

1944

NEW ZEALAND

THE GENERAL ELECTION, 1943

REPORTS BY SPECIAL RETURNING OFFICERS IN UNITED KINGDOM, CANADA, MIDDLE EAST, AND PACIFIC ON THE CONDUCT OF THE NEW ZEALAND GENERAL ELECTION, 1943, AMONGST MEMBERS OF THE FORCES, UNDER THE ELECTORAL (MEMBERS OF THE FORCES) REGULATIONS 1941

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave

UNITED KINGDOM

New Zealand Government Offices,
415 Strand, London, W.C. 2, 1st October, 1943.

DEAR SIR,

I am forwarding under separate cover the following completed election papers:—

By mail-box	{	Declarations in order.
		Declarations disallowed, with sealed envelopes containing relative ballot-papers.
		Valid Electoral ballot-papers.
		Invalid Electoral ballot-papers.
		Valid National Licensing ballot-papers.
		Invalid National Licensing ballot-papers.
Attached	{	Valid Local Option ballot-papers.
		Invalid Local Option ballot-papers.
		Official count of votes certified by scrutineers.

As the election was conducted wholly by declaration voting on account of rolls not being available, and, by commencing the count early, time was available to make a thorough examination of each ballot-paper, I appointed Mr. Arthur Sims and Mr. Jas. Webster (who is acting as Audit Officer) as scrutineers, and arranged for them to be present at the opening of the ballot-papers. In this way the figures were thoroughly checked and agreed by the scrutineers before being cabled to you.

The electoral material forwarded by the "Empire Grace" reached me at the beginning of September, but the air-mail letter with instructions and explanation of regulations mentioned in your cable numbered 4891 of 26th July has not come to hand. In any case, air-mail letters in July and August were taking five to seven weeks to reach us, and I could not, therefore, expect to receive your letter before the end of August. As it would then have been too late to organize a system of conducting the election it was necessary for me to improvise one based on the regulations relating to voting by declaration. Particulars of the method adopted and some comments on the general application of voting by declaration to this election are being supplied in a separate report [*printed below*].

The costs of the election have been kept as low as possible without impairing efficiency or leaving grounds for complaint that every facility was not afforded to servicemen and the Merchant Navy to record their votes. I am unable to supply you with a statement as to cost, but all electoral expenses will be paid by the High Commissioner's Office and charged to Electoral vote, so that particulars will reach you in due course through the Treasury.

Following your decision as to remuneration of polling officers and polling clerks in connection with by-elections, I am making payment to them of £2 2s. and £1 1s. respectively.

I should like to record my appreciation of the generous assistance afforded to me by officers of the High Commissioner's staff, frequently after office hours, also to Mr. H. Turner, who very kindly took over the recording of votes of men of the Merchant Navy on ships arriving at Liverpool during the period of voting.

It was considered advisable that a representative should visit the larger R.A.F. stations to hand over voting-papers and explain the instructions to the officer deputed to take the votes. The difficulty of railway travel and the distances to be covered presented an obstacle, but at the request of the headquarters of the R.N.Z.A.F. (Group Captain Manson) the Air Ministry kindly placed a plane and pilot at my disposal for four days for my representative Mr. Balfour, of the High Commissioner's staff, to visit the outlying stations.

May I add my personal thanks to you for the appointment as Special Returning Officer for the United Kingdom, Greenland, Iceland, and Gibraltar.

Satisfactory arrangements were made for Iceland and Gibraltar, but it was ascertained from the United States authorities who control Greenland that no New Zealand nationals were in the Forces stationed there.

The work involved was heavier than I had expected from my experiences from time to time as a Deputy Returning Officer in New Zealand, but I have enjoyed the renewed contact with New Zealand affairs and hope that I have conducted the election to your satisfaction.

I shall continue in the High Commissioner's office until I have cleared up all matters except the payment of polling officers and polling clerks, leaving a list of these amounts with the Finance office for payment.

Yours faithfully,

F. T. SANDFORD, Special Returning Officer.

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER,
WELLINGTON,
NEW ZEALAND.

REPORT OF CONDUCT OF GENERAL ELECTION IN UNITED KINGDOM, GIBRALTAR, AND ICELAND

I COMMENCED this work during the third week in July, and as it seemed clear that electoral rolls would not be available for distribution to all Naval, Army, and Air Force stations the headquarters of each of these Services were asked to issue orders to all stations, instructing the Commanding Officer to forward, direct to me, lists of New Zealand nationals under their commands, giving in each case full name, last residential address in New Zealand, and approximate date of leaving the Dominion. The objects of obtaining these lists were first to enable me to prepare an electoral roll for each station, and secondly to ensure that all New-Zealanders in the Services would have brought to their notice the fact that a General Election was being held and that they had the right to vote. The lists, of course, constituted the Commanding Officers' certificates required by the regulations.

In response to these orders lists were received from 477 stations, but, as would have been expected, many of them were more or less incomplete on account of insufficiency of address or omission of date of leaving New Zealand. Considerable correspondence was involved in getting them all completed, so that the electorates could be accurately fixed and entered on the lists. In this way upwards of four thousand names were obtained. It was, of course, not possible to check the addresses, and therefore the address given in each case was taken as correct. This work was completed before the supplementary rolls were received, but as a matter of fact the rolls were of little use, as I would estimate that, in some 20 per cent of the cases, the addresses claimed by the men differed from those shown in the rolls. This was, I think, due to the fact that most men had at least two addresses—viz., where they lived or worked prior to enlistment, and the addresses of next-of-kin.

I found at a very early stage that it was useless to rely on men knowing the electorate within which the address that they gave was situated. To check up on this, I asked the headquarters staff of one of the New Zealand Services here to fill in declaration forms. Forty-six forms were received and in twenty-five of these the electorates were either incorrect or left blank because the electorates were not known. As these men were all engaged in administrative or clerical work it is reasonable to assume that over the whole of the fighting Services the percentage of correct electorates would at least not be higher.

The voting by declaration method is based on the assumption that the voter is fully aware of the electorate in which he is eligible to vote, but it is clear that, unless some one has the knowledge or information to advise the voter before he fills in his declaration form, so many votes will have to be disallowed as to render the poll farcical.

My instructions to polling officers, of which three copies are attached, require that when the voter is given the declaration form his attention must be drawn to the electorate in which his address entitles him to vote, it being assumed, of course, that the polling officer will check the declaration when completed with the list. This should have ensured that all declarations were in order, but out of some 3,200 declarations 78 (2.4 per cent.) had to be disallowed. These 78 incorrect declarations may have resulted from the voter claiming an address different from that shown on the list, in which case the polling officer would have no means of checking the electorate.

In every case the Commanding Officer of the station was appointed polling officer with power to delegate, and it is clear that the officers actually doing the work did not, in quite a few cases, take the trouble to read the instructions, as many instances occurred of the electorates not being filled in before the ballot-papers were handed to the voter. This omission rendered 88 out of 534 local option voting-papers invalid. It is not possible for me to identify the stations at which this occurred, but it is no doubt due to lack of interest or to other interests being uppermost in the minds of the fighting Services. This is not surprising as, in the case of the Air Force for instance, these men are almost continuously engaged on operations in Bomber, Fighter, or other Commands. The inclination to vote was naturally not as keen as it would have been in units composed solely of fairly large numbers of New-Zealanders.

In 395 Navy and Air Force ships and stations of the 477 from which lists were received there were only small numbers of men qualified to vote, and these were dealt with by post. Declaration forms were prepared in this office from particulars supplied by the stations, and these were sent to the stations for signature. On the return of these declarations, duly signed, the ballot-papers were sent by registered post. This process involved a fair amount of extra work, but I am convinced that it resulted in more men recording their votes, or at least being given opportunity to do so.

The lists received from Commanding Officers covered a total of well over 4,000 men, but of these, only some 75 per cent. recorded their votes. Quite a number of ballot-papers were returned from the stations with notes from the polling officers that the men for whom they were intended did not wish to vote. Transfers to other stations both in the United Kingdom and overseas were of daily occurrence, and although all men were notified that they must notify any change of address it is certain that these transfers contributed largely to the discrepancy between voters registered and votes recorded.

Every effort was made through the "New Zealand News," the Forces weekly broadcast by Mr. A. Heighway, and newspapers to distribute information, and I feel satisfied that those who did not register have not the excuse that they had not sufficient information.

Declaration, Electoral ballot-papers, and National Licensing ballot-papers when printed were numbered consecutively, the Local Option ballot-papers, being less in number, were left unnumbered. As there were so many stations, with the number of voters varying between 1 and 500, it was felt that this consecutive numbering of papers gave a better check on papers than could have been obtained by consecutive numbering at the time of issue by the polling officers. The instructions to polling officers required that all the papers given to any voter should bear the same number as his declaration form, and that if a Local Option ballot-paper were required this should be marked by the polling officer with the same number as the declaration. In the event of necessity arising for any of the ballot-papers to be opened, a reference to the declaration will show the number of the ballot-paper. Rubber stamps with polling-booth numbers could not be supplied on account of the difficulty of obtaining the rubber for their manufacture, and polling officers were therefore instructed to write the name of the station on the counterfoils and initial each counterfoil and also the back of the ballot-paper.

In the absence of rolls, by a comparison of which after the close of the poll dual voting could have been detected, a card was prepared for each man from the Commanding Officers' lists, and on receipt of the signed declaration the card was stamped to show that he had voted. No case of dual voting has occurred.

In two cases on the last day for voting it was necessary to instruct a station by telephone to prepare their own declarations and ballot-papers. The completed forms were duly received and were in order.

There was no central authority through which lists of men in the Merchant Navy could be compiled. An effort was therefore made to get in touch with those at sea through wireless broadcasts and by sending a polling officer aboard each ship ordinarily in the New Zealand trade on her arrival in a United Kingdom port. In this way all new arrivals were given an opportunity to vote. Seamen temporarily ashore must register with the shipping pool and, with the co-operation of the Ministry of War Transport, notification of the right of New-Zealanders to vote was sent to each of the fifty pool offices in the United Kingdom. A number of seamen's votes were recorded, but I have no idea of the proportion that this number represented of those entitled to vote.

F. T. SANDFORD, Special Returning Officer.

CANADA

Memorandum for:

THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER,
WELLINGTON.

NEW ZEALAND ELECTIONS: IN AMERICA

I BEG to make the following report with reference to the taking in America of the votes of members of the Forces.

PRELIMINARY

1. Following my appointment, on 3rd August last, as Special Returning Officer for the American Continent and adjacent areas, I made preliminary inquiries here from the Air Force and Naval authorities in order to get a general picture of the problems to be dealt with. I left Auckland on Wednesday, 18th August, by an American Naval Air Transport Service plane, and arrived in Honolulu on 20th August. The Naval Air Transport officials made urgent arrangements for my journey on to San Francisco, and I left Honolulu on 22nd August, arriving at San Francisco on 23rd August. I left there the following day by air for Washington, D.C., where I arrived at midday on 25th August.

INQUIRIES AS TO NAVAL PERSONNEL

2. I interviewed the British Admiralty Maintenance representative in Washington and found that, in response to a suggestion made by the New Zealand Legation, he had sent a general signal to all stations and ships in the Western Atlantic and around the North American Continent advising the approach of the New Zealand elections and requesting all New Zealand personnel who wished to vote to register their names with their Commanding Officers. Certain names had already been sent in by Commanding Officers, and I arranged for further information received to be sent to me as it was received.

PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES AS TO ARMY PERSONNEL

3. While in San Francisco, and again in Washington, I made inquiries as to Army personnel who might be in America in the election period, and arranged to be advised as to any who might arrive. At that time there was a possibility that the Forestry Unit might need to be dealt with in America, but I had inquiries made and ascertained that their departure from England had been postponed and that they would be dealt with there.

PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES AS TO AIR FORCE PERSONNEL

4. While in Washington I made inquiries from the New Zealand Air Mission as to Air Force personnel in United States or adjacent areas. I had already made arrangements with the senior R.N.Z.A.F. officer in Honolulu to cover all New Zealand personnel there. From Washington I proceeded immediately to Ottawa, where I arrived on Friday, 27th August.

