

Greater Britain and the Great War: British and New Zealand Official Propaganda in the First World War



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Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
History Faculty
University of Oxford

Michaelmas 2019

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Short Abstract

Propaganda of the First World War has been a persistent area of interest for historians. The national focus of much of the historiography of the war has, however, left significant gaps in understanding. This thesis examines an important area of elision: propaganda between Britain and the settler Dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland, which this thesis terms ‘Greater British Propaganda.’

British and Dominion propaganda campaigns during the war operated in a distinct cultural space and context. Greater British propaganda is not simply a grouping of several distinct national campaigns, but a collaborative, transnational, co-creative process. It was a product of the particular cultural, political, social, and operational dynamics of Greater Britain, under the pressures of war. These dynamics formed a distinct type of cultural interaction, utilising a shared cultural language, and forged through particular dynamics of ‘co-creation,’ which encompassed collaboration, exchange, adaptation, and competition. Understanding the interaction of British and Dominion propaganda efforts during the war in this way reveals aspects that have gone ignored, or which make little sense, when viewed through a national – or colonial nationalist – lens.

This thesis uses the relationship between Britain and New Zealand to reveal these wider dynamics, and is arranged in six case studies, showing different aspects of propaganda creation and exchange. By exploring ‘Greater British propaganda’ as a distinct topic, and the dynamics of ‘co-creation’ within it, this thesis redresses the limitations of historiography of both wartime propaganda, and colonial nationalist histories of the war. The community of Britain and the Dominions was a real

historical community with particular dynamics, worthy of distinct historiographical attention. Instead of treating Greater Britain as just an idea, this thesis contributes to scholarship that rightly sees it as an important, lived cultural, social, economic, and political community.

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Long Abstract

Official propaganda of the First World War was an inherently transnational phenomenon: belligerent nations constructed official campaigns to court overseas opinion, criticise enemy powers, and bolster domestic sentiment. The national focus of the majority of historical scholarship on the war obscures this transnationalism, however.

This thesis redresses the limitations of historiography of both wartime propaganda and colonial nationalist histories of the war by examining ‘Greater British propaganda’, or propaganda creation and exchange between Britain and the settler Dominions during the war. It approaches the community of Britain and the Dominions of Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland as a real historical community with particular dynamics, worthy of distinct historiographical attention – as Greater Britain. The propaganda efforts and exchanges within that community are therefore treated as a distinct product of these dynamics – as ‘Greater British propaganda’. Conceptualising the topic in this way makes a significant contribution to historiographies of the war and of the British world, by recovering dynamics that have been overlooked by previous approaches.

This thesis explores both the operation of Greater British propaganda – in terms of its creation, organisation, dissemination, and exchange, and its rhetorical aspects, in terms of the language or message communicated by propaganda material and propaganda figures. Most historiography has explored these dynamics in an overly national way, which obscures Greater British particularities.

Greater British propaganda was something more than a grouping of several distinct national campaigns, but less than a formal, coherent, directed campaign. It was a collaborative, transnational, co-creative process. It was a product of the particular cultural, political, social, and operational dynamics of Greater Britain, under the pressures of war. Greater British propaganda was ‘co-created.’ This encompasses the varied collaboration, exchange, adaptation, and even competition, between the different parts of Greater Britain in terms of official propaganda. The dynamics of ‘co-creation’ developed from existing Greater British political, cultural, and operational dynamic, under the pressure of the changing circumstances of the war. Greater British propaganda utilised political organisations, social and personal political connections, transnational voluntary organisations, commercial press and media operations, and existing imperial communications networks. Greater Britain was a particular space that allowed these interactions, and so they can only be properly understood by analysing them in this frame.

The focus and contribution of this thesis is therefore to show Greater British propaganda as a distinct phenomenon, worthy of considered attention, and thereby to reveal and explore its complex dynamics. This thesis explores the wider complexity of Greater British propaganda through a focus on Britain and New Zealand. This provides a lens into the wider picture, and challenges some of the held assumptions around wartime imperial culture, engrained in recent scholarship.

This thesis is framed in a series of case studies of elements of Greater British propaganda, including broader rhetorical and operational surveys and closer case examinations of specific aspects or media within Greater British propaganda. This approach shows the breadth of Greater British propaganda, and the underpinning dynamics at play.

The thesis begins by exploring the different ways that various official and unofficial propaganda bodies intersected and interacted within the Greater British community at war, particularly looking at the Dominions’ position in official British propaganda organisations. It also examines how Greater British and imperial communications networks were mobilised for war.

The thesis then moves to explore the rhetoric of Greater British propaganda. These chapters explore how British official propaganda engaged the Greater British community, by exploring Greater Britain as a distinct cultural space, with specific rhetorical dynamics and a shared cultural language.

This approach provides a new interpretation of familiar rhetorical tropes of the war, such as British war justifications and war aims, and more broadly the language of Commonwealth. These are all shown to operate within Greater Britain in distinct ways, combining familiar rhetorical dynamics with the needs to the moment.

Subsequent chapters focus on more specific aspects of Greater British propaganda. The thesis explores the visits of the Dominion Prime Ministers to Britain during the war, particularly of New Zealand's leaders, Massey and Ward, as Greater British propaganda. This challenges existing scholarship that depicts these visits in high political terms only. The chapters explore how the leaders acted as Greater British propaganda spokesmen in London, and how the leaders' reception was stage managed by influential Dominion advocates. This emphasises the importance of the press as a staging ground for both Greater British propaganda and politics.

The thesis concludes with a close examination of Greater British cinema propaganda, both in terms of the creation, organisation, and distribution of official cinema propaganda in Greater Britain, and in a rhetorical sense. Cinema propaganda is revealing of the complex dynamics of Greater British propaganda. Different Dominions either seized the opportunity of Greater British propaganda dynamics, or were hampered by them. These chapters also show co-creation of Greater British propaganda in specific detail, including the use of the shared rhetorical and symbolic language of Greater Britain and how Dominion propagandists facilitated this process, and how politicians explicitly re-contextualised 'generalised' British films as Greater British propaganda for Dominion audiences.

The focus on Britain and New Zealand within the wider frame of Greater British propaganda is used to emphasise complexity and variance within the broader picture. The experience and approach of each part of Greater Britain to propaganda was not uniform: each Dominion responded to their shared ambiguous place in British propaganda organisations in different ways. Where Australia and Canada carved spaces for their own self-promotion, New Zealand struggled to assert itself. Focusing on Britain and New Zealand therefore highlights some of this distinctiveness, to show the wider complexity of Greater British propaganda.

This complexity is further explored by placing Britain back into the Greater British frame, as a component member. Britain's engagement with Greater Britain and the Empire did not operate in a vacuum, as some historiography suggests. Britain was a component member of Greater Britain, and as much a co-creator of its propaganda as the Dominions. The awkwardness and complexity inherent in this process is not a reason to disconnect Britain from analysis, but is exactly the focus of this work.

In approaching the topics as such, this work moves past the framing of 'Anglo-Dominion relations' scholars, who see this relationship only in high-political, constitutional terms, and the war as a pivot point from the old Empire to the modern Commonwealth. Instead of treating Greater Britain as just an idea, this thesis sees it as an important, lived cultural, social, economic, and political community. Historians of Anglo-Dominion relations treat the First World War as a turning point in 'rationalising' the relations between the Dominions and Britain, towards the modern Commonwealth. This, once again, unhelpfully disconnects the Dominions from Greater Britain. Instead of framing several national stories together, this thesis takes Greater Britain itself as its focus. In doing so, it progresses recent scholarship on the British world and Greater Britain, and of the First World War.

Taking an overly national approach to Greater Britain not only misinterprets matters, but also obscures interactions between Britain and the Dominions. Historians of the 'Anglo-Dominion relations' scholarship prioritise the nation in their framing, focusing on the emergence of distinct national identities. They accordingly misinterpret interactions between Britain and the Dominions as awkward hangovers of an older relationship, as 'loose ends' that the transition to Commonwealth would rationalise. For this historiography, affirmation of Dominion national identities was the main impact of the war. The complex tessellations between British and Dominion authority at play during the war, such as Dominion forces being under the ultimate authority of the British War Office, are seen as relics of an older order in this scholarship, as awkward hangovers and more improvised, ambiguous, informal interactions as evidence of resistance to the imperial connection. This misreads the nature of the Greater British relationship during the war.

The distinctive intersections between Dominion and British national authority, politics, and organisations were not simply colonial 'loose ends,' however, and should not be dismissed as such.

These interactions take on new meaning in the frame of Greater British propaganda, where they have been presented as awkward or out-dated by colonial nationalist historians. The aim of this thesis is to show and explore these unique interactions and dynamics in the context of propaganda. It does not consider how this relationship developed after the war, and so does not seek to 'read back' later dynamics to the war.

Examining Greater British propaganda interactions outside of the teleology of 'Empire to Commonwealth' shows their significance and complexity, and thereby reinforces the complexity and reality of Greater Britain itself, as an important imperial community.

Within the Greater British relationship, a Canadian press magnate could rise to direct British government propaganda. Similarly, New Zealand's official cinematographer could be a Briton, under the direction of a Canadian propagandist, at the discretion of the British War Office. Much like recent work on British world investment practices in this period, this thesis explicates how these complex interactions were informed and given context by the reality of Greater Britain, utilising a shared cultural identity and language, underwritten by a communal trust. Greater British propaganda was therefore a product of Greater Britain. Its particular and unique dynamics were only possible in this 'zone of interaction.' The war both challenged and developed Greater British dynamics.

The major contribution of this work is therefore in showing Greater British propaganda as a distinct phenomenon in its own right, and to explore its complexities. Just as Greater Britain itself, it is more than a historiographical framing device, or an aspirational project, but an important and overlooked development. This holds true for the war more broadly. The national siloisation of scholarship on wartime propaganda reflects the wider picture: historiography of the war tends to be organised on national lines. Even if contemporaries understood it as a global conflict, scholars have only recently begun to approach it as such. This thesis therefore beds its approach to Greater British propaganda within a wider global approach to the war. Instead of framing the war as a series of national stories, this work considers it as a distinctly global conflict. It considers the global *nature* of the war, not just its global *scale*.

Like the war itself then, Greater British propaganda should be understood and examined as more than a collection of national stories and campaigns; as more than the sum of its parts.

Propaganda of the First World War was an essentially transnational product, aiming to court and convince audiences beyond the nation state. Greater British propaganda represents this. The forms of propaganda co-creation – both rhetorical and organisational – were particular to the Greater British community, and so must be understood in this context.

By showing the reality of Greater British propaganda, and demonstrating something of its complexity and diversity, this thesis therefore challenges several historiographies at once, by opening a new and important avenue of research. This work builds on important findings of recent British world history, and provides avenues to push forward, whether to explore Greater Britain during the war more deeply, or beyond it. Such a broad and complex topic is beyond the scope of this work alone to entirely explore.

By exploring ‘Greater British propaganda’ as a distinct topic, and the dynamics of ‘co-creation’ within it, this thesis redresses the limitations of historiography of both wartime propaganda, and colonial nationalist histories of the war. The community of Britain and the Dominions was a real historical community with particular dynamics, worthy of distinct historiographical attention. Instead of treating Greater Britain as just an idea, this thesis contributes to scholarship that rightly sees it as an important, lived cultural, social, economic, and political community.

Acknowledgements

I write these acknowledgements in unusual times, from the comfort of my temporary home in East Oxford. My first thanks, then, go to my dear friends Adam Rebick and Bernadette Urtz, who have made this pandemic more comfortable and pleasant than I could possibly have expected through their generosity. Thank you for your incredible kindness and friendship.

Completing this DPhil was only possible with the support of many people, to all of whom I am deeply grateful, and offer some meagre means of repayment by extending my thanks below.

I am sincerely grateful to the organisations that funded my DPhil studies and made this work possible: the University of Oxford's Clarendon Fund, the Oxford History Faculty's Globalising and Localising the Great War Network, Pembroke College, and the Oxford History Faculty's Beit Fund.

Several institutions were essential in supporting me during me to finish what occasionally felt like an impossible task. To all of these I am very thankful: Pembroke College and its Middle Common Room, my social home throughout my studies; the Oxford University Counselling Service, which enabled me to complete this work; and Pembroke College Boat Club, for the amazing memories, friends, and many (in)glorious moments on the river.

Several academics provided wise counsel and encouragement during my research. Significant thanks must go to David Monger, for initially encouraging me to pursue graduate studies and for his continued support, to Glen O'Hara, who provided insight and support at critical times, and to John Horne, for helping to give my work a second wind when it needed it most. Thanks also to Erica Charters, Miles Larmer, Santanu Das, Pierre Purseigle, Margaret MacMillan, and John Darwin for academic, career, and life advice at important times.

I was very lucky to have an academic home in Oxford's Globalising and Localising the Great War Network. Thank you to everyone involved for the insights, knowledge, support, and friendship I gained through this project. I was equally lucky to find an amazing community in the Oxford Sudbury Transnational and Global History Seminar, which extended my thinking and deepened my friendships with a group of amazing scholars.

I am very grateful to my examiners Ben Jackson and Simon Potter, for taking the time and consideration to engage and challenge my work to make it the best it could be. This thesis is stronger for your considered advice, diligence, and insight.

Thank you to my supervisors for guiding this work and for their support during its difficult times. Thank you to Jamie Belich for providing a critical eye and timely guidance and advice throughout. Thank you to Adrian Gregory for his good humour and enthusiasm, and his enduring encouragement of me, all the way back to first meeting me as a visiting student in

2011. Thank you both for your belief in my work, and enabling me to come to Oxford to pursue it. I am extremely grateful for your help in realising this ambition.

I could not have completed this work without the help of many friends. Whether our friendship was forged on the river, around the seminar table, at Pembroke's MCR bar, on the dance floor, amidst DPhil stress solidarity, or elsewhere, I am incredibly grateful to every one of you, and lucky to call you my friends. A few of these require special mention: Callum Dunbar, Georgia Nichols, Ashley Garber, Charlotte Bennett, Andris Rudzitis, Richard Yates, Riccardo Liberatore, Erin O'Halloran, Julia Lefkowitz, Jack Doyle; Sean Phillips, Harriet Mercer, Chris Liang, Gabriel Crossley, Elizabeth Hypes, Shaunna Calpin, Mathew Yates, Pico Mannocci, Adam Rebick, Matthew Kerr, Kieran Wachsmuth, and Oscar Deal. I could write another 100,000 about how your friendship made my DPhil experience what it was. Thank you all so very much.

Most importantly of all, I am immeasurably grateful to my wonderful family who made this achievement possible with their love and support. Thank you to Aunty Jill, for believing in me so much. Thank you to Chris and Jessica, for getting me through with your humour, particularly during late night writing sessions. Thank you to Ken, for helping me to overcome the hurdle that set me on the path to completion – this work is in large part owed to your wise counsel.

Finally, the most important thank you goes to my amazing mother. I cannot possibly thank you enough for everything that you have done for me, but I hope these 100,000 or so words will go some small way towards it – this thesis is dedicated to you.

Oxford, United Kingdom

October 2020

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List of Abbreviations

ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
BEU	British Empire Union
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
CO	Colonial Office
DOI	Department of Information
FO	Foreign Office
IWC	Imperial War Cabinet
MOI	Ministry of Information
NZEF	New Zealand Expeditionary Force
PRC	Parliamentary Recruiting Committee
TCC	Topical Trade Committee
WOCC	War Office Cinematograph Committee

Archive Codes

ANZ	Archives New Zealand	(NZ)
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Archives	(NZ)
BOD	Bodleian Library	(UK)
BL	British Library	(UK)
HCPP	UK House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online	(UK)
IWM	Imperial War Museum	(UK)
MBL	Macmillan Brown Library	(NZ)
NAA	National Archives of Australia	(AU)
PA	Parliamentary Archives	(UK)
TNA:PRO	The National Archives, Public Record Office	(UK)
TPA	Te Papa Archives	(NZ)
VLA	Victoria League Archives	(UK)

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Introduction

I – Outline

All belligerent nations in the First World War created official propaganda, to varying levels. This was an inherently transnational process: the main aim of most early-war propaganda was to court overseas opinion. The national focus and organisation of much historiography of the First World War, including of wartime propaganda, obscures this. At best, recent works have expanded the scale by placing different national campaigns alongside one another, mostly in edited collections. Official propaganda is best explored in the transnational, global context of the war. Vital dimensions and dynamics are elided or misunderstood through a nation-centric approach. This thesis focuses on one such area: Greater British propaganda.

Histories of the settler Dominions of the British Empire suffer from the same nation-centric historiography. Colonial nationalist narratives frame the settler Dominions' experiences of the war for how the conflict contributed to forming independent national identities. In this scholarship, wartime propaganda is explored for how it helped to develop national myths of the war, such as the ANZAC legend. This obscures the wider – and more complex – operation of wartime propaganda amongst the Dominions and Britain.

This thesis redresses the limitations of historiography of both wartime propaganda, and colonial nationalist histories of the war, through a focus on 'Greater British propaganda.' It approaches the community of Britain and the settler Dominions of Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland as a real historical community with particular dynamics, worthy of distinct historiographical attention: as Greater Britain. In doing so, it moves past the 'Anglo-Dominion relations scholarship,' which sees this relationship only in high-political, constitutional terms, with the war a pivot point from the old Empire to the modern Commonwealth. Instead of treating Greater Britain as just an idea, this thesis sees it as an important, lived, cultural, social, economic, and political community.

It explores the official and semi-official governmental propaganda created within Greater Britain as, in turn, its own phenomenon, and worthy of specific attention. Greater British propaganda was not simply a grouping of several distinct national campaigns, but a collaborative, transnational, co-creative process. It was a product of the particular cultural, political, social, and operational dynamics of Greater Britain, under the pressures of war. Conceptualising and exploring the topic as such is a major contribution of this work. The thesis focuses specifically on the relationship between Britain and New Zealand to reveal wider dynamics, and is arranged in six case studies, showing different aspects of propaganda creation and exchange.

Historians of Anglo-Dominion relations treat the First World War as a turning point in ‘rationalising’ the relations between the Dominions and Britain, towards the modern Commonwealth. Accordingly, this scholarship presents the complex interactions between Britain and the Dominions as relics of an older, increasingly uncomfortable relationship. C.P. Stacey’s reading of the war’s impact on Canadian nationhood reflects this position, with metropolitan British influences as mere ‘loose ends’:

A self-governing colony evolving into a nation under the impulsion of a world crisis is bound to leave loose ends. The facts of Canadian munition production being directed by an agency of the British government, and of the Canadian air effort (including training in Canada) being entirely controlled by the British air services, were colonial survivals by no means surprising in the circumstances.¹

For Stacey, the important aspects of the war were Borden’s success in the Imperial War Cabinet, and Canadian troops’ martial legacy at Vimy Ridge. Both are seen to provide fuel for Canada’s movement towards independent nationhood in the emergent Commonwealth, and for a national mythology. Anything else was a colonial hangover that would eventually be rationalised.

The complex interactions and intersections between Canadian and British national military organisations were not simply colonial ‘loose ends,’ and should not be dismissed as such. Such interactions take on new meaning in the frame of Greater Britain, where they have been presented as awkward or out-dated by colonial nationalist historians. The aim of this thesis is to show and explore such unique Greater British interactions and dynamics in the context of propaganda. It does not

¹ C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict: A History of Canadian External Policies, Volume I: 1867-1921*, (Toronto: 1977), 239.

consider how this relationship developed after the war, and so does not seek to ‘read back’ later dynamics to the war, but explores the relationship for its own sake.

Examining Greater British propaganda interactions outside of the teleology of ‘Empire to Commonwealth’ shows their significance and complexity, and thereby reinforces the complexity and reality of Greater Britain itself, as an important imperial community. Greater British propaganda interaction was facilitated by what Andrew Thompson and Gary Magee have dubbed the ‘moral aspects of culture,’² or the crucial bonds of trust, familiarity, and shared identity between Britain and the Dominions. These complex internal dynamics are the focus of this research.

Within the Greater British relationship, a Canadian press magnate could rise to direct British government propaganda. Similarly, New Zealand’s official cinematographer could be a Briton, under the direction of a Canadian propagandist, at the discretion of the British War Office. Much like Thompson and Magee’s work on British world investment practices in this period, this work explicates how these complex interactions were informed and given context by the reality of Greater Britain. James Belich has illustrated that Greater Britain was more than an idea, but an important economic and cultural reality, a product of the increasingly tightened economic relations of Britain and the Dominions.³ Greater British propaganda was therefore a product of Greater Britain. Its particular and unique dynamics were only possible in this ‘zone of interaction.’ The war both challenged and developed Greater British dynamics. The contribution of this work is to reveal this complex operation during the war.

The remaining sections of this chapter explain the historiographical setting and methodological approach of this thesis. Key approaches to the First World War, Greater Britain, and propaganda are explained, which dovetail to provide a fuller definition of ‘Greater British propaganda’ as used in this thesis. The second half of the chapter then builds on this scene setting by explaining how the topic is explored, in terms of national case studies, sources, and chapter topics.

² Gary B. Magee & Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850-1914*, (Cambridge: 2010), 5-7.

³ James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World*, (Oxford: 2009), esp. Chapter 15.

This thesis explores the broader picture of Greater British propaganda through a focus on Britain and New Zealand. Both are constituent members of Greater Britain, and are often, in their own ways, spoken past in the historiography of Dominion identity and imperial culture. Instead of trying to show the entire vast picture of Greater British propaganda – which would be impossible, given its complexity, in the space of this thesis – the pairing of New Zealand and Britain is used to gain insight into the specific dynamics of Greater Britain. Through this, the thesis presents an approach that could be reproduced with different pairings, to reveal the complex workings of Greater Britain.

II – The Global First World War

Historiography of the First World War tends to focus on the conflict's global *scale*, as a confluence of several national stories, rather than the global *nature* of the war more deeply. This is particularly so for the former Dominions of the British Empire. Colonial nationalist historians use the war to demonstrate the development, similarly but separately, of independent national identities apart from Britain. This work explores the global and transnational *nature* of the war, not just its *scale*.⁴

Only recently has a body of scholarship emerged that considers the war in a focused transnational or global way. Older historiography tends to frame the conflict through national approaches. A central assertion of this thesis is that the war needs to be considered in terms of its transnational *nature*, rather than just its global *scale*. This means focusing less on exclusive national narratives of the war, and instead looking at how the war was a uniquely global moment, which produced similarly unique interactions, that cannot be captured by overly national framings.

A global approach to the First World War is still developing in historiography. Jay Winter in his Cambridge History of the War nominated transnationalism as a new major turn in the

⁴ For transnational methodology see, Ann Curthoys & Marilyn Lake (ed.), *History in Transnational Perspective*, (Canberra: 2005); Michael G. Muller & Cornelius Torp, 'Conceptualising transnational spaces in history,' in *European History Review*, 16:5 (2009), 609-617; see also, James Belich, John Darwin & Chris Wickham, 'Introduction,' in *The Prospect of Global History*, ed. Belich et. al, (Oxford: 2016), esp. 14-20; see also, Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?*, (Princeton, NJ: 2016); Maxine Berg (ed.), *Writing the History of the Global: Challenges for the 21st Century*, (Oxford: 2013).

historiography,⁵ but it remains unevenly applied in scholarship. A transnational understanding of the war is not a modern innovation, however, but skews closer to how contemporaries understood the conflict for its global significance. Hew Strachan has pointed out that contemporary Austrian and German historians favoured the title ‘world war’ from the outset for this reason.⁶

Understanding the war in a global or transnational way means more than widening the geographic *scale* of analysis. Some recent historiography has mistakenly taken a transnational approach to simply mean looking at more nations alongside one another. John Morrow’s contribution to the recent Cambridge History, for instance, proposes an imperial framework for understanding the war, but this amounts more to reminding the reader of the imperial politics of the origin of the war, rather than engaging with how these politics, or the war itself, were distinctly transnational.⁷ Much of the recent ‘global’ or ‘transnational’ work on the war tends to be in the form of multi-authored edited collections, which take broad geographical remits, but mostly set several national or regional approaches side by side.⁸

A global or transnational approach to the war can be achieved through a narrow focus. Recent works by Robert Gerwartz, Erez Manela, and Hew Strachan have proposed a way to re-envision the war as a globalised imperial conflict; transnational in *nature*, rather than as simply a confluence of national histories. Grewartz and Manela argue for seeing the war as the peak of a cycle of imperial armed conflict and competition that had been building for decades. They present the war as a uniquely ‘global’ conflict: a clash of empires.⁹ Strachan takes this further, arguing that the war was not simply global because of the involvement of multi-national and multi-ethnic empires, but was a product of the globalised world order of 1914. The imperial involvement was significant to making

⁵ Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, (Cambridge: 2014), esp. ‘General Introduction,’ 1-10.

⁶ Hew Strachan, ‘The First World War as a global war,’ *First World War Studies*, 1:1 (2010), 3-14.

⁷ John H. Morrow, ‘The imperial framework,’ in *Cambridge History*, 405-432; see also, John H. Morrow, *The Great War: An Imperial History*, (Abingdon: 2014).

⁸ E.g. Andrew Tait Jarboe & Richard S. Fogary, *Empires in World War I: Shifting frontiers and Imperial Dynamics in a Global Conflict*, (London & New York, NY: 2014); Santanu Das (ed.), *Race, Empire, and First World War Writing*, (Cambridge: 2011); Ashley Jackson (ed.), *The British Empire and the First World War*, (London: 2015); Michael Walsh & Andrekos Varnava (ed.), *The Great War and the British Empire: Culture and Society*, (Abingdon: 2017).

⁹ Robert Gerwartz & Erez Manela (ed.), *Empires at War: 1911-1923*, (Oxford: 2014), esp. ‘Introduction,’ 1-16; Robert Gerwartz & Erez Manela, ‘The Great War as a Global War: Imperial Conflict and the Reconfiguration of World Order, 1911-1923,’ *Diplomatic History*, 38:4 (2014), 786-800.

the war 'global,' but was not the only factor. Strachan emphasises that the world of 1914 was already 'globalised,' and that the war must be seen in this context.¹⁰

Gerwarth and Manela argue that only when viewed through a global lens can the war's 'scope, significance, and implications be grasped in their fullest sense.'¹¹ This does not imply the need to tell the whole story of the war in one universal way, but rather taking a global approach to different aspects. This approach rescues important aspects of the war experience that are obscured by taking discrete national approaches.

Cultural history is a good site for this approach. Transnational movements of men and material in the war are easier to retrace, and can still form parts of national histories of the war. The transnational movement and development of ideas is a more complex proposition. Transnational European cultural histories of the war have provided useful generalised insights,¹² but these are usually comparative rather than connective. Katie Pickles' examination of the global trajectory of the story of Edith Cavell is an example of a global approach to the culture of the First World War.¹³

Greater British propaganda is an important phenomenon that has been obscured by a nation-focused approach to the war. Treating Greater British propaganda as a specific topic worthy of focus, reveals its complexity, furthers this recent global approach, and addresses weaknesses and elisions of colonial nationalist histories. This work therefore contributes to this growing scholarship of understanding the global nature of the war.

