

astonished at the deterioration which had taken place from preventable causes'.⁶² 'Begin with the Boy' advocated one authority, whilst a 'Civil Servant', given *Defence's* editorial column to state his case, thought that compulsory universal training would counteract a boy's preference for idle 'billiards and football, tennis and how-to-speak French, sweethearting and choir singing, and every pursuit and hobby under the sun'.⁶³

In August 1912 a party of twenty specially selected and Trentham-trained cadets left Auckland under Captain J. G. Fullarton to travel to Canada at the invitation of the Government in Ottawa and to compete in the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto the following month. In Toronto the New Zealand cadets acquitted themselves favourably in military exercises against cadet corps from throughout Canada and from Britain and Australia, winning 'everything but the shooting'. Following their tour of Canada a Vancouver unit followed the New Zealanders back to the Dominion. As a result 'hundreds of cadets who had been only lukewarm, and probably not a few who were opposed to the universal system, have seen what can be done by proper discipline and efficient training . . .'.⁶⁴ Such visits, too, 'would tend to link together more closely the different parts of the Empire'.

But, as Weitzel has shown, there was in New Zealand between 1909 and 1914 a strong yet 'somewhat improbable alliance between middle-class liberalism and militant labour' to combat compulsory universal military training.⁶⁵ Christchurch was at first the principal centre of resistance against the Defence Act measures, but the movement soon gained more universal support.

In the Turnbull Library pamphlet collection is T. C. Gregory's *Conscription in New Zealand and Australia* (Bristol, 1912) containing a selection of anti-conscriptionist letters and reports from the English and Australasian press and advising people to think seriously before emigrating. In arguments reminiscent of compulsory conscription during the Viet Nam War, intending and actual emigrants were warned about the dangers to their and their sons' freedoms.

Gregory, secretary of the Bristol Peace Federation, also published *Plain Facts about Conscription* (Bristol, 1912) a one penny pamphlet criticising, amongst other measures, the 'absurd age at which training commences'. Under the Defence Act 'at the early age of twelve' boys are

given a sham rifle, marched out to military exercises, and are inevitably introduced to thoughts of power by force—are made familiar with the wretched spirit masquerading as 'patriotism', which teaches that duty to country lies principally, if not solely, in learning to shoot the citizens of some other country. Even our girls are not to be left free from the spirit of militarism.⁶⁶