I examined the position of Air Force personnel in Canada closely, and sent from the New Zealand Air Mission to each Air Force unit a communication concerning the elections, with a request that advice be sent immediately concerning the number of New Zealand personnel attached to the unit. There were several Air Force personnel who had been discharged from the Air Force and who were still in America. These had to be provided for also.

PRELIMINARY INQUIRIES AS TO MERCHANT SEAMEN

5. Before leaving New Zealand I ascertained that there was a possibility that the "Pamir" might be in American waters during the election period, but that no other New Zealand merchant ships were likely to be there, though there might be cases of New Zealand seamen on other ships. I accordingly decided to make arrangements in Vancouver, San Francisco, and New York to cover New Zealand seamen whose ships might be in port during election period.

PREPARATIONS PRIOR TO CLOSING OF NOMINATIONS

6. I prepared detailed instructions for the taking of votes, and, prior to the closing of nominations, circulated these, together with the necessary number of ballot and voting papers, to all stations, both naval and air, to which New Zealand personnel were attached. In addition, I arranged with the following to look after voting in the places mentioned:—

Mr. E. E. Ackland (New Zealand Agent), Vancouver, B.C.

Mr. S. B. Pilcher (New Zealand Agent), San Francisco.

Mr. L. M. Death (New Zealand Supply Mission), Washington, D.C.

Mr. T. O. W. Brebner (N.Z. Customs Representative), New York.

Flight Lieutenant F. O. Spackman (R.N.Z.A.F.), Halifax, N.S.

Flying Officer R. Somerville (R.N.Z.A.F.), New Zealand Air Mission, Ottawa.

Messrs. Ackland, Pilcher, and Brebner kept in touch with the shipping position in an endeavour to contact any New Zealand seamen touching port in the voting period.

In the case of the various stations and ships, the Commanding Officers were requested to arrange for an officer to take charge of the voting, and were advised that, in cases where the number of New Zealand personnel exceeded one hundred, the station would be visited by a New Zealand representative who would assist in the taking of the votes.

I arranged for an announcement to be made concerning the election in the Radio News Summary which is broadcast to New Zealand and Australian Air Force trainees in Canada each Sunday, and voters were advised to communicate with Ottawa headquarters if no arrangements were made for them to vote.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION NEWS SHEET

7. The nominations were received on Friday, 10th September, and I had copies printed immediately. I received the cable containing the whole of the material for the election news sheet at 5 p.m. on Sunday, 12th September. As this had to be printed for circulation at the earliest possible moment, Mr. Firth, the Acting High Commissioner, arranged for a number of typists to work that night transcribing the cable ready for the printer.

By working all Monday and through Monday night the printer was able to deliver the news sheet to me ready for circulation by 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 14th September, and by 6.30 p.m. that evening final instructions for the voting, together with sufficient copies of the list of candidates and election news sheet to give one to each voter, were in the mail.

All packages were sent by the most expeditious means available.

CONDUCT OF THE VOTING

8. The greatest number of R.N.Z.A.F. personnel were centred around Calgary and Winnipeg, and, in view of the fact that approximately 300 men had just arrived in the Calgary area and their names were not on any roll, I considered it advisable to proceed to Calgary myself. I arranged for Mr. Middlemass, of the New Zealand High Commissioner's Office, to accompany me, as some assistance would be necessary.

We visited four stations in the area, assisting the polling officers with the voting at three of the stations, and communicated with other stations to ascertain that voting was proceeding.

I arranged for Flight Lieutenant A. Drake, from the New Zealand Air Mission, Ottawa, to visit Winnipeg, and he visited a number of stations, assisting the polling officers with the voting, and communicated with other stations to ascertain that the voting was proceeding. Flight Lieutenant R. Potter, of the New Zealand Air Mission, Ottawa, went to Toronto for several days and communicated with the stations in that area to see whether any assistance was required. At the request of the officer commanding one station he visited the station and assisted in the taking of the votes of the New Zealand personnel, who included a number of Fleet Air Arm trainees.

Flight Lieutenant Spackman communicated with the stations in the Halifax area to ascertain that the voting was proceeding and that no further assistance was required.

AREA COVERED

9. There were New Zealand personnel in approximately ninety different stations and ships in or near the North American Continent, from Honolulu in the west to Bermuda, the Bahamas, and Trinidad in the east and south. All had an opportunity of voting except a few ferry pilots who were away on duty, and the men in Bermuda, the Bahamas, and Trinidad and in some ships which put to sea before the 10th September and did not return to port before 25th September. The voting-papers and list of candidates, although sent by air, did not reach Bermuda until 25th September and did not reach Trinidad until some days after that date. They reached the Bahamas on 22nd September, but owing to a misreading of the instructions the voting was not proceeded with. The number of men affected was as follows:—

Bermuda	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Bahamas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	18
Trinidad	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27
Ships at sea	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	66

I had records of the names and addresses of all these men, except nine of those in the Bahamas, and none of those whose addresses I had came from the closely-contested electorates.

RETURNS, SCRUTINY OF ROLLS, ETC.

10. In order to preserve the secrecy of the ballot, voting in all places where the numbers were small was by declaration vote, and I required all ballot-papers to be sent to Ottawa for counting.

On 24th September, when I sent preliminary returns to New Zealand, I had received all but 65 ballot-papers, which came to hand the following week.

Immediately after the preliminary count, the scrutiny of the roll was commenced. By the time this was completed the position in connection with those places from which papers had not been received had been ascertained, and the final count was then made and the returns sent to New Zealand.

There were approximately 1,900 men entitled to vote in or near North America, and, of these, 1,443 voted.

ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

11. In travelling to and from Ottawa I received great assistance from the American Naval Air Transport authority at Honolulu and also from the British Consuls-General at Honolulu, New Orleans, and Los Angeles.

I received great assistance also from the British Admiralty Maintenance representative in Washington.

I am mentioning these matters in a separate memorandum to the Secretary, Department of External Affairs.

In the performance of the task allotted to me I received the greatest assistance and help from Mr. R. M. Firth, the Acting High Commissioner for New Zealand in Ottawa, and from Mr. Middlemass and the other members of the staff of the office of the High Commissioner.

Great assistance was also rendered by Group Captain White and the members of the staff of the New Zealand Air Mission in Ottawa.

The co-operation of the Royal Canadian Air Force authorities and the officers commanding the various stations to which New Zealand personnel were attached was of the utmost help to me. Without it the taking of the votes would not have been possible.

D. J. DALGLISH,
Special Returning Officer for America.

Wellington, 26th January, 1944.

MIDDLE EAST

REPORT TO THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, NEW ZEALAND, ON THE CONDUCT OF THE GENERAL ELECTION, 1943, IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Prepared by Major W. A. Bryan, 232195, Special Returning Officer

(NOTE.—The appendices mentioned in this report contain matters which cannot be conveniently printed or reproduced. They are included in a separate paper to be laid on the Table of the House where they will be available for inspection by members.)

THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER,
WELLINGTON,
NEW ZEALAND.

I REPORT that the task of conducting the general election in the Middle East was performed to the best of my ability with the minimum of inconvenience to the fighting Services. I trust that this report will justify in their choice those who had confidence in my ability and entrusted me with the responsibility involved.

I wish here to record my appreciation of the willing and unstinted aid I received from the G.O.C., Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., &c., and the administrative officers of 2 N.Z.E.F. Without their assistance and kindly interest it would have been impossible to conduct the election satisfactorily, especially in the limited time available.

In submitting this report I desire to point out that I was in the Middle East only twenty-three days before the commencement of the voting period on 10th September and that all arrangements, including distribution of supplies, had to be completed in this time.

For convenience all aspects of the election have been discussed separately. It will be appreciated, however, that some repetition and cross-reference is unavoidable in discussing items mutually interdependent.

TRIP OVER

Before leaving New Zealand it was apparent that there was a possibility of an early election, in which case I would be strained to the utmost after arrival to make satisfactory arrangements for the conduct of a poll. Until my departure I had been largely occupied in assisting the Chief Electoral Officer in co-ordinating arrangements for recording votes of New Zealand personnel all over the world and had done little specifically for the Middle East.

I decided, therefore, to do as much as possible on the transport in the way of preparation and planning for any likely situation, and this later proved very valuable.

Colonel J. H. Whyte, G.O. transport, kindly permitted me to use the ship's office accommodation and orderly-room typists. I drafted several forms and a booklet of instructions which were printed *en route*, and, in addition, I sorted out the nucleus of a staff from members of the reinforcement and spent considerable time instructing them in the scheme and my probable requirements.

Before reaching Perth I was informed of the dates of the close of nominations and the General Election which had been picked up by ship's radio. This early date confirmed my decision to do everything possible *en route*, and whilst on board I prepared an agenda of items for discussion with 2 N.Z.E.F. authorities and therein listed my anticipated requirements in minute detail. This proved very valuable, and I was able to initiate many items immediately after arrival.

The trip, which commenced on 22nd July, the day I boarded the transport, lasted until the evening of the 18th August, at which time I arrived at Maadi Camp.

CO-OPERATION

It was apparent immediately after arrival in the Middle East that all authorities were determined to give every assistance.

In my first meeting with General Freyberg, who at all times took a keen interest in the election arrangements, he made it clear that every assistance and whatever staff or materials requested would be supplied, and at the same time instructed that any difficulties met should be referred for his personal attention.

This latter instruction was completely unnecessary, for at all times the officers of 2 N.Z.E.F. were extremely kind and helpful, and I consider myself exceedingly fortunate to have worked in such pleasant circumstances. The efficiency of the organization of 2 N.Z.E.F. was very impressive.

The Middle East Naval and Air Force authorities, with whom numerous contacts were made, gave every assistance and co-operation at all times. Personnel attached to these services, although comparatively few in number, were scattered over a tremendous area.

The British Army Base Post Office, together with the R.A.F. Mail Office and Fleet Mail Office at Cairo, were also helpful in that they arranged priority despatch of parcels of voting material, &c.

OFFICE ORGANIZATION

It was found on arrival that two adjacent rooms sized 10 ft. by 15 ft. each in one of the 2 N.Z.E.F. H.Q. buildings had been made available for electoral use, but this was realized to be inadequate, and additional accommodation was provided by erecting 3 E.P.I.P. tents adjacent thereto. The layout appears in the photographs in Appendix A [*not printed*].

The tent space was used originally for storage and packing of polling supplies and later rearranged to accommodate sorting-boxes and returned voting material and in the final stages for the scrutiny of rolls and official count.

The two rooms were used to accommodate the office and postal booth.

As it is possible that a similar scheme may be found necessary at some future date a plan of the office layout for the sorting of votes is included in Appendix A [*not printed*]. Consideration of this in conjunction with the photographs should provide a good idea of the arrangements made; these proved very satisfactory.

STAFF

When it was learned that the election would be early I realized that it would be almost impossible for me to conduct the election alone in the Middle East, and that, further, there was always the remote possibility of my falling ill, with consequent serious repercussions.

On the boat I introduced myself to Captain R. A. Bolland, the ship's Records Officer, whom I knew would be free at the end of the trip. This gentleman expressed a keen desire to stay in the Middle East to assist with the election, and a cable was therefore despatched from Perth requesting that, if possible, his services be made available. Captain Bolland was, of course, fully employed on the transport, and on arrival at H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F., I learned that he was freed for duty, and he reported two days later. Thereafter Captain Bolland assisted in taking charge of the staff as they arrived and organizing their duties. On the transport some time was also spent in arranging the nucleus of a staff and training them together with Captain Bolland. In this I was very fortunate in contacting Sergeant K. M. Sleight, Secretary to the Hon. D. G. Sullivan, Minister for Supply and Munitions, &c., who was one of the Tenth Reinforcement. I had never met Sergeant Sleight before, but had been told he was on board, and he proved eager to help. In addition, I selected and instructed four other clerks—namely, Private D. R. E. Hammond, Signaller N. S. B. Wright, Privates G. E. Taylor, and R. S. Lowe. Two clerks—namely, Sapper G. M. U. Caldwell and Private J. H. Clague—had already been arranged by H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F., and these reported for duty on 19th August, 1943. Immediate request was made for the release of the personnel selected on board the transport, and this was approved.