III – Propaganda and Rhetoric

Propaganda of the war is also a topic that has been misunderstood due to the national focus of much historiography of the war. Propaganda of the war was an essentially transnational project – overseas neutral and enemy audiences were the main focus of much early propaganda on both sides.

¹⁰ Strachan, 'global war,' 3-14.

¹¹ Gerwarth & Manela, *Empires*, 4.

¹² E.g. Jay Winter and Jean Louis Robert (ed.), *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914-1919*, vols. 1-2, (Cambridge: 2007); Winter, 'Visual essay: Global war,' in *Cambridge History*, 639-643.

¹³ Katie Pickles, 'Mapping Memorials for Edith Cavell on the colonial edge', *New Zealand Geographer*, 62 (2006), 13-24; Katie Pickles, *Transnational Outrage: The Death and Commemoration of Edith Cavell*, (Basingstoke: 2007).

Despite this, much of the scholarship on the topic remains nationally organised. Once again, Greater British propaganda has been overlooked through this approach.

Concepts of ‘propaganda’ and ‘rhetoric’ require careful definition, as both have been applied broadly and have developed significantly over time. Both have also acquired a negative connotation through post-First World War applications, which is unhelpful to understanding the terms in context. To clearly define how this thesis approaches these concepts, some differentiation between them is necessary. This thesis understands ‘propaganda’ as a form of communication with a particular aim, within which ‘rhetoric’ is the language or the message.

At a functional level, propaganda can be understood as a form of public and political communication. In this sense, it is similar to other forms such as political campaigning, public education, or commercial advertising, as an umbrella term for a particular form of public communication. Each can be defined by its aim or intention, which informs the dynamics of operation, mediation, communication, and perception, as does their particular context. For instance, both the aim and context of a commercial advertising campaign are different from a political campaign, even if they share similar techniques and approaches. The context and aim of delivery, including audience perception and engagement, informs how messages are communicated and received therein.¹⁴ The most effective definition for propaganda, along these lines, then, is one that prioritises the historical context in which it existed – understanding how contemporaries understood, engaged with, and delivered propaganda. This does not rely on macro-historical definitions, informed either by deep historical or etymological origins, or by subsequent uses and examples. This thesis defines propaganda as it was understood in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain and Greater Britain, and especially during the war. Broadly speaking, official propaganda’s aim was to communicate each nation’s war effort in the best possible light to convince overseas audiences, and to inspire or ‘culturally mobilise’ domestic audiences.

Rhetoric is a broader, more diffuse term. This thesis favours the definition of rhetoric set out by Richard Toye. Rhetoric is the language, argument, and symbolism of communication, meant to

¹⁴ See, Martin Thomas, & Richard Toye, *Arguing About Empire: Imperial Rhetoric in Britain and France, 1882-1956*, (Oxford: 2017); Richard Toye, *Rhetoric: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: 2013); James Thompson, *British political culture and the idea of ‘public opinion,’ 1867-1914*, (Cambridge: 2013).

persuade and convince. Sometimes it refers to public and political communication, but as Toye notes, it is possible to understand more ephemeral and even private communication as rhetorical, hence the need for ‘propaganda’ as a contextual qualifier.

Toye emphasises that rhetoric, like propaganda, has acquired an unhelpful negative connotation, as essentially manipulative or false language meant to conceal the deliverer’s true intentions. Toye’s definition is less negative and more general; not all rhetoric was for manipulation. Specific examples of rhetoric need not colour the entire scholarly understanding of the concept.¹⁵ This thesis follows this more neutral approach to the term.

The different forms of public communication listed above therefore all utilise rhetoric and different rhetorical forms for their own purposes. It is important to approach ‘propaganda rhetoric’ as a distinct concept and form of communication. Different forms, such as ‘campaigning rhetoric’ or ‘advertising rhetoric’ could of course overlap, with a similar form of communication being utilised or framed differently for different purposes. Toye makes this point with reference to supposedly private and public forms of rhetorical expression, using the example of a political television interview borrowing the form of a personal, private conversation.¹⁶ How different styles of communication invoke or adapt different rhetorical forms is an important factor in understanding those types of communication.

Toye emphasises the importance of understanding the contexts around rhetoric to properly understand it:

Rhetoric cannot be conceived purely in terms of text and language, separate from the technical means by which it is conveyed to listeners and readers. In addition to textual analysis, we need to consider how the ‘symbolic ritual dimensions of politics’ ... affects what rhetorical messages are produced and how they were created.¹⁷

‘Propaganda rhetoric’ in this thesis refers to the specific message and language used by politicians and propagandists to communicate their points, to serve and explain the Imperial war effort. That these messages were communicated as state propaganda, and organised as such, is vital context. Understanding the immediate contexts and aims of propagandists in making their rhetorical choices is

¹⁵ Toye, *Rhetoric*, esp.1-4.

¹⁶ Toye, *Rhetoric*, 3.

¹⁷ Toye, *Rhetoric*, 3.

more revealing than trying to construct discursive notions of public imagination. This thesis therefore considers rhetoric a tool, rather than as something more discursive. Propaganda can be considered the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ – a form of communication with a specific goal – where rhetoric can be considered the ‘what’ – the language, arguments, and symbols used to that end.

It is these internal rhetorical and operational dynamics of propaganda – and specifically official propaganda – that are the focus of this research. Understanding how the aims, methods, and prevailing understandings of ‘official propaganda’ informed its operation and its content, language, or ‘rhetoric.’ Within this functional definition, a more specific approach to First World War propaganda is also necessary.

Propaganda was understood and applied in a specific way during the First World War. This work rejects macro-historical definitions either tracing the Classical or Renaissance origin of ‘propaganda,’ and modern definitions, influenced by Second World War and Soviet propaganda.¹⁸ It instead pays attention to how contemporary propagandists, politicians, and bureaucrats understood their work, and the broader context it was received in.

Before the war, propaganda in the British world was understood as a broad type of communication in the public sphere, to promote an argument and convince an audience. Propaganda meant *propagating* a message or argument on behalf of an interest or group. It was a general but specifically non-governmental concept, associated more with businesses, churches, the press, political parties, philanthropists, interest groups, and voluntary societies. It implied a bias or an interest, but not necessarily in the sense of being false or coercive. The pre-war conception stopped short of ‘manipulation’ or ‘deceit,’ but implied an attempt to change hearts and minds, or coming from a sectional interest. Propaganda was designed to convince and inspire, not simply inform.

¹⁸ E.g., Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell, ‘Introduction’, *Readings in Propaganda and Persuasion: New and Classic Essays*, ed. Jowett & O’Donnell, (London: 2006), ix-xv; Jacques Ellul, ‘The Characteristics of Propaganda’, in *Readings in Propaganda: and Persuasion: New and Classic Essay*, ed. Garth S. Jowett & O’Donnell, (London: Sage, 2006), 1-50; Haavard Koppang, ‘Social Influence by Manipulation: A Definition and Case of Propaganda’, *Middle East Critique*, 18:2 (2009), 117-143; Nicholas O’Shaughnessy, ‘Persuasion, Myth and Propaganda’, *Journal of Political Marketing*, 3:3 (2004), 87-103; Beth S. Bennett and Sean Patrick O’Rourke, ‘A Prolegomenon to the Future Study of Rhetoric and Propaganda’, *Readings in Propaganda*, 51-72.

As explained by Gary Messinger, the change in the reputation and definition of propaganda came from its use by governments during the Great War.¹⁹ Britain's state propaganda efforts were an innovation – to some a transgression – due to the application of propaganda to government aims. It is therefore important to emphasise the significance of 'official' propaganda in this context. To illustrate, the British Parliament discussed propaganda in 1918, to air hesitations about the work of the Ministry of Information. The focus of the Liberal MP Lief Jones' criticism was not the inherent nature of propaganda as a coercive form of communication, but its application by the government. Jones' concerns were around the government use of film, theatre, photography, and most notably, the press, which he argued were outside accepted pre-war conventions of political communication:

Before the War there was no Government propaganda from public funds in this country, and there was no Press Bureau for the selection and manufacture of news and views for consumption by the multitude. We had a press absolutely free from Government interference ... Government made no use of the Press, though of course, then, as now, individual Ministers were more or less skilled in the art of advertising, but as a Government no use was made of the press.²⁰

Critics in parliament were therefore less concerned about propaganda's unique capacity for influence, than about the prospect of government using it for its own partisan purposes in peacetime, and especially using public funds to do so. Official propaganda can be seen as an expansion of state means of communication, beyond the confines of political debates and party campaigning rhetoric – the acceptable means of political communication – towards governments communicating messages in much broader ways using state funds and organizations. It was not, as some historiography claims, the government's use of new coercive and manipulative forms of communication.

Later, in 1938, Arthur Ponsonby's condemnatory *Falsehood in Wartime*²¹ coloured post-war interpretations of British propaganda as inherently deceitful and manipulative. Ponsonby claimed that British propaganda was entirely exaggerated, and worthy of condemnation. This, combined with

¹⁹ Gary Messinger, *British Propaganda and the state in the First World War*, (Manchester: 1992).

²⁰ House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (HCPP): [cc925-1019] House of Commons Debate – 5 August 1918, vol.109, 'Ministry of Information.'

²¹ Arthur Ponsonby, *Falsehood in Wartime: Containing an Assortment of Lies Circulated Through the Nations during the Great War*, (London: 1938).

propaganda's more coercive application in the Second World War, has led to the term becoming almost inextricably linked to state coercion; certainly this influences the modern understanding.

A significant body of historiography has followed Ponsonby's lead in reading British First World War propaganda as wholly coercive and manipulative.²² Latterly, however, this interpretation has fallen out of favour, and Michael Sanders and Philip Taylor's, and Messinger's more moderate lines have become more typical.²³ Recent historians questioned the state's capacity to conduct what Brock Millman, Cate Haste, and others claim to be a wholly deceptive and coercive campaign, and emphasised the risks involved for propagandists in knowing deception. The overall tone of British official propaganda was generally more encouraging than coercive, and built on existing sentiments and opinions, rather than relying on mass manipulation.²⁴

David Monger proposes a useful approach to this issue. He argues for seeing British official propaganda on a scale from 'white propaganda' – clear, simple, direct, and honest communication of facts and details from an acknowledged source – to 'black propaganda' – outright and knowing manipulation, deceit, and coercion. The vast majority of British official propaganda occupied the white to grey end of the scale. Exaggeration, mischaracterisation, and a degree of deception took place, but not so much as to define the campaign.²⁵ Propaganda was meant to convince, not deceive. The most effective state propaganda built on prevailing methods of official and political communication and discourse, which were temperate and persuasive, and most of all familiar, rather than deceitful, coercive, and alien.

²² E.g., Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War*, (London: 1977); Brock Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain*, (London: 2000); Brock Millman, 'HMG and the War against Dissent, 1914-18', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40:3 (July 2005), 413-440.

²³ M.L. Sanders & Phillip Taylor, *British Propaganda during the First World War, 1914-1918*, (London: 1982); M.L. Sanders, 'Wellington House and British Propaganda during the First World War,' *The Historical Journal*, 18:1 (1975), 119-146; Messinger, *Propaganda and the State*.

²⁴ See, David Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale*, (Liverpool: 2014), 4-11; Monger, 'Familiarity Breeds Consent? Patriotic Rituals in British First World War Propaganda,' *Twentieth Century British History*, 26:4 (2015), 501-528; Monger, 'Nothing Special? Propaganda and Women's Roles in Late First World War Britain,' *Women's History Review*, 7:1, (2014), 1-25; Monger, 'Tangible Patriotism during the First World War: Individuals and the Nation in British Propaganda,' *War & Society*, 37:4 (2018), 244-261; Nicholas Hiley, "'Kitchener Wants You" and "Daddy, What did you do in the Great War?": The Myth of British Recruiting Posters', *Imperial War Museum Review*, 11 (1997), 40-58; Troy R.E. Paddock (ed.), *World War I and Propaganda*, (Leiden: 2014); for a recent example following Ponsonby's approach see, Pier Paolo Pedrini, *Propaganda, Persuasion and the Great War: Heredity in the Modern Sale of Products and Political Ideas*, (Abingdon: 2018).

²⁵ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 4-11.

Instead of letting retrospective criticism colour interpretations, it is more important to consider the political, cultural, and media context First World War propaganda emerged from. This work therefore places official wartime propaganda in Greater Britain within the development of state, political, and public sphere communications in Britain and the Empire throughout the nineteenth century into the twentieth, building on work by Jon Lawrence and recently James Thompson.²⁶ This informs this work's approach to propaganda and the media and source material consulted.

Much historiography of First World War propaganda distinguishes it from this context, treating it as something apart, and uniquely innovative in approach and method. Often wartime propaganda is treated as a turning point for the use of advertising methods, posters, and cinema in political communication. This misses that these were all familiar methods in public communication by 1914. James Thompson has shown that illustrated posters, lanternslide presentations, and even cinema were familiar features of political campaigning in London by 1914.²⁷ Likewise, older, more established methods of political communication remained important to wartime propaganda, and even gained importance as the war progressed. The National War Aims Committee's main method was public meetings, supposedly a characteristically nineteenth century means of communication.²⁸ This bears out Lawrence's argument for the perseverance of such means of public campaigning and communication well into the twentieth century alongside the rise of more modern techniques, and the increasing domestication of politics. Once again, therefore, this thesis puts wartime propaganda in context, rather than seeing it as a distinct, disconnected development.

Official propaganda combined traditional means of state political communication, such as speeches and public meetings – often relayed via the imperial press or in published pamphlets – with

²⁶ James Thompson, 'Posters, Advertising and the First World War in Britain,' *The Edinburgh Companion to the First World War in the Arts*, ed. Einhaus & Baxter (Edinburgh: 2017), 166-182; James Thompson, "'Pictorial Lies'? Posters and Politics in Britain c.1880-1914,' *Past & Present*, 197 (2007), 177-210; James Thompson, *British political culture and the idea of 'public opinion,' 1867-1914*, (Cambridge: 2013); David Craig & James Thompson (ed.), *Languages of Politics in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, (Basingstoke: 2013); Jon Lawrence, *Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914*, (Cambridge: 1998); Jon Lawrence, *Electing Our Masters: The Hustings in British Politics from Hogarth to Blair*, (Oxford: 2009); see also, James Thompson, 'The statisticalization of the consumer in British market research, c.1920-1960: Profiling a Good Society,' in *Statistics and the Public Sphere: Numbers and the People in Modern Britain, c.1800-2000*, ed. Crook & O'Hara (New York, NY & Abingdon: 2011).

²⁷ James Thompson, "'The Lights of the Electric Octopus Have Been Switched Off': Visual and Political Culture in Edwardian London,' *Twentieth Century British History*, (2017), 1-26.

²⁸ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, esp. Chapter 1.

newer but still familiar media, such as photography, cinema, cartoons, and illustrated posters, as used by politicians and propagandists. The means by which these forms of communication were reproduced and communicated at a distance throughout Greater Britain, or took on new meanings or significance in this context, is the major focus of this work, in understanding Greater British propaganda as a distinct phenomenon.

In this regard, particular attention is paid to political speeches for how they operated as Greater British propaganda. Political speeches were important tools of official propaganda, both in their immediate sense, such as at public meetings and recruiting rallies, and more broadly for how they signalled the main arguments and messages of British propaganda. A good example is Lloyd George's 'war aims' speech, which laid a blueprint for British propaganda for the final years of the war.²⁹

Reproduction of this speech in the press or in pamphlet literature extended its initial audience. How such speeches were therefore projected and communicated outward as Greater British propaganda is a major focus of this thesis. This includes their physical reproduction and distribution to the Dominions, through the imperial press system, and through official and unofficial channels as pamphlets, and the rhetorical dimensions of the speeches themselves. Within this, the rhetorical stakes of engaging Greater Britain is another important focus. The issue of how a British Prime Minister represented or requested anything of the Dominions in a speech was a complicated point that both Asquith and Lloyd George encountered and responded to differently throughout the course of the war. This is the focus of Chapters 2 and 3.

Beyond speeches, this thesis takes a wide and representative approach to official propaganda source material. The main focus is less to silo material according to media, than it is to understand how different materials and methods interacted, and operated specifically as Greater British propaganda. To fully define the concept of Greater British propaganda – the focus and contribution of this work – it is necessary to define 'Greater Britain' itself.

²⁹ See, John Horne, 'Remobilizing for 'total war': France and Britain, 1917-1918', in *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War*, ed. John Horne, (Cambridge: 1997), 195-211; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; David R. Woodward, 'The Origins and Intent of David Lloyd George's January 5th War Aims Speech', *The Historian*, 34:1 (1971), 22-39.

IV – Greater Britain – Definition and Background

Greater Britain has been misunderstood by the national-focus of many different historiographies. Like the First World War, and wartime propaganda, Greater Britain needs to be understood as something more than a collection of nations, or the sum of its parts.

At the simplest level, Greater Britain is the community of Britain and the white settler Dominions of Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland. Around this definition contemporaries and historians have interpreted the concept in various ways. This thesis treats Greater Britain as more than simply a collection of nations, and importantly as more than simply an idea; it was a lived transnational community in its own right. Engaging the concept and language of Greater Britain is only one aspect of this work, therefore. It also considers Greater Britain as an historical reality.

Recent scholarship has rightly corrected assumptions that ‘Greater Britain’ was only an idea.³⁰ Greater Britain was a real and important historical community within the British Empire and the British world. It was perceptible and important to those within it during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, not only as an imagined community, but as an operational, political, economic, social, and cultural community – a ‘zone of interaction.’³¹ It was more than simply an idea, but the development of the idea in intellectual, cultural, and political senses, is an important context. It was also more than a political aspiration, or a byword for imperial federation. Greater Britain was certainly the focus of proposals for imperial federation from the 1880s, but it was still a recognised community, even if not formally federated or organised. It is also more than a historians’ framing device.

Greater Britain captured the reality of this community, but was not the only term used for it by contemporaries. Others, including ‘British Commonwealth of Nations,’ and the ‘settler empire’ were quite common. Some even conceptualised this community as the Empire in totality, or alternatively as apart from the Empire entirely. The ‘awkward squad’ – Darwin’s sobriquet for the

³⁰ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*; Magee & Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation*; Andrew S. Thompson, *Imperial Britain: The Empire in British Politics, c1880-1932*, (Harlow: 2000).

³¹ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, esp. Chapter 15.

group – seems particularly apt to foreground the community’s complexity.³² Despite this, ‘Greater Britain’ became perhaps the most common and influential title.

Furthermore, ‘Greater Britain’s’ contemporary usage did not imply a fixed consensus in definition. The advantage of the term was a certain flexibility, which accommodated the various opinions and ambitions within the community into an acceptable if fuzzy consensus.³³ ‘Dominion status,’ introduced in 1907, served the same purpose of affording privilege and containing varied ambition through a deliberate ambiguity.³⁴ ‘Greater Britain’ was not fixed, but shifted according to time, purpose, and particular individuals. It was as deliberately flexible as the concept of ‘imperialism’ itself.³⁵ This complexity is a major focus of this work, particularly in the examination of the language of Commonwealth in Chapter 3. Tracing the concept’s origin shows this inherent – and important – flexibility and adaptation.

The term originated in 1868, and by the outbreak of the war was a common byword for the community of Britain and the settler colonies.³⁶ Over this period, different writers debated the inclusion of different groups and nations. Even so, in most discussions, Greater Britain referred to a real, if nascent, community, rather than a *potential* union, as some historiography suggests.³⁷ Much of the nineteenth century literature on Greater Britain did, however, debate its future.³⁸ The continued adaptation of the language of Greater Britain is a major focus of Chapter 3.

³² John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World System, 1830-1970*, (Oxford: 2009), esp. 11.

³³ John Darwin, ‘A Third British Empire? The Dominion Idea in British Politics,’ in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Brown & Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 64-87.

³⁴ W. David McIntyre, *The Britannic Vision: Historians and the Making of the British Commonwealth of Nations, 1907-48*, (Basingstoke: 2009), esp. 116-7; see also, McIntyre, ‘The Strange Death of Dominion Status,’ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 27:2 (1999), 193-212; see also, McIntyre, *Dominion of New Zealand: Statesmen and Status, 1907-1945*, (Wellington: 2007).

³⁵ Mark F. Proudman, ‘Words for Scholars: The Semantics of “Imperialism”,’ *The Journal of the Historical Society*, 8:3 (2008), 395-433; Thompson, *Imperial Britain*; Andrew Thompson & Meaghan Kowalsky, ‘Social Life and Cultural Representation: Empire in the Public Imagination,’ in *Britain’s Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Thompson and Stuart (Oxford: 2012); Luke Blaxill, ‘The Language of Imperialism in British Electoral Politics, 1880-1910,’ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45:3 (2017), 416-448; Duncan Bell, *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought*, (Cambridge: 2007); W. David McIntyre, ‘Commonwealth Legacy,’ in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV The Twentieth Century*, ed. Brown & Louis, (Oxford: 1999), 694-702.

³⁶ Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900*, (Princeton, NJ: 2007).

³⁷ Daniel Deudney, ‘Greater Britain or Greater Synthesis? Seeley, Mackinder, and Wells on Britain in the Global Industrial Era,’ *Review of International Relations*, 27:2 (2001), 187-208.

³⁸ Bell, *Greater Britain*.

The widely agreed origin of the term was in Charles Dilke's bestselling 1868 travelogue *Greater Britain*.³⁹ Through his travels around the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and India, he acknowledged and detailed a community resulting from 'English expansion' throughout the world. Dilke's *Greater Britain* comprised 'English-speaking and English-governed lands,' and prioritised racial, cultural, and linguistic bonds, with enough flexibility to incorporate India and the USA.⁴⁰

Dilke's vision reflected the confidence of nineteenth century 'new imperialism.' For Dilke, compared to previous historical imperial systems, *Greater Britain* was *greater* not *better*. Dilke's main anxiety was in Britain missing the potential of the Greater British powerhouse.⁴¹

J.R. Seeley's 1883 *The Expansion of England* adapted the concept, and brought it into wider popular use. Seeley's work reflects the receding imperial confidence, especially regarding population potential, of the late nineteenth century. Seeley's ambition for *Greater Britain* was to be *better* not *greater*; he was therefore ambivalent about the USA and particularly India's inclusion.

Seeley's conceptualisation informed the language of Greater British wartime propaganda more than Dilke's, in terms of arguing that *Greater Britain* was something more than a traditional empire:

We call it for want of a better word an Empire ... But yet it is wholly unlike the great Empires, of the Old World, Persian, or Macedonian or Roman or Turkish, because it is not in the main founded on conquest, and because in the main the inhabitant of the distant provinces are of the same nation as those of the dominant country.⁴²

Seeley argued it would be better for Britain to become a second-rate world power if it was first-rate morally and intellectually, arguing 'bigness is not necessarily greatness.'⁴³ Seeley's framing was still racialised. He dismissed not only non-white colonies but also native populations in settler colonies: indigenous Australians were too 'low on the ethnographical scale' as to warrant consideration.⁴⁴ A

³⁹ Charles Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English Speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867 – Volume 1 & 2* (London: 1868).

⁴⁰ Dilke, *Greater Britain*, vii-viii; see also Ann-Barbara Graff, "'England in the East" Metonymies of Absence in Charles Dilke's *Greater Britain*,' *Victorian Review*, 35:1 (2009), 175-189.

⁴¹ Dilke, *Greater Britain*, esp.405.

⁴² J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures*, (London: 1883), 42-43.

⁴³ Seeley, *Expansion*, 16.

⁴⁴ Seeley, *Expansion*, 46.

recurrent feature of representations of Greater Britain, therefore, was an implicit racial boundary of whiteness.

Seeley's interpretation, save for his indifference to India, proved the more influential to 1914, echoing increasing British Imperial anxieties out of the nineteenth century and in the wake of the Boer War. By the outbreak of the war, Greater Britain was a common synonym for Britain and the settler colonies, later Dominions.⁴⁵ Both interpretations agree that Greater Britain captured the reality of a community that 'Empire' alone could not.

This constant adaptation and debate reflected the operation and development of Greater Britain itself, rather than suggesting it was simply an idea or an aspiration. Anglo-Dominion relations historiography misses this. Historiography of the 1911 Imperial Conference, for instance, tends to focus on Joseph Ward's failed proposal for an Imperial Parliament as dominating debates around the operation of Greater Britain. This obscures the significance of the 'softer' issues of communication and consultation discussed at the conference, including proposals for reforms to imperial telegraphy, wireless chains, postal rates, a proposed 'all-red' postal line, and the role of the High Commissioners as the main Dominion agents in London.⁴⁶ While each of these proposals was rejected, they demonstrate the reality of the Greater British community, and the importance of dynamics beyond strictly constitutional elements.

Debates about Greater Britain were therefore not abstract, but show the reality of the community. They were also consequential. The failure to reform Greater Britain's communications meant that peacetime issues in Greater British communications were exacerbated by the pressures of the war, and was significant for the mobilisation of Greater Britain. Exploring these 'softer' issues of communication and cultural interaction are often more revealing of the reality and operation of Greater Britain than strictly high-political developments.

⁴⁵ Bell, *Greater Britain*.

⁴⁶ HCPP: [Cd. 5745] 'Imperial Conference, 1911. Dominions no.7 Minutes of proceedings of the Imperial Conference,' 1911, esp.25-26, 28-29, 36-44, 46-75; Robert M. Pike, 'National interest and imperial yearnings: Empire communications and Canada's role in establishing the Imperial Penny Post,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 26:1 (1998), 22-48; Hancock, '1911,' 365.

Much of the historiography of the Dominions and the Empire has missed or seen past the reality of Greater Britain. This thesis challenges such work, and builds on other historiography that treats the community as more than an idea or a historians' tool.

