material was used selectively and altered to better fit the national consciousness of New Zealand while locally-produced propaganda emphasised aspects that were uniquely New Zealand. The presentation of the archival material and the publicity produced during the war, therefore, gives further credence to the argument well-established by historians thus far: by WWII, the people who lived in this nation considered themselves as distinctly New Zealanders.

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