Sergeant Sleight I appointed my personal assistant, and his services were extremely valuable. He was, on arrival in the Middle East, reverted to the rank of Corporal, and I was unfortunately able to obtain for him only the rank of Temporary Staff Sergeant. This was very poor recompense for the service he rendered.

Application was also made for the release of Staff Sergeant J. W. Norling, formerly of the office of the Registrar of Electors, Auckland, but he could not be released.

Successful application was made for the release of Lance Sergeant A. C. O'Connor, formerly of the Supreme Court, Wellington, and he reported about eight days after my arrival. He performed very useful duties until I released him on 24th September, 1943, to fill a vacancy on the staff of the Legal Staff Office, 2 N.Z. Div.

For typing, the services of Private J. J. Johnston, formerly of the Registrar-General's Office, which was until recent times under the control of the late Mr. G. G. Hodgkins, Chief Electoral Officer, were secured. By reason of his duties there Private Johnston had a good idea of electoral requirements.

On account of the delay in voting, with the consequent need for rapid handling to enable an early advice of the preliminary count, it was necessary to arrange additional staff of twelve men—namely, Private B. A. Barrer, Private A. G. Donohue, Private D. G. Edwards, Private G. French, Private B. R. Hawkins, Private M. E. Haymes, Private R. Henderson, Private W. McLaren, Private E. L. Manning, Private E. B. Rout, Private W. H. Stirling, Private J. A. Wright, who were carefully chosen for clerical experience. These were trained in requirements and aided in the sort and preliminary count and were released on 25th September with the exception of Private D. G. Edwards, who was retained to fill the vacancy caused by the release of Sergeant A. C. O'Connor.

It was extremely fortunate that such a staff could be chosen. They worked exceedingly well and were at all times willing and cheerful, despite the long hours sometimes necessary.

After the completion of the official count the staff was released as the work diminished and members thereof should prove of value to the H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F., if at any time it becomes necessary to hold a by-election.

PUBLICITY

Before my departure from New Zealand an arrangement was made by cable with H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F., that publicity be given to the New Zealand general election through Army, Navy, and Air Force orders in the Middle East and that units not of the 2 N.Z.E.F. be requested to advise the number of New Zealand personnel on their strength to "The Special Returning Officer, care of H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F." This was done, and a notice requesting this was placed in 2 *N.Z.E.F. Times* of 16th August, 1943.

Replies commenced to be received on my arrival on 18th August. A slight error appeared in this early announcement, in that applications were requested from civilians and one or two replies were received from persons not entitled to vote as members of the Forces. All persons (233) who replied to the advertisement received an acknowledgment.

The poster giving information regarding the regulations and voting facilities was distributed liberally to all units of 2 N.Z.E.F., and was circulated also to New Zealand Forces' Club, New Zealand Y.M.C.A., and all N.A.A.F.I. institutions likely to be visited by New Zealand personnel.

In addition, a *résumé* of this was printed in 2 *N.Z.E.F. Times* on 30th August, and isolated New Zealanders on special duties were again requested to communicate with the Special Returning Officer. By kind assistance of the R.A.F. Welfare Section it was possible to have a similar statement printed in *Air Force News* on 7th September. It was also possible to have references to the New Zealand election made in the local Egyptian papers.

The possibility of radio broadcast was investigated, but on advice of the Broadcasting Unit of the Public Relations Service, 2 N.Z.E.F., it was not proceeded with, as units are not supplied with sets suitable for reception of normal broadcasts, and no benefit was likely to result.

The list of nominated candidates was printed overnight by the 2 N.Z.E.F. Printing Unit and distributed on the same basis as the poster. The amendments thereto and the list of Maori candidates were cyclostyled and despatched on the same basis immediately it was received. This list appeared in the *N.Z.E.F. Times* of 20th September, there being an objection advised from New Zealand to the publication in the same issue as the statements of party policy. Statements of party policy were received later and were printed immediately by 2 *N.Z.E.F. Times*, which had withheld issue pending their receipt. The statements were received on 13th September, and the paper was issued on 15th September. Every endeavour was made to be scrupulously fair on layout and setting.

Advertisements were received from New Zealand Alliance and National Council, Licensed Trade, too late for inclusion in the above issue, which was already half run, and it was necessary to delay publication till the next issue on 20th September. Printing facilities, paper shortage, and difficulties of distribution would not permit the running of a special issue, and this was indicated to the Chief Electoral Officer by cable. After the poll 2 *N.Z.E.F. Times* published results as received from New Zealand and also the percentages of service voting in the Middle East for various parties and the liquor issues. The release of this percentage was approved by cable from New Zealand.

The Film Unit of 2 N.Z.E.F. requested my co-operation in allowing them to make a short film of election procedure in the Middle East for despatch to New Zealand, and this was done. In addition, a number of "stills" were taken and copies of these appear in this report as Appendix A [*not printed*].

Copies of all publicity given in papers is attached to this report as Appendix F [*not printed*].

The Public Relations Section of 2 N.Z.E.F., which publishes the *N.Z.E.F. Times*, was eager to co-operate in any way and were at all times most helpful in keeping the Forces "election conscious." This assistance was extremely valuable and played no small part in the success of the poll.

PRINTING

On board the transport I found a printing press operated by the ship's staff, and decided to arrange printing of certain forms and instructions. This, however, involved payment to the ship's printer, and I had no credit with the ship's Paymaster. Furthermore, there was no paper on board and it would be necessary to purchase some at the first port of call.

I was informed of the ship's movements, and accordingly cabled from Hobart for authority to draw on ship's Paymaster. The ship was in Hobart for only a few hours, but I was given special permission to go ashore for two hours for the purpose of purchasing paper. This proved difficult, as the two hours included the local lunch-hour, and the purchase of paper necessitated the issue of permits on account of the extreme shortage then existing. Eight reams were finally obtained from the Government Printer, Hobart, through the good offices of the State Electoral Officer, and I caught the transport with a few minutes to spare. At Perth authority to draw on the ship's Paymaster was received and I claimed for the expenditure incurred.

Between Hobart and Perth it was found that the ship's printer would be able to do only two small jobs and could not print the booklet of instructions which I had drafted. I then heard the date of the election, and determined to try to get the job done at Perth if our stay was long enough. It was found on arrival at Fremantle that we would be there for thirty-six hours, and I immediately went to Perth. After some difficulty a private firm was persuaded to undertake the job, although the time was very short (the Western State Printer being unable to help on account of their own forthcoming election). I took delivery of the finished job late on the night of the second day, and it was necessary to take a taxi back to the ship at Fremantle.

On arrival at Maadi the Printing Unit of 2 N.Z.E.F. was placed at my disposal and undertook further requirements.

During the printing of the list of nominated candidates their machine broke down and it was necessary to have the job completed elsewhere. We were fortunate in receiving the immediate assistance of the Printing Unit of the Union of South Africa Defence Forces.

A copy of each form drafted and printed by me is attached hereto as Appendix B [*not printed*].

FINANCE

On the transport, to enable the printing of forms *en route*, it was necessary to cable for authority to expend money up to £50. It was actually necessary to expend only £13 16s. 6d. All expenditure was accounted for by voucher.

On arrival I made early contact and discussed finance with Lieutenant-Colonel J. Martin, who was acting as Paymaster, 2 N.Z.E.F., in the absence of Colonel F. Pridcaux, O.B.E.

Before leaving the Middle East, vouchers were prepared in respect to all accounts.

In consideration of the fact that all requirements of the 2 N.Z.E.F. are supplied by Great Britain and the election was not strictly a normal military requirement, Brigadier N. McD. Weir, after discussion with General Headquarters, Middle East, decided that services supplied for electoral should be a charge on the Electoral Department, and accordingly it was decided to assess the value of all stationery used, and to charge the standard rate of 7d. per mile for any vehicle used solely for electoral requirements, the resultant sums to be paid to British authorities.

This step was thought necessary in order not to mar the excellent relationship at present existing on the matter of stores and equipment, and I consider the attitude very reasonable.

In view of the small stationery requirements and the large quantities of stationery which were distributed throughout the 2 N.Z.E.F. in the course of the election, the claim for stationery was waived.

At no time was any charge made for any service supplied by the 2 N.Z.E.F., and no assessment was made for rations and quarters of Captain Bolland and myself.

An account of £47 7s. 7d. was incurred for transport used, and in view of the services made available to me, this payment is, in effect, only a token payment.

The cables despatched on electoral business were, of course, a charge on the New Zealand Government, and a large account was incurred in this connection, as the results cables were very lengthy.

Expenditure was held rigidly to the minimum at all times.

TRANSPORT

On arrival I requested that a car and a light truck be made available to the electoral staff, but it was pointed out that transport was exceedingly scarce and it was therefore impossible to allocate vehicles solely for my use. Arrangements were, however, made for me to draw on the pool of transport vehicles operated by the H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F. This arrangement was satisfactory in all ways, and at all times a vehicle was made available as required. My requirements in transport were kept to a minimum, and full use was made of vehicles engaged in Army duties which were going in directions required by me. For personal transport I used at all times civilian services.

It is pointed out here that it was necessary to make many trips in person to ascertain information, as Egypt is recognized as a centre for espionage and no telephone is considered "safe." It is impossible, therefore, to ascertain strengths or locations over a telephone, and even for personal visits credentials are very carefully checked.

STATEMENTS OF PARTY POLICY AND NOMINATED CANDIDATES

This was a matter of considerable interest to New-Zealanders in the Middle East, and such material was eagerly awaited there. Lieutenant-General Freyberg asked if I had brought anything of such nature from New Zealand, and as I had not he immediately cabled asking for this material to be supplied by the 9th September at the latest. This was the latest date to allow printing and distribution of 2 *N.Z.E.F. Times* before voting commenced.

The New Zealand Government Advertising Office supplied to me all clippings relating to candidates and the elections generally which had appeared in New Zealand papers until the time of my departure.

This material was offered to *N.Z.E.F. Times*, but it was considered inadvisable to use it as it was complete only to about 20th July and on examination proved to be not representative of all parties and very incomplete.

Shortly after my arrival it became necessary for the Division to undertake training in preparation for the move to Italy, and extensive planning took place. The Division was to undertake unit and brigade manoeuvres and then move to a new training area—the move involving a week's march for all units; the complete transfer of the Division was to take two weeks. One day, the 12th September, was left free so that all units could vote on that day. Supplies were distributed, and the list of nominated candidates was published with the utmost despatch to facilitate this object and to save dislocation of unit functions. Unfortunately the cabled statement did not arrive and the Division had to move. On 11th September General Freyberg held a conference with his administrative officers and myself and the position was discussed. I assured him that a delay in voting, although inconvenient, could be successfully handled by me, and it was decided to stop voting until 19th September with the exception of permanent booths, the postal voting, mobile booths, and units a great distance away. A cable was despatched to New Zealand by General Freyberg asking whether the publicity was coming, for at this late date we were in a quandary. Unfortunately 6,000 votes were cast before the signal stopping voting was received by units. Units were, of course, keyed up to complete voting as soon as possible.

The *N.Z.E.F. Times* withheld issue, although a complete paper was set up in case of non arrival of the party statements. The cable containing the statements was received on 13th September and the paper rushed into publication and was distributed on 15th September. For copies of the printed statements see Appendix F [*not printed*].

The difficulties arising out of the delay have been reported on further under "Voting Arrangements" and "Preliminary Count."

The advertisement desired by the National Council of the Licensed Trade and the New Zealand Alliance arrived by cable on 13th September, and by this time the paper was half run. Paper and printing facilities are in short supply in the Middle East, and it was impossible to include these advertisements in this issue. The Chief Electoral Officer was advised by cable and the advertisements placed in the next issue of the paper five days later. Accounts for these advertisements were submitted by 2 *N.Z.E.F. Times* to the parties concerned.

VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

Shortly after arrival in the Middle East an accurate location and strength statement of all units of 2 N.Z.E.F. was prepared and supplied.

This was considered in detail in the light of communications, &c., and compared with maps to enable a rapid appreciation of the position.