V – Greater Britain – Historiography and Approach

Taking Greater Britain seriously as a community has much potential for historical research. It has been applied in various and limiting ways, or entirely seen past and disregarded, however. David Armitage and Mark Lee have both questioned the value of Greater Britain compared to regional 'world' approaches, such as the Atlantic world. They argue the term is useful for revealing trends in Britain's conception of its global identity, but insufficient in capturing broader connections. Their focus is comparative: on Greater Britain as a bridge to American, Irish, and Atlantic histories, rather than as a community in its own right. This applies the term as a historians' tool, rather than as a historical community.⁴⁷

More common is the elision of Greater Britain by colonial nationalist historians, who of course give primacy to the nation. These historians understand both the British Empire and the First World War as a confluence of national experiences and stories. Nationalist historians, such as Keith Sinclair for New Zealand, are interested in telling the story of New Zealand nationhood, and so understand imperial connections and identity as not only separate from national identity and nationhood, but even as a contradictory or constricting force.⁴⁸

This colonial nationalist reading of Dominion history arose in the 1960s and 1970s in response to the dislocation felt in the wake of decolonisation, and Britain's entry into the European Economic Community. This approach made sense of this dislocation by rejecting traditional imperial

⁴⁷ David Armitage, 'Greater Britain: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis?,' *American Historical Review*, 104:2 (1999), 427-445; Mark Lee, 'The Story of Greater Britain: what lessons does it teach?,' *National Identities*, 6:2 (2004), 123-142; Deudney, 'Greater Synthesis?'; Eliga H. Gould, 'A Virtual Nation: Greater Britain and the Imperial Legacy of the American Revolution,' *American Historical Review*, 104:2 (1999), 476-489; David Armitage, *The ideological origins of the British Empire*, (Cambridge: 2000); David Armitage, *Greater Britain, 1516-1776: essays in Atlantic History*, (Aldershot: 2004); Sebastian Lecourt, 'The Mormons, the Victorians, and the Idea of Greater Britain,' *Victorian Studies*, 56:1 (2013), 85-111.

⁴⁸ E.g., Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, (Auckland: 1985).

framings of Dominion histories. These historians saw the First World War as sparking a realisation of national identity for the Dominions, and providing the heroic national myths to sustain its development, albeit, as Sinclair claims, apparently delayed in the 1920s and 1930s by national grief at war losses.⁴⁹

These approaches are at odds with understanding Greater Britain. As Sinclair states, 'It was difficult to conceive of an empire consisting of fully autonomous units' in the Empire.⁵⁰ For Sinclair, any evocation of this community is rejected as the result of a 'lack of political imagination,' wherein New Zealand's national spirit was similarly burgeoning as its fellow larger Dominions, if tempered by an unfortunate lack of political drive to pursue its independence as confidently.⁵¹ Stacey, for Canada, also presents imperial and national identities as essentially discordant, and something to be rationalised and outgrown.⁵² Both therefore either see past or actively dismiss the significance of Greater Britain.

Historians of 'Anglo-Dominion relations' take the same approach, particularly emphasising an inevitable progression from Empire to the modern Commonwealth.⁵³ This historiography is less nationally exclusive, and often considers Britain and the Dominions together. Even so, it frames these interactions as between individual nation states, rather than perceiving the relationship and community between Britain and the Dominions as something distinct, or a community in its own right. It also prioritises high-political interactions, often through a focus on Imperial Conferences or similar summits, notably the 1917 Imperial War Cabinet as the key moment of the war.⁵⁴ The broader, and more complex, dynamics of Greater Britain are missed by this historiography.

⁴⁹ Sinclair, *A History*, 232-233.

⁵⁰ Sinclair, *A History*, 219.

⁵¹ Sinclair, *A History*, 214-227, 240-247.

⁵² Stacey, *Canada*, 239.

⁵³ E.g., J.E. Kendle, *The Colonial and Imperial Conferences, 1887-1911: A Study in Imperial Organisation*, (London: 1967); J.E. Kendle, 'The Round Table Movement, New Zealand, and the Conference of 1911,' *The Round Table*, 84:336 (1995), 495-508; I.R. Hancock, 'The 1911 Imperial Conference,' *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand*, 12:47 (1966), 356-372; Neville Bennett, 'Consultation or Information?: Britain, the Dominions and the Renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1911,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, 4:2 (1970), 178-194; Ged Martin, '1905-1908: the 'Watershed' of the Empire-Commonwealth?,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, 8:2 (1974), 164-171; J.D.B. Miller, *Richard Jebb and the Problem of Empire*, (London: 1956); Christopher M. Bell, 'Sentiment vs. Strategy: British Naval Policy, Imperial Defence, and the Development of Dominion Navies, 1911-14,' *The International History Review*, 31:2 (2015), 262-281.

⁵⁴ E.g. Phillip G. Wigley, *Canada and the Transition to Commonwealth: British-Canadian Relations 1917-1926*, (Cambridge: 1977).

New Zealand historian J.G.A. Pocock challenged these nation-centric approaches, with his famous ‘plea for a new subject’ from 1973. His work addressed the elision of imperial connections in recent British and Dominion histories from the 1950s and 60s. Speaking for New Zealand, he advocated an ‘antipodean perception,’ suggesting the insights from New Zealand’s history could provide a new collective British history.⁵⁵ Pocock also proposed a wider British history, encompassing British and the Dominion histories as distinct and co-owned. While elements of Pocock’s ‘calls’ were limiting – particularly in their lack of incorporation of native populations – his essential point had a belated influence, especially in the British world history approach.

Emerging in the late 1990s, ‘British world’ history sought to recover the historical connections and shared global history of the settler colonies and Britain, and views these histories through the lens of shared and global Britishness.⁵⁶ Initially the project responded directly to Pocock’s call, to recover the shared connections between Britain, the Dominions, and other parts of the British world that have been ignored or dismissed, despite postcolonial criticism that such history was never lost.⁵⁷

The project has since broadened to show the significance of ideas of shared Britishness in forming an array of connections and communities, within and beyond the British Empire. Practitioners of British World history have rightly pointed out that this ‘world’ was broader than just Britain and the Dominions, and that membership was complex.⁵⁸ This has led to a degree of terminological vagueness – or at least contestability – in defining the scope and limits of the British world. Philip Buckner, for instance, limits the British world very specifically to the network of Britain

⁵⁵ J.G.A. Pocock, ‘British history: a plea for a new subject (1973/74)’, 24-43; Pocock, ‘The antipodean perception (2003)’, 2-23; Pocock, ‘The neo-Britains and the three empires (2003)’, 181-198, in Pocock (ed.), *The Discovery of Islands*, (Cambridge: 2005); see also, Pocock, ‘The New British History in Atlantic Perspective: An Antipodean Commentary’, *The American Historical Review*, 104:2, (April: 1999), pp.490-500.

⁵⁶ Phillip Buckner & R. Douglas Francis, ‘Introduction’, *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Buckner & Francis, (Calgary: 2005), 9-20; Buckner, ‘Whatever Happened to the British Empire?’, *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 4:1 (1993), 8-32; Carl Bridge & Kent Fedorowich, ‘Mapping the British World’, *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity*, ed. Bridge & Fedorowich, (London: 2003), 1-15; Stuart Ward, ‘Imperial Identities Abroad’, *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives*, ed. Sarah Stockwell, (Oxford: 2008), 219-243; see also, Tamson Pietsch, ‘Rethinking the British World’, *The Journal of British Studies*, 52:2 (April 2013), 441-463.

⁵⁷ See, Katie Pickles, ‘The Obvious and the Awkward: Post Colonialism and the British World’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, 45:1 (2011), 85-101; Giselle Byrnes, ‘Introduction: Reframing New Zealand History’, *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes, (Melbourne: 2009), pp.1-18.

⁵⁸ E.g. Barry Crosbie & Mark Hampton, ‘Introduction,’ in *The Cultural Construction of the British World*, ed. Crosbie & Hampton, (Manchester: 2015), 1-16.

and the Dominions, while Catherine Hall argues for a porous British world with contested boundaries, into which different groups, including different races, could easily imagine themselves.⁵⁹

Andrew Dilley points out Victorian contemporaries of the British world also struggled with this definition. Historians have varyingly framed a ‘big British world,’ incorporating the entire English-speaking world or ‘Anglo world,’ a ‘broad British world’ looking at the global impact of British politics and culture, or a more focused ‘small British world’ of just Britain and the ‘neo-Britains’ or Dominions.⁶⁰ Other approaches have also adapted the concept to the ‘settler world,’ as in James Belich’s work, or John Darwin’s conceptualisation of the ‘British world system,’ meaning the global expansion of British power generally, both through and beyond formal imperialism.⁶¹

Each of these approaches is important in revealing different dynamics of the British world. This thesis therefore builds on the ‘British world’ history by exploring Greater Britain within it. Using ‘Greater Britain’ for the community of Britain and the settler Dominions has the advantage of contemporary usage, building on historical definitions, understandings, and language around this community, which is a focus of this work. This thesis therefore examines Greater Britain as a distinct community within the British world, and draws on recent works of British world history and imperial history more generally to approach and examine it.

Recent works on the conceptual development of Greater Britain are therefore important to this work, but the thesis also moves beyond them in its analysis. Duncan Bell’s *The Idea of Greater Britain* is an important contribution, and remains the authority on the intellectual, political, and cultural development of the language of Greater Britain from the mid nineteenth to the turn of the twentieth century. Bell’s key emphasis is that ‘Greater Britain’ was a distinct concept that not only rose and fell in popularity according to prevailing context, but also adapted through specific use, and was not simply a synonym for imperial federation.⁶² This thesis moves beyond Bell’s chronology, to

⁵⁹ Catherine Hall, ‘What did a British World mean to the British?: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century,’ *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Buckner & Francis, (Calgary: 2005), 21-37.

⁶⁰ Andrew Dilley, ‘Empire, globalization, and the cultural economy of the British World,’ *Journal for Maritime Research*, 14:1 (2012), 45-55.

⁶¹ See, Belich, *Replenishing*; Darwin, *Empire Project*.

⁶² Bell, *Greater Britain*; see also, Bell, *Victorian Visions*; Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, (Princeton, NJ: 2016); Duncan Bell, ‘The Idea of a Patriot Queen? The monarchy, the

the First World War, and examines the dynamics of Greater Britain in operation, rather than focusing solely on the concept. Bell's work is the most notable to focus on the specific idea of Greater Britain alone, but is part of a group of recent works of cultural and intellectual history to emphasise how culture and rhetoric operated distinctly in Greater Britain and the British world.

This thesis draws on other recent works alongside Bell that consider how imperial language and concepts operated in context, rather than exploring an 'imperial discourse.' In particular in this regard are Andrew Thompson, looking at changing political connotations of imperialism; W. David McIntyre, looking at the development of the Dominion idea; and Richard Toye and Martin Thomas, looking at imperial rhetoric between Britain and France. These works emphasise that specific approaches are needed to understand the operation and development of imperial language and concepts. They all align with Mark Proudman's general emphasis that 'imperialism' was a concept of unique flexibility, or 'protean imprecision.' What different contemporaries meant by 'empire,' 'imperialism,' and most importantly for this thesis, 'Greater Britain,' was not fixed, but shifted according to time, purpose, and particular individuals.⁶³ Accordingly, this thesis explores how the language of Greater Britain worked in the context of First World War propaganda, at a particular point in history.

This work does not just examine this language, however, but sets it in context and explores how it operated. In this regard, this thesis also heavily draws on Stuart Ward's work, which presents the British world as a distinct cultural space, with a shared language and particular rhetorical dynamics.⁶⁴ This approach is distinct from recent works that consider British world culture more

constitution, and the iconographic order of Greater Britain, 1860-1900,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 34:1 (2006), 3-22.

⁶³ Proudman, 'Words for Scholars,' 395-433; Andrew Thompson, 'The Language of Imperialism and the Meanings of Empire: Imperial Discourse in British Politics, 1895-1914,' *Journal of British Studies*, 36:2 (1997), 147-177; Andrew Thompson, 'The Languages of Loyalism in Southern Africa, c.1870-1939,' in *The English Historical Review*, 118:477, (2003), 617-650; W. David McIntyre, *The Britannic Vision: Historians and the Making of the British Commonwealth of Nations, 1907-48*, (Basingstoke: 2009); Thompson, *Imperial Britain*; Thompson & Kowalsky, 'Empire in the Public Imagination,' 252-297; Blaxill, 'Language of Imperialism,' 416-448; Bell, *Victorian Visions*.

⁶⁴ Stuart Ward, 'Introduction,' in *British Culture and the End of Empire*, ed. Stuart Ward, (Manchester: 2001), 1-20; Ward, 'Run Before the Tempest: The 'Wind of Change' and the British World,' in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 37, (2011), 198-219; Ward, 'The European Provenance of Decolonization,' *Past and Present*, 230 (2016), 227-260; Ward, 'Imperial Identities Abroad,' 219-243.

broadly, in terms of the global export of ‘Britishness.’⁶⁵ This thesis is confined to exploring the internal cultural dynamics of Greater Britain. Building on Ward’s approach, this then can be considered a more cultural take on the conceptualisation of the ‘British world economy’ as a particular community, cohered by links of shared language, information, and importantly trust.⁶⁶

In terms of exploring the operation and interaction of Greater Britain through propaganda, this thesis draws on works on imperial and British world communications networks, and the concept of the British world as a ‘networked community.’ In particular, Simon Potter’s work retracing the operation of the British imperial press system of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is important, especially for distinction between the potential and the reality of such communications networks. Issues of geography, cost, capacity, and politics were defining.⁶⁷ This complicates more vague assertions of their connective potential, and rejects analogies of undersea telegraph lines as a ‘Victorian internet,’ for instance.⁶⁸ This unevenness was exacerbated by the war. For Greater Britain, this often meant that peacetime advantages of communications with ‘Home,’ or even the potential for quick communication, were inverted or limited by wartime pressures. This is a major focus of Chapter 1.

Importantly, this thesis focuses on these imperial communications as a system, rather than following technology-specific approaches. Historiography that focuses on one communications technology exclusively tends to miss the years of the war. For instance, work on imperial telegraphy tends to conclude around 1911, when Britain’s global ‘all-red’ undersea telegraph network is

⁶⁵ E.g., Crosbie & Hampton, ‘Introduction,’ 1-16.

⁶⁶ Magee & Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation*; see also, Dilley, ‘cultural economy,’ 45-55; Thompson, ‘Languages of Loyalism,’ 617-650; see also, Alan Lester, ‘British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire,’ *History Workshop Journal*, 54 (Autumn 2002), 24-48; Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain*, (London: 2001); O’Hara, ‘Networked World,’ 609-625.

⁶⁷ Simon J. Potter, *News and the British World: The Emergence of an Imperial Press System, 1876-1922*, (Oxford: 2003); Potter, ‘Communication and Integration: The British and Dominions Press and the British World, c.1876-1914,’ *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity*, ed. Carl Bridge & Kent Fedorowich, (London: 2003), 190-206; ‘Webs, Networks, and Systems: Globalization and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth- Century British Empire,’ *Journal of British Studies*, 46:3 (2007), 621-646; *Broadcasting Empire: the BBC and the British World, 1922-1970*, (Oxford: 2012); Potter, *Broadcasting Empire: the BBC and the British World, 1922-1970*, (Oxford: 2012).

⁶⁸ Glen O’Hara, ‘New Histories of British Imperial Communication and the “Networked World” of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries,’ *History Compass*, 8:7 (2007), 609-625; Duncan Bell, ‘Dissolving Distance: Technology, Space, and Empire in British Political Thought, 1770-1900,’ *The Journal of Modern History*, 77:3 (September 2005), 523-562.

considered to have reached its peak of development.⁶⁹ Conversely, most historiography on imperial wireless networks begins with the successful schemes of the 1920s.⁷⁰ Approaching these technologies as part of a coherent imperial system, as Potter has, shows the challenges the war place on these networks.⁷¹

Postcolonial critics of British world history have argued for an alternative ‘networked’ approach. In particular, New Zealand historian Tony Ballantyne focuses on less obvious ‘horizontal’ connections, between New Zealand and Asia, for instance, conceptualised as a complex ‘web’ of connections. Ballantyne emphasises the importance of examining these horizontal connections between component parts of the Empire in addition to, and even above, the more familiar vertical connection between New Zealand and Home.⁷² This is an important aim, but does not need to supplant examination of connections to the metropole. An important dynamic of Greater British interaction explored in this work is the favouring of connections to Britain over horizontal or inter-Dominion connections. This is particularly the case between New Zealand and Australia.⁷³ Exploring the avoidance or disconnection of such horizontal links is itself an intriguing development.

Finally, James Belich’s work on the British and settler worlds provides an important lead on seeing Greater Britain not as a failed idea, but ‘an important economic and cultural reality.’ By tracking the economic and demographic trends of the British world from the 1880s, Belich demonstrates how, as the economic fortunes of the Dominions became increasingly wedded to the

⁶⁹ Daniel R. Headrick and Pascal Griset, ‘Submarine Telegraph Cables: Business and Politics, 1838-1939,’ *The Business History Review*, 75:3 (2001), 543-545; P.M. Kennedy, ‘Imperial Cable Communications and Strategy, 1870-1914,’ *The English Historical Review*, 86:341 (1971), 728-752.

⁷⁰ Aitor Anduaga, *Wireless and Empire: Geopolitics, Radio Industry, and Ionosphere in the British Empire*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 54-77.

⁷¹ Potter, *Broadcasting Empire*, 1-17; Anduaga, *Wireless and Empire*, 54-77; Kennedy, ‘Imperial Cable’, 728-752.

⁷² Tony Ballantyne, *Webs of Empire: Relocating New Zealand’s Colonial Past*, (Vancouver: 2014); see also, Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*, (Basingstoke: 2001); Tony Ballantyne, ‘On Place, Space, and Mobility in Nineteenth Century New Zealand,’ *New Zealand Journal of History*, 45:1 (2011), 50-70; Tony Ballantyne, ‘Race and the Webs of Empire: Aryanism from India to the Pacific,’ *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 2:3 (2001).

⁷³ See, Steven Loveridge, ‘The ‘Other’ on the Other Side of the Ditch? The Conception of New Zealand’s Disassociation from Australia,’ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 44:1 (2016), 70-94; Philippa Mein Smith & Peter Hempenstall, ‘Australia and New Zealand: Turning Shared Pasts into a Shared History,’ *History Compass*, 1 (2003), 1-10; Philippa Mein Smith & Peter Hempenstall, ‘Rediscovering the Tasman World,’ *Remaking the Tasman World*, ed. Mein Smith et. al. (Christchurch: 2008), 13-30; Philippa Mein Smith, ‘The Tasman World,’ *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Byrnes, (Melbourne: 2009), 297-319.

imperial connection and London, quite contrary to Sinclair's point, it became increasingly easy and important for the Dominions to imagine themselves as coherent collective – as Greater Britain. Belich's theory of 'recolonisation' reveals how the economic and demographic currents of Greater Britain gave a shared global 'Britonism' between Britain and the Dominions not only purchase, but reality. This was facilitated by the 'zone of interaction' created by Britain's imperial communications network.⁷⁴ Belich has shown that enthusiasm for Greater British identity spiked in the British press during times of conflict, especially the First World War. This thesis therefore explores this in greater detail. It takes the high-level survey provided by Belich, and delves into it in a more focused way.

VI – 'Greater British Propaganda'

The major focus of this thesis is 'Greater British propaganda,' and the main contribution of this work is to define and demonstrate it as a distinct phenomenon. The specific approaches to historiography and concepts sketched above inform how 'Greater British propaganda' is defined and approached in this work.

'Greater British propaganda' was a particular product of Greater Britain during the First World War, and a distinct phenomenon. This means more than grouping the different national propaganda campaigns within Greater Britain together in analysis. It is also not about simply examining the 'imperial' aspects of these national campaigns, in a discursive or thematic sense. Instead, it explores how the dynamics of Greater Britain – both long- and short-term – allowed the 'co-creation' of distinctly Greater British forms of propaganda, particular to Greater Britain. This not only re-contextualises aspects of the national campaigns of the members of Greater Britain, but in showing the collective, reveals new aspects of propaganda interaction which have been obscured by nationally-exclusive approaches.

This approach follows recent British world scholarship that shows the significance of the economic and cultural 'zone of interaction' between Britain and the Dominions, including Belich and

⁷⁴ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*; see also, Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, esp. Chapter 15

Simon Potter.⁷⁵ In particular, this echoes Andrew Thompson and Gary Magee's conceptualisation of the 'British world economy.' In sketching the British world economy, Thompson and Magee show the importance of taking the cultural, social, and identity links between Britain and the Dominions seriously, in understanding investment trends in Britain that preferred investment in the familiar settler Dominions to pure profit maximisation. This made sense in the context of this relationship. So too are the complex dynamics of propaganda 'co-creation' revealed by taking Greater British propaganda seriously as a phenomenon. Both interactions were facilitated by the 'moral aspects of culture,' or, the trust, familiarity, and shared identity between Britain and the Dominions, and operated through British imperial communications networks, or the 'software of Empire.'⁷⁶ Economic, political, and cultural identification were tightly interconnected in Greater Britain; this thesis shows that in detail.

The historiographical approaches outlined above therefore deeply inform the definition and approach to Greater British propaganda. It is not enough to simply see Greater British propaganda as a collection of national campaigns. Greater British propaganda was more than the sum of its national parts, but a distinct phenomenon in its own right with particular dynamics. Within this frame, distinct forms of interaction, collaboration, and competition are given new meaning as 'co-creation.' It was also less than a coherent, directed, official campaign. There was no Greater British 'official mind' directing propaganda, nor any centralised organising body. Greater British propaganda was not 'directed' from London or anywhere else. The dynamics of 'co-creation' were seldom designed or directed but resulted from existing Greater British dynamics changed under the pressures and imperatives of the war. Understanding and observing these dynamics entails resisting exclusively national approaches to Greater Britain, to wartime propaganda, and to the war itself.

⁷⁵ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, esp. Chapter 15; Potter, *Imperial Press System*; Potter, 'Webs, Networks,' 621-645; Alan Lester, 'British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire', *History Workshop Journal*, 54 (Autumn 2002), 24-48; Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain*, (London: 2001); O'Hara, 'Networked World,' 609-625.

⁷⁶ Thompson & Magee, *Empire and Globalisation*; see also, Andrew Smith, 'Patriotism, Self-Interest and the 'Empire Effect': Britishness and British Decisions to Invest in Canada, 1867-1914,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 41:1, (2013), 59-80; Dilley, 'cultural economy,' 45-55. 59-80; Dilley, 'cultural economy,' 45-55.

The aim of this thesis is not to construct a corpus defined as ‘Greater British propaganda,’ in a thematic sense, but instead to consider how the reality and dynamics of Greater Britain entailed particular types of propaganda interaction, creation, and operation. It examines how different official, unofficial, and commercial actors and organisations in Greater Britain created, disseminated, and brought meaning to propaganda. This thesis defines this process as the ‘co-creation’ of Greater British propaganda, which is a central idea in this work.

‘Co-creation’ covers a range of interactions, including collaboration, cooperation, re-contextualisation, and competition. They were partly the product of existing relationships, informed by prevailing cultural and political ideals of how different parts of Greater Britain should interact, informed in turn with the changing circumstances of the war. Greater British propaganda utilised political organisations, social and personal political connections, transnational voluntary organisations, commercial press and media operations, and existing imperial communications networks. Greater Britain was a particular space that allowed these interactions, and so they can only be properly understood by analysing them in this frame.

This approach re-contextualises propaganda interactions between Britain and the Dominions that otherwise have stood out as awkward – as colonial ‘loose ends’ for instance – or fall between the gaps in national framings. In the Greater British frame, the intersections of Dominion and British campaigns, or the influence of Dominion figures in apparently national British propaganda bodies, become clear. This reading re-contextualises interactions or phenomena such as the Dominion Prime Ministers’ visits to London during the war, as in Chapter 4, or the activities of Dominion propagandists and press figures such as Lord Beaverbrook, Keith Murdoch, C.E.W. Bean, or Malcolm Ross. Nationally focused readings see these aspects in isolation, for how they contributed to national mythologies of the war in colonial nationalist readings. New Zealand’s London-based Publicity Branch of the War Records Section, meanwhile, is a clear example of an important aspect of Dominion propaganda that has been elided by a national framing. This work instead re-examines them as products of Greater British propaganda, and explores the dynamics and contexts that informed and gave meaning to such unique interactions and operations.

This applies as much for rhetorical aspects of propaganda as it does for operational dimensions. As noted, this thesis follows Stuart Ward's approach, to conceptualise Greater Britain as a specific cultural space. In particular it borrows from Ward's work on the meaning and reception of the language of decolonisation in European and especially British settler contexts. Ward's approach – particularly his reframing of the famous 'Winds of Change' speech – shows how familiar cultural concepts and language were inflected by the particular contexts in which they were received, understood, and adapted. For Greater Britain, he shows that the former settler Dominions responded to the language of decolonisation with particular anxieties, distinct from domestic Britons.⁷⁷

This rhetorical reframing expands and even challenges understandings of familiar tropes of First World War propaganda, such as Britain's war justifications and war aims, and the language of Commonwealth, as in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. This approach challenges Mark Connelly's assertion that Britain lacked a coherent and cohesive 'imperial message' in its propaganda.⁷⁸ This work focuses instead on how this rhetoric operated within the context of Greater British propaganda, instead of seeing Greater Britain or the Empire as simply 'thematic' aspects in British propaganda, to be read quantitatively.

Just as Ward emphasises in his reframing of the European origins of decolonisation, this does not mean that Greater Britain is the *only* context in which the relevant rhetoric should be understood. It does mean that it needs to be brought into the debate. The Greater British relationship allowed particular types of co-creation which were not quite the same as those between Britain and other nations, even closely connected ones such as India and the United States. This approach reveals some new ground, and casts fresh light on other aspects.

Certain interactions between British and Dominion propaganda campaigns have received attention, but have been framed to serve national histories. Canadian histories have examined Beaverbrook's work in Britain,⁷⁹ and likewise Australian histories have considered C.E.W. Bean and

⁷⁷ Ward, 'Wind of Change,' 198-219, Ward, 'Introduction,' 1-20; Ward, 'Decolonization,' 227-260; Ward, 'Imperial Identities Abroad,' 219-243.

⁷⁸ Mark Connelly, 'The British Media and the Image of Empire in 1917,' in *Turning Point 1917*, ed. Delaney & Gardner (Vancouver: 2017), 189.

⁷⁹ E.g., Tim Cook, 'Documenting War and Forging Reputations: Sir Max Aitken and the Canadian War Records Office in the First World War', *War in History*, 10:3 (2003), 265-295.

Keith Murdoch's publicity work at the front and in London.⁸⁰ These tend to focus on their contribution to national memory and mythology, especially the ANZAC legend for Australia, rather than considering the Greater British context these figures operated in. This thesis in particular clarifies how, through the Greater British relationship, these Dominion figures were able to achieve such influence and traction in the British press and propaganda operations.

A similar approach has been to isolate 'imperial' aspects of national propaganda campaigns in a thematic sense. Recent works have begun to read the imperial language and arguments in British and Dominion campaigns. For instance, David Monger and Mark Connelly for British domestic propaganda, and Steven Loveridge for New Zealand propaganda,⁸¹ have made arguments about 'imperial lines' in these propaganda campaigns. These are useful as they redress the lack of consideration of imperial language in older work on particularly British propaganda. Despite this, the treatment of 'Empire' as a discrete theme or device, or as a disconnected external target of British propaganda misses important operational contexts and interactions. Instead, this thesis considers *how* Greater Britain and the Empire informed the choices of British and Dominion propagandists, and how propaganda was created and disseminated in that space.

