

the New Zealanders at that time. The preoccupation with equality, the commitment to promotion through seniority, and the concern with fairness are all evident on most of the pages. Wilfred Smith's extraordinary account of crossing the equator is almost worth an article in its own right. In many of these extracts even the language deserves analysis. The word 'stunt', for instance, seems to have been a uniquely New Zealand expression for describing attacks. Eric Partridge, seemingly unaware of the use made of the word by the 'diggers' (the New Zealanders' name for themselves until it was appropriated by the Australians), defined it as 'an item and an entertainment'; 'an athletic performance, any (daring) feat Hence, an enterprise undertaken to gain an advantage or a reputation. . . . ' In the context of the First World War 'stunt' suggests ironic understatement, 'taking the mickey' out of the war and the New Zealanders' own pretensions, even frivolity. At Le Quesnoy, on 4 November 1918, the Division engaged in its most spectacular stunt, scaling the walls of the historic fortress in order to save civilian lives and 'historic monuments'. It was like an episode from a war in another century, almost a gesture of contempt for the industrialized slaughter of the 'Great Adventure'.

The letters and diaries provide a remarkable series of insights into New Zealand men of that generation. They also provide a compelling and moving account of an experience which seems quite extraordinary. In their different voices these eight recognized the extraordinary nature of that experience, and this skilful selection allows the reader to rediscover what they learned. The editors suggest that most of what the men learnt was not understood at home; in some respects this was obviously true. What surprised me, however, was the frankness and fullness of many of the letters that travelled back to New Zealand. It may have taken the population that stayed at home the best part of a decade to absorb the full cynicism of the troops, but letters such as these must have helped considerably in creating the foundation for that twentieth-century consciousness which scholars like Fussell have begun to analyse.

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King and Country Call. New Zealanders, Conscription and the Great War. By Paul Baker. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1988. 274pp. NZ price: \$30.70.

THE SOCIAL history of the two world wars has recently come under close scrutiny by New Zealand historians, as revealed by a number of recent publications. Attention has been focused on the experiences of the New Zealand troops overseas, conscientious objectors, and women, and wider questions about the effect of war on New Zealand nationalism have been addressed. While Paul Baker claims, in his preface, to have been 'inspired by the heroic approach of Sir Keith Sinclair . . . complet[ing] the map, in broad strokes', *King and Country Call* is not a general social history of New Zealand in the First World War, but about a very specific aspect of that war—conscriptions. Baker seeks to explain why conscription was introduced in 1916 and how New Zealanders responded. Through his discussion of conscription he does, however, expose some of the characteristics of New Zealand society of the early twentieth century, in particular the conservative nature of that society. The response to the war showed New Zealand to be unequivocally loyal to Britain, and the attitudes to 'shirkers' revealed some deep concerns in New Zealand society about non-conformity to the dominant ideology of the Protestant work ethic. 'Army discipline [it was hoped] would finally reform the drunkards, thieves, layabouts, radicals, and general purpose ratbags who had proved beyond their control' (p.49).

Little space is given by Baker to those who opposed the war effort (apart from the galling accounts of their treatment by the authorities, in particular the 14 conscientious objectors who were sent to the Front in France in 1917). This is intentional on Baker's part. He explains that he wanted to keep those who opposed the war effort in their place as a minority group. Baker claims that too much prominence has been given to them previously by leftist historians. A good deal of attention is given to Sir James Allen who, as Minister of Defence, was largely responsible for introducing conscription and running it, and was Acting Prime Minister twice during the war. Baker argues that Allen deserves a more prominent place in New Zealand history than he has hitherto been given, as New Zealand's effective leader during the First World War. The success of conscription he attributes at least in part to 'the good and sustained intentions of its administrator', who was responsible for avoiding the extremes of inefficiency, unfairness, militarism, and intentional brutality that other conscriptionist nations showed to be possible (p.230).

The strength of this book, however, lies not in the attention to policymakers and administrators but in the voice of the people that clearly comes through. A wide range of sources has been consulted and presented in a clear and interesting fashion. Baker has shown what the average New Zealander felt about the war and conscription and how attitudes changed in the course of the war. He argues convincingly that conscription worked because most people wanted it, or at least accepted it; that it was an expression of popular will, in particular an expression of the belief that there should be an equality of sacrifice.

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'I Shall Not Die'. Titokowaru's War. New Zealand, 1868-9. By James Belich. Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1989. 323pp. NZ price: \$29.95.

TWO GOOD books, based on two dissertations, in four years is a most impressive achievement, and the second book, though on a much smaller subject, is as good as the first.

Titokowaru, once a name to frighten settlers, a Maori leader never beaten in a battle, has almost vanished from our history books. Dr Belich has convincingly resurrected his reputation. In doing so he has written what must be the most detailed account of any event or brief series of events in our history.

Titokowaru, at first a 'determined pacifist', became involved in the resistance to the occupation of confiscated land by settlers. The killing of Europeans involved him in conflict with the Armed Constabulary, militia, Volunteers, and 'friendly' Maori, that is, kupapa. The numbers engaged were quite small. At first about 200 Maori faced about 1000 Armed Constables and some 200 Volunteers. Later there were some 600 Europeans and about 450 kupapa. There were only a couple of battles, which the so-called 'rebel' Maori won. Titokowaru was a brilliant defensive leader. Still, I do not see how he can be called 'perhaps the greatest war leader' ever produced in New Zealand. Speaking, not too seriously, as a former Sergeant in the NZ Army Temporary Staff and as a former Sub-Lieutenant in the RNZNVR, I wonder how he can be compared with General Freyberg. In any case, most of Titokowaru's men left him, apparently because of his adultery with the wife or wives of one or more chiefs.

Belich does show that he almost won a limited victory, for some of the European troops ran away, mutinied, or just went home because their term of service had expired. The