To save a multiplicity of booths, small units were, where possible, grouped with larger ones, and by this means it was necessary to institute only eighty-nine booths for the whole of 2 N.Z.E.F. In addition there were, of course, a postal booth, two mobile booths, two permanent booths, and eleven naval booths, and three booths appointed in India, which are all the subject of separate sections of this report. Booth supplies based on the figures resulting from the survey were made up and checked by the staff, and to save possible confusion all ballot and voting papers were machine numbered on corner and counterfoil before issue. Ballot-boxes were improvised by Native carpenters out of benzine-cases which had contained patriotic gift parcels despatched from New Zealand.

Publicity through posters and newspapers had already given personnel considerable information to ensure as far as possible correct action in booths. All units within reasonable reach were instructed to appoint a polling officer who would attend a lecture on 9th September and be instructed in his duties. This meeting was held, and the attending officers were lectured on polling-booth procedure. All points were driven home by operating a specimen booth and performing a series of playettes on different types of voting and the answering of probable questions.

At this meeting all supplies and ballot-boxes were issued to the polling officers (see photographs in Appendix A [not printed]).

As soon as the list of nominated candidates was received it was printed, a block having been set up in type awaiting the insertion of the names of candidates and the names of the parties. These lists were issued as soon as available from the printing press by despatch riders and air mail on a predetermined scale. The envelopes had already been addressed. The names of the Maori candidates had been "scrambled" in the original cable, and these were issued separately in a cyclostyled sheet a few hours later together with the corrections in party designation of independent candidates advised from New Zealand. The despatch was complete within twenty-four hours of receiving the first advice. This included the despatch of all postal voting-papers.

As mentioned under "Publicity," 2 N.Z. Division was moving its location and the 12th September had been left free for voting. Unfortunately the Division could not vote on that day, as the statements of party policy had not arrived. This raised numerous difficulties, for units were moving by foot, motor transport, and rail and were splitting up for the move. Units had therefore to be regrouped for voting purposes and special arrangements had to be made to collect completed voting-papers in time to include them in the preliminary count. This also meant handling all papers in a very short period, and for this purpose extra staff was obtained and shifts were worked on sorting.

MOBILE BOOTHS

In addition to the isolated New Zealand Army personnel, there were numerous small groups of New-Zealanders on duties or attending British courses of instruction in Palestine and Syria.

In view of the poor and uncertain mail service between Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, it was decided to send a car to Syria which would deliver polling-booth supplies to units and collect completed votes and unused material on return and, in addition, visit British hospitals and known isolated New-Zealanders on special duties. The Public Relations Section of 2 N.Z.E.F. had work to be done in this area, and this was adjusted to suit my requirements. Captain R. A. Bolland accompanied Lieutenant Barker, of the Public Relations staff, and acted as polling officer. This mobile booth delivered polling-booth supplies to eight groups or units, visited hospitals, and took votes of isolated personnel. In all, 41 votes were recorded. It left on 12th September, and returned on 23rd September after having covered two thousand miles. This trip, of course, involved no charge for transport.

This booth, however, could not cover the Canal and Cairo area, so a further mobile booth was instituted for which Staff Sergeant K. M. Sleight was the polling officer. Through the kind offices of Major W. G. Tweedie, New Zealand Red Cross Commissioner, this Staff Sergeant was taken to hospitals and New-Zealanders on courses, &c., from Cairo to Port Said and Suez with the Red Cross Hospital Visiting Service. For this booth it was necessary to arrange special transport for the Cairo area. This booth took 98 votes.

These mobile booths provided a very valuable service.

PERMANENT BOOTHS

Inquiries after arrival showed that Alexandria and Cairo were the two main centres in the Middle East likely to be passed through by New-Zealanders on leave or changing location, and it was therefore decided that permanent booths should be opened.

Alexandria.—The New Zealand Y.M.C.A. operates a hostel at Alexandria, and on a trip there, while investigating naval requirements, I arranged with Mr. N. Leibezeit, the Secretary, that two of my staff should stay there to operate a booth for the full voting period. Accordingly two left Cairo for Alexandria on 12th September to operate a booth. This booth was very valuable, as it also visited the British hospitals in the Alexandria area. In all, 162 votes were recorded by this booth, this proving its value, as there were no New Zealand units in Alexandria.

Cairo.—The New Zealand Forces' Club is without doubt the best Club in the Middle East area and very popular with New-Zealanders of all arms. It is famed throughout the Middle East, and was accordingly an ideal spot for a booth. New-Zealanders on loan to British formation headquarters for special duties were advised by phone to vote at this booth, and Commanding Officers of British Schools of Instruction allowed personnel leave to attend there. This booth, which was operated by two of my staff, recorded 527 votes.

In each case one of the two staff returned to my headquarters on 23rd September with completed votes, the other remaining until 1900 hours on 24th September to record votes and returning to my

headquarters as soon as possible thereafter. This action enabled nearly all votes to appear in the preliminary count.

These two booths recorded only the votes of those personnel who could not vote with units. They were inspected during the voting period by the Special Returning Officer.

POSTAL SCHEME

After studying the location statement of 2 N.Z.E.F. and the strengths of its component units, it became apparent that there were many New Zealand personnel in isolated localities for whom it would be impossible to establish polling-places. In addition, a number of officers and men were attending courses or instructing at various Schools of Instruction throughout the Middle East, while others were on loan to other formation headquarters.

In addition, I obtained from the R.N.Z.A.F. Liaison Officer a list of R.N.Z.A.F. personnel attached to R.A.F. formations in the Middle East and India. These were widely scattered and numbered approximately 841.

A list showing isolated personnel, Army, Navy, and Air Force, to whom his organization sent patriotic gifts was obtained from Lieutenant-Colonel F. Waite, New Zealand Patriotic Funds Commissioner. This list also forms the distribution list of *N.Z.E.F. Times*, and, as far as R.A.F. is concerned, is based on the list referred to above.

The Royal Navy in both Cairo and Alexandria was contacted in regard to New-Zealanders serving in the Royal Navy and a list showing names of personnel serving in the Levant Fleet obtained. These totalled 147. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, polling-places were established at certain naval stations, but there were other personnel whom it was impossible to cover by a polling-place.

In view of these factors and the fact that divisional manœuvres were taking place and certain personnel were already probably in Sicily, I decided to institute a postal-voting scheme, and established a polling-place in the office for this purpose. Sergeant A. C. O'Connor was placed in charge of this work, and I delegated to him my powers of delegation under the regulations. This allowed him to perform most of the duties of a polling officer such as the issuing of voting-papers and to delegate his powers to Commanding Officers of units for them to complete the action.

The system of sending out voting and ballot papers was as follows :—

- (1) Names were obtained from the Army, Navy, and Air Force and patriotic lists supplied, and rolls were searched for the electorates in which they were entitled to vote.
- (2) Ballot and voting papers (and Local Option where applicable) were prepared in respect to each man, showing the electorate.
- (3) A certificate for signature by the Commanding Officer of the voter's unit was prepared certifying—
 - (a) That the man was entitled to vote.
 - (b) That the vote was cast before 1900 hours on 24th September, 1943.
- (4) A list of candidates, showing the parties they represented; and
- (5) Declaration Form and envelopes were enclosed.
- (6) Where a man's electorate was not known, a slip was sent asking his Commanding Officer to take a declaration from the voter.

All the above papers were then sent to the Commanding Officer of the man's unit under cover of a printed letter giving complete details as to the procedure to be followed and asking for his co-operation in the taking of the vote and the return of the papers. Copies of this letter and the certificate referred to in (3) may be seen in Appendix B hereto [*not printed*].

All the above forms were prepared in full and placed in addressed envelopes. As soon as the list of nominated candidates was printed, a copy was placed in each envelope, which was then sealed. These were then rushed by car to the Fleet Mail Office and R.A.F. Post-office, with whom arrangements had already been made for immediate despatch.

A total of 1,098 postal voting-papers was sent out to isolated personnel, as follows :—

52 Army.
205 Navy.
841 Air Force.

Returned voting-papers were checked off the list of postal voting-papers issued, and after that the papers were placed in a ballot-box and dealt with as for any normal booth.

Up to the time of the official count, 396 valid votes had been received by me, and papers had been returned for a considerable number who had become casualties or had been transferred to other localities. In this connection I would point out the impossibility of obtaining accurate lists of isolated personnel. Furthermore, the Sicilian and Italian campaigns immediately affected movements, and this was especially so in respect of Air Force and Navy. Thus, apart from casualties, many personnel had moved to other spheres and their papers up to the time of the official count had not been returned to me. In addition, a number of personnel to whom papers were sent voted at Cairo or Alexandria in one of the permanent booths and returned their postal votes unused.

The most disappointing feature of the postal-voting scheme was the failure to receive papers from some 250 Air Force personnel in India. This is inexplicable, and I can only refer to the letter from Staff Sergeant Sleight (Appendix E [*not printed*]) wherein he outlines the manner in which the letters were posted and the steps taken to locate them. It became apparent after receipt of mails from India that the Air Force authorities had inadvertently despatched Indian mails by surface.

The postal-voting scheme was, I consider, well worth while, as it resulted in the receipt of 396 votes from as widely-scattered places as follows :—

Navy.—Gibraltar, Levant station, Canal area, Suez, Alexandria, Malta, Algiers, Port Said, Durban, India, and various naval vessels of whose location I have no knowledge.
Air Force.—South Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Pantellaria, Sicily, Italy, Aden, Syria, Iraq, Iran.
Army and Miscellaneous.—Persia, Nairobi, Iraq, Tripolitania, Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, and various isolated places in North Africa.

It is worthy of note that there is no reliable source for up-to-date information regarding the location of New-Zealanders in the Air Force and Navy in the Middle East with the exception of those in the Levant Fleet, as there is no central record office for either Force. To obtain detailed information would necessitate a personal visit to India and the headquarters of the other Fleets and Air Force commands mentioned in this report. This was absolutely impossible in the time available.

INDIA

On arrival considerable thought was given to voting arrangements for New-Zealanders in India, but it was found most difficult to obtain information as to communications, and there appeared to be no Central Office to make responsible for the whole of India.

Surface mails were unreliable and infrequent, and there was a delay of air-mails, even with priorities, of a week or more.

After exhaustive inquiries and discussions with officers with recent knowledge of India the names of the following were obtained :—

Colonel Stewart, Eastern Group Supply Council, New Delhi.

Captain J. W. Fisher, New Zealand Liaison Officer, Ceylon Army H.Q., Colombo.

C. R. C. Gardiner, Resident Manager, New Zealand Insurance Co., (and New Zealand Supply Liaison Officer), Bombay.

It was decided, therefore, to establish polling-places at New Delhi, Colombo, and Bombay, to appoint each of the above-named gentlemen Polling Officers for their respective areas, and to cover 257 known New-Zealanders in India by the Postal Voting Scheme. At this stage I would mention that the most up-to-date list I could obtain of New Zealand personnel in India was one reasonably correct in March, 1943. (The above-mentioned booths were, of course, in addition to the naval booths which I established at Colombo, Kilindini, and Bombay and which are dealt with in another part of this report.)

On 5th September the Liaison Officer, New Delhi, was notified by cable of his appointment as Polling Officer for the New Delhi area, and warned to expect an air-mail letter from me and a cable from New Zealand with a list of nominated candidates within a few days.

On the same date Captain Fisher, Colombo, and Mr. Gardiner, Bombay, and Colonel Stewart were posted full instructions and the necessary voting materials.

These letters and packages were despatched "Fast Air" on 5th September.

The results of the Indian voting were as follows :—

- (1) *New Delhi*.—Supply Liaison Officer failed to take any votes. The only knowledge I have of this matter is the Chief Electoral Office cable to me of 30th September and my reply of 2nd October.
- (2) *Colombo*.—A cable was received from the Polling Officer on 6th October that no votes had been recorded.
- (3) *Bombay*.—Fourteen votes were recorded and returned by air-mail and received by me in time for inclusion in the official count.

In view of the distance from this headquarters, the difficulties of communication, and the absence of a central office to cover the whole of India, I made the best arrangements possible, after discussion with army officers with recent knowledge of the country. The failure of New Delhi to record any votes is inexplicable.