Similarly, this work does not engage with ideas of a diffuse 'imperial imagination' in connection to wartime propaganda.⁸² This work instead considers how immediate pressures and demands, within the dynamics of Greater Britain, informed the choices propagandists made in expressing and communicating ideas. Assumptions about audience imagination are beyond the focus of this work. This follows Toye's caution against reading too far into audience perception and imagination.⁸³ Accordingly, this work sets Greater British propaganda of the war within the specific cultural and political context of Greater Britain from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

⁸⁰ E.g., Robert Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake: C.E.W. Bean, Frank Hurley and the Making of the 1923 Photographic Record of the War', *History of Photography*, 32:2 (2007), 165-179; Eisenberg, Daniel, 'A most miserable hotchpotch': Charles Bean and the origins of the First World War film collection', *Studies in Australasian Cinema*, 10:2 (2016), 199-210; Peter Putnis, 'Lord Northcliffe, Keith Murdoch, and the development of the Melbourne Herald in the 1920s', *Australian Journal of Communication*, 38:2 (2011), 71-86.

⁸¹ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Connelly, 'Image of Empire,' 188-213; Steven Loveridge, 'Another Great War?: New Zealand interpretations of the First World War towards and into the Second World War,' *First World War Studies*, 7:3 (2016), 303-325; Loveridge, *Calls to Arms: New Zealand Society and Commitment to the Great War*, (Wellington: 2014); Loveridge, 'Soldiers and Shirkers': Modernity and New Zealand Masculinity During the Great War,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, 47:1 (2013), 59-79.

⁸² E.g. Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World: Memories of Empire*, (Oxford: 2011).

⁸³ Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*; Toye, *Rhetoric*.

In this regard, this work draws more from Andrew Thompson's and Duncan Bell's approaches to these issues, in terms of looking at how concepts developed in their political and cultural contexts.⁸⁴

This is also a distinct approach to the New Imperial History's understanding of 'imperial propaganda.' Following John Mackenzie's lead from *Propaganda and Empire*, the New Imperial History approach has conceptualised imperial propaganda in a very specific way that this thesis does not share. The term has become a very broad catchall for cultural representations of Empire, generally in commercial or popular culture, and commonly associated with particular media, such as education and youth publications, public entertainments including cinema, music hall, and mass imperial exhibitions, visual media especially photography, and commercial advertising.⁸⁵ This approach has informed the scant literature on the Dominions' role in British propaganda.⁸⁶ This thesis takes a broader approach. Instead of seeing Greater British propaganda as located in or associated with a particular set of media, or outputs, or organisations, it examines how propaganda broadly operated within Greater Britain. The notion of any media being particularly or distinctly 'imperial' is heavily questioned, especially in the examination of cinema propaganda in Chapters 5 and 6.

This follows James Curran's approach of taking a more contextual approach to media in understanding *how* media operated in situ, rather than a fractured 'medium' history, prioritising the medium itself as almost out of time – a further attempt to understand the Greater British *nature* of the interaction, not just its *scale*.⁸⁷ Rather than skimming the most obvious imperial cream, it is just as important to investigate less obvious and more awkward engagements with Empire and Greater

⁸⁴ Thompson, *Imperial Britain*; Thompson, 'Languages of Loyalism,' 37-65; Thompson & Kowalsky, 'Social Life and Cultural Representation,' 252-297; Bell, *Greater Britain*; see also, Bell, *Victorian Visions*; Bell, 'Dissolving Distance: Technology, Space, and Empire in British Political Thought, 1770-1900', *The Journal of Modern History*, 77:3 (September 2005), 523-562; Bell, *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*, (Princeton, NJ: 2016).

⁸⁵ John Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960*, (Manchester: 1984); much of the significant output of the *Manchester Studies in Imperialism* series follows in Mackenzie's tradition; see also, Frederick Cooper & Ann Laura Stoler (ed.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, (London: 1997); Kathleen Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1640-1880*, (Cambridge: 2004); Katie Pickles, *Female Imperialism and national identity: Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire*, (Manchester: 2002); Katie Pickles, 'A link in 'the great chain of Empire friendship': the Victoria League in New Zealand', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 33:1 (2005), pp.29-50; Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power*, (London: 2000).

⁸⁶ E.g., Matthew C. Hendley, *Organised Patriotism and the Crucible of War: Popular Imperialism in Britain, 1914-1932*, (Montreal: 2012).

⁸⁷ James Curran, 'Media and the Making of British Society, c.1700-2000', *Media History*, 8:2 (2002), 135-154.

Britain. This includes pursuing apparent absences or where Greater Britain *appears* quantitatively minor.

The major contribution of this work is therefore in showing Greater British propaganda as a distinct phenomenon in its own right. Just as Greater Britain itself, it is more than a historians' framing device, or an aspirational project, but an important and overlooked development. Like the war itself, it should be understood and examined as more than a collection of national stories and campaigns, but as more than the sum of its parts. Propaganda of the First World War was an essentially transnational product, aiming to court and convince audiences beyond the nation state. Greater British propaganda represents this. The forms of propaganda co-creation – both rhetorical and organisational – were particular to the Greater British community, and so must be understood in this context.

By showing the reality of Greater British propaganda, and demonstrating something of its complexity and diversity, this thesis therefore challenges several historiographies at once, by opening a new and important avenue of research. This work builds on important findings of recent British world history, and provides avenues to push forward, whether to explore Greater Britain during the war more deeply, or beyond it. Such a broad and complex topic is beyond the scope of this work alone to entirely explore. The remaining sections of this chapter therefore illustrate the specific approach taken to reveal this wider complexity.

This thesis explores the complexity of Greater British propaganda through a focus on Britain and New Zealand. This provides a lens into the wider picture, and challenges some of the held assumptions around wartime imperial culture, engrained through recent scholarship.

VII – Imperial Britain

This thesis explores Britain as a constituent member of Greater Britain. It rejects the framing of Britain as a disconnected, aloof centre, which imperial culture 'happened to,' or as a hegemonic centre, with a coherent imperial 'official mind.' This treats Britain as a constituent part of Greater Britain, and a fellow 'co-creator' of Greater British propaganda with the Dominions. Britain of course

was the hub around which imperial communications networks and politics centred, known rhetorically as ‘Home’ and the ‘Mother Country.’ This centrality and authority is therefore an important dynamic of Greater Britain, but does not disconnect Britain from the analysis.

Since the 1980s, historiography of ‘British imperial culture’ has been dominated by the question of ‘impact.’ This is best captured in the still influential maximalist/minimalist debate regarding the imperial culture of Victorian Britain, between John Mackenzie and Bernard Porter. Mackenzie’s *Propaganda and Empire* is a foundational text for the debate, and the New Imperial History. The maximalist Mackenzie claims that British society and culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was imbricated with a popular imperialism, in both obvious and subconscious ways.⁸⁸ Recent works have built on this, particularly Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose’s work, which qualifies the maximalist position to emphasise the subtle influence of Empire on the metropole, in terms of culture and practice.⁸⁹

Bernard Porter is a leading proponent of the minimalist case. He contends that cultures of Empire were more typically a sectional and elite interest, and only occasionally had wide impact.⁹⁰ He usefully highlights absences and awkwardness in understanding British imperial culture.⁹¹

This thesis questions the terms of this debate and pushes beyond it. Both sides disconnect Britain as mainly a recipient of imperial culture. The New Imperial History especially treats imperial culture as something ‘happening to’ Britain, influencing identity, culture, and practice in obvious and imperceptible ways. The minimalist side likewise isolates ‘imperial culture’ as an elite or sectional interest, and something that was both operated and influenced in an ‘absent-minded’ way, as something apart from British culture more generally. In rejecting the notion of ‘impact,’ this thesis treats Britain as a co-creator of imperial and Greater British culture.

⁸⁸ Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*; see also, Mackenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, (Manchester: 1986); Mackenzie, ‘Heroic myths of Empire’; ‘Introduction’, in *Popular Imperialism and the Military, 1850-1950*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: 1992), 109-138.

⁸⁹ Catherine Hall & Sonya O. Rose (ed.), *At Home with Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, (Cambridge: 2006).

⁹⁰ Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: What the British Really Thought About Empire*, (Oxford: 2004); Porter, ‘Further Thoughts on Imperial Absent-Mindedness,’ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36:1 (2008), 101-117.

⁹¹ Porter, *Absent-Minded Imperialists*; see also, Porter, *Empire Ways: Aspects of British Imperialism*, (London: 2016).

Re-framing Britain as a constituent ‘co-creator’ of Greater British propaganda also challenges the notion of a coherent British ‘official mind’ informing imperial culture and politics. Colonial nationalist historians tend to invert the above dynamics, arguing that Britain was a hegemonic centre radiating imperial culture and identity – and with them authority – outwards. Post-colonial approaches that consider imperial culture in this way have been important in recovering lost or marginalised voices in this process, and have challenged imperial historiography and the British world approach accordingly.⁹² Even so, as Toye and Thompson argue, an over-emphasis on this hegemony as a coherent ‘official mind,’ to which post-colonial perspectives must respond, entails its own risks. Such an emphasis can overlook the complexity and contested nature of imperial rhetoric and imperial political culture in the centre.⁹³ It is important to account for complexity and ambiguity at all levels.

The place and meaning of imperialism in British political culture by 1914 was far from coherent. While both sides of the maximalist/minimalist debate agree that the war renewed imperial enthusiasm to levels near their height in the 1880s, the ideological landscape of 1914 was far more complex than this suggests. The Boer War of 1899-1902 unsettled imperialism’s place in British politics, and more loosely in popular culture.⁹⁴ This difficult conflict heightened anxieties about imperial overstretch and the viability of Britain world power status, and intensified the darker pejorative definition of imperialism, due to news of British atrocities. This made imperialism a contentious and complex political concept by the beginning of the twentieth century.⁹⁵

Both major parties confronted this complexity, and Empire and imperialism became potentially dangerous concepts and issues for both parties.⁹⁶ There was nothing inevitable or absent-minded about political engagement with imperial rhetoric by 1914 for both Unionists and Liberals.⁹⁷ Both parties sought to develop broad, coherent positions on the Empire, to differing degrees of

⁹² See, Pickles, ‘Obvious and the Awkward,’ 85-101.

⁹³ Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*, 7.

⁹⁴ Alex Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism in Imperial London, 1868-1906*, (Woodbridge: 2007), 163-5, 184-5; Andrew Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism’ 151; Rhodri Williams, *Defending the Empire: The Conservative Party and British Defence Policy, 1899-1915*, (New Haven, CN: 1991), 9-11.

⁹⁵ Robert J. Scally, *The Origins of the Lloyd George Coalition: The Politics of Social Imperialism, 1900-1918*, (Princeton: 1975), 31, Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism,’ 151; Scally, *Origins*, 31.

⁹⁶ Williams, *Defending*, 9-11, Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism,’ 151-2; Andrew Rose, *Between Empire and Continent: British Foreign Policy before the First World War*, (New York, NY: 2017), 11.

⁹⁷ Thompson, ‘Languages,’ 174-7; Windscheffel, *Popular*, 188-194; Blaxill, ‘Language,’ 419.

coherence and success.⁹⁸ Greater British propaganda of the First World War therefore entered a context wherein the language of Empire and Greater Britain were highly charged in British politics, and required greater subtlety than has often been assumed.

Leading into the First World War, both parties grappled with their approach to Empire. There was therefore nothing unintentional or incidental in the expression of imperial rhetoric by British politicians by the outbreak of the war, given its contentiousness.⁹⁹ This need for delicacy intensified during the war, given the Empire-scepticism of key neutral powers, especially the USA. The notion of a coherent British imperial mind therefore severely underestimates the contestability of imperial concepts – including Greater Britain – in the years leading to the First World War.

This work takes this complexity into account, considering absences and awkwardness rhetorical engagement with Empire and Greater Britain. Rather than presenting Greater British propaganda as either a cultural product of the Dominions that was radiated back to Britain, or as the product of a coherent British imperial mind, this work re-contextualises Britain as a co-creator of Greater British propaganda. This demands understanding the rhetorical stakes of engaging in the language of Empire and Greater Britain for British politics, just before and during the war.

Rather than equating proliferation with significance – and absence with insignificance – this work deeply *contextualises* the language and culture of Empire and Greater Britain. It places imperial rhetoric and expressions of Greater Britain interacted within the broader cultural and political landscape of early twentieth century Greater Britain. Propagandists balanced rhetorical ambitions against contextual realities, which this thesis in turn explores. This consideration informs the entire thesis, but especially for the consideration of the rhetorical stakes of engaging Greater British for British official propaganda, which is the focus of Chapters 2 and 3.

⁹⁸ Scally, *Origins*, 31, 36-7.

⁹⁹ Thompson, 'Language of Imperialism,' 151.

VIII – New Zealand

New Zealand is the main Dominion focus of this work, as it provides unique opportunity to redress issues of existing historiographical approaches to Greater Britain. New Zealand's less confident and developed historiography and national mythology of the war, compared to Australia and Canada, provides opportunity. Colonial nationalist historians, especially Sinclair for New Zealand,¹⁰⁰ use the war as a key moment for the development of an independent New Zealand national identity. New Zealand does not share Australia's same mythic approach to ANZAC identity. New Zealand and Australia's ANZAC mythology developed largely independently. As Hew Strachan notes, this provides an opportunity for New Zealand historiography, as it can essentially start from scratch, rather than having to unseat established nationalist mythologies as Australian and Canadian historiography must.¹⁰¹

Major gaps persist in New Zealand's historiography of the war. The front line experience is well covered, notably by Christopher Pugsley and Michael King, even if an imbalance in favour of the Gallipoli persists.¹⁰² Domestic, cultural, and political coverage is, by contrast, relatively scant, especially compared to the prodigious British scholarship on these areas.¹⁰³ Paul Baker's survey of New Zealand conscription, published in 1988, remains perhaps the best authority on New Zealand's domestic and political experience of the war, which is indicative of the slow progress of the field.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Keith Sinclair, *A Destiny Apart: New Zealand's Search for National Identity*, (Auckland: 1986); Sinclair, *A History*; Sinclair, 'The beginnings of a colonial nationalism: Richard Jebb in New Zealand, 1899', *The Rise of Colonial Nationalism*, ed. John Eddy & Deryck Schreuder, (Sydney: 1988), 111-130; Sinclair, 'New Zealand's Metamorphosis,' *International Journal*, 29:3 (1974), 412-421.

¹⁰¹ Hew Strachan, 'Foreword: New Zealand Society in the Great War,' in *New Zealand Society at War, 1914-1918*, ed. Loveridge (Wellington: 2016).

¹⁰² Christopher Pugsley, *Scars on the Heart: Two Centuries of New Zealand at War*, (Auckland: 1996); Michael King, *New Zealanders at War*, (Auckland: 2003); see also, Erik Olssen, 'A Nation: 1914-1918', *The People and the Land: An Illustrated History of New Zealand, 1820-1920*, ed. Judith Binney, Judith Bassett, & Erik Olssen, (Wellington: 1990), pp.319-339; Erik Olssen, 'Waging War: The Home Front 1914-1918', *The People and the Land: An Illustrated History of New Zealand, 1820-1920*, ed. Judith Binney et al., pp.299-318; Ron Palenski, *The Making of New Zealanders*, (Auckland: 2012).

¹⁰³ E.g., Trevor Wilson, Trevor, *The Myriad Faces of War: Britain and the Great War, 1914-1918*, (Cambridge: 1986); Gerard J. DeGroot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the First World War*, (London: 1996); Nicoletta Gullace, *'The Blood of Our Sons': Men, Women, and Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War*, (Basingstoke: 2002); Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War*, (Cambridge: 2010); Catriona Pennell, *A Kingdom United: Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland*, (Oxford: 2012).

¹⁰⁴ Paul Baker, *King and Country Call: New Zealanders, Conscription and the Great War*, (Auckland: 1988).

Several recent edited collections have filled some of these gaps. Jon Crawford and Ian McGibbon's *New Zealand's Great War* is the best example.¹⁰⁵ Jock Phillips and Graham Hucker have made particularly important contributions in recovering the importance of imperial identities in New Zealand's domestic war effort.¹⁰⁶ A growing historiography of the Māori experience of the war has also greatly added to the scholarship.¹⁰⁷ Despite this progress, the field is still under developed.

Steven Loveridge's work is an important contribution, providing an over-arching narrative of New Zealand's domestic war effort. Importantly, Loveridge emphasises the significance of Greater British identities to New Zealand's understanding of its war effort.¹⁰⁸ Despite this, it tends not to consider the operational dimensions of this imperial connection. Felicity Barnes' work on New Zealand soldiers in London is a good example of the usefulness of considering this connection in an operational sense.¹⁰⁹

New Zealand's wartime propaganda efforts are almost entirely unexplored. This is an issue of prevailing approaches. Where propaganda is framed as a strictly national product, and explored as such, New Zealand did not produce much of its own propaganda, compared to the illustrated poster campaigns of Britain, Canada, and Australia. This focus on an extant national product misses how

¹⁰⁵ Jon Crawford & Ian McGibbon (ed.), *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies and the First World War*, (Auckland: 2007); David Monger, Katie Pickles, & Sarah Murray (ed.), *Endurance and the First World War: Experience and Legacies in New Zealand and Australia*, (Cambridge: 2014); Charles Ferrall & Harry Ricketts (ed.), *How We Remember: New Zealanders and the First World War*, (Wellington: 2014).

¹⁰⁶ Graham Hucker, 'The Great Wave of Enthusiasm': New Zealand Reactions to the First World War in August 1914 – A Reassessment,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, 43:1 (2009), 59-75; Jock Phillips, 'The quiet Western Front: the First World War and New Zealand Memory', *Race, Empire and First World War Writing*, ed. Santanu Das, (Cambridge: 2011), 231-248; Pickles, 'Mapping Memorials,' 13-24; Chris Maclean and Jock Phillips, *The Sorrow and the Pride: New Zealand War Memorials*, (Wellington: 1990); Jock Phillips, 'The Great War and New Zealand Nationalism: The Evidence of War Memorials', *An ANZAC Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45 – Selected Papers*, ed. Judith Smart & Tony Wood, (Melbourne: 1992), 14-29.

¹⁰⁷ P.S. O'Connor, 'The Recruitment of Maori Soldiers, 1914-1918', *Political Science*, 19:48 (1967), 48-83; James Cowan, *Maori in the Great War*, (Christchurch: 2011); Franchesca Walker, "'Descendants of a Warrior Race': the Maori Contingent, New Zealand Pioneer Battalion, and Martial Race Myth, 1914-19", *War and Society*, 31:1 (March 2012), 1-21; Christopher Pugsley, 'Images of Te Hokowhitu A Tu in the First World War', in *Race, Empire and First World War Writing*, ed. Santanu Das, (Cambridge: 2011), 194-210.

¹⁰⁸ Loveridge, *Calls to Arms*; Steven Loveridge (ed.), *New Zealand Society at War, 1914-1918*, (Wellington: 2016); Loveridge, 'Another Great War?' 303-325; Steven Loveridge, 'Once A German is Always a German?: Representations of Enemies, Germans and Race in New Zealand c.1890-1918,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, 48:1 (2014), 51-77; Loveridge, 'Soldiers and Shirkers,' 59-79.

¹⁰⁹ Felicity Barnes, 'Bill Massey's Tourists in the Big Smoke: Rethinking the First World War's Role in New Zealand's National Identity,' *New Zealand Journal of Literature*, 33:2 (2015), 89-107; see also, Barnes, *New Zealand's London: A Colony and its Metropolis*, (Auckland: 2012); Barnes, "'Familiar London': New Zealand travel writing and the imagined metropolis, 1890-1940', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 14:4 (2010), 397-409; Barnes, 'War "Zones": The Metropolis and New Zealand, 1940 and 2005', *History Compass*, 3 (2005).

New Zealand confronted propaganda, especially in terms of co-creation. Jennifer Wellington's work on British, Canadian, and Australian war trophy collections and war museum initiatives is an example of this limited focus. It excludes New Zealand because it was less successful at this work. Jim Aulich and John Hewitt's work on illustrated posters has the same issue. Because New Zealand did not independently produce much of its own posters, it is essentially absent.¹¹⁰ This misses important context.

Rather than being less successful or productive, this thesis shows that New Zealand tended to rely more on the collaborative aspects of Greater British propaganda. This makes focusing on New Zealand within a Greater British-wide analysis particularly revealing.

These misunderstandings have also affected New Zealand historiography. Ron Palenski's work on New Zealand's official press correspondent Malcolm Ross, for instance, deems Ross a notable failure. This is compared to Australia's C.E.W. Bean and Keith Murdoch, who were more successful in propagating a confident Australian mythology of the war in the British and Australian press.¹¹¹ This misreads both Ross' and New Zealand's aims, and the co-creative dimension of Greater British propaganda. This is an important focus of Chapter 4. Stephanie Gibson's work on New Zealand's use of illustrated posters during the war hints more usefully at this co-creative process. Noting New Zealand's lack of its own sophisticated poster campaign, Gibson illustrates how New Zealand co-opted on British posters for domestic purposes.¹¹²

This underdevelopment and misreading in New Zealand's historiography of the war therefore provides a useful opportunity to demonstrate the operation of Greater British propaganda, and its co-creative aspects. Because New Zealand created less of its 'own' material – due both to material and economic capacity, and matters of approach and identity – it relied more than the other Dominions on the collaborative and adaptive aspects of propaganda co-creation. New Zealand is therefore a useful

¹¹⁰ E.g., Jim Aulich & John Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction?: First World War Posters in Britain and Europe*, (Manchester: 2007); New Zealand is essentially absent from this work.

¹¹¹ Ron Palenski, 'Malcolm Ross: A New Zealand Failure in the Great War,' *Australian Historical Studies*, 39 (2008), 19-35; Ron Palenski, 'Malcolm Ross: A Forgotten Casualty of the Great War,' (MA Thesis: University of Otago, 2010); see also, Allison Oosterman, 'Malcolm Ross: From the peaks to the trenches,' (PhD Thesis, University of Auckland, New Zealand, 2008).

¹¹² Stephanie Gibson, 'First World War posters at Te Papa,' *Tuhinga*, 23 (2012), 69-84.

starting point to reveal these dynamics, which the nationally organised historiography has so far missed.

A focus on New Zealand also re-contextualises Australia and Canada's wartime propaganda and publicity in a Greater British frame. Transnational comparisons of the former Dominions, including during the war, are more common between Canada and Australia,¹¹³ as is work on the ANZAC connection.¹¹⁴ This pairing only tells a partial story of Greater Britain, by suggesting the dynamics of Canada and Australia were indicative, or that Gallipoli solely dominated New Zealand's cultural experience of the war.

New Zealand's particularities in geography, demographics, and identity, also usefully complicate a collective focus on Greater Britain at war. In the context of Greater British propaganda, New Zealand's extreme distance and lesser economic capacity made the difficulties of Britain's imperial communications networks at war particularly pronounced. This is the particular focus of Chapter 1. This again qualifies New Zealand's reliance on, and indeed eagerness for, the collaborative aspects of propaganda co-creation. Despite its distance, British material and concepts remained important in New Zealand's cultural experience of the war.

Comparisons that include New Zealand reveal such complications to the Greater British picture. Kynan Gentry's work on the significance of Britishness and native cultures in forming Dominion identities shows that New Zealand's small size and distance from Home were among many reasons that made settlers' relationship to Māori distinctive in the wider context.¹¹⁵ Likewise, Felicity Barnes has explored how New Zealand's distance from London informed its particularly strong

¹¹³ Jennifer Wellington, *Exhibiting War: the Great War, museums, and memory in Britain, Canada, and Australia*, (Cambridge: 2017); Jennifer Wellington, 'Empire and nation in Canadian and Australian First World War exhibitions, 1917-1922,' *The Great War and the British Empire: Culture and Society*, ed. Walsh & Varnava (Abingdon: 2017), 185-198; Margaret Macmillan & Francine MacKenzie, *Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the twentieth century*, (Vancouver: 2003); Mark Sheftall, 'Mythologising the Dominion Fighting Man: Australian and Canadian Narratives of the First World War Soldier, 1914-39,' *Australian Historical Studies*, 46:1 (2015), 81-99; Rosemary Ross Jonathan & Lissa Paul, 'Approaching War: Australian and Canadian Children's Culture and the First World War,' *Childhood in the Past*, 7:1 (2014), 3-13.

¹¹⁴ E.g., Judith Smart & Tony Wood (ed.), *An ANZAC Muster: War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45 – Selected Papers*, (Melbourne: 1992); Christopher Pugsley, *The Anzac Experience: New Zealand, Australia and Empire in the First World War*, (Auckland: 2004).

¹¹⁵ Kynan Gentry, *History, heritage, and colonialism: Historical Consciousness, Britishness, and Cultural Identity in New Zealand, 1870-1940*, (Manchester: 2015), esp. 189-223.

Britishness, compared to other Dominions.¹¹⁶ Greater Britain is best explored for its variety and complexity, which this thesis strives for.

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Beyond the two main focuses of Britain and New Zealand, the rest of Greater Britain is explored in varying depth throughout to reveal broader dynamics. Australia and Canada are important throughout, particularly for their contrast in approach to the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. This is particularly so in Chapter 4's examination of the Dominion Prime Ministers' visits to London. Chapter 6, meanwhile, compares New Zealand and Australia's interaction with official British war films.

South Africa, India, and Ireland were more complex in their relation to Greater British propaganda. These three were notable for their charged internal politics during the war – each saw internal rebellions against British authority during the war to varying levels of seriousness. They therefore required distinct approaches from British politicians and propagandists. For South Africa, this again complicates the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. For India and Ireland, these stakes set them outside it. The implications of this distinctiveness to inclusion in Greater Britain are explored, but beyond the scope of this work to fully extrapolate individually.

The United States of America is an important contextual figure throughout the thesis, for how it drew the majority of British propagandists' attention for the first three years of the war. It is not a primary focus, however.

IX – Sources

This thesis' conceptualisation of Greater British propaganda informs its approach to sources. In the first sense, its definition of propaganda informs the material consulted. It examines a broad collection of media, created throughout Greater Britain. This includes written sources such as

¹¹⁶ See, Barnes, *New Zealand's London*.

pamphlets, periodicals, and books, and a significant body of visual material, including posters, photography, and especially cinema. Press sources are also important, especially for political speeches and reports of public meetings, for both specific textual rhetoric, and an understanding of how they were transmitted as Greater British propaganda.

The broad source body consulted gives a representative picture of the breadth of media utilised for Greater British propaganda. This resists the tendency of much historiography on First World War propaganda to emphasise supposedly innovativeness of new media such as posters and photography to propaganda. Illustrated posters, advertising techniques, and cinema were not innovations of the war, but familiar methods by 1914.¹¹⁷ This shows the joint importance of civic, gestural, and public propaganda, and furthermore how this more immediate propaganda was then reproduced and communicated throughout Greater Britain.

Importantly, this thesis' approach to rhetoric is expanded specifically to visual sources, such as illustrated posters, illustrations, cartoons, photography, and cinema. Instead of treating these sources as illustrations, the same interrogation of context in relation to the meaning of these sources is applied. This borrows from concept of the 'social life of images' discussed by Elizabeth Edwards, Janice Hart, and Ludmilla Jordanova.¹¹⁸ This entails treating visual sources as distinct historical objects, in which contexts of creation, display, and dissemination are significant to understanding what they communicated. This is especially relevant for Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis, which consider cinema propaganda. While the general approach to rhetoric is extended to cinema propaganda in these chapters, the particular dynamics of cinema as a medium, in terms of its market operation, is considered for how this influenced rhetoric and depictions in cinema propaganda. Visual sources are therefore not used indiscriminately, but where they are, they have been deeply interrogated for the significance of their 'social life' to the wider analysis.

¹¹⁷ Thompson, 'Electric Octopus,' 1-26; Thompson, 'Pictorial Lies.'

¹¹⁸ Elizabeth Edwards & Janice Hart, 'Introduction: Photographs as Objects', *Photographic Histories: on the Materiality of Images*, (London: 2004), 2; Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Approaching Visual Materials', *Research Methods for History*, ed. Simon Gunn and Lucy Faire, (Edinburgh: 2012), 41-42; Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past*, (Cambridge: 2012), 4-5; see also, Sandy Callister, 'Being there: war, women and lantern slides,' *Rethinking History*, 12:3 (2008), 317-337; Jay Winter, 'Visual essay'; see also, C. Whitner, "'Picturing" World War I: German War Bond Posters and the Modern Public', in *Constructing the Memory of War in Visual Culture since 1914*. Routledge, 2018, pp.25-37

This approach to cinema in particular also redresses weakness of recent historiographical approaches to the topic. Cinema propaganda has been disconnected from the main historiography of British wartime propaganda, through an over-emphasis of its distinctiveness. Nicholas Reeves' work remains something of a lone survey on the topic.¹¹⁹ Cinema is more familiar in scholarship on public memory of the war.¹²⁰ By comparison, cinema occupies an outsized place in the new imperial history's scholarship, as it is claimed as a specifically 'imperial medium.'¹²¹ This thesis instead tries to reconnect cinema propaganda, and imperial depictions therein, to both the wider contexts of British propaganda, and the contemporary cinema and media market. Instead of simply noting Greater British representation in official films, this thesis considers how these contexts informed rhetorical choices. Chapters 5 and 6 therefore consider how official cinema functioned as Greater British propaganda.

The thesis' focus on Greater Britain also informs the range of archives consulted. The thesis draws insights from British, New Zealand, Canadian, and occasionally Australian, political papers regarding official propaganda to retrace the unique intersection of these bodies, and the operation of Greater British propaganda. This broad integration helps overcome the initial challenge of gaps in the papers of British and New Zealand official propaganda campaigns. Very soon after the end of the war, the bulk of papers regarding Britain's official propaganda campaign – and the majority of New Zealand's official wartime papers – were deliberately and accidentally destroyed respectively. This has hampered the historiography to a degree, but is not prohibitive.

Files and retrospective summaries of Britain's official campaign, collected before the Second World War, provide an important core of official British organisational files, particularly for the earlier efforts of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, Wellington House, and the Department of Information. The relatively fulsome archives of the National War Aims Committee are also consulted,

¹¹⁹ Nicholas Reeves, *Official British Film Propaganda During the First World War*, (London: 1986); Reeves, 'Film Propaganda and Its Audience: The Example of Britain's Official Films during the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 18:3 Historians and Movies: The State of the Art: Part 1 (July 1983), 463-494.

¹²⁰ E.g. Michael Paris, *The First World War and popular cinema: 1914 to the present*, (Edinburgh: 1999); Michael Hammond & Michael Williams, *British Silent Cinema and the Great War*, (Basingstoke: 2011); Emma Hanna, *The Great War on the small screen: Representing the First World War in contemporary Britain*, (Edinburgh: 2009); Andrew Kelly, *Cinema and the Great War*, (London: 2011); see also, Chris Kempshall, *The First World War in Computer Games*, (Basingstoke: 2015).

¹²¹ E.g., James Chapman & Nicholas J. Cull, *Projecting Empire: Imperialism and Popular Cinema*, (London: 2009), see below, Chapter 5.

revealing suggestions as to its work towards the Dominions that have gone unacknowledged. Files regarding New Zealand's propaganda work are less centralised, though Defence Department archives are fulsome, and particularly helpful for exploring New Zealand's late-established Publicity Branch. This Publicity Branch is essentially unexplored in historiography, and so it alone is a discrete contribution this thesis makes.

This thesis' Greater British focus helps to remedy some of these gaps. The high level of intersection and interaction between British and Dominion official and unofficial propaganda organisations and activities means that insights for different British and Dominion efforts can be found beyond their own national archives. For instance, important insights regarding New Zealand propaganda, especially its collaboration with British efforts, are often found in British archives, and vice versa. An important source for this is the extensive Colonial Office (CO) ledgers of correspondence at the British National Archives. These provide crucial indications of the unique dynamics of Greater British propaganda, especially regarding official cooperation, as explored in Chapter 1.

Private papers of Greater British politicians and propagandists provide similarly unique and important vectors. Max Aitken Lord Beaverbrook's well-preserved papers are key sources for this thesis, especially for the work of the War Office Cinematograph Committee and the Ministry of Information, which is particularly important for Chapters 1 and 5. As a key Greater British propagandist explored in this work, Beaverbrook's papers are therefore useful more generally in demonstrating the co-creative dynamics of Greater British propaganda.

Other private papers, such as those of Walter Long, Alfred Milner, David Lloyd George, C.E.W. Bean, and F.S. Oliver, are similarly important vectors into Greater British propaganda. For New Zealand, private papers are particularly helpful in retracing Massey and Ward's visits to London, the focus of Chapter 4. While Massey's and Ward's papers themselves are scattered, entirely lost, or partial, Minister of Defence James Allen's papers, especially his correspondence with Massey, are useful for this, and provide a useful domestic counterpoint for analysis of the Prime Ministers' reception in Britain.

It is also important, in any cultural history research, but particularly for work on propaganda and rhetoric, to address the limitations of tracing audience perception. Reception, audience perception, and collective imagination are not the focus of this work, and are beyond the capacity of this research to address with fidelity. This thesis is careful not to make assertions about audience perception where they cannot be found. Instead, this work focuses more on the things that informed the rhetorical and operational decisions that Greater British propagandists made. One dimension of this is *their* perception of audience reaction, but this thesis does not make its own claims in this direction. Nonetheless, modest inferences about the cultural landscape of Greater Britain can be made from this interrogation. Discursive constructions of a broad ‘imperial imagination’ are both beyond the scope, and against the methodological priorities, of this work.

Understanding the rhetorical, political, and material contexts that informed propagandists’ choices deepens and challenges existing understandings of British and Dominion propaganda efforts. Given the political risk and material cost of creating propaganda, propagandists only wanted to create material they believed would resonate. For a quotidian example, the context of paper shortages in Britain from the middle of the war should inform the cost benefit placed on continued printed propaganda, and likewise the stakes of not wasting resources on needless or ineffective propaganda. Likewise, operation through commercial media, such as the press and cinema, increased the need for effective propaganda. Politicians and propagandists were aware that neither press nor cinema proprietors would unquestioningly defer to official propagandists. Their messages and material had to be appealing to proprietors, and as such, appealing or at least relevant to their audiences. Material with a reasonable chance of success and resonance was therefore the aim.

More generally, the contemporary meaning of the key concepts of Greater Britain and imperialism in Greater British political culture by 1914 informed rhetorical choices in Greater British wartime propaganda. This is the particular focus of Chapters 2 and 3.

Understanding the choices politicians and propagandists made in the communication and dissemination of Greater British propaganda, and the various contexts they operated in, are major focuses of this thesis. That British and Greater British propaganda was effective in maintaining morale towards eventual victory suggests that official rhetoric must have been at least somewhat

resonant, where it is commonly held that German domestic propaganda proved ineffective at a crucial moment at the same task.¹²²

X – Chapter Outline

Each chapter in this thesis is a case study of an aspect of Greater British propaganda. Together they reveal broader dynamics of propaganda co-creation.

Chapter 1 focuses on the organisational and operational dynamics of Greater British propaganda. It explores the different ways that various official and unofficial propaganda bodies intersected and interacted within the Greater British community at war, particularly the Dominions' position in official British propaganda organisations. It also looks at how existing Greater British and imperial communications networks were mobilised for war purposes. This chapter thus provides a Greater British approach to the organisational sketches of British propaganda provided by older literature.¹²³ It also builds on Potter's work on imperial communications networks, by focusing on the war.¹²⁴

Chapters 2 and 3 look at the rhetoric of Greater British propaganda. These chapters focus on the rhetorical dynamics of Greater British propaganda. In particular, they explore how British official propaganda engaged the Greater British community. This involves taking Stuart Ward's approach, in re-analysing familiar rhetorical language or issues in a new frame. Chapter 2 explores the Greater British rhetorical and conversational dynamics of British war justifications. Chapter 3 does the same for British war aims. Chapter 3 also re-contextualises the rising official use of the language of 'Commonwealth' from 1917. This reflects less a watershed redefinition of Anglo-Dominion relations, as it has often been represented,¹²⁵ than an expedient British rhetorical compromise of the war.

¹²² See, David Welch, *Germany, Propaganda and Total War, 1914-1918: The Sins of Omission*, (London: Athlone, 2000); Whitner, 'Picturing,' 25-37.

¹²³ E.g., Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*.

¹²⁴ Potter, *Imperial Press System*; Potter, 'Communication and Integration,' 190-206; Potter, 'Webs, Networks,' 621-646; Potter, *Broadcasting Empire*.

¹²⁵ E.g., Wigley, *Canada*; Robert Craig Brown, 'Sir Robert Borden, the Great War and Anglo-Canadian Relations,' in *Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Grant Creighton*, ed. John S. Moir (Toronto: 1970), 201-224; Lorna Loyd, 'Britain and the Transformation from Empire to Commonwealth,' *The Round Table*, 86:343 (1997), 335-336.

Chapter 4 furthers challenges Anglo-Dominion relations historiography, through a focus on the visits of the Dominion Prime Ministers to Britain during the war, particularly of New Zealand's leaders, Massey and Ward. It challenges existing scholarship that had depicted these visits in high-political terms, as key moments in the redefinition of Anglo-Dominion relations. Instead, these visits are here explored as Greater British propaganda. The chapter explores how the leaders acted as Greater British propaganda spokesmen in London, and how their reception was stage-managed by influential Dominion advocates. This interpretation emphasises the importance of the press as a staging ground for both Greater British propaganda and politics.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on Greater British cinema propaganda, as a case study that deepens the understanding of the dynamics explored in earlier chapters. Chapter 5 explores the organisation and distribution of official cinema propaganda in Greater Britain. Cinema propaganda is particularly revealing of the complex dynamics of Greater British propaganda, and how different Dominions either seized the opportunity of Greater British propaganda dynamics, or were hampered by them. The distribution of Greater British cinema propaganda also provides an interesting inversion of Thompson and Magee's premise, showing that economics underwrote culture in Greater Britain, as much as the inverse.

Chapter 6 focuses on the content and rhetoric of Britain's official cinema propaganda, as Greater British propaganda, again borrowing Ward's approach. This chapter explores co-creation in terms of the use of the shared rhetorical and symbolic language of Greater Britain. It also explores how Dominion propagandists facilitated this process, and how politicians explicitly re-contextualised 'generalised' British films as Greater British propaganda for Dominion audiences.

Chapter 1 – ‘Needs No Spur’: The Organisation and Operation of Greater British Propaganda

Greater British propaganda was more than the confluence of a series of national propaganda campaigns. This chapter examines the operational and organisational aspect of Greater British propaganda. It examines how peacetime Greater British communications networks were mobilised for the purpose of wartime propaganda. It also examines how responsibility for propaganda to the Dominions was dispersed throughout the British state. Finally, it examines New Zealand’s specific place in this ad hoc wartime context, and how it sought to project its image and publicise its efforts.

This chapter borrows from Thompson and Magee’s approach,¹ in sketching the organisational space and structure of Greater British propaganda. For instance, it looks at the changing role of the Colonial Office as gatekeeper for Greater British propaganda, and later the Ministry of Information’s claiming of this mantle. Within both it explores the various semi-official or commercial efforts that intersected with this official work. It also follows Potter’s work in exploring how existing organisations and imperial networks, such as the press and undersea telegraph networks, responded to the pressures of mobilisation.

First and foremost, this chapter shows the improvised and complex nature of Greater British propaganda in an operational sense. Greater British propaganda was not a formal campaign, and was never formally directed from a central body. Instead, responsibility for Dominion propaganda in Britain’s official campaign was widely dispersed throughout the government. Showing these operational aspects of propaganda shows how the pressures of the war complicated – and at times inverted – Greater Britain’s dynamic of quick and effective communication.

The political trust and familiarity Britain placed in the Dominions, alongside boundaries to collaboration enforced by the doctrine of responsible government, meant that connecting between British and Dominion propaganda efforts was often disconnected, informal, and improvised. This was starkly different to the operational advantages of the India Office, for instance, or the more organised approach to neutral or enemy propaganda by the British state.

¹ Thompson & Magee, *Empire and Globalisation*; see also Dilley, ‘cultural economy,’ 45-55; Smith, ‘Empire Effect,’ 59-80.

Likewise, the pressures of the war also challenged the Dominions' privileged place in imperial communications networks. Due to their initial low strategic priority, and the maintenance of commercial rates for news distribution, the Dominions' contact with Britain was slowed considerably by the war. This was most challenging in terms of delayed or truncated news or political speeches being abridged in dissemination to the Dominions. This chapter therefore considers telegraph networks and the press itself as key agents of Greater British propaganda, which were slowed or complicated by the war.

How the unique dynamics of Greater Britain, especially when adapted to the pressures of the war, created particular dynamics in communication and propaganda distribution are explained in this chapter. The impact was not uniform across the Dominions however. Wartime pressures slowed communications to New Zealand, leaving politicians and the press feeling frustrated and forgotten. At the same time, the dynamics of trust and familiarity allowed a Dominion figure like Lord Beaverbrook to rise to the top position of British official propaganda by the war's end. These seemingly contradictory developments resulted from the same complex process of Greater British propaganda.

1.1 – Mobilising Imperial Communications

Greater British propaganda during the war operated through existing imperial communications networks, and established modes of interaction – the 'software of Empire.'² This system worked effectively in peacetime. New Zealand had particular issues of distance, cost, and contingency compared to the other Dominions, which Joseph Ward voiced at the Imperial Conference of 1911. Generally, however, Greater British communications were effective, and the Dominions were well connected to Britain via imperial communications networks. Greater British identity and solidarity did not depend on instantaneous communication; the five-week steamship journey from New Zealand to Britain was acceptable in peacetime. These networks facilitated press and personal

² Thompson and Magee, *Empire and Globalisation*, esp. 16, see also, Potter, *Imperial Press System*; Potter, 'Webs, Networks,' 621-645; Lester, 'Circuits of Empire', 24-48; Lester, *Imperial Networks*; O'Hara, 'Networked World,' 609-625.

communications, and the exchange of culture effectively in peacetime.³ The system worked less effectively for Greater Britain in war, which complicated Greater British propaganda.

Almost immediately upon the outbreak, Britain's communications networks became critically overstressed with official and unofficial traffic. The reliance on *laissez faire* commerciality in Greater British communications slowed this exchange. A general political trust, and the Dominions' lower strategic priorities compared to India and the United States, meant there was little initial attention in securing effective Greater British communications in this overburdened system. This informal system that worked well in peacetime, through an informal commerciality and trust, struggled under the traffic and pressures of wartime communications. For New Zealand in particular, this distance was keenly felt.

This complicates the connective nature of imperial networks such as the undersea telegraph, and any historiographical description of Britain's telegraph networks as a 'Victorian internet.' The connective *potential* of these imperial communications often did not reflect their *practice*, especially during the war. Imperial telegraphy, for instance, was imbalanced, expensive, and congealed around centres of power, favouring London.⁴ Through these commercial and strategic pressures, the war ironically inverted the advantages of the Greater British communications system in peacetime to complications under mobilisation. It intensified disconnections and delays inherent in the system. This had significant implications for the dissemination and co-creation of Greater British propaganda, in terms of transmitting messages and material from Britain to the Dominions.

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The congestion of imperial communications lines particularly affected the flow of war news from Britain to the Dominions, which limited the press' effectiveness as a conduit for Greater British propaganda. Initial war news communications to the Dominions from London were slow, difficult,

³ See, Potter, *Imperial Press System*, esp. Chapter 8.

⁴ Potter, 'Webs, Networks,' 621-646; see also Bell, 'Dissolving Distance,' 525-526; Potter, 'Communication and Integration,' 201-202; Lester, *Imperial Networks*.

and often truncated.⁵ Despite the Dominion demand for war news, the continuation of pre-war pricing made supplying this demand prohibitively expensive in many cases for Dominion papers. Even at the subsidized ‘imperial press rate’ messages still cost 7½d per word.

Political speeches of notable Greater British politicians, including the British Prime Minister, were important propaganda gestures. They provided direction for British propaganda more generally. The immediate context of delivery, the reproduction and dissemination to the Dominions, and the conversational dynamics therein are all important to understanding how they operated as Greater British propaganda. This will be explored in greater detail in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Despite this, the wartime disruptions to Greater British communications systems limited the effectiveness of these speeches as Greater British propaganda, and the press’ capacity to act as conduit for them.

Longer transmissions, such as King George V’s messages to the Empire, were too expensive for all but the largest Dominion newspapers. They often reached Antipodean newspapers in abridged form, prompting complaint from editors.⁶ The intent of these Empire-wide royal messages of solidarity was therefore undercut by commercial and practical constraints.

These press rates were reasonable in peacetime, but the demand for war news changed the economic viability for Dominion newspapers, even with increased sales.⁷ This cost limited the press’ role as a conduit for Greater British propaganda messages. The New Zealand press particularly struggled under initial financial pressures, and looked to government for assistance.⁸ The New Zealand Newspaper Proprietors Association for instance appealed the government’s proclivity to follow British examples by calling for paid government advertisements in papers for recruiting:

We feel sure the wisdom of following the example of the ‘Mother of Parliaments’ will appeal to you. Especially at this trying period in the history of our Empire it is necessary for our rulers to keep in constant touch with their people – and the best way to do this is, obviously, to use those mediums handled daily by the people.⁹

⁵ Potter, *Imperial Press*, 187-211; see also, Potter, ‘Communication and Integration’, 198-9; Pickles, *Transnational Outrage*, 63; O’Hara, ‘Networked World,’ 609-625, 613-5.

⁶ The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA:PRO): CO 323/693 – 52159 ‘London Correspondents of Colonial Newspapers’, p.186; CO 323/689 – 56704 ‘Press Bureau’, p.298.

⁷ See, Potter, ‘Communication and Integration’, 198-9; O’Hara, ‘Networked World,’ 613-615; Potter, *Imperial Press System*.

⁸ Archives New Zealand (ANZ): R10075019 – Dinwiddie to Massey, 2 March 1916; Acting Editor of *The Press* to Massey, 1 March 1916; Dinwiddie to Massey, 2 March 1916; see also, *Manawatu Evening Standard* Managing Director to Massey, 15 April 1916.

⁹ ANZ: R10075019 – Selig, *The Press* Advertising Manager to Massey, 25 May 1916.

Prime Minister William Massey responded in kind, arguing the press should allow the government free advertising space as an expression of patriotism, as newspapers in Britain had for Lord Derby's recruiting scheme.¹⁰

Official efforts to improve the circulation of war news by official British propaganda organisations were principally aimed at the USA and neutral audiences, meanwhile. The Dominions fell through these initial organisational gaps. As the Press Bureau was formed through the War Office, and the News Department through the Foreign Office, neither had responsibility for Greater Britain.¹¹ Courting American opinion was the overwhelming priority. Dominion opinion was felt to be secure for the first half of the war, with intervention unnecessary and inappropriate.

These delays and deferral caused some initial tensions among Dominion press figures, being interpreted as dismissal rather than an evocation of British political trust in Greater Britain. Australian press correspondent Keith Murdoch complained in 1915:

The Press Bureau is obliging, but does not pretend to place us on the same footing as [the] British, and has in some cases given preference to the American press.¹²

British officials were hesitant to intervene, or divert from the established *laissez-faire* tradition. The Dominions were initially left to negotiate terms with private networks such as Reuters for reduced rates.¹³ This was an early indication of the efforts of Dominion press figures such as Murdoch in shaping of Greater British propaganda later in the war. Without early official intervention, frustrated but well connected figures such as Murdoch eagerly set to work promoting his Dominion in the British press, and trying to solve initial delays.

These issues were products of the informality and lack of direction in Greater British propaganda. This echoed Greater Britain's administration in the Empire more generally. Comparison to India is telling. The more formal administration of India compared to the Dominions meant communication between it and Britain was more efficiently mobilised, through peacetime

¹⁰ ANZ: R10075019 – Massey to Milne, 18 March 1916.

¹¹ Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 203; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 1; DeGroot, *Blighty*, 174-5; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 10; Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 3.

¹² TNA:PRO: CO323/693 – 52159 'London Correspondents of Colonial Newspapers', 186.

¹³ Potter, *Imperial Press System*, esp. 187-211.

administration. Under the aegis of the India Office a regular and extensive flow of India-specific dispatches of war news was sent to Indian newspapers from the beginning of the war. The Government of India reciprocated with regular official despatches of war news from India sent to London papers, to emphasise Indian loyalty.¹⁴ Here the press worked as an effective conduit for Indian propaganda, where it was less effective, at least initially, for Greater Britain.

The India Office was a structural advantage in wartime. Administration of Indian matters, including publicity and propaganda, was more formalised than towards Greater Britain, where responsible government meant commerciality and informality prevailed. British officials were much more willing to actively coordinate and formalise the flow of information to India. India was a perennial strategic priority – and especially so in wartime, which meant that effective diplomatic and press communications were a priority from the outset. Indian communications were therefore better suited to mobilisation than Greater Britain's. Much of Britain's imperial cable networks were already strategically focused around India.¹⁵ The informality of Greater Britain's peacetime dynamics therefore proved inhibitive in mobilising the press as a conduit of Greater British propaganda.

The Colonial Office – the Dominions' administrative home in Britain – was less effective in facilitating better wartime press conditions for Greater Britain. In September 1914 it arranged a daily telegram of war news for the Dominions.¹⁶ The War Office, the India Office, the Foreign Office, and the Admiralty were all consulted. They all praised the aim, but replied that they could not contribute their news, or foresee anyway to increase the speed of news distribution to the Dominions. They argued it would entail either delaying news in Britain for the benefit of the Dominions – untenable as local press often pre-empted official announcements anyway – or risk transmitting sensitive information to the Dominions prematurely.¹⁷ Structural issues of geography, timing, and the placement of telegraph lines, therefore meant that the limited initial advocacy of the Colonial Office

¹⁴ Chandrinka Kaul, 'A new angle of vision: The London press, governmental information management and the Indian empire, 1900-22,' *Contemporary Record*, 8:2 (1994), 213-241; see also, Andrew Tait Jarboe (ed.), *War news in India: the Punjabi press during World War I*, (London: 2016).

¹⁵ Kaul, 'New angle,' 218-220; Kennedy, 'Imperial Cable', 54-77

¹⁶ TNA:PRO: CO323/643 – 33373 'Press Bureau's Announcements', p.12; see also CO753/1 War – Dominions – Index – 1914, 8.

¹⁷ TNA:PRO: CO323/689 – 56705 'Press Bureau', 299-305; see also, CO323/693 – 52159 'London Correspondents of Colonial Newspapers', 186.

was ineffectual. Greater Britain's wide geographic dispersal delayed distribution of news from London to the Dominions. Sentiments of closeness could not initially overcome this inhibition.

This situation exacerbated New Zealand existing complaints of distance and delay in press communications. The New Zealand public and press complained throughout the war to the New Zealand Defence Department about the insufficiency of details of the NZEF's actions.¹⁸ Disadvantages of distance were acute in New Zealand. Even accounting for the struggles of New Zealand's war correspondent Malcolm Ross,¹⁹ New Zealand defence authorities complained about delays and poor quality in New Zealand's war news from the Western Front, supplied by the Press Bureau, due to a perceived disregard:

The value, unfortunately, of the cables for publicity purposes in England is very small if they arrived so late, because British War Correspondents stuff, which is only a few hours old, has meanwhile reported in a general way what has occurred in the New Zealand Sector, and by the time we get out our matter, our line is a considerable distance ahead, and the information is "Cold." Papers are so congested with a flood of French, American, Canadian, Italian, and Australian matter, all up-to-date, that even warm sentiment towards us will not enable them to give us space for delayed matter.²⁰

Coverage of New Zealand troops on the Palestinian front, meanwhile, was virtually non-existent for much of the war, leading to further complaint.²¹ A homespun war enthusiasm would overcome these limitations for New Zealand, but would eventually strain with the impact of distance and delays.

The wartime pressures on Greater Britain's communications system also limited dissemination of other propaganda material, beyond the press. Similar commercial considerations limited the effectiveness of shipping routes in distributing British propaganda literature and posters.

Australia and New Zealand's peacetime complaints about high imperial postal rates gained new intensity during the war. Once again, New Zealand felt particularly disadvantaged. New Zealand officials complained that the expense stifled the flow of British periodicals to the Dominion, limiting important cultural connection to Home during the war:

¹⁸ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919.

¹⁹ See, Palenski, 'A New Zealand Failure,' 19-35.

²⁰ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919; Gambrill to Headquarters, NZEF, London, 15th October, 1918.

²¹ ANZ: R22434566 – Miss Shelton to Allen, 26 August 1918, Allen to General Robin, 25 March 1918.

The postal authorities do not appear to realize how great is the interest of the overseas people in the doings of [Britain]; and it is especially necessary at the present time that those people should be kept well informed of all that is going on.²²

Like war news, the cost of imperial postal rates made the dispersal of published propaganda from Britain prohibitive for New Zealand. Once again, cost inhibited the operation of Greater British propaganda.

Inter-Dominion rivalry played a role. New Zealand officials complained at Canada's reduced postal rate to Britain. British postal authorities responded on commercial rather than sentimental lines, stating that Canada was not only closer to Britain, but also a much larger market.²³ Such complaints continued unsuccessfully from New Zealand until 1917, when Britain officially deferred the matter until after the war.²⁴ This materially affected the circulation of British official propaganda material to New Zealand.