The most disappointing feature was, however, the failure to receive any postal votes from Air Force personnel in India. The papers were posted by "Fast Air" through the R.A.F. Post Office, Cairo, on 11th September and planes left for India on the 11th, 13th, and 14th September. Postal votes were received from two naval personnel in India.

I have made every endeavour to ascertain the reason why no votes have been returned, but without success. See letter from Staff Sergeant Sleight attached (Appendix "E"). It has since become apparent that the Indian Air Force mail was inadvertently despatched by surface by the postal authorities.

- (4) *Burma*.—Owing to communication difficulties and the impossibility of obtaining any information as to personnel in Burma it was impossible to make any arrangement in regard to that area.

It is apparent that every country within which it is desired to record votes should be visited by the Special Returning Officer or his representative to make arrangements on the spot with local authorities. The paucity of mails renders it impossible to make satisfactory arrangements and explanations from a distance. For this purpose greater time than was at my disposal should be allowed.

NAVY

As anticipated the Navy (together with the R.A.F.) proved a major difficulty.

Maadi Camp is 12 miles from Cairo and this is about 130 miles from the Mediterranean Coast. Africa is a large continent, and to arrange voting for New-Zealanders involved contacting four fleets—namely, Mediterranean, Levant, Eastern Command, and South Atlantic. The headquarters of these fleets were respectively 1,800 miles, 130 miles, 3,400 miles, and 5,000 miles away. These fleets are separate and under the direct control of the Admiralty, London.

After discussion with the Secretary to the Commander in Chief, Levant, it was decided that the best action to take would be to cover the Levant Fleet by the postal scheme and to forward booth supplies to main bases in other areas. The Levant Fleet headquarters at Alexandria made a search of all records and supplied me with a list of all New-Zealanders serving in that fleet, and also undertook to supply information about main bases in other areas and request that all vessels calling be advised of all voting facilities. The notifying of the nominated candidates would have to be undertaken through the Admiralty in London. In addition, I was advised to contact the Fleet Mail Office at Cairo to arrange immediate despatch of any supplies or letters.

At this time a cable giving information about New-Zealanders serving in the Navy was received from New Zealand, and I was able to take immediate action with the assistance of H.Q., Levant.

Notifying nominated candidates was a great difficulty, for it was pointed out that to signal the length of such a list was impossible to send to all ships, especially in view of existing and forthcoming operational requirements and that it would be almost impossible to deliver supplies to the hundreds of ships in the four fleets, especially in the time available. It was decided, therefore, to concentrate on the main bases in each Naval Command.

I accordingly cabled the High Commissioner requesting that he arrange advice of the nominated candidates to these bases with the Admiralty, and received an affirmative acknowledgment.

In addition, it was arranged that the Port Detachment (N.Z.E.F.) at Suez would contact all vessels calling during the voting period.

It is pleasing to report that nearly all New-Zealanders of Levant Fleet voted by post or at Alexandria, and that a total of 104 New-Zealanders in the other fleets voted at Algiers, Malta, Bombay, Kilindini, Colombo, Naval Air Stations E.A., Pietermaritzburg, Simonstown, Durban, and Port Elizabeth in purely naval booths.

AIR FORCE

Early contact was made with Flight Lieutenant G. L. Gray, the R.N.Z.A.F. Liaison Officer in the Middle East, and through him was obtained an up-to-date list of all New-Zealanders known to be in the Middle East theatre. In addition, authority to communicate direct with R.A.F. units was arranged through him, thus avoiding the necessity for referring requests through higher formations to lower, and so on. There proved to be no concentration of New-Zealanders in the R.A.F. in the Middle East, as they are scattered throughout British units throughout Africa. It was decided, therefore, to post each person a postal vote and trust that it was received in time to record a vote.

Contact was made with the C.O., R.A.F. Post Office, and arrangements made that all votes would be despatched by "Fast Air."

It was found that in most cases papers were delivered in time, but that many persons to whom these were addressed had been transferred or become casualties. A number of votes were recorded by personnel serving in Italy and the Mediterranean in the Italian offensive. In other cases, however, units in an operational role did not receive the papers in time, and these were returned in due course unused. A number of votes addressed to units a long distance away were not received in time. As will be appreciated, a theatre of war is zoned and lateral communication is not good. Unless special planes can be chartered, it is almost impossible to guarantee delivery of mails in a limited period. This is largely a matter of chance.

MERCHANT MARINE

The permanent booth at Alexandria and the port detachment at Suez were requested to keep a close lookout for New-Zealanders in the Mercantile Marine. It is reported that only one was located and he did not desire to vote. Before leaving New Zealand inquiry from the Seamen's Union revealed that the only New Zealand seamen expected to be operating in Middle East waters were on the hospital ships.

HOSPITAL SHIPS

"*Oranje*."—The "*Oranje*" arrived in the Middle East during the voting period, and although it was known that voting material had been supplied in New Zealand, further booth supplies, together with lists of nominated candidates, were prepared and conveyed to the vessel immediately after its arrival. It was thought that if voting could be completed whilst in port the results could be absorbed in those of Middle East. This was not possible, and the "*Oranje*" returned all the material forwarded, except the list of nominated candidates, and arranged to record all votes while on the trip to Durban, and cable results from there to New Zealand.

Inquiry after the return of the ship from Durban revealed that voting had been completed and supplies returned to New Zealand.

"*Maunganui*."—This vessel was not in the Middle East prior to the election, but arrived shortly after the closing date. Colonel F. Prideaux, Paymaster, 2 N.Z.E.F., who had acted as Polling Officer was contacted, as it was thought that perhaps the official count for the vessel could be conducted in the Middle East, thus saving time in New Zealand, but it was found that he had despatched all voting material back to New Zealand.

PRISONERS OF WAR

Italy made unconditional surrender in the voting period, and it was anticipated that a large number of New Zealand prisoners of war would be freed immediately. Suggestions, probably facetious, were made that I should arrange voting facilities. The question was, however, given consideration, but was manifestly impossible. It subsequently turned out very few such prisoners were released.

SORTING OF VOTES, AND PRELIMINARY COUNT

While booth supplies were being prepared Native carpenters were preparing ballot-boxes and boxes for sorting of completed ballot and voting papers into electorates.

Immediately after the distribution of these booth supplies the packing tents were cleared, shelving erected, and the sorting-boxes placed thereon and labelled with the name of the electorate. For the layout see the photographs appearing in Appendix A [*not printed*].

As ballot-boxes were returned from units they were emptied and sorted into the boxes, declaration votes being placed on one side.

These declaration votes were investigated by a staff of two, and where correct put aside for sorting after separation from the accompanying declarations. Incorrect declarations were double-checked and then submitted to me for final check before being disallowed. It is interesting to note that of 7,408 declaration votes recorded only 318 were disallowed. In the circumstances this is very low.

The late receipt of statements of party policy necessitated the employment of additional staff for sorting of votes, as this was crammed into a very short period. Two shifts of eight were operated, one from 0730 hours until 1500 hours, and one from 1500 hours until 2230 hours daily.

Ballot-boxes were received from units until 1800 hours on 24th September, and sorting continued until 1915 hours, at which time the preliminary count was commenced.

This was performed by eight groups of two men, each of which would count the contents of a box recording the results on a counting-slip provided to it, and return the papers to the sorting-box. Two men supervised the issue of boxes and the reailing thereof. Cable forms had been prepared in advance and required only the insertion of figures.

Sheets of cable were taken to the Cipher Officer, 2 N.Z.E.F., as completed. This office, by arrangement, had retained its staff all night and borrowed an extra cipher machine. They also had a despatch-rider standing by to deliver the enciphered cable to the Marconi Co. I had already been in touch with this company to arrange immediate despatch of the cable and found that a request was also received from New Zealand. My rank of Major enabled me to send the cable with the Priority "Immediate" as arranged, under my own signature, thus saving delay.

I was assured, therefore, of immediate despatch all through, and was content that everything had been done to facilitate this object.

OFFICIAL COUNT AND SCRUTINY OF THE ROLLS

For the purpose of the preliminary count completed voting-papers had in many cases been forwarded in advance of unused material, &c., and in addition a small number of votes were still to be received.

Immediately after completion of the preliminary count action was taken to ensure the return of all outstanding material, and cables were despatched to ascertain whether outlying booths in India, South Africa, and the Mediterranean had recorded votes. In addition, investigation into delivery of air mails was made in an endeavour to establish whether voting-papers sent under the postal scheme had been delivered in time for personnel to vote.

On 16th October, when I was satisfied that all possible votes had been received, a start was made with the official count.

I discussed in the early stages of the election the question of witnesses to the official count with General Freyberg and Brigadier Weir, and it was decided that the 2 N.Z.E.F. would nominate two officers, and that I would appoint them as required by the regulations.

About 1st October Lieut. J. H. Blair and Lieut. R. J. Thomas reported to me and were in attendance at the office until 24th October, when the count was completed. The certificate completed by these officers appears with the result of the official count in Appendix C [*not printed*].

On the arrival of these officers a start was made with the scrutiny of rolls, and to cover all possible avenues of dual voting the declarations completed by personnel not on rolls were sorted alphabetically, checked for duplicates, and then compared with the master roll resulting from the scrutiny of the rolls.

As the result of the scrutiny two cases of dual voting were discovered and the necessary disciplinary action was taken. All votes by these two persons were, of course, disallowed.

After the scrutiny all butts and unused ballot-papers were checked with the statements made by Polling Officers.

On 16th October the official count, which could not be undertaken for any electorate until the whole scrutiny was complete, was commenced, each paper being examined and numbered as in New Zealand.

The results were cabled to New Zealand daily, the cables being checked by the official witnesses before despatch.

As each electorate was completed the papers were wrapped in sealed parcels and set aside for disposal.

A copy of the official count result is attached hereto as Appendix C [*not printed*].

DISPOSAL OF MATERIAL

There was, of course, a considerable amount of stationery and other material awaiting disposal after completion of the official count. The scarcity of shipping to New Zealand rendered it desirable to cut down space requirements to a minimum, and the following action was taken:—

(1) *Used Ballot-papers, Butts, Rolls, &c.*—It was considered undesirable to send this material back to New Zealand on account of shipping, and on account of a possible move of the base organization of 2 N.Z.E.F. from Egypt it was considered undesirable to leave such material stored there. In discussion, Brigadier Weir agreed with me that in view of conditions it was desirable to burn all such material, and accordingly all the sealed parcels were destroyed by fire under supervision of the Military Police.

(2) *Stationery.*—2 N.Z.E.F. was eager to accept surplus stationery, as this is difficult to obtain in the Middle East, and I therefore followed the example of Mr. A. G. Harper in 1941 and passed over all pencils, paper, &c. Sealing-wax was returned to New Zealand, as there is no use for it in the Middle East on account of the heat.

(3) *Unused Electoral Material:*—

(a) It was considered that there was not likely to be another licensing election for some time, and therefore all unused Licensing and Local Option voting-papers were destroyed by fire.

(b) In view of the likelihood of by-elections, materials sufficient for 5,000 votes were packed into two cases together with all necessary instructions, rolls, and references. These cases were stored with the Base Kit Store of 2 N.Z.E.F. A schedule of this material is attached to this report as Appendix E [*not printed*].

(c) *Rolls.*—The members of the Forces' roll is a very valuable reference for certain base units, and accordingly H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F., were handed fifteen sets of the army roll and one set of the Air Force and Navy rolls for controlled distribution.

(d) All surplus material I thought likely to be of use in New Zealand I cased for return. A schedule of this material has been submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer.

(e) Files of correspondence built up in the Middle East were purged to the minimum bulk and all secret matter expunged therefrom. These files were cased with the material referred to in para. (d) above for reference by the Chief Electoral Officer.

GENERAL INTEREST

In general considerable interest was displayed by members of the Forces, but, as reported by cable, there was some apathy to the election, engendered doubtless by lack of knowledge of the candidates and loss of touch with New Zealand affairs.

In addition, the Division was moving out from base with consequent packing, and later during the voting period, was preparing for the move to Italy. This meant that a number of personnel did not bother to attend the unit booth to vote.

In view of the circumstances existing it is felt that the achievement of recording 28,191 votes was very satisfactory.