Other complications to imperial shipping lines during the war also inhibited the flow of official propaganda material such as posters throughout Greater Britain. While posters are a common focus of the historiography of British wartime propaganda, the practical process of distribution beyond Britain is rarely considered. Wartime issues of capacity, and military danger, made distribution of posters and similar material from Britain more complicated than in peacetime.

This disruption particularly affected New Zealand, as it relied on material from Britain and the other Dominions to bolster its domestic propaganda efforts. New Zealand did not launch official illustrated poster campaigns as the larger Dominions and Britain did, due to cost and capacity.²⁵ New Zealand's official poster campaigns were based on government-created letterpress posters. These were supplemented by imported illustrated designs, either as templates to reprint, or actual copies to distribute. Small batches of British official posters by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee (PRC)

²² TNA:PRO: CO209/281 – 46993 'Magazine and Newspaper post' (27 November, 1914), 702.

²³ TNA:PRO: CO209/282 – 44724 'Magazine Post' (13 November, 1914); see Pike, 'Penny Post.'

²⁴ TNA:PRO: CO209/295 – 24151 'Postage rates on newspapers etc. from NZ to UK' (8 May, 1917).

²⁵ See Aulich & Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction*; For New Zealand's limited financial capacity see, John Connor, *ANZAC and Empire: George Foster Pearce and the Foundations of Australian Defence*, (Cambridge: 2011), 124; Malcolm McKinnon, *Treasury: The New Zealand Treasury 1840-2000*, (Auckland: 2003), 83-85; G.R. Hawke, *The Making of New Zealand: An Economic History*, (Cambridge: 1985), 120.

were sent to New Zealand for reproduction.²⁶ New Zealand's illustrated poster campaign was therefore a clear example of co-creation: recreating and adapting British and other Dominion designs for local purposes.

Even if British will had existed to more fully supply New Zealand with posters, high postal rates, distance and the danger of German submarine attack to shipping lines, made such distribution unviable on a larger scale. For significant recruiting campaigns in New Zealand, such as Prime Minister William F. Massey's final push for the voluntary system in 1916, larger supplies were sought from Australia instead. In a rare example of official direction of propaganda in New Zealand, in March 1916, a large run of 100 copies of the eleven best poster designs were sourced, grudgingly, from the Australian Parliamentary Recruiting Committee in Melbourne.²⁷ These were sent to local New Zealand recruiting committees to be 'conspicuously displayed.'²⁸ These pressures overcame a Trans-Tasman dynamic of largely seeking to ignore one another.²⁹ These commercial and military considerations therefore affected the currents of Greater British propaganda exchange. Here, proximity and expediency overcame New Zealand's sentimental preference for Britain. In this way, the war could emphasise distance rather than compress it, for Greater Britain.

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British authorities were sympathetic to these issues. The War Office (WO) agreed to do all it could to 'remove from [the Dominions'] minds the impression that they are not considered in every way possible.'³⁰ Even so, up to at least 1917 the Dominions' low strategic priority meant there were few official efforts to overcome these issues. For the majority of the war, Greater British unity was a luxury that could not overcome issues of practicality, distance, cost, and the prioritizing of public opinion in United States. While networks such as imperial shipping lines and undersea telegraphy

²⁶ TNA: PRO: WO106/367 – Parliamentary Recruiting Committee – Report of the Publications Sub-Department, 6-7.

²⁷ ANZ: R10075020 – Massey to Robinson, Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, Melbourne, 6 March 1916.

²⁸ ANZ: R 10075020 – Recruiting Board memorandum, 30 March 1916.

²⁹ See, Mein Smith & Hempenstall, 'Tasman World,' 13-14; Mein Smith & Hempenstall, 'Australia and New Zealand,' 1-10; Mein Smith, 'Tasman World,' 299; Loveridge, 'Other Side of the Ditch?' 70-94.

³⁰ TNA:PRO: CO323/689 – 56705 'Press Bureau', 299-305.

facilitated Greater British social and cultural contact in peacetime, they were not designed and organised for these purposes, at least to the Admiralty and the War Office. Proposals for an imperial wireless chain in 1911, for instance, paid little to no attention to its social or cultural utility. The Postmaster General deemed its importance as ‘...partly for strategical and partly for commercial reasons.’³¹ The commissioned scheme was mapped strategically, in England, Cyprus, Aden, Bombay, Straits Settlements, and Australia, not on Greater British hubs.³² When the plan was scuttled in 1914, the CO voiced a similar position: ‘[T]he main value of the wireless chain is strategic and that if the two War Depts (W.O. & Admiralty) are satisfied, the Colonial Office can have nothing to say’.³³ This was noticeably discordant with Ward’s vision of imperial communications from 1911 as, ‘enabling us to come closer to the Old World and to bring the Old World closer to us.’³⁴ Even if these networks were the ‘software of Empire,’ the informality of Greater British interactions meant that there was little official intervention to support Greater British propaganda interaction.

Potential did not equal reality.³⁵ Greater British cultural solidarity was not seen as a government responsibility before 1917. Dominion calls for remedy to these issues fell on deaf ears, and were tabled for the rest of the war in 1917, just as they had been rejected in 1911.³⁶ British politicians and propagandists only gradually improved Greater British war news circulation as Dominion frustrations rose to a level of strategic priority later in the war.³⁷

Dominion complaints were somewhat unmoored, without structural support to the level of the India Office. They were deferred to greater initial strategic pressures for Britain. The pressures of the war therefore inverted the peacetime effectiveness of Greater British communications. Greater British propaganda was inherently informal and improvised. These issues underscore that it was not an official campaign, and was not directed. The Dominions’ ambiguous categorization, lacking a clear

³¹ TNA:PRO: CO886/5B – Imperial Conference, 1911 – Minutes of Proceedings, 308.

³² TNA:PRO: CO886/5B – Imperial Conference, 1911 – Minutes of Proceedings, 309; CAB37/107/63 – Scheme for Imperial Wireless Stations (26th May 1911); WO32/7045 – General Post Office – Imperial Wireless Installations – Copies of Correspondence relating to Contract for Imperial Wireless Stations; see also, Anduaga, *Wireless and Empire*, 54-77; Kennedy, ‘Imperial Cable’, 54-77.

³³ TNA:PRO: CAB37/121/105 – Imperial Wireless Chain (5th September 1914).

³⁴ TNA:PRO: CO886/5B – Imperial Conference, 1911 – Minutes of Proceedings, 284.

³⁵ Potter, ‘Webs and Networks’, 621-646.

³⁶ TNA:PRO: CAB37/107/66 – Imperial Conference, 1911: Dominions resolutions to be submitted and proposed Departmental answers thereto. (12th May 1911), 1-3, 10-14.

³⁷ Potter, *Imperial Press System*, Chapter 8.

organisational home as India did, meant that capacity to overcome these issues was diluted. This ambiguous categorization – split ‘home’ and ‘overseas’ categories, effectively ‘semi domestic’ – characterised the broader pattern of the Dominions’ placement in official British propaganda.

1.2 – Initial Organisation and Categorisation

British government propaganda of the interwar period has received little historiographical attention due to the lack of a centralised propaganda organisation to facilitate easy archival research.³⁸ The same issue limits understanding of the Dominions’ place in Britain’s wartime propaganda. Greater British propaganda lacked a formal home or central leader throughout the war. As such, responsibility for it was dispersed throughout the British state, and its various propaganda organisations. Due to their ‘semi-domestic’ status, the Dominions were not excluded from British propaganda organisations, but fell between the cracks of their organisational logic, spread diffusely across both ‘home’ and ‘overseas’ categories.

Initially, the Dominions were a category of the overseas – and neutral – focused War Propaganda Bureau at Wellington House, directed under the Round Table member F.S. Oliver.³⁹ They were also connected to Britain’s semi-official domestic Parliamentary Recruiting Committee (PRC). They were the primary focus of neither body, however. Only a small degree of the PRC’s almost six million recruiting posters reached the Dominions, as templates for local reproduction.⁴⁰ Other early British propaganda organisations, such as the Neutral Press Committee and the News Department of the Foreign Office, took no interest in the Dominions.⁴¹ Combined with their low initial priority in British official propaganda,⁴² the Dominions’ ambiguous ‘semi-domestic’ status complicated their

³⁸ Mariel Grant, *Propaganda and the role of the state in interwar Britain*, (Oxford: 1994).

³⁹ National Library of Scotland (NSL): MS 24853 – Family and General Correspondence of Frederick Scott Oliver, 1915 – February 1917; TNA:PRO: INF4/4B – ‘War of 1914-1918 Information Services’ – Report on the Operations of Wellington House; Scheme of work of the Department of Information, 1917.

⁴⁰ Te Papa Archives (TPA): MU000207/001/0001 – Mackenzie to Massey, Memorandum No.7223 (November 1918); TNA:PRO: WO106/367 – Parliamentary Recruiting Committee – Report of the Publications Sub-Department, 6-7.

⁴¹ Sanders, ‘Wellington House,’ 119-121.

⁴² See, Horne, ‘Remobilizing’, 203; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 1; De Groot, *Blighty*, 174-5; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 10; Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 3.

placement. They were a *potential* focus for many organisations, but a *primary* focus of none. Against greater strategic imperatives, and the material pressures such as paper shortages, Dominion-focused propaganda was initially seen as a luxury that could be dismissed. The Dominions' initial buoyant morale gave licence to this approach.⁴³

British confidence in Dominion morale was initially well placed. Officials in the New Zealand Defence Department, for instance, argued by dismissing the need of any local official propaganda, even the minor expense of a small scheme of recruiting advertisements in local newspapers, proposed in November 1914, after the initial recruiting burst slowed.⁴⁴ Domestic tensions certainly existed in New Zealand, including criticism of the national government, labour unrest, and Māori dissent, but these were initially limited enough to not cause major concern.⁴⁵ British propagandists had no initial anxieties about New Zealand morale in particular, or the Dominions generally. Only South Africa provoked serious anxiety. Official propaganda contact with the Dominions was therefore incidental, and conducted through established political channels. PRC posters were sent via the Dominion High Commissioners, or through social and voluntary networks, especially imperial patriotic societies, which Wellington House and the Central Committee of Patriotic Organisations in particular utilised.⁴⁶ Initial Greater British propaganda was casual, incidental, and informal.

In so far as there was an official voice for the Dominions in official propaganda interaction, this was the Colonial Office (CO). The Dominions' administration under the CO had long been a matter of some criticism. The Round Tabler Leo Amery, as under secretary to Prime Minister David Lloyd George, for instance, complained that the CO was unbecoming of the Dominions, as it meant that they were technically subordinate under a British department. Amery argued that being 'grouped with non-self governing dependencies and with backward populations of all sorts of races' insulted

⁴³ Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 167-8; Millman, 'HMG', 431; Potter, 'Communication and Integration,' 195-6.

⁴⁴ ANZ: R22434550 – New Zealand Defence Forces General Headquarters Memorandum, 16 November 1914; Allen to Commandant of Nelson, 25 June 1915; Defence Department memorandum, 15 February 1916; New Zealand Military Forces Headquarters memorandum, 26 July 1916.

⁴⁵ Gwen Parsons, 'Debating the War: The Discourses of War in the Christchurch Community,' in *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies, and the First World War*, ed. Crawford & McGibbon, (Auckland: Exisle), 550-568; Baker, *King and Country*, 15-23; McIntyre, *Dominion of New Zealand*, 60-61.

⁴⁶ TNA:PRO: INF4/4B – 'War of 1914-1918 Information Services' – Report on the Operations of Wellington House; Scheme of work of the Department of Information, 1917.

Dominion pride, making explicit the underlying racial dynamics of Greater Britain.⁴⁷ Despite such complaints, the Dominions remained under the CO by 1914.⁴⁸

The CO was the gatekeeper, and in practice a barrier, to British propagandists' access to the Dominions. Despite the Dominions' initial lower strategic priority, some organisations, particularly Wellington House, had ambitions to include them in their work. The Colonial Office was staunch in preventing this. In a joint conference with the Colonial Office in November 1916 to consider propaganda efforts in the Empire, Wellington House officials stated their enthusiasm for increased propaganda to the Empire, and proposed coordinating British and Dominion propaganda efforts. The scheme entailed Dominion Governors General communicating with Wellington House every six months via telegram, regarding the propaganda efforts of their Dominion. The Colonial Office decisively and almost derisively rejected the suggestion:

Wellington House feel themselves bound by the terms of their appointment to press their propaganda to the fullest possible extent not only abroad but also throughout the Empire ... We feel that propaganda in the Empire is, except in a few special cases, sheer waste of public money, and want to damp it down so far as we can.⁴⁹

Colonial Secretary Andrew Bonar Law's summarised the perceived pointlessness of Greater British propaganda, stating "loyalty as a general rule need[ed] no spur, to justify the trouble and expenditure involved" in the Dominions.⁵⁰ Official propaganda coordination was seen as unnecessary, even inappropriate, for Greater Britain. Though tides of Dominion war weariness were approaching by late 1916, Dominion propaganda was still seen as unnecessary effort that would only exacerbate issues of overburdened telegraph lines, and distract Governors General with 'idle propaganda.' More deeply, this was the CO protecting 'appropriate' Anglo-Dominion interactions, and protecting its authority to do so.

The CO's restraint of Wellington House's proposal was also, on principle, to enforce 'responsible government.' As ill-defined as Dominion status was, responsible government, or autonomy over internal politics, was the consensus of what set the Dominions apart from the Colonial

⁴⁷ TNA:PRO: CAB 17/190 Memoranda on Imperial Coordination by Leo Amery, 1917, 19.

⁴⁸ Andrew Stewart, 'The 'Bloody Post Office': The Life and Times of the Dominion Office,' *Contemporary British History*, 24:1 (2010), 43-66.

⁴⁹ TNA:PRO: CO323/733 – 55353 'Propaganda in the colonies,' 17 November, 1916, 22.

⁵⁰ TNA:PRO: CO323/733 – 55353 'Propaganda in the colonies,' 17 November, 1916, 22.

Empire and India.⁵¹ This principle informed a consensus vision of Greater Britain as an informal diplomatic, social, and cultural community – cohered voluntarily rather than administratively – a vision that would also be evinced rhetorically in British propaganda.⁵² The CO prioritised non-interference with the Dominions.⁵³ Dominion leaders likewise preferred diplomatic contact through direct access to the British Prime Minister, or through High Commissioners, to strengthen informal diplomatic, almost social, interaction.⁵⁴ Greater British propaganda therefore generally conformed to this informal tone.

Tellingly, the CO was much less anxious about proposed propaganda efforts in the Colonial Empire, where its authority was much more formal and direct. Though perceived as pointless, the CO allowed Wellington House to distribute pamphlets in European and ‘native’ languages in the colonies and protectorates as long as local Colonial Governors were consulted. The CO was unequivocal on the Dominions, by contrast:

The Governments of the self-governing Dominions are the sole responsible Authorities for their respective territories, and for this reason no propagandist publications of any description shall be circulated in Australia, Canada, South Africa or New Zealand without the concurrence of those Governments.⁵⁵

To enforce non-interference for Greater Britain the CO insisted that the High Commissioners were the only appropriate channels for propaganda distribution. Accordingly, the piecemeal distributions of PRC posters and other official propaganda material initially went through them.⁵⁶ Propaganda raised the stakes of maintaining responsible government, as state propaganda’s propriety even domestically was also a matter of some contention, especially later in the war.⁵⁷ To allow a British government organisation direct access to the Dominions was therefore seen a contravention of this status quo, however ill defined as it was. Despite the more delicate political stakes for propaganda in India, control and authority in this regard was at least more streamlined and obvious through the India Office.

⁵¹ See, McIntyre, *Britannic Vision*.

⁵² See below, Chapter 2.

⁵³ J.A. Cross, ‘The Colonial Office and the Dominions before 1914,’ *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 4:2 (1966), esp.145.

⁵⁴ Cross, ‘Dominions,’ 145; Stewart, ‘Bloody Post Office,’ 43-66.

⁵⁵ TNA:PRO: CO 323/733 – 55353 ‘Propaganda in the colonies’, 17 November, 1916, 29-30.

⁵⁶ ANZ: R22434750 – Allen to Liverpool, 6 June, 1918.

⁵⁷ For the late war debates about propaganda see, Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 131-142.

This was also a matter of inter-departmental rivalry, with the CO defending its authority over the Dominions against the Foreign Office, where Wellington House was based. The CO defended its status as arbiter of Dominion matters, even as late as 1918, when it had already conceded a degree of control over Dominion propaganda to the Ministry of Information (MOI), by reminding the Ministry to consult the High Commissioners over distribution of official films.⁵⁸ By defending the status quo of the Greater British political relationship, which entailed prestige through informality in peacetime, the CO stymied official Greater British propaganda coordination. Greater British propaganda therefore remained widely dispersed throughout Britain's propaganda organisations for the rest of the war.

The CO was more permissive of Wellington House's efforts towards the Dominions in 'a few special cases,' where there was a perceived political need. South Africa was a notable exception, due to its dangerous internal politics during the war.⁵⁹ The CO allowed a certain degree of Wellington House propaganda distribution to South Africa, such as a wide scale distribution of Dutch illustrator Louis Raemaeker's pro-war cartoons, in English and Dutch. The CO argued against extending this scheme throughout Greater Britain, stating 'opinion in Aust[ralia] and NZ needs no spur.'⁶⁰ Where morale was assumed, restraint was enforced. The 'pro-Entente Dutchman' Raemaekers' cartoons were deployed to inspire and ingratiate the Boer population and alleviate political tensions.⁶¹ South African tensions frayed the cultural 'trust' between South Africa and the rest of Greater Britain. New Zealand loyalty and political stability was conversely assumed, so formal effort was deemed unnecessary. This also conformed to the early-war perception of propaganda as for specific, targeted aims, rather than for general morale maintenance.

Māori relations were a potentially comparable concern, but much less contentious than Anglo-Boer relations. British intervention here was both less necessary and less constitutionally appropriate. Though Māori tribes of the Waikato actively resisted conscription later in the war, this never rose to the same threat level as the Boer Uprising of 1915 in South Africa. Furthermore, British involvement

⁵⁸ TNA:PRO: CO323/786 – G. Grindle to Assistant Director Department of Information, 20 February, 1918, 248-249.

⁵⁹ See, T.R.H. Davenport, 'The South African Rebellion, 1914', *The English Historical Review*, 78:306, (January 1963), 73-74.

⁶⁰ TNA:PRO: CO323/693 – 58573 'Raemaekers' Cartoons,' 15 December, 1915, 639.

⁶¹ TNA:PRO: CO 323/689 – 57324 'Louis Raemaekers' Cartoons', 13 December, 1915, 346-9.

in New Zealand's Māori affairs was a wider issue, dating back to the New Zealand Wars, where it was eventually officially settled that the New Zealand government had sole authority in this area.⁶² New Zealand managed appeals to Māori itself. This reflects the wider dynamics and non-uniformity of Greater Britain: the CO's restraint of propaganda interaction with New Zealand and Australia was a mark of privilege and trust, compared to the more complex dynamics of South Africa.

As gatekeeper, the CO also advocated for the Dominions, especially to remedy issues of press communications discussed above.⁶³ The CO often took the Dominions' side in disputes with other British government departments, however trivial. In 1917, for instance, the Australian press correspondent C.E.W. Bean complained to the CO, through the Australian High Commissioner Andrew Fisher, that the Australians were given insufficient recognition in the British press for their military victories. This was due to the War Office's policy of 'generalising' press descriptions of the achievements of imperial forces as one British Imperial effort, partly as a censorship measure.⁶⁴ War Secretary Lord Derby retorted that the Australians were often given excessive attention, complaining, 'these Colonials are very trying.'⁶⁵ Regardless, then Colonial Secretary Walter Long supported the Australian claim, emphasising the need to remove any feelings of neglect or mistreatment.⁶⁶

By enforcing the peacetime political dynamics of Greater Britain, the CO restrained official propaganda coordination between Britain and Dominion. This reinforced Greater British propaganda as an informal space, which allowed the varied interaction of official and unofficial organisations, campaigns, and personalities therein. Dominion advocates with strong connections to Fleet Street, such as Canada's Lord Beaverbrook and Australia's Keith Murdoch, utilised this dynamic, and forged their own insurgent propaganda machinery and Dominion publicity campaigns in London to great effect. These Dominion-led campaigns would receive important British ascent, as Dominion morale became a greater strategic priority later in the war – introducing the need to 'remobilise' Greater Britain. The

⁶² McIntyre, *Dominion of New Zealand*, 29, 31.

⁶³ TNA:PRO: CO 323/689 – 56704 'Press Bureau,' 56704, 295; CO323/685 – 56822 'Containing enemy press propaganda', 9 December, 1915.

⁶⁴ TNA:PRO: CO537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), 8.

⁶⁵ TNA:PRO: CO537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), 2-3.

⁶⁶ TNA:PRO: CO537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), 2-3.

ambiguous 'semi-domestic' status of the Dominions meant their place in British propaganda likewise changed, entailing greater effort and ambiguities in tandem.

1.3 – Remobilisation and Reorganisation

The accession of the Lloyd George government in late 1916, and changing strategic demands of the war from 1917, entailed major reforms and a new approach in British propaganda. The USA's entry on the Allied side reduced its priority in British propaganda. Rising domestic war weariness meant home front propaganda in turn became a major focus. The Lloyd George coalition therefore focused on propaganda's role in 'remobilising' the British public for the final stages of the war. Likewise, further to Lloyd George's impulse for centralisation and efficiency, official propaganda was reformed and rationalised by audience. In particular, management of domestic morale, especially containing class dissension, became a major focus. By 1918 this reorganisation resulted in the National War Aims Committee for domestic propaganda; the Enemy Propaganda Department at Crewe House for the enemy audiences; and the Ministry of Information for overseas and neutral audiences. Greater Britain's position within this campaign changed accordingly.

John Horne has explained how the British government 'remobilised' from 1917 to meet the challenge of domestic war weariness, and the threat of class and workers' resistance, through propaganda. Initially official British propaganda was seen as a discrete tool for specific purposes on the home front, such as recruiting and conscription. From 1917 the British government began to use propaganda for general management of domestic morale. Instead of expecting self-motivation as earlier, British propagandists sought to actively inspire and encourage domestic audiences, by offering reasons for continued sacrifice. British war aims were used as an implicit deal. This was the focus of the National War Aims Committee in particular, but also informed approaches to neutral and enemy propaganda. The approach moved from letting facts speak for themselves, to making a specific, confident case.⁶⁷ The Greater British dimensions of this change are under examined. Greater Britain

⁶⁷ See, Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 195-211; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Monger, 'Tangible Patriotism,' 244-261.

was, however, a significant part of the Lloyd George strategy, with rhetorical and organisational changes to reflect this. This changed the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, as from 1917, British official propaganda engaged the Dominions more actively than earlier.

The Dominions' ambiguous status meant their placement was still complex, however, and they remained caught between the rationalised categories of 'domestic' and 'overseas.' As fellow Britons, the domestic NWAC took some responsibility to 'remobilise' Dominion troops. As overseas audiences, meanwhile, the Ministry of Information jealously defended its authority over the Dominions. The Dominions therefore lacked a clear home in official propaganda throughout the war, even while they were a greater focus from 1917. The CO foreshadowed this persistent ambiguity in 1915, at an interdepartmental War Office conference.⁶⁸ While the internal propaganda needs of each Dominion were naturally seen as the preserve of each Dominion government to dictate, Lloyd George's reforms blurred the earlier more harsh division imposed by the CO. Meanwhile, Dominion propagandists in London had entered this grey space, and utilised the press and other media to launch their own campaigns, which were well established by 1917.

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Upon his accession, Lloyd George commissioned a report by journalist Robert Donald into potential reconfiguration of British propaganda efforts. This resulted in the formation of the Department of Information (DOI). This centralised various propaganda bodies under the Foreign Office, including Wellington House, into one department, under the direction of novelist and political biographer John Buchan.⁶⁹ Just as under Wellington House, the Dominions were an acknowledged category of the DOI's work, but existing efforts towards them expanded and became more formalised. Increased amounts of printed propaganda were sent through the official channels of New Zealand's

⁶⁸ TNA:PRO: CO323/685 – 56822 'Containing enemy press propaganda,' 9 December, 1915.

⁶⁹ Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 55-63; Philip M. Taylor, 'The Foreign Office and British Propaganda during the First World War,' *The Historical Journal*, 23:4 (1980), 875-898; Hew Strachan, 'John Buchan and the First World War: Fact into Fiction,' *War in History*, 16:3 (2009), 298-323.

Governor General and High Commissioner, conforming to previous CO advice.⁷⁰ Compared to the small number of British recruiting posters and publications sent sporadically up to 1916,⁷¹ from late 1917, New Zealand's High Commissioner Mackenzie received substantial collections of posters and pamphlets from the British 'Propaganda Department.' By late 1917 and into early 1918, large shipments of British publications, up to 9,000 at a time, were sent directly to New Zealand through steamship companies.⁷² This continued into early 1918, with shipments of tens of thousands of pamphlets sent regularly.⁷³

This was still an increase more in scale than character for Greater British propaganda. The DOI maintained Wellington House's 'hands off' approach of utilising private and voluntary networks for distribution and dissemination. This filtered British arguments through notable local figures at public meetings, supplying them with official material as talking points. This was its own, subtle form of co-creation, exploring British arguments to the Dominions, to inform the local process of propaganda. This ensured Greater Britain all sang from the same hymn sheet.

Imperial patriotic societies were used as distribution lines, to maintain secrecy and connect to influential figures. For instance, in mid 1917 the DOI created several series of lantern-slide reproductions of official War Office photographs from the front, which were distributed throughout the Dominions to branches of the Victoria League.⁷⁴ The Victoria League had strong connections to Britain's official propaganda campaign – both Buchan and his wife, and New Zealand Defence Minister James Allen, were all committee members, for instance.⁷⁵ Besides these networks, the High

⁷⁰ TNA:PRO: CO323/733 – 55353 'Propaganda in the colonies', 17 November, 1916, 29.

⁷¹ TPA: MU000207/001/0001 Mackenzie to Massey, Memorandum No.7223, (November 1918); ANZ: R22434750 – Allen to Lord Liverpool, 6 June 1918.

⁷² ANZ: R22434750 – Mackenzie to Massey, 28 December 1917 (Memorandum No. 10332).

⁷³ ANZ: R22434750 – Mackenzie to Massey, 19 February 1918 (Memorandum No. 1127); see also, Mackenzie to Massey, 5 March 1918 (Memorandum No. 1394); Mackenzie to Massey, 22 January 1918 (Memorandum No. 400); Mackenzie to Massey, 3 January 1918 (Memorandum No. 39).