The 2 N.Z.E.F. had a strength of 31,532, and it was estimated that there were approximately 500 other New-Zealanders within reach of the Middle East, so that 88 per cent. voted.

INFORMAL VOTING

The total number of informal votes cast was 951, and it is considered that this is not excessive. Many persons cast blank ballot-papers and many Polling Officers issued ballot-papers for the two electorates for which there were no contests. The remaining cases were caused by voters inserting the name of a candidate for one electorate in the ballot-paper for another.

CONCLUSION

The experience in conducting the election in the Middle East was very valuable, and I am satisfied that everything possible was done in the very limited time available to ensure a successful poll. Every member of 2 N.Z.E.F. was given the opportunity to vote, and, in addition, all votes possible were obtained from the Navy and Air Force over a tremendous area. It was unfortunate, but inevitable, that some of these isolated personnel should be missed.

I strongly recommend, however, that in the event of it becoming necessary to conduct another election in wartime, in any sphere as large as the Middle East, that the Special Returning Officer should be on the spot two months before the date of the election, as this would allow six weeks before the commencement of the voting period in which to build an organization, train a staff, and make detailed planning. From personal experience I can state that it is almost impossible to assess in New Zealand the difficulties involved by distances, the lack of communications, the effect of operations, the very enervating climate, the limitations imposed by operating in a foreign country, and the extreme necessity for security.

I further recommend that the Special Returning Officer should be supplied with an assistant who has worked with and had an opportunity of studying the voting scheme and the arrangements made before leaving New Zealand.

The time available to me—*i.e.*, three weeks before the voting period—was much too short, and I consider it extremely fortunate in that I can report a successful poll.

It is pleasing to report that the scheme for recording votes worked very well, and after putting it into operation I can suggest no improvement. Polling Officers in particular were pleased with the simplicity of the arrangements, and it can be claimed that practically no dislocation was caused to service duties.

W. A. BRYAN, Major.

[Enclosure: Appendix "E" referred to in above report.]

Electoral Office, H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F., Middle East Forces,
15th October, 1943.

THE SPECIAL RETURNING OFFICER.

Re POSTAL VOTING MAIL: INDIA

On 11th September, in accordance with your instructions, I took a number of parcels of letters containing postal voting-papers to the R.A.F. Post Office, Cairo. These letters were addressed to various R.A.F. stations throughout the Middle East, and amongst them was a bundle of between 200 and 300 letters addressed to individual New Zealand personnel attached to R.A.F. stations in India. These were all marked "Certified Official" and also "Fast Air."

I handed them all to Captain Reilly, R.A.F. Post Office, and drew his attention specially to the bundle of letters for India, and to the fact that it was desired that they should go "Fast Air."

Inquiries from Major Barnes, British Base Post Office, on 9th October, showed that planes left for India on 11th, 13th, and 14th September.

As no replies have been received from New Zealand personnel in India, I interviewed Captain Reilly on 13th October, and was informed that the mail in question had been sent immediately by his office in a bag addressed "Sorting Officer, British Base Post Office," and that the label had borne a note to the effect that it contained New Zealand electoral papers and was to go "Fast Air."

I saw Lieutenant Thompson, Officer in Charge, Sorting Office, British Base Post Office, on 13th October, but he stated that owing to the vast volume of mail passing through he could not clearly recall having received the bag in question. At the same time he seemed to have a vague recollection of receiving electoral papers, and said that if the mail reached him on 11th September it would certainly have gone "Fast Air," and would have connected with the planes leaving either on 11th, 13th, or 14th September. He would have no record of the contents of any particular bag. He could only suggest that the mail had gone straight through by fast air to R.A.F. Post Office, Bombay, where it would be sorted for despatch to the individuals concerned.

I also inquired from Major Barnes whether any air mails between Cairo and India had been lost, and he stated that no planes had been lost for some months.

British Base Post Office could give me no indication of the arrival of surface mails from India, as they have no information until the mail actually arrives.

Air mails from India are frequent, probably two or three per week.

The latest surface mail I have seen from India is a letter from Mr. Gardiner, Supply Liaison Officer, Bombay. This bears Bombay P.O. postmark of 15th September, and the Cairo P.O. date-stamp of 14th October.

K. M. SLEIGHT, Staff Sergeant.

PACIFIC AREA

Memorandum for :
 THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER,
 WELLINGTON

GENERAL ELECTION, 1943

BEFORE THE POLL—PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

1. The warrant of my appointment as a Special Returning Officer for the purpose of the Electoral Amendment Act, 1940, directed me to take the votes of those members of the Forces who were for the time being within the Pacific Area and such other areas as may from time to time be specified for the purpose. In general, this territory covered the following locations: New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Espiritu Santo, Guadalcanal, Australia, and all coast-watching stations throughout the area where New Zealand members of the Forces were stationed.

My previous experience at Army Headquarters, Wellington, had enabled me to obtain a general knowledge of where most of the Service personnel were stationed, and this knowledge was used to advantage in assisting me in my mission.

Arrangements were made for my release from Army Headquarters on attachment to your Office, and I duly reported for duty on the 1st July, 1943. In view of the importance of the work to be performed it was necessary to obtain the services of an officer experienced in electoral procedure, and it was decided that Major D. Malcolm, 1 Tara, be appointed. This officer is a public servant, and, having been a Returning Officer for several elections, was well qualified for the appointment. Major Malcolm has also been a commissioned officer in the New Zealand Military Forces for over twenty years. He commenced duty on the 7th July, 1943, and later proceeded overseas with me.

The date of the election at that stage had not been fixed, but in view of the probable minimum of time that might be ultimately available to conduct the poll we proceeded immediately with the necessary preliminary preparations. The headquarters of all Services were approached and information as to the probable future strengths of formations and movements within the area was obtained, and at this stage it is gratifying to record that the fullest co-operation was given by all Services. The territory to be covered was extensive, and the envisaging of proposed operational roles of formations affected had to be considered. Supplies of the requisite voting material were procured and despatched overseas.

Detailed instructions for Polling Officers and others were prepared and forwarded to those concerned to make them conversant with the proposed procedure.

We obtained information about prospective candidates for the elections with the idea of arranging for fullest information on this point to be available to the voters before they exercised their votes.

Every effort was made to ensure that adequate arrangements for the conduct of the election in the Pacific were made in New Zealand so as to simplify the procedure when we arrived at the various stations overseas. The time spent in these preliminary arrangements proved invaluable, as subsequent events will reveal. The fact that the area was in an American Command had to be taken into account and co-operation had to be maintained with the American Legation here to guard against any curtailment of our movement within the area.

DEPARTURE FROM NEW ZEALAND

2. When all these preliminary arrangements had been completed steps were taken for our departure from New Zealand to commence a tour of the whole area in order to complete our plans and obtain a first-hand comprehensive knowledge of the location and facilities available.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister furnished me with letters of introduction to the following:—

Admiral W. F. Halsey, Commander, South Pacific Area.

Major-General H. E. Barrowclough, D.S.O., M.C., G.O.C., 2 N.Z.E.F.I.P.

Sir Philip Mitchell, Governor of Fiji.

Group Captain Wallingford, R.N.Z.A.F.

Colonel C. W. Salmon, Chiefs of Staffs' Representative.

I also had with me a letter of introduction to the Acting-Governor of New Caledonia from the Delegate for Fighting France in New Zealand, and a general authority for production to any to whom it may concern. These letters were of great value to me and very largely facilitated easy movement throughout the Pacific.

I left Wellington on the 8th August, 1943, for Auckland, and, as climatic conditions were unfavourable, my departure was delayed until the 11th of August, 1943, when I reached New Caledonia. Major Malcolm left New Zealand on the 12th August, 1943, and arrived at New Caledonia the same day, calling at Norfolk Island *en route*. We both travelled on American Service Command Air Transport (SCAT).

ARRIVAL OVERSEAS

3. (1) *New Caledonia*.—Before leaving New Zealand it was decided that our headquarters would be with 2 N.Z.E.F.I.P., and on arrival at Tontouta I proceeded immediately to Noumea and reported to Colonel Salmon, whose staff advised me as to the procedure for onward movement and made the required contacts with the American authorities. The necessary permission for us to visit the forward area was granted, and, our itinerary having been fixed, priorities to travel by air were arranged to the following islands in the order set out: Espiritu Santo, Guadalcanal, Espiritu Santo, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, Espiritu Santo, Efate, Noumea.

We had been informed in New Zealand that the 3 (N.Z.) Division was moving from New Caledonia to the forward area, and on arrival at Noumea found that this move was then in progress and that some of the advance troops had already embarked.

While in Noumea the introductory letters mentioned above were presented to the gentlemen to whom they were addressed.

I also had a lengthy interview with Major-General Barrowclough and explained to him the proposed method of obtaining the votes of the Division. The General approved of the system and did not anticipate any difficulties in the matter. As the Division was practising amphibious exercises during the move it was considered inadvisable to place any electoral supplies on board the ships owing to the possibility of loss during transit and the difficulty of replacement. It was therefore agreed that as the move was to be completed by the 15th September, 1943, when all the Division would be located on Guadalcanal, the necessary supplies, manifestos, and lists of nominated candidates be available there on that date. If this course were adopted voting could then take place over a period of days, enabling the preliminary results to be forwarded to New Zealand in ample time to be available on election night. This arrangement was, therefore, subject to any change in operational tasks.

Having completed the formal introductions I then proceeded on the 12th August, 1943, to headquarters, 8th Brigade, where I spent the night and discussed with the Commander (Brigadier Rowe) the question of voting his brigade and in general outlining the plans approved of by Major-General Barrowclough.

On the 13th August, 1943, I continued my journey to headquarters, 2 N.Z.E.F.I.P., at Bourail, and found that Major Malcolm had already reported there the same day.

A conference had been arranged for Thursday by the Officer in Charge Administration, at which Liaison Officers from the Division and base troops were appointed to assist us. As from that date all matters appertaining to the election as affecting these formations were handled through these officers.

Finality was reached as to our staff, accommodation, and transport during the period we would be in New Caledonia.

(2) *Onward Movement within the Pacific*—(a) *Espiritu Santo*: On the 14th August, 1943, we left New Caledonia to visit all islands as set out in our itinerary, and on the same day we reached Espiritu Santo, reporting to headquarters, No. 1 Island Group, R.N.Z.A.F., and remained there overnight.

We found that tentative arrangements had been made to conduct the poll, and Flight Lieutenants J. B. Smillie and G. Taylor, both of whom had previous experience in electoral work, were appointed Polling Officers for the Air Force personnel there. We also conferred with Paymaster Lieutenant-Commander H. Twigg, R.N.Z.V.R., and appointed him Polling Officer for the Navy. We had previously met this officer in New Zealand, and he was well aware of our proposals. This later conference enabled the position to be finalized. His appointment as an Advanced Base Paymaster enabled us to be kept well informed of any Navy movement throughout the whole of the forward area.

(b) *Guadalcanal*: This was the area that was to figure largely in our field of activity for the election. We made our first visit to this island on the 15th August, 1943, and reported to the R.N.Z.A.F. Station Commander. We had ascertained that a portion of the Fiji Defence Forces was operating forward of this island, but until now we could not get definite information as to where this unit was based. This unit contained New Zealand commissioned and non-commissioned officers. We called on the British Resident Commissioner (Colonel Trench), and through the good offices of his staff we were fortunate in being able to contact the unit the same day. They had not seen any New Zealand personnel for many months, only one other New Zealand officer having previously visited them. Part of this unit had returned to Guadalcanal for a rest, the remainder operating well forward. The time at our disposal was limited, and, being anxious to adhere to our original itinerary, we were unable to meet many New-Zealanders in this unit. We arranged for Lieutenant Holmes, the Advanced Base Camp Quartermaster, to act as a Polling Officer for these troops, and supplies were later handed over to him for distribution. The unit has special significance on account of its outstanding work against the enemy, and its actions have won favourable recognition from the American Command.

We remained overnight at the R.N.Z.A.F. station, and this island was later to become an advanced centre from which the voting of the Division was to play an important part.