⁷⁴ Macmillan Brown Library (MBL): MB367 - Victoria League of New Zealand Canterbury branch records; Victoria League Archives (VLA): Sixteenth Annual Report of the Victoria League Head Office (1917), 18; Pickles, 'Victoria League', 95; Eliza Reidi, 'Women, Gender, and the Promotion of Empire: The Victoria League 1900-1914', *The Historical Journal*, 45:3 (2002), 598; Sarah M. Dowling, 'Female Imperialism: The Victoria League in Canterbury, New Zealand, 1910-2003', (MA Thesis, University of Canterbury, 2004), 40; Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 195-199; 'Victoria League Lantern Slide Show,' *New Zealand Observer*, 25 May, 1918, 22; 'Women in Print', *Evening Post*, 3 July, 1918, 9; 'Exhibition of Official War Pictures' Advertisement, *Wanganui Chronicle*, 31 May, 1918, 7.

⁷⁵ VLA: Sixteenth Annual Report of the Victoria League Head Office' (1917), p.18; TNA:PRO: INF 4/5 'Report on the work of the Bureau established for the purpose of laying before neutral nations and the

Commissioners remained the agreed appropriate official connection between the DOI and the Dominions.

The DOI made efforts to remedy longstanding issues of war news circulation to the Dominions by assisting Dominion journalists with interviews and visits to the front and despatching special articles to Dominion newspapers.⁷⁶ Even so, the DOI essentially expanded Wellington House's work, and the CO still loomed as gatekeeper. In summarising the DOI's work, the Second Donald Report – commissioned as Buchan's leadership faltered⁷⁷ – shows that even for the change in scale, the DOI never saw the Dominions, India, nor the Empire in general, as important aspects of its work:

Mr. Masterman emphasised the point that his Department had no concern with propaganda in the United Kingdom, and what has been done in the Dominions and in India has been of such a casual character that one can rule out for practical purposes the whole of the British Empire.⁷⁸

In this regard, a main factor in prompting the next round of reorganisation in late 1917 was the growing control of the FO over the DOI,⁷⁹ which marginalised the Dominions in the DOI by reinforcing their ambiguous categorisation. The resulting round of reforms entailed the highest level of official propaganda engagement with Greater Britain during the war.

1.4 – The Ministry of Information

The DOI had not realised Lloyd George's ambitions for official propaganda, and so in late 1917, official propaganda was reorganised again. A shortcoming was the DOI's lack of influence in Cabinet, falling under the work of existing ministries. As a result of the Second Donald Report, submitted in December 1917, the Ministry of Information was established in February 1918, as a

Dominions the case of Great Britain and her Allies', (15 July, 1915); 'John Buchan's report on the workings of the Ministry of Information' (September, 1917); INF 4/1B 'The activities of Wellington House during the Great War'; See also, Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 152; Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 12-14.

⁷⁶ TNA:PRO: INF 4/1B – Buchan to Carson, Department of Information Report, September 1917, 2.

⁷⁷ Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 73.

⁷⁸ Parliamentary Archives (PA): BBK/E/3/37 – Appendix V, 'Report on the Operations of Wellington House by Arthur Spurgeon', 23.

⁷⁹ Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 73; Taylor, 'Foreign Office,' 875-898.

separate and independent ministry, with according ministerial influence.⁸⁰ This reflected a larger reform to organise propaganda by audience, rather than function. The Ministry controlled overseas, allied, and neutral propaganda; the National War Aims Committee controlled domestic propaganda; and the Enemy Propaganda Bureau at Crewe House was responsible for enemy audiences. Some overlap and competition existed between the three.⁸¹

The Ministry claimed particular authority for the Dominions, reflecting Greater Britain's increased strategic importance in propaganda from 1917. This increased attention seemed only to underscore the Dominions' ambiguous semi-domestic position, as they were still caught between domestic and overseas categories. The NWAC made a similar claim to Dominion soldiers.⁸² This ambiguity characterised Greater Britain's interaction with British propaganda for the rest of the war.

The role of Minister of Information was given to the Canadian Sir Max Aitken, later Lord Beaverbrook. By 1918 Beaverbrook had made his name in Greater British propaganda. As Canada's 'eye witness' in London, he was the denizen of Canada's wildly successful propaganda and publicity efforts in Britain. He had already gained influence in British official propaganda: through the success of the Canadian War Records Organisation's cinematographic efforts, he was appointed head of the War Office Cinematograph Committee.⁸³ Aitken was also an influential press magnate in Britain, as owner of the *Daily Express*, and MP for Ashton-under-Lyne. His role as the Canadian government's 'eye witness' in London entailed to reporting upon British war politics to the Canadian government, and promoting Canadian interests in the British press.

Beaverbrook is a notable figure of Greater British propaganda. His wartime career represents the opportunities presented by the particular dynamics of Greater British propaganda, for propagandists willing to seize them. Beaverbrook's efforts at Canadian publicity entered the vacuum of Dominion attention from Britain's propaganda organisations earlier in the war. Similar to Murdoch's complaints, Beaverbrook's Canadian publicity efforts attempted to counter Britain's 'generalising'

⁸⁰ Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 126-127; Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 70-73, 134.

⁸¹ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 89.

⁸² E.g., TNA:PRO – T 102/16 National War Aims Committee (Guest Committee) – 'Meetings Department Report, 25th September, 1917,' 5.

⁸³ Cook, 'Documenting War,' 270; Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 123; Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent*, 53.

reportage of the war effort. Beaverbrook for Canada, and Murdoch for Australia, took advantage of the ambiguity of Dominion status, and the gaps created by the CO's restraint and British 'generalisation.' In Britain, both advocates created publicity campaigns that promoted their Dominions' war efforts, serving their own domestic audiences, but also the British public, and metropolitan opinion leaders. Where Murdoch utilised the British press for his aims, Beaverbrook had notable success intervening in British official propaganda. As much as Britain's early war propaganda organisation provided roadblocks to Greater British interaction, the particularity of Greater Britishness as semi-domestic also provided opportunity.

Beaverbrook was exceptionally successful at this task, establishing the Canadian War Records Office to fulfil his work. His *Canada in Khaki* series of books, valorising the Canadian Expeditionary Force's work, sold extremely well in Britain.⁸⁴ He also utilised photography and cinema effectively, so much so that the CWRO's efforts outpaced British efforts. The extensive publicity of the Canadian troops in the British press became a point of parody and even resentment amongst fellow British propagandists.⁸⁵ Murdoch similarly utilised personal Fleet Street diplomacy for greater publicity for Australia. His connection to the press baron Alfred Harmsworth Lord Northcliffe opened the Northcliffe-owned *Daily Mail* and *The Times* as outlets for favourable Australian coverage.⁸⁶ Towards the end of the war, both Canada and Australia ran highly successful and profitable photographic exhibitions in London, which also transitioned effectively into work to commemorate these Dominion war efforts in national war museum collections.⁸⁷ New Zealand was slower to take up this sort of work.

While this success recommended Beaverbrook to the role of Minister of Information, his appointment was also a political manoeuvre of self-preservation for Lloyd George.⁸⁸ Alongside Beaverbrook, Lord Northcliffe was appointed as head of Crewe House. These appointments were strategically designed to 'anchor' or neutralise the two dangerous influential newspaper magnates, who had been instrumental in Asquith's downfall through publicity of the shell crisis, while also

⁸⁴ See, Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295.

⁸⁵ See, PA: BBK/E/2/8 – July-Aug. 1917 – General Correspondence and War Cinematograph Committee – John Buchan to Sir Reginald Brade, 14 August 1917. See also, Cook, 'Documenting,' 265-295.

⁸⁶ Putnis, 'Lord Northcliffe,' 71-86.

⁸⁷ See, Wellington, *Exhibiting War*; Wellington, 'Empire and nation,' 185-198; Sheftall, 'Dominion Fighting Man,' 81-99; Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake,' 165-179; Cook, 'Documenting,' 265-295.

⁸⁸ Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent*, p.53.

utilising their expertise and connections for the benefit of official propaganda.⁸⁹ Lloyd George satirically noted in private that the two press barons were perfectly suited to undermining enemy populations' confidence in their governments and General Staff, as they had done to Asquith.⁹⁰ As regards Greater Britain, the result was to put an experienced Dominion propagandist at the head of Britain's official propaganda campaign. This changed not only the scale, but also the formality and focus of the Dominions' place in British official propaganda.

Unlike its predecessors, the Ministry sought exclusive authority over Dominion-focused propaganda. This meant not only increased material, but also attention, to Greater Britain. Beaverbrook demonstrated as such in a clash with the FO:

The Ministry of Information claims that ... for the Dominions with which it deals, it alone is in a position to decide the requirements of propaganda of all categories, and the preparation of such propaganda, whether in the field or elsewhere, subject only to ... military, naval or air censorship.⁹¹

This determined, almost defensive, claim to authority over the Dominions marked a sharp contrast to Masterman's relative indifference in 1917. The Ministry backed up this claim by installing figures with Dominion knowledge and expertise to its staff.⁹²

Significantly, the CO conceded to the Ministry's control of Dominion propaganda by 1918. Discussing film distribution to the Empire, the CO representative focused on arrangements towards the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, but deferred to the Ministry for the Dominions:

No action on our part is required in regard to the self-governing Dominions. I believe that the War Office Cinematograph Committee have already done what is needful as regards those Dominions, presumably in consultation with the High Commissioners and Agents General.⁹³

Though the CO still presumed its policy of consulting High Commissioners was being followed, this was a notable concession of authority. The NWAC was less willing to concede to the Ministry, by

⁸⁹ Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 77-78; 89-90.

⁹⁰ Leo Amery, Diary entry 5th March, 1918 in, *The Leo Amery Diaries – Volume 1: 1896-1929*, ed. John Barnes and David Nicholson, (London: 1980), 208; see also, A.J.P. Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, (London: 1972), pp.135-140; see also, Messinger, *British Propaganda*, p.136; Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent*, 53.

⁹¹ PA: BBK/E/3/35 – Memorandum 3 September 1918; see also, BBK/E/3/3 – 'Draft of Ministry of Information Memorandum'.

⁹² PA: BBK/E/3/38 – 'Staff Report'.

⁹³ TNA:PRO: CO 323/789 – 'Distribution of Official Cinematograph Films in the Colonies', 149.

contrast.⁹⁴ This represented a significant formalisation of Greater British propaganda; under the Ministry the Dominions were a specific rather than incidental focus. This was indicative of the Lloyd George coalition's wider strategic shift towards Greater Britain.⁹⁵

The work of the Ministry of Information was a change for Greater British propaganda, not just in scale but also in nature, in terms of the role of British official propaganda. The Ministry operationally formalised, or enshrined, the informality of Greater British propaganda. Beaverbrook prioritised popular diplomacy or 'personal propaganda,' influencing opinion through personal networking, including through cooperation, influence, and hospitality, of notable figures, and developing links between Dominion journalists and the British press.⁹⁶ This approach had been key to the success of Beaverbrook's and Murdoch's national efforts in Britain earlier in the war, and was similarly important in Beaverbrook's pre-war political career.⁹⁷

To improve channels between Dominion journalists and the War Office, for instance, the Ministry recreated the effective personal press diplomacy that benefitted Canada and Australia. It established a press centre, where overseas journalists in London could gather, to be briefed on the latest war news from the Ministry, and network with important figures. According to the Ministry, this, 'influenc[ed] the opinions of all these correspondents favourably and so ... all their publics throughout the world.'⁹⁸ This institutionalised the informal principles of Greater British interaction to better fit the pressures of the war. Personal networking was leveraged towards the distribution of news and information throughout the Dominions. This style of personal propaganda remained as influential as any other material innovation for Greater British propaganda. This was reflective of Greater Britain's peacetime dynamics of interaction, but these required operational assistance and rationalisation under the pressures of war. The Ministry formalised the informal nature of Greater Britain.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 37.

⁹⁵ See, French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, esp. 3-11, 62-64.

⁹⁶ PA: BBK/E/3/3 – Draft Ministry of Information memorandum; see also, Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 144.

⁹⁷ PA: BBK/E/3/3 – Draft Ministry of Information memorandum; see also, Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 131, 144; Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 123.

⁹⁸ PA: BBK/E/3/38 – 'Extension of Ministry Work' Report, 1918.

⁹⁹ See, Thompson, 'Posters,' 166-182; Thompson, 'Electric Octopus,' 331-356.

The Dominions therefore achieved a new privileged status under the Ministry. Within the Ministry's press operations, a 'Dominions and USA Department' was formed to coordinate these personal press interactions, to keep the Dominion press 'in very close touch with the Ministry.'¹⁰⁰ This section also organised visits of notable Dominion nationals, supervised despatches of literature to the Dominions, and generally established a firm organisational link between Britain and the Dominions that had not existed outside the CO in terms of propaganda before 1918. This work had peacetime precedents, but the Ministry formalised and expanded it. The Dominions' pairing with the USA was likely at least in part down to organisational expediency – organising English-speaking nations together – but underscored the Dominions increased attention and consideration, in a position of privilege alongside the USA.¹⁰¹ Strategically, this again echoes the strategic pivot to the Dominions and the USA, especially in terms of desired post-war relationships, under the Lloyd George coalition.¹⁰²

A specific Ministry initiative was to coordinate visits to London and the front for delegations of 'responsible' journalists from the Dominions. These were to inform Dominion populations 'what Britain is doing for the Allied cause'.¹⁰³ These delegations were formed of a variety of Dominion newspapers, including from hostile opinion papers or labour-focused papers. A journalist from the Australian paper *Labour Call*, was chosen for this reason. The visit seemed to have the intended effect:

[The journalist was] believed to be a pacifist in his sympathies, prior to his visit. There is every reason to believe that there will be a change in his opinions since visiting the fleet and witnessing the effort the Motherland is putting forward in this War.¹⁰⁴

This was an extension of the Fleet Street personal diplomacy that had served Beaverbrook and Murdoch well. It represented a further utilising of the power of the press as a conduit for Greater British propaganda.

¹⁰⁰ PA: BBK/E/3/4 – 'Memorandum of the Committee', 29-30.

¹⁰¹ Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, pp.9-14; Pietsch, 'Rethinking,' 447-450.

¹⁰² French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, 62-64; see also, Macmillan, Margaret, *Peacemakers: The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to End the War*, (London: 2001).

¹⁰³ PA: BBK/E/3/4 – 'The Ministry of Information – Report', 4 March – 4 August, 1918, 31; see also, TNA:PRO: CO 209/299 – Mackenzie to Massey, 1918, 53.

¹⁰⁴ PA: BBK/E/3/4 – 'Herewith a brief outline respecting the personal of the Dominion Press Mission'.

More broadly this work represented a shift in the perceived utility of propaganda later in the war – from targeted campaigns, to maintaining opinion more generally, including in the Dominions. This also reflects the seriousness with which British politicians took to maintaining Dominion morale by 1917, as a major pillar of the Lloyd George coalition's strategy.¹⁰⁵ Beaverbrook hosted such delegations, taking them to personally funded luncheons and dinners,¹⁰⁶ which further underscored the importance of personal, almost informal interaction in Greater Britain.¹⁰⁷

The Ministry also formalised Beaverbrook's efforts in publicising Canada in the British press, for the rest of the Dominions. The Ministry acted as a clearinghouse to supply the press with Dominion-focused and Dominion-written journalism. This particularly benefitted New Zealand, which lacked a comparable advocate like Murdoch and Beaverbrook to do this alone. By mid-1918, journalism by New Zealand writers focusing on the work of the NZEF, and New Zealand official photographs from the front, were regularly supplied to the Ministry to distribute to British papers, and through their internal overseas publications, particularly to South America. A dedicated New Zealand-focused edition of the Overseas Club's journal, authorised by the Ministry, was arranged.¹⁰⁸ New Zealand benefitted from the formalisation of this collaborative co-creation of Greater British propaganda.

The Ministry therefore took over the CO's role in advocating for the Dominions, doing so with more fervour. The Ministry was confident in making the case for the importance of Greater Britain in propaganda. A Ministry report stated as such:

It comes within the province of the Ministry of Information to advertise the British Empire, for the purpose of making known to all neutral countries – and for that matter, also to our Allies – what it stands for, and what our system of self-government means; to explain the vastness of our resources, our commanding control over great many raw materials, and the way we have built up a free commonwealth of nations by freedom, instead of by force.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, 62-64.

¹⁰⁶ PA: BBK/E/3/4 – 'Cheques refunded by Lord Beaverbrook in respect of Luncheons and Dinners paid for by the Ministry'; Ministry of Information to Stanley Baldwin, Treasury, 6 November, 1918; see also, Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 55.

¹⁰⁷ Pietsch, 'Rethinking', 447-450; Barnes, 'Familiar London', 337-339; Barnes, *New Zealand's London*, 2-10.

¹⁰⁸ ANZ: R25103271 – Report on work of War Records Section, 17 October, 1918 – 'Report on War Records Section, 7/10/18.'

¹⁰⁹ TNA:PRO: INF 4/8 – Deposited papers of Sir Robert Donald – correspondence and press cuttings – 'Advertising the Empire', 19 May 1918.

Beaverbrook's leadership afforded the Dominions this new status, but likewise entailed certain inequities in the Ministry's work.

Beaverbrook's leadership naturally meant that Canada was generally privileged ahead of the other Dominions in the Ministry's work. Beaverbrook's meeting with the Canadian press delegation was an apparently elaborate private dinner, costing £264. By contrast he hosted a joint luncheon for the rest of the Dominions, spending a mere £36.¹¹⁰ Likewise, in discussions of the eventual distribution of profits from official war films, Canada made out well, garnering a £10,000 share of the proceeds, to Britain's £20,000, and £5,000 each for India, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand.¹¹¹ Canada's advantage in the Ministry was not only Beaverbrook's continuing advocacy, but also the institutional advantage of its formation through the shell of Beaverbrook's earlier Canada-focused organisations. Beaverbrook's connections were certainly stronger in Canada, and even as Minister of Information, he retained his mantle as Canada's eyewitness, even if unofficially.

The formalisation of the Ministry certainly was to New Zealand's advantage, but frustrations continued. New Zealand Defence Department staff in London resentfully noted the Ministry's Canadian favouritism. Using Beaverbrook's work as an example to prompt New Zealand authorities to sponsor similar publicity work, Sergeant Gambrill of the New Zealand War Records Office in London complained that Beaverbrook had effectively made Britain pay for the Canadian War Records Office.¹¹² The Ministry therefore entailed a high watermark of the Dominions' consideration and engagement in Britain's official propaganda campaign. At the same time, it highlighted the uneven, competitive nature of Greater British propaganda, belying a reading of easy cooperation and uniformity.

The essential ambiguity of the Dominions' place in Britain's official propaganda campaign persisted into 1918. Despite the Ministry's assertion of exclusivity over Dominion propaganda, other bodies still sought influence over Greater Britain. The domestic NWAC used the Dominions as a rhetorical tool, as per their guiding principles for speakers:

¹¹⁰ PA: BBK/E/3/4 – 'Cheques refunded by Lord Beaverbrook in respect of Luncheons and Dinners paid for by the Ministry'.

¹¹¹ PA: BBK/E/2/19 – 'Second Report of the War Office Cinematograph Committee', August, 1919.

¹¹² ANZ: R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records section and Publicity branch, 15 July 1917 – 21 April 1920: 'New Zealand War Museums Committee.'

To encourage unity and stifle party class dissensions by dwelling insistently on the momentous issues at stake, on the gravity of the crisis, on the spontaneous cooperation of Oversea Dominions, on the moral and material support of America, on the fact that the cohesion and resolution of the Allies depend very largely on the example and inspiration of this country.¹¹³

It also undertook a degree of work towards the Dominions, including supplying the New Zealand War Records section with NWAC literature.¹¹⁴ The minutes of the NWAC's meetings department mention the need to fold Dominion troops into the work to re-confirm British war aims:

Information has reached the Department as to the need of explaining to our troops the causes of the war, the issues at stake and aims of the Allies. There appears to be great ignorance upon the whole subject and steps should be taken to place the facts before the men. One reliable correspondent tells us that meetings for the Dominion troops on Salisbury Plain are urgently needed. With the sanction of the Committee the Department proposes to arrange a series of meetings in connection with the various Huts.¹¹⁵

This proposed folding the Dominions, or at least Dominion troops in Britain, into the 'national' work of the NWAC. Similar to the Dominions' connection to the domestic PRC, this blurred the lines between domestic and overseas in Greater British propaganda.

Lloyd George's reforms to propaganda changed the Dominions' connection to Britain's official propaganda campaign, if not necessarily clarifying it. They continued to exist in an ambiguous semi-domestic space. Being split between overseas and domestic propaganda organisations created new gaps in addition to covering former ones. Canada and Australia utilised this ambiguity, with their confident personal diplomacy with Fleet Street. New Zealand was much slower to adopt this sort of self-starting publicity, reflecting its capacity and distinct approach. This ambiguity therefore affected New Zealand in particular.

¹¹³ TNA:PRO: T102/18 National War Aims Committee (Guest Committee): Records. Meetings Department – 'Meetings Department Report, 25th September, 1917.'

¹¹⁴ TNA:PRO: T 102/18 National War Aims Committee (Guest Committee): Records. Meetings Department - Report up to 8th December, 1917.'

¹¹⁵ TNA:PRO: T 102/18 National War Aims Committee (Guest Committee): Records. Meetings Department - Meetings Department Report, 25th September, 1917,' 5.

1.5 – New Zealand Publicity

Political and material pressures of mobilisation initially disrupted Greater British communications. These delays and disconnections affected New Zealand particularly. Where the larger Dominions of Canada and Australia utilised the ambiguity of Greater British propaganda to their advantage,¹¹⁶ New Zealand struggled. Not only was it materially less capable and more distant than the larger Dominions, its approach to propaganda and publicity exacerbated its struggles. New Zealand pursued a more cooperative approach with British politicians and propagandists. It relied more on the collaborative aspects of Greater British propaganda co-creation. This left it subject to the difficulties of Greater British propaganda, than its fellow larger Dominions. Government attitude mattered. Beyond his own skills and connections, Beaverbrook had the benefit of Canadian government backing his initial publicity work. New Zealand was less inclined and prepared to conduct this sort of work, at least initially. The New Zealand experience therefore shows the initial disconnections of Greater British propaganda coordination, and the war's effect of inverting former privileges and advantages of Greater British interaction.

New Zealand was much slower to adopt its own publicity efforts in London. In part this was due to its more modest national character in Imperial interactions, compared to Canada and Australia. Sergeant Gambrell, appointed to the New Zealand's War Records Section suggested as such:

The New Zealand is very much like the Englishman – show him a result and he will see the point but otherwise he will not be sympathetic. Canada has shown to England what can be done with military records and England has followed her lead. Moreover the English public are unknowingly paying for Canada's records and collections. We need a beginning and with care could obtain a like result.¹¹⁷

This hesitancy was also material, due to New Zealand's smaller capacity and influence, which informed its official attitude. A report by the late-established War Records Section of the NZEF in London, for instance, accused the New Zealand government of ignorance and lack of imagination towards publicity:

¹¹⁶ See Putnis, 'Lord Northcliffe,' 71-86; Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295.

¹¹⁷ ANZ: R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records section and Publicity branch, 15 July 1917 – 21 April 1920; Gambrell to GOC NZEF in UK, 21 June 1918.

We are up against an unimaginative Government who cannot at the distance conceive the importance of the works we might undertake. Later we will [be] asked why it was not done, but now any move will be vetoed by those in charge of war expense.¹¹⁸

Advocates for greater effort noted the success of Australian and Canadian publicity in London, lamenting the New Zealand government's short sightedness in not following suit:

[I]t is difficult for the Government in New Zealand to fully appreciate the effect of their action which will result in the Dominion being in a very unfavourable position compared with other Dominions in regard to establishing a War museum after the war. Canada and Australia have each appointed a number of artists, and have realised large profits from the exhibition and sale of reproductions of their work, in addition they have gained considerable advertisement for their respective countries by display of war pictures in London. We could, I feel sure, follow their example with great advantage and guarantee the not only would initial expense be recovered but that considerable profit would be obtained ...¹¹⁹

New Zealand's official war correspondent, Malcolm Ross, did not undertake similarly confident publicity efforts as Beaverbrook, Murdoch, or even his Australian counterpart C.E.W. Bean. New Zealand lacked an advocate to voice its complaints or concerns over early issues such as war news delays. The disconnection and disruption of the early years of the war to Greater British communications therefore affected New Zealand particularly. This compounded New Zealand's extreme distance, which already caused delays and high cost. The CO's restraint increased the importance of personal networks in Greater Britain, which New Zealand was slow to activate.

Examining how New Zealand struggled in its cooperative, modest approach, where Australia and Canada gained publicity advantage, shows the complexity of Greater British propaganda. Major disruptions in the status quo for New Zealand were less determinative for the larger Dominions. These differences were as much to do with national approach, as inherent limitations.

New Zealand's approach to propaganda, including domestically, was circumspect and tended to follow British approaches. In particular, New Zealand shared the early British conception of official propaganda as only for specific purposes, such as recruiting or conscription. Proposals for domestic propaganda in New Zealand therefore arose in relation to specific need. For instance, the first proposal for a New Zealand propaganda office arose in 1916 in response to public controversy

¹¹⁸ ANZ: R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records section and Publicity branch, 15 July 1917 – 21 April 1920; Gabrill to GOC NZEF in UK, 21 June 1918.

¹¹⁹ ANZ: R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records section and Publicity branch, 15 July 1917 – 21 April 1920: 'New Zealand War Museums Committee.'

around the introduction of conscription.¹²⁰ Journalist C.E. Wheeler suggested to Major Francis that New Zealand create a body similar to Britain's Press Bureau to achieve a more favourable reciprocal exchange of war news between the Defence Department and the press, and so grow favourable opinion for the war effort.¹²¹ The invocation of Britain's Press Bureau underscores New Zealand's preference for British models.¹²² This proposal failed to take off as criticism died down.¹²³ Major Francis noted, 'fortunately the attacks ceased about the same time the authority was given, and no appointment was made.'¹²⁴ New Zealand's early view of propaganda was therefore careful and reactive, rather than seizing opportunities for publicity.

These plans were resurrected towards the end of the war, in response to criticism around demobilisation. Major Francis noted in 1918:

It is anticipated from the tone of many newspapers during the past month and the desire of a considerable section of the public to criticize the National Government for any real or imaginary grievances that once demobilisation commences a campaign against the 'powers that be' similar to that of 1915-6 may be looked for.¹²⁵

In late November 1918, at the war's end, Wheeler was appointed as the Defence Department's press agent.¹²⁶ British examples were again invoked, referring to the reforms of 1916, which had been 'so successful in England at a critical time.'¹²⁷ Notably, this was a post-war propaganda effort, which Britain was hesitant to enact. The appointment was also small scale: Wheeler was appointed to devote approximately 'half his time' to the role, at an annual salary of £250 – barely enough to cover a

¹²⁰ ANZ: R10701377 – Memorandum for Adjunct General, 25 November 1918; R22434688 – Publicity General File: Major Francis New Zealand Military Forces memorandum, 25 November 1918.

¹²¹ ANZ: R22434688 – Publicity General File: C.E. Wheeler to Major Francis, 30 March 1916.

¹²² Stephen Badsey, 'Press, Propaganda and Public Perceptions', in *A Part of History: Aspects of the British Experience of the First World War*, ed. Michael Howard (London: 2008), 28-32; Deian Hopkin, 'Domestic Censorship in the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5:4 (1970), 155; Colin Lovelace, 'British Press Censorship during the First World War' in *Newspaper History from the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day*, ed. George Boyce, James Curran & Pauline Wingate (London: 1978), 308-314.

¹²³ ANZ: R10701377 – Memorandum for Adjunct General, 25 November 1918.

¹²⁴ ANZ: R22434688 – Major Francis New Zealand Military Forces memorandum, 25th November, 1918.

¹²⁵ ANZ: R22434688 – Major Francis New Zealand Military Forces memorandum, 25th November 1918.

¹²⁶ ANZ: R10701377 – Memorandum for Adjunct General, 25 November 1918.

¹²⁷ ANZ: R10701377 – Memorandum for Adjunct General, 25 November 1918.

dinner with Beaverbrook!¹²⁸ By July 1919, Wheeler suggested his salary be halved, as his workload was severely reduced, and by November 1919, his work was concluded.¹²⁹

New Zealand's struggles were also material. The contingency of imperial telegraph lines was pronounced in New Zealand, at an offshoot of the Australian line. New Zealand was at the mercy of a single link, subject to pressures, congestions, and even inclement weather. For instance, a large storm in Sydney delayed the despatch of war news to New Zealand at the outbreak of the war for several days, delaying news of the initial deployment of British troops.¹³⁰ The high demand for war news, and its quick pace, made these delays more critical than in peacetime. Generalised Greater British disruptions were therefore more pronounced in New Zealand.

Without the internal political tensions of Boer rebellion as in South Africa, or French Canadian tensions as in Canada, the impetus for the CO to intervene to improve these delays was particularly low for New Zealand. New Zealand, like its larger neighbour Australia, never raised above the general Dominion waterline as a particular concern for British politicians.¹³¹ Not even the Waikato Māori resistance to conscription caused Colonial Office-level concern. New Zealand also lacked similar strategic incentive to British propagandists as Canada and South Africa did, on the doorstep of more significant strategic propaganda priorities of the USA and the rest of Africa respectively.

New Zealand's particular isolation from British propaganda – both geographically and strategically – is visually represented as a series of War Office maps from 1917 showing networks of cinema propaganda distribution by continent. In these regional maps, New Zealand does not even warrant specific depiction. Instead, a map for Australia contains a note that New Zealand would be supplied through steamship companies and private firms from Australia [Figure 1]. Maps featuring Canada and South Africa [Figures 2 & 3] are much more sophisticated, detailing local networks for distribution into the USA and Africa. Australia and New Zealand did not warrant such attention.

¹²⁸ ANZ: R22434688 – Defence Department memorandum, 19 December 1918; Allen to Robin, 19 December 1918.

¹²⁹ ANZ: R22434688 – Wheeler to Allen, 31 July 1919; Allen to Wheeler, 2 August 1919; Allen memorandum, 19 November 1919.

¹³⁰ E.g., 'Terrific Storm Sweeps Over Sydney,' *New Zealand Times*, 26 November, 1914, 5.

¹³¹ See, TNA:PRO: CO323/693 – 58573 'Raemaeker's cartoons', 15 December, 1915, 639.

Australasia, as self-sufficient and largely unproblematic, was left to coordinate its own efforts, with limited input from Britain. This reflected the community of trust between Britain and the antipodean Dominions, but resulted in a kind of inverse privilege. Trust led to disconnection.

The maps' conflation of New Zealand and Australia as 'Australasia,' was a recurrent issue that, rankled New Zealand. Gambrill cited this as a motivation for the formation of New Zealand's Publicity Branch, stating, 'One of the most important works of this Section should be advertising New Zealand in Great Britain – even now we are still confused with the Australians.'¹³²

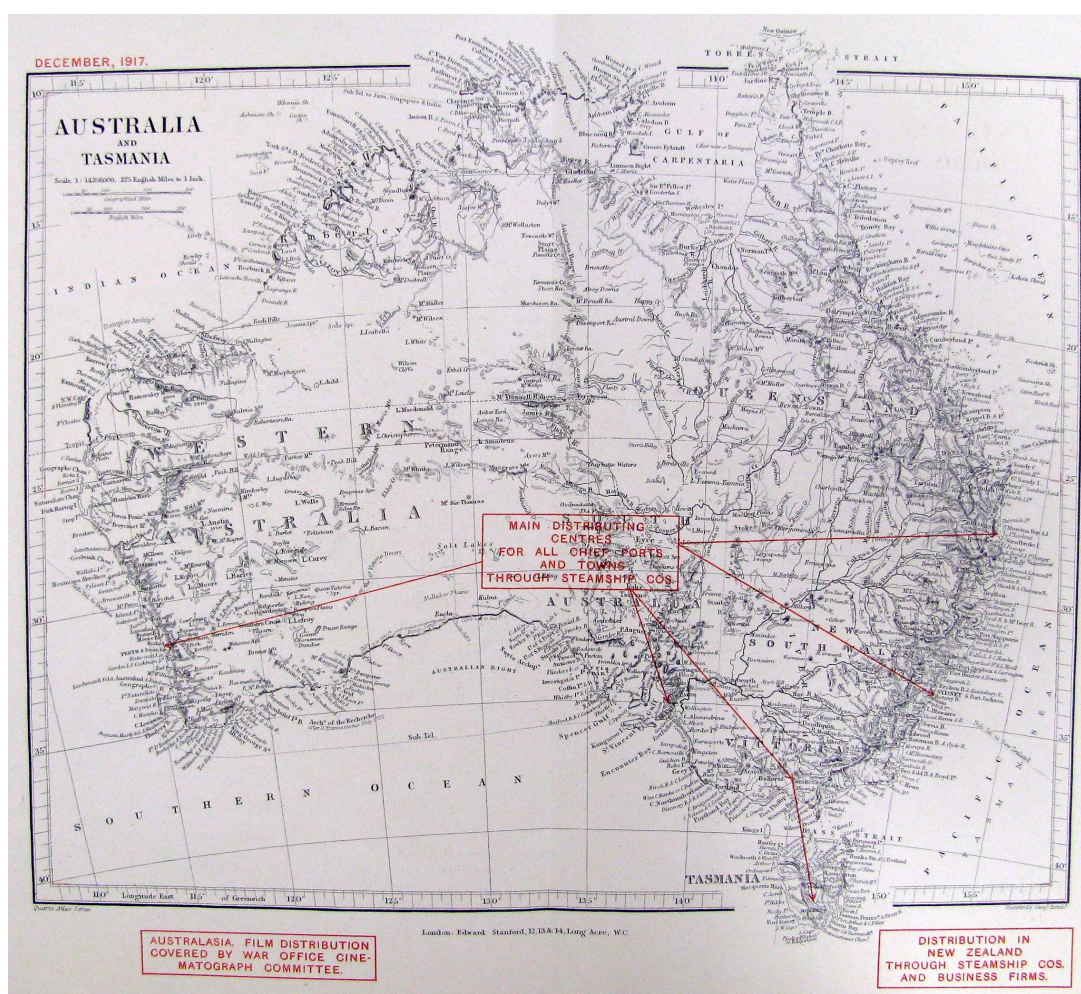


Figure 1 TNA:PRO: WO153/1348 Map Illustrating British Propaganda Distribution by Continent - Australian Map.

¹³² ANZ: R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records section and Publicity branch, 15 July 1917 – 21 April 1920. 'Gambrill to War Records Section, 21 June 1918.'

[illegible]

Figure 3 TNA:PRO: WO153/1348 Map Illustrating British Propaganda Distribution by Continent –African Map.

The implications of New Zealand's distance, especially regarding the supply of news of the NZEF, eventually provoked change in 1918.¹³³ Sergeant Gambrill explained the New Zealand frustration at the Press Bureau's slow pace of distribution, including despatches from the official New Zealand correspondent Malcolm Ross:

There is a big delay, apparently in France between Capt. Ross's dating of his cable and its final despatch to England (Press Bureau). A specific example is the case of the previous cable has been sent to Capt. Ross in which the course of the cable has been traced in periods from the time it left him at Divisional Headquarters, and it was shown that apparently two days were lost between Divisional Headquarters, and GHQ France. It was suggested that this should be investigated and remedied.¹³⁴

Even if Ross' intentions had been similar to his Canadian and Australian counterparts, he was stymied by organisational delays. Gambrill noted that this affected New Zealand specifically, where Australia had solved its delays through its Prime Minister Billy Hughes: 'Until recently the same delay occurred in regard to Australian cables and Mr. Hughes has the same matter remedied.'¹³⁵ New Zealand only lately asserted itself within Greater British propaganda.

Finally, in 1918, following Canadian and Australian examples, New Zealand established a publicity office in Britain to solve these issues: the Publicity Branch of the War Records Office. Without a strong advocate, or similar Prime Ministerial backing, New Zealand struggled to overcome what it perceived as unfair disadvantages within Greater Britain. The Publicity Office did to a greater degree for New Zealand what the Ministry did in a generalised way: institutionalise and formalise the informal, personal propaganda and press relationships, to afford greater publicity for New Zealand. This was a privilege that could be taken for granted in peacetime, but required institutional help during the war.

The India Office had facilitated this personal diplomacy for India, while Canada and Australia had improvised similar organisational machinery through Beaverbrook and Murdoch. Only through a similar formalisation was New Zealand able to overcome its perceived limitations. A report

¹³³ ANZ: R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records Section and Publicity Branch. 'Gambrill to War Records Section, 21 June 1918.'

¹³⁴ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919. Gambrill to Headquarters, NZEF, London, 15th October, 1918.

¹³⁵ ANZ: R25103023 – Gambrill to Headquarters, NZEF, London, 15th October, 1918.

noted that the branch improved, if not fully resolved, delays in Ross' despatches.¹³⁶ Through this organisation, New Zealand began to rely less on collaborative co-creation, or the despatches of Australian and British correspondents standing in for Ross'. Issues caused by timing and distance remained, but the branch certainly helped. While the CO and later the Ministry attempted to provide this advocacy, New Zealand still required its own effort.

Following Beaverbrook and Murdoch's work, the New Zealand's Publicity Branch also utilised the British press for favourable New Zealand publicity. Personal propaganda, specifically establishing personal relationships with editors of British papers, proved effective again. This supplemented the Ministry's generalised efforts. A particular focus was disaggregating New Zealand from Australasia in press coverage. Initial efforts were satisfying to Gambrill at least:

Furthermore a personal connection has been made with all the leading London newspapers which has resulted in a more sympathetic treatment of New Zealand matter and a general increase in the knowledge of New Zealand's effort among the newspaper staffs. This in itself is indirectly affording us a measure of publicity.¹³⁷

This was a quantifiable impact, as the same report claimed that in October 1918 alone, the Publicity Branch facilitated 52 photographic pieces, and 77 articles in 46 different British dailies – 45 of which were by Ross specifically.¹³⁸ By 1918 New Zealand was beginning to make use of the press as a conduit for its publicity, as Murdoch had earlier for Australia. This divergence will be explored more closely in Chapter 4. With organisational backing, New Zealand was able to achieve similar informal influence as the larger Dominions. Another report notes that news distribution delays were likewise overcome by 'investigation and personal interviews' with members of the Press Bureau and Press Association, which led to greater consideration for New Zealand.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ ANZ: R25103271 – Report on work of War Records Section, 17 October 1918. – 'Report on Work of War Records Section.' 7/10/18 7.

¹³⁷ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919. – Gambrill, Capt. i/c NZ War Records Section to Headqrs., NZEF in UK, 'NZ War Records Section – Publicity Branch,' 5th November 1918.

¹³⁸ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919. – Gambrill, Capt. i/c NZ War Records Section to Headqrs., NZEF in UK, 'NZ War Records Section – Publicity Branch,' 5th November 1918.

¹³⁹ ANZ: R25103271 – Report on work of War Records Section, 17 October 1918. – 'Report on Work of War Records Section.' 7/10/18, 7.

New Zealand's experience demonstrates both the challenges and opportunities in mobilising Greater British propaganda. The juncture between the *potential* and the *reality* of British imperial communications networks was revealed explicitly through Greater British propaganda. New Zealand struggled under these material and political disruptions, relying, as it did, on the collaborative aspects of propaganda co-creation. Conversely, Canada and Australia claimed advantage out of the ambiguity, and developed sophisticated propaganda and publicity efforts in London. While the Ministry of Information helped to remedy New Zealand's issues in a general way, it was only through its own formalised efforts at personal diplomacy and propaganda, that New Zealand seized something of the opportunity of Greater British propaganda.

The war exaggerated New Zealand's issues, but a frustration that its voice was occasionally crowded out on the Greater British stage existed before the war. Ward's proposals at the 1911 Imperial Conference suggested as such. Accordingly, some within the Publicity Branch advocated continuing its work into peacetime, to remedy this New Zealand concern:

I would suggest that the value to New Zealand of the world of this Branch is apparent, and that it should be continued after demobilisation on similar lines under the aegis of the High Commissioner ... In comparison with the large sums expended by other Dominions on this work the results appear to me to be highly satisfactory and give cause for regret that the matter was not taken up sooner.¹⁴⁰

Ultimately, however, conforming to British practices, New Zealand's Publicity Branch was rapidly wound up at the end of the war. The continuation of dedicated state propaganda and publicity work was seen as a dangerous precedent in peacetime.¹⁴¹ Even so, for Dominion advocates, the war had shown the need for reform in communications.

¹⁴⁰ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919. – Gambrill, Capt. i/c NZ War Records Section to Headqrs., NZEF in UK, 'NZ War Records Section – Publicity Branch,' 5th November 1918.

¹⁴¹ For New Zealand see, ANZ: R22434688 – Richardson to Potter, 26 June 1920; R22434795 – Extract from Letter from Chief of Imperial General Staff, 14 October 1920; R3091266 – 'National Education System' proposal, National Efficiency Board, 7 March 1918; R22434688 – Richardson to Potter, 26 June 1920; For Britain see, TNA:PRO: CO537/1014 – The Ministry of Information – as to the winding up of – and as to the proposed transfer to the Colonial Office of such part of their work as concerns the Dominions, 1-2.

1.6 – Post-War Reform

For Round Table Movement imperialists, the war exposed the limitations of the Greater British status quo, especially in terms of representation and communication, and the need for reform.¹⁴² Equally, the Lloyd George coalition's strategic pivot towards the Dominions, including in propaganda, provided an opportunity to test or achieve reforms in this direction. Beaverbrook attempted to use his position as Minister of Information to actualize some of these reforms to Greater British communications and political interaction.¹⁴³ Most of these proposals failed in the short term, but had an impact on Greater British interactions into the interwar years. The war both demonstrated the strength of Greater Britain – most of all militarily – while also exposing inter-community frustrations.

Beaverbrook's first proposal in this direction, to the 1918 Imperial War Conference, was for a state-controlled Imperial news service to the Dominions. Beaverbrook proposed a dedicated office to collect and exchange news throughout Greater Britain. This was a proposed continuance of the government facilitation of imperial news distribution that the war had enacted, since 1917 at least.¹⁴⁴ Continuing the formalisation of Greater British interaction as in wartime was Beaverbrook's aim:

Both in time of war and time of peace there are many powerful and urgent reasons for a large and better supply of inter-Imperial news ... The combined Imperial effort is immensely strengthened by a common knowledge of the War efforts and movements of opinion going on in each separate part of the Empire. Such knowledge gives each Dominion or Colony a sense of solidity and security.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Anduaga, *Wireless and Empire*, 57; Potter, 'Communication and Integration', 201-202; O'Hara, 'Networked World', 611-613; Bell, 'Dissolving Distance', 524-525

¹⁴³ McIntyre, *Dominion of New Zealand*, 62-65; Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 124; Potter, *Broadcasting Empire*, 1-17.

¹⁴⁴ PA: BBK/E/3/8 Lord Beaverbrook's Memoranda (Feb. – Oct. 1918): 'Imperial War Conference, 1918 – Imperial News Service. Memorandum by the Minister of Information'.

¹⁴⁵ PA: BBK/E/3/8 Lord Beaverbrook's Memoranda (Feb. – Oct. 1918): 'Imperial War Conference, 1918 – Imperial News Service. Memorandum by the Minister of Information'; see also TNA:PRO: T1/2227 – Imperial News Service – Construction of Wireless Stations - Imperial War Conference Minutes – 10 July, 1918 – 'Imperial News Service'.

The Imperial War Conference approved the proposal in principle,¹⁴⁶ though the scheme as envisioned by Beaverbrook was never initiated. Its brief approval marks a directional change in the organising principle of Britain's imperial communications networks: from the military, strategic, and *laissez faire* conception of the 'all-red' line,¹⁴⁷ towards a 'softer' cultural and social utility in binding the Greater British community. This softer sentiment was evinced as a guiding principle in the establishment of the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1922.¹⁴⁸ The favourable reception of Beaverbrook's scheme in the IWC is a sign of Greater British cultural cohesion moving from a platitude, to a realistic political concern.

This pattern is also evinced in Beaverbrook's imperial wireless proposal. Building on the suggestion of the Canadian General Alexander McRae, Beaverbrook proposed a state-owned chain of twelve wireless telegraphy stations, six in England, two each in Canada and India, and one each in Australia and South Africa, at the same conference.¹⁴⁹ The placement of stations was a shift towards the Dominions, compared to the stalled 1913 wireless scheme, which placed according to strategic logic, in England, Cyprus, Aden, Bombay, Straits Settlements, and Australia.¹⁵⁰

Beaverbrook foregrounded the wireless scheme's cultural and social impact:

If the arguments for a chain of Imperial Wireless stations were strong before the War, they have now become over-whelming. The arguments were stated in 1911 by the Postmaster General to be:- general ground of Imperial defence, the development of commerce and the cheapening by competition of cable rates. This argument no longer does justice to the case. The war has broadened and vivified the Imperial vision, and that which seemed desirable before August, 1914 is only a fraction of what is now seen to be essential. This country, the Colonies and the Dominions must be educated to the Imperial point of view.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ TNA:PRO: T1/2227 – Imperial News Service – Construction of Wireless Stations – Beaverbrook to Walter Long – 11th September, 1918; Imperial War Conference – Imperial War News (10 July 1918); see also Potter, *Imperial Press System*, 187-211.

¹⁴⁷ Kennedy, 'Imperial Cable', 54-77.

¹⁴⁸ Potter, *Broadcasting Empire*.

¹⁴⁹ PA: BBK E/3/8 Lord Beaverbrook's Memoranda (Feb. – Oct. 1918).

¹⁵⁰ TNA:PRO: CO886/5B – Imperial Conference, 1911 – Minutes of Proceedings, p.309; CAB37/107/63 – Scheme for Imperial Wireless Stations (26th May 1911); WO32/7045 – General Post Office – Imperial Wireless Installations – Copies of Correspondence relating to Contract for Imperial Wireless Stations; see also, Anduaga, *Wireless and Empire*, 54-77; Kennedy, 'Imperial Cable', 54-77.

¹⁵¹ TNA:PRO: T1/12227 – War Cabinet 'Proposed "Communications Board" Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War', 1918.

This was a marked difference from the priorities of the pre-war scheme. Even by 1914 CO administrators conceptualised imperial wireless in strategic military ways.¹⁵² This was a very different position to that taken by the CO at the end of the war, in response to Beaverbrook's proposal, under Alfred Milner's direction, when social and cultural connections were seen as equally important.

Beaverbrook's proposal also highlighted the importance of improving of horizontal, inter-Dominion connections, to 'strengthen the ties of unity':¹⁵³

At present, for example, Canada knows practically nothing of New Zealand; for although currents of news do already flow – however inadequately – from centre to circumference and from circumference to centre, there is practically no current of news between the various points in the circumference ... the impediment of distance, the menace of remoteness, the peril of aloofness must be overcome ... they can only be overcome by the establishment of an Imperial News Service based on an Imperial Wireless chain.¹⁵⁴

Beaverbrook highlighted how the war exposed these limitations, and proved the imperative of reinforcing Greater British cultural and social ties:

One of the many things thrown into relief by the war is the vital importance of each part of the British Empire to every other part, of each part of the Empire as a whole, and of the Empire as a whole to each part. In the war the Empire, in so far as it has been one entity, has been strong; in so far as it has been many entities it has been weak ... The Empire must not merely be allowed, it must be persistently encourage and stimulated, to grow in homogeneity ... All parts of the Empire must become members of 'one another' in the full meaning of that expression.¹⁵⁵

Beaverbrook's imploring words bear striking similarity to Ward's sentiments from 1911, such as in the latter's warning of the risk of Imperial disconnection:

Geographically scattered as the Empire is, it is obvious that few things are likely to contribute more to its political unity and commercial development than the establishment and maintenance of a cheap and effective system of inter-communication.¹⁵⁶

Beaverbrook of course did not speak for the Canadian government at large. Such proposals for increased centralisation and coordination for Greater Britain were dangerous for Canada and South Africa in particular, with their contentious extra-European populations to consider. As such, while

¹⁵² TNA:PRO: CAB37/121/105 – Imperial Wireless Chain (5th September 1914).

¹⁵³ TNA:PRO: T1/12227 – 'Imperial News Service' Memorandum, 10 July, 1918.

¹⁵⁴ PA: BBK/E/3/8 – 'British Imperial News Wireless Service' Memorandum for War Cabinet by Minister of Information, 1918; see also, TNA:PRO: T1/12227 – 'Imperial News Service' Memorandum, 10 July, 1918.

¹⁵⁵ PA: BBK/E/3/8 – 'British Imperial News Wireless Service' Memorandum for War Cabinet by Minister of Information, 1918.

¹⁵⁶ TNA:PRO: CO886/5B – Imperial Conference, 1911 – Minutes of Proceedings, 285.

these proposals cut across a significant strain of Greater British opinion, they represented the significance with which contemporaries saw the operation of Greater British propaganda. For some, it was a preview of a more coordinated system that they had been aiming towards.

Unsurprisingly, Alfred Milner, as Secretary of State for War, was a strong proponent of this attitude. Discussing Beaverbrook's proposals in 1918, Milner seized on the cultural potential of the scheme in addition to strategic benefits:

A rapid, cheap and reliable system of telegraphic communication between the various parts of the Empire is essential not only for military reasons but also for the development of trade after the war and for the reinforcement of the bonds which the war has done so much to strengthen between the Dominions, the Crown Colonies, and the United Kingdom.¹⁵⁷

Milner certainly spoke for a certain centralising strain of Greater British opinion, but this attitude did gain some success post war, such as in the introduction of a form of Imperial Preference, and the creation of the Dominions Office.¹⁵⁸ Culturally, the Empire Marketing Board and later the BBC took up the mantle of promoting and cohering Greater Britain, and the Empire more broadly.¹⁵⁹

Like Beaverbrook, some Greater British politicians, notably from within the Round Table Movement, pursued the ambiguity and opportunity of Greater British propaganda into the interwar years. Even if certain historians have missed the significance of Greater British propaganda, contemporaries did not.

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This chapter has shown how the peacetime dynamics of trust and familiarity between Britain and the Dominions informed the operation of Greater British propaganda in complex and contradictory ways. Greater British political dynamics could be both an advantage and a burden. They

¹⁵⁷ TNA:PRO: T1/2227 – Imperial News Service – Construction of Wireless Stations - War Cabinet – Proposed ‘Communications Board’ – Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Milner, 7th December 1918).

¹⁵⁸ Stewart, ‘Bloody,’ 43-66; Steven E. Lobell, ‘Second Image Reversed Politics: Britain’s Choice of Freer Trade or Imperial Preference, 1903-1906, 1917-1923, 1930-1932,’ *International Studies Quarterly*, 43:4 (1999), 671-693; Matthew Stubbings, ‘Free Trade Empire to Commonwealth of Nations: India, Britain and Imperial Preference, 1903-1932,’ *The International History Review*, (2017), 1-22.

¹⁵⁹ Potter, *Broadcasting Empire*; Stephen Constantine, ‘Anglo-Canadian relations, the Empire Marketing Board and Canadian national autonomy between the Wars,’ *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 21:2 (1993), 357-384.

could slow propaganda collaboration between Britain and the Dominions, such as through the Colonial Office preventing this contact on the grounds of responsible government. They could also provide unique advantages to influential Dominions figures, such as Beaverbrook's rise to Minister of Information. The impact of mobilising Greater Britain for war was not uniform. New Zealand's struggles to publicise its efforts, compared to Australia and Canada's success at using the British press and propaganda organisations, shows the variance of experience in Greater Britain.

This variance was, to a large degree, due to the maintenance of an informal, personal, and commercial means of communication for Greater Britain. This prompted disadvantages for the distant and less financially powerful New Zealand, but potential opportunity for confident Dominion advocates willing to work into this ambiguous space. This complexity was particular to Greater Britain. This variance shows the particularity of its dynamics, and the significance of Greater Britain as a political and operational community.

The particularity of these Greater British dynamics was also evinced in the rhetorical aspects of Britain's official propaganda. The next chapter examines how Greater Britain was represented in British official propaganda. This includes official political speeches – which were important signals of British propaganda – and material such as posters and pamphlets. It shows that international pressures, especially the spectre of German propaganda, constrained how Britain could represent Greater Britain in its propaganda. As in operational aspects, this warped peacetime dynamics of interaction and rhetorical engagement. The next chapter therefore follows Stuart Ward's approach, in reframing British war justifications in a Greater British context.

Chapter 2: ‘“A Glorious Abstraction”: Greater British Rhetoric and War Justifications in Official British Propaganda, 1914-1916’

Greater Britain was more than simply a theme of British and Dominion wartime propaganda rhetoric. Rather, especially for Britain, it was a much wider strategic consideration, that informed rhetorical choices. This chapter explores the rhetorical aspects of Greater British propaganda in the early years of the war. Specifically, it looks at how British official propaganda rhetoric represented and engaged Greater Britain. Instead of looking for an ‘imperial message,’¹ or trying to quantify imperial representations, it explores British official propaganda rhetoric operated as Greater British propaganda. It examines the rhetoric of the Asquith Government, from 1914 to 1916. The chapter then shows that the strategic pressures of the war, and particularly the spectre of German propaganda, constrained British propagandists’ rhetorical engagement with Greater Britain. The Dominions were significant to the rhetorical dynamics of British propaganda, even in their occasional absence.

This chapter follows Stuart Ward’s approach, in re-contextualising familiar rhetoric or conceptual language in a new frame.² It reads British war justifications – the rhetorical engine of Britain’s early war propaganda – in a Greater British context. This includes considering how British propagandists engaged the Dominions in official speeches, posters, and literature, but also