(c) *Espiritu Santo*: Leaving Guadalcanal, we returned to Espiritu Santo on 16th August, 1943, and were billeted at the Naval Air Transportation Service (NATS), Transit Camp (American), for the night. We visited the No. 1 Island Group, R.N.Z.A.F., to make certain that our previous arrangements for the Poll did not require any further action meantime.

(d) *Fiji*: We departed from Espiritu Santo on 19th August and arrived at Fiji that day, reporting at H.Q., Fiji Defence Forces, where we were accommodated and immediately arranged for a conference of representatives Navy, Army, and Air Force to discuss the arrangements, and the following officers attended—

Navy—Lieutenant Tovey; Lieutenant-Commander Barracks.

Army—Lieutenant Chapman Cohen.

Air Force—Flying Officer Quill.

Civilian (Communications) Mr. Hampton.

Fiji is an important strategic point and, owing to the large number of troops based in the area, the importance of assuring a complete coverage for all New Zealand personnel was stressed. Everybody was quite confident that there were no insuperable difficulties to overcome.

(e) *Tonga*: Leaving Fiji on the 18th August, we passed on to Tonga and reported to H.Q., "T" Force, where we found that supplies had not yet reached the island. The ship carrying these was on its way, and it was considered that the supplies would reach the area within a few days. Details of the procedure for the election were made known to the staff, and Major Gillies and Lieutenant J. T. Hill were appointed Polling Officers. These officers were instructed to ensure that facilities be given to coast-watching personnel on adjacent islands to record their votes. While at Tonga I called up the British Agent and Consul, Colonel Trevor Johnson, who was indisposed at the time and regretted that he was unable to receive me. We did, however, have a telephone conversation, and I was disappointed at being unable to meet him in person.

(f) *Fiji*: Continuing our journey from Tonga, we called at Upollo, Samoa, with the object of contacting the Officer Commanding Samoa Defence Forces, who had been signalled our proposed visit. Unfortunately, owing to delay in transmission, he was not there on our arrival, and all efforts to contact him from this point of call were unsuccessful. We passed on to Fiji again, being billeted by the Commander Fiji Defence Forces. On this second visit to Fiji we were able to clarify a few points raised by the Polling Officers. It had been ascertained that in the time at our disposal it was impossible

to deliver material to certain naval coast-watching personnel. Contact by radio was the only means of communication. We therefore decided that, rather than disfranchise these personnel, we would obtain particulars of their respective electorates and transmit instructions and contents of ballot-papers by radio. The individual votes were radioed back in cipher, and certified at both terminals. The votes were recorded on to ballot-papers and a certificate from the Naval Commander in each case was attached. Had this course not been adopted, all the personnel affected would not have been able to vote. We were also able to visit the New Zealand Forces Club, Suva, for a short period, where we met the staff and several of our New Zealand personnel.

I had already met the Governor of Fiji at Noumea, and he very kindly invited me to stay at Government House when visiting Fiji, but as my time there was very limited I asked permission to remain at H.Q., Fiji Defence Forces. This was granted by His Excellency.

(g) *Noumea*: We departed from Fiji on the 20th August, 1943, on our return trip to New Caledonia, calling at Espiritu Santo and Efate. On this return visit to Noumea I called on the British Consul, Mr. M. Johnston, who displayed considerable interest in our mission.

When in Noumea I called on M. Bourgeon, Acting-Governor of New Caledonia, and presented the letter handed to me by the Delegate for Fighting France. I subsequently received an invitation to dine with the Acting-Governor, and on the 1st September, 1943, had the pleasure of accepting this invitation. At the dinner I also had the pleasure of meeting M. Kouter, the Resident Commissioner in the New Hebrides. Both of these gentlemen displayed great interest in New Zealand.

Prior to our departure from Noumea on return to New Zealand in October, 1943, we took the opportunity of visiting the French Courts of Justice there and met the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeal, M. Senesse. The Courts had a special significance for us as, in our civilian employment, we are both officers of the Department of Justice. We spent an interesting time comparing the French and New Zealand Judicial procedures.

News of our entry to the area and the nature of our mission had become known and the American War Correspondents sought an interview. Colonel Salmon arranged for this and agreed to peruse the draft before publication.

We had now covered the area allotted to us and had a comprehensive picture of the whole territory, satisfying ourselves of complete coverage for all members of the Forces.

We were restricted by the time factor, and it was important that every avenue should be explored to make certain that all facilities were afforded our Forces to record their votes. The area was extensive, and in order that contact be made with everybody in the shortest possible time we were forced to travel long distances in service transport.

(h) *Australia*: Our original investigation disclosed that there was not a sufficient number of votes there to warrant proceeding to Australia to finalize matters, and we decided that the New Zealand Liaison Officer at Melbourne be appointed our principal Polling Officer, with authority to delegate his powers.

As a precautionary measure we arranged for him to have a reserve supply of electoral matter to be used in the event of any ship calling at any Australian port during the election period. Subsequent events proved this to have been fully justified. Two drafts from the Middle East arrived at Fremantle just before the election, and the personnel aboard were able to record their votes. The officer who went to Fremantle was also able to contact the hospital ship "Maunganui" and pass on the list of nominated candidates to that ship. Voting aboard the hospital ship took place whilst the ship was en route to Colombo.

(i) *Honolulu*: Although this location is in the Pacific, by your direction it was removed from my territory, and other arrangements were made to accommodate the voters stationed there.

(j) *Cook Islands*: As only a few voters were on these islands they were made the subject of special arrangement with the Public Works Department at Wellington.

(k) *Norfolk Island*: This island is not on the general air route, and hence we experienced some difficulty in making personal contact with the Army and Air Force stationed there. The plane conveying Major Malcolm from New Zealand in the first instance made a stop there, and he was able to discuss the election during his brief stop. All the arrangements for the poll on Norfolk were done by correspondence. Climatic conditions in New Caledonia prevented the American planes from departing on the 20th September, 1943, but the Chief of the New Zealand Air Staff (Air Marshal L. Isitt) permitted me to accompany him in his plane on his return to New Zealand on that date. He called in at Norfolk, where he spent the night, continuing his journey to New Zealand on the 21st September, 1943. While at Norfolk I called on the Administrator (Major-General Sir Chas. Rosenthal) who was absent, but his Official Secretary recorded a note of my visit.

(l) *Coastwatching and Radar Stations*: Scattered throughout the Pacific and under control of Navy, Air, and Public Works Departments (Aerodrome Services) are small detachments of personnel coming under this heading and eligible to vote. In some instances the only means of contacting them personally was by relief ship, and this method could not be arranged before the election period had terminated. All were, however, linked by radio, and this means proved useful.

The numerical strength on each station was small; nevertheless the sum total affected was substantial. Under the circumstances varied methods of communication were adopted to make sure that, as far as possible, all were acquainted with the provision of legislation enacted to provide for the taking of their votes. It can be definitely stated that the results obtained from all coast-watching and Radar stations clearly indicated that the coverage was very full.

(m) *Mercantile Marine*: Under section 18 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1941, the facilities for voting as members of the Forces were extended so as to include members of the Mercantile Marine engaged in any ship outside the territorial waters of New Zealand. We had ascertained that the "Rapaki," a floating crane, was in the vicinity of Noumea, working under American authority, and after several attempts we ultimately contacted the ship, went aboard, and took the votes of the crew.

The "Tamatea" called at Nepoui during the period of the election, and a polling staff went aboard and thus enabled the crew of that ship to vote also.

The necessity for the strictest secrecy regarding movements of ships was not overlooked, and we were informed that the above mentioned were the only ships which required our attention. Ships of a foreign register were used for the conveyance of our troops to the forward area.

(3) *Establishing Headquarters.*—Our next task was to establish our headquarters, and we decided that despite the movement of the Division from New Caledonia, we should remain with Headquarters, 2 N.Z.E.F.I.P., where we could be kept informed of the activities of this formation and have access to good signal communications. We were satisfied that all our Commanders were desirous of co-operating to the fullest extent in making our mission a success.

Consequently we went to Bourail on the 22nd August, 1943, being accommodated at the Base Reception Depot. No buildings were available to us, and we were required to use two tents each approximately 12 ft. by 12 ft. as our offices, and these were used as our headquarters. Transport, telephone, office furniture, and necessary clerks were placed at our disposal.

(4) *Supplies and Organizing for the Poll.*—Supplies had been despatched to the various islands prior to our departure from New Zealand; excepting those for New Caledonia, all had reached their respective destinations. Prompt inquiries had been instituted by us when we first reached New Caledonia, and on our return we were pleased to see that the delivery of the supplies had been expedited and that they were now available. We then commenced the work of breaking bulk and providing onward delivery to forward area. The war in the Pacific was reaching a stage where it appeared likely that our troops might be forward of Guadalcanal during the election period, and be in action. The supplies reached Guadalcanal before the end of August, 1943.

We then made a survey of New Caledonia to provide for our base and static troops, and transport and staff to deal with these units was duly arranged. The troops were dispersed over a wide area extending from Noumea to Hepoui, a distance of approximately 180 miles. Complete coverage for all troops on the island was provided for by the establishment of fixed polling-booths, and itineraries for mobile polling-booths were drawn up to cater for isolated detachments. Attention given to these details resulted in a very full poll for this Island.

LIST OF NOMINATIONS AND MANIFESTOS

4. It soon became obvious to us that all matters other than operational were of secondary importance and in an area with a base comparable to that at Noumea there was a grave risk of the nominations and manifestos not reaching their destination at the appropriate time. It was therefore decided that Major Malcolm return to New Zealand and personally supervise the distribution of these. On return overseas he was to proceed to the forward area with this information, superintending all polling arrangements there. This was done. The major portion of our Forces was at this period well forward awaiting action. Comment has been made through the press and other channels regarding the availability of election information to our Forces. It will be remembered that in my memorandum of the 25th August, 1943, it was pointed out that any information of this nature should reach the members of the Forces at the first available opportunity. The manifestos were handed over by the printer on 11th September. Major Malcolm returned to New Caledonia on 12th September, 1943, with all the material that was available to him at that date. Delivery was made to waiting transport, which carried the manifestos to units on the island the same day. It was planned to distribute the manifestos on the basis of one per man, but on account of short supply this was impracticable. A distribution was then made on the basis of one to every three men. A supply of manifestos and list of nominated candidates was taken by Major Malcolm to the forward area on the 14th September, 1943, and was handed over by him to units on Guadalcanal on the 15th September, 1943, for distribution on the above basis. Copies for other islands were duly handed over by that Officer to the Air Force authorities at Whenuapai for despatch by the first available air service. Delay would ensue at this terminal, dependent on plane service, but, as will be observed from the above, it is considered that the delivery could not have been done with greater promptitude. It can, however, be definitely stated that the list of candidates was given every prominence in all places where troops assembled and was posted up in all polling-booths.

Your cable forwarding information regarding the licensing issue, which it was intended should be published as an advertisement in the *Kiwi* newspaper, arrived too late for insertion in that newspaper. The cable was received by the French authorities in Noumea and was not handed to me until the 17th September, 1943. Voting had by that date commenced in some units. I conferred with H.Q., 2 N.Z.E.F.I.P., and representatives of the *Kiwi* newspaper to ascertain whether it could be practicable to comply with your instructions and ensure a large proportion of the members of the Forces becoming acquainted with the subject-matter of the advertisement. I was informed that if this information was printed forthwith, owing to the wide dispersal of our Forces, it would be impossible to have copies of the *Kiwi* newspaper available in units in sufficient time to permit the voters to consider the subject-matter before voting. Under the circumstances, publication of this information was withheld, as advised in my signal of 17th September, 1943.

COMMUNICATIONS

5. The subject of communications should at this juncture be mentioned as it is difficult for persons in New Zealand to visualize the position overseas. Army control the following W/T terminals in New Zealand—

Norfolk Island, Tonga, New Caledonia

and Air control—

Espiritu Santo and Fiji :

There is no lateral communication between the islands, consequently some delay in the passing of messages between the islands arises. We were reliably informed that the American Command had placed some restrictions on the use of W/T excepting for purely military matters. As it appeared that the transmission of results of the election might cause some embarrassment to our Forces, that heavy traffic in W/T might be useful information to the enemy, and the element of human error in transmission, it was decided that a simple code be prepared and special message forms adopted for the election results. The preparation of this system of forwarding results was carefully considered by Army Signals

and Air Transmission Officer, and an excellent system was adopted. The time spent on its preparation was fairly extensive, but the result proved that it was well worth while, and our thanks are particularly due to Major McIntosh, of Army Signals, for the work performed by him in this connection. From the above it will be observed that it was impracticable for results to be received by me at my headquarters in New Caledonia, and I subsequently returned to New Zealand for that purpose. It is gratifying to report that a fair result of the preliminary count was available on election night in New Zealand, but, in view of the operational role of the Division, only portion of the results from the forward area were received.

CASTING OF VOTES

6. The method of voting was strictly in accordance with the requirements of the Electoral (Members of the Forces) Regulations 1941, and all unit commands were required to afford every opportunity to voters to record their votes. Rolls of all personnel serving overseas were issued to most units, and where these were not on hand declarations were made by the voters establishing their right to vote. Many cases occurred where the official rolls were at variance with the last registered domicile of the voters. Attached hereto is a schedule by locations showing the total number of votes cast in the respective places set out. As will be seen from the record of votes polled, a high percentage of personnel exercised their right of voting. The means taken to ensure that all personnel knew of the election and also that they had every opportunity to vote were varied to suit the particular location, but the following was the general principle carried out:—

- (1) Election notices and lists of nominations were displayed on all notice-boards in camps and in all general buildings, mess-halls, recreation-rooms, Y.M.C.A. :
- (2) Notices in routine orders, and special orders on the subject :
- (3) Announcements at movie shows and at mess :
- (4) Instructions to sub-unit commanders to make sure that all personnel under their command had an opportunity to vote :
- (5) Announcements at parades.

I am satisfied from inquiries made on the subject that all possible publicity was given to produce a full poll. In so far as 3 Division was concerned, the *Kiwi* newspaper was most generous in allotting space to make the election known to all its readers.

Polling commenced in some islands as early as 16th September, 1943, and from reports received it is evident that the polling period as provided by the regulations was ample.

The Pacific is studded with small islands on which there are small groups of New Zealand personnel, all of whom come under the respective command of some island neighbouring Force. They are not far from the mainland, but just sufficiently distant to be out of touch in the event of unfavourable weather.

A case in point is as follows:—

Eua	4
Coast-watching stations in northern islands	12
On H.M.S. "Kia Kia"	6
	22

During the whole period of the polling the weather conditions were such that landing at Eua was deemed impossible by those operating the available boats. Indeed, for the greater part of the time it was not considered safe to make the crossing between Tongatabu and Eua in the only available boat, let alone attempt to enter through the reef. Regarding the Observer Company personnel in the northern island, the time was too short for votes to be obtained by boat. The only possible means was by seaplane.

An effort was made to get this form of transport, but the Air Force Command at Tonga was unable to supply a plane for the purpose. In any case, I am informed that it probably would not have been able to effect a landing at either Tin Can or Keppel Islands from a seaplane.

In the case of the "Kia Kia," the same condition applies. The ship left two days before the receipt of nominations and did not return to Tonga until after the election. She could only have been reached by seaplane. The number of voters disfranchised is shown at twenty-two.

It is considered that a Special Returning Officer is required to obtain as many votes as possible, and the method which he adopts, particularly in a theatre of war, must be determined at the particular time under review. This applies especially to the forward area and is a matter that required to be decided fairly hurriedly in view of impending movements at the time of the election. It will have been observed that special attention had been given this area, and as is now known, on 17th September, 1943, detachments from 3 (N.Z.) Division were on the move from Guadalcanal. This sudden alteration demanded immediate action lest these detachments be deprived of the opportunity of voting.

Arrangements were accordingly made by Major Malcolm to meet this situation, and voting actually took place on ships in convoy to Vella Lavella. A total of sixteen booths operated on these ships, and in one instance only were the votes from a booth not received. These votes are still outstanding and are the subject of a separate inquiry.

The remainder of the Division voted on Guadalcanal. In addition, the votes of all New Zealand casualties in American hospitals in Guadalcanal were collected. These included Navy, Army, and Air Force personnel.

Votes were also obtained from Munda, Russell Island, and other advanced "air strips." A mobile booth operated by air from Henderson Field on Guadalcanal was responsible for collecting the votes of all New Zealand Air personnel forward of Guadalcanal. This plane was also on other tasks, but owing to enemy action was unable to depart from Henderson Field until 21st September, 1943, when it took a polling staff for the purpose of collecting the votes of personnel from these new stations.

Ships of R.N.Z.N. were operating in the forward waters, and the votes of all the New Zealand personnel were taken while the ships were at sea.

The collection of all votes from the forward area presented some anxiety and required co-ordination of all Services to ensure the safe custody of ballot-papers, and it is gratifying to report that all arrangements were satisfactorily completed, excepting in one instance cited above.

An American ship conveying New Zealand reinforcements for 3 (N.Z.) Division was contacted at Noumea and a special polling staff travelled from Bouvail, a distance of 110 miles to take these votes, a total of 800-odd. The staff boarded the ship in the roadstead, and booths were set up in the holds. These were personnel who had just left New Zealand and they all voted by declaration.

We also provided for the civilians employed in Noumea by the American authorities. These people do not come within the scope of the regulations under which we were operating. They utilized the Postal Voting System, and their votes were despatched to respective Returning Officers in New Zealand.

AFTER THE POLL

7. The regulations provided for the appointment of two persons to act as witnesses for the scrutiny of the rolls and the official count. In view of the special circumstances existing in the Pacific, the Government decided that party representatives be permitted to attend at the scrutiny and official count. The following representatives duly arrived by air in New Caledonia on 7th October, 1943:—

Mr. M. Moohan (New Zealand Labour Party):

Mr. M. J. Nestor (National Party):

Mr. W. Sinton (Independent Group):

Mr. W. E. Millar (Democratic Labour Party).

They were met on arrival and conveyed to Bourail, where they were accommodated at the Base Reception Depot.

In order to speed up the official count the scrutiny was commenced prior to the arrival of the above-named gentlemen, and the time saved in this respect enabled the official count to be commenced earlier than would have otherwise been possible. The scrutiny continued from day to day as returns came to hand. The procedure adopted was similar to that obtaining in New Zealand, and any cases of apparent dual voting were carefully investigated, but in every instance they proved to be errors made by Polling Officers in booths, and there did not appear to be any cases of dual voting.

OFFICIAL COUNT

8. Following our inspection of the islands we deemed it desirable to have all ballot and voting papers from the forward area and Norfolk Islands brought to New Caledonia, and those from Tonga, Samoa, and Cook Islands brought to Fiji. This course seemed preferable to carrying them over long stretches of water with a possibility of loss in transit. There also appeared to be some anxiety about the method of delivery as any means of this nature was largely controlled by the American authorities. When it was intimated that party representatives were to attend the scrutiny and official count I considered it advisable to adopt the above course. Instructions were accordingly issued to Commanders affected to forward all papers used in the election direct to me in New Caledonia. This was done, but there was considerable delay in respect to the receipt of the parcels. For example, advice was received from one Island, dated 27th September, 1943, that parcels were ready awaiting despatch. These parcels reached us on 26th October, 1943. It will therefore be appreciated that there are real difficulties to surmount, but, given sufficient time, all are capable of being satisfactorily overcome.

On the 14th October, 1943, a progress report of official count of the votes on hand was despatched to New Zealand. The party scrutineers informed me that it appeared unnecessary for them to remain any longer in the area, and they did not wish to be in attendance until the conclusion of the official count. They assured me that they had no objections to offer regarding the conduct of the election.

During their brief stay in New Caledonia every opportunity was taken to afford the scrutineers means of visiting camps and institutions on the island to enable them to meet as many service personnel as possible. In addition, a trip to Honailon was arranged so that they would have an idea of the conditions and type of country on the island. It was unfortunate that more time could not be devoted in this respect. Their return journey to New Zealand was therefore arranged for 17th October, 1943.

As parcels came to hand they were expeditiously dealt with, and on the 20th October, 1943, a first supplementary count was despatched, and on the 27th October, 1943, a second supplementary count was forwarded.

DISPOSAL OF USED BALLOT-PAPERS AND FORMS

9. In accordance with your instructions all used ballot and voting papers have been returned to New Zealand, together with the corresponding counterfoils and other material used for the election, and these have been duly handed over to you for disposal.

A small supply of ballot-papers and forms was handed over to Officer in Charge Stationery, at N.Z.E.F.I.P., as reserve stock in the event of a by-election being held later.

Surplus stationery was also handed over for the immediate use of the Forces.

PRINTING OF FORMS

10. Our estimate of forms required in the various locations proved to be fairly accurate, but in order that no objection might be lodged by a voter on the ground of being unable to obtain the recognized form authority was given to all Polling Officers to improvise (if necessary) any forms in short supply. This improvisation took place in several cases, and thus enabled votes to be cast.

It was necessary for us to obtain an additional supply of voting-papers in respect of the Local Option Poll, and the printing of these was done by the *Kivi* Print in New Caledonia. The work was very satisfactorily performed.

OBSERVATIONS OF LEGISLATION FOR VOTING BY MEMBERS OF THE FORCES

11. We were entrusted with the task of carrying this scheme into effect in an area where our troops were dispersed over a wide territory and the locations separated in most cases by large stretches of water, also all concentrations were far distant from our headquarters. We also had the experience of operating the scheme where our Forces were committed to action. It is only when one has such an opportunity of applying the scheme to such a set of circumstances that there is an opportunity of judging its practicability and completeness. We are satisfied that the whole scheme was well thought out, and, despite

the particular circumstances which arose in the Pacific, was capable of satisfactory fulfilment. The legislation was unique in that it is extremely doubtful if a poll will again be taken under such circumstances. We found no difficulty in carrying into effect the principles intended by the Legislature.

CO-OPERATION FROM SERVICE AUTHORITIES

12. Our tour of duty in connection with the election brought us into contact with all the Services in New Zealand and overseas, and also required close co-operation with the American authorities who were responsible for our transportation overseas. It can confidently be stated that during the whole of this period cordial relationship existed throughout. There was a genuine desire on the part of all persons with whom we came in contact to extend to us every facility in the performance of our mission. We are most grateful to all concerned for their whole-hearted co-operation in this respect, and for the assistance afforded us.

I would like to add my personal thanks to Major Malcolm for the services he rendered. He was industrious, and his knowledge of electoral law and procedure was most helpful. The staff directly associated with me at my headquarters in New Caledonia also gave valuable assistance under trying conditions, and I am most grateful to them.

In conclusion, may I express our appreciation of the confidence reposed in us by those responsible for our despatch on this mission. It has been a most interesting experience, and the knowledge gained from our trip abroad, together with the contacts made, should, we trust, prove beneficial to the Government.

ANALYSIS VOTING, BY LOCATIONS: PACIFIC AREA

Location.	Votes recorded.				
	Electoral.		Licensing.		
		Votes dis- allowed.	Total.	National.	Local.
Guadalecanal	10,616	12	10,628	10,514	1,616
Espiritu Santo	798	3	801	805	163
New Caledonia	5,649	38	5,687	5,695	987
Fiji	2,348	..	2,348	2,376	380
Norfolk	942	..	942	946	158
Tonga	1,627	3	1,630	1,665	282
Samoa	12	..	12	12	2
Cook Islands	2	..	2	2	2
Australia	256	..	256	281	42
Coast-watching stations	37	..	37	40	6
Totals	22,287	56	22,343	22,336	3,638

Estimated voting strength all Services in Pacific at time of election	23,000
Votes cast	22,343
Number personnel voting in Licensing Poll for uncontested electorates (estimated)	407
Number Navy personnel voting in New Zealand on ships returned to New Zealand before date of election (estimated)	1,000
Number not desirous of voting (estimated)	100
Number returned to New Zealand from area during period (estimated)	300
Number voting under postal-voting system	43
Number ballot-papers missing (estimated)	150
Percentage of votes cast in relation to actual number available to vote, 97.14.	

Wellington, 17th November, 1943.

G. E. POLLOCK, Major,
Special Returning Officer (Pacific).

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (950 copies), £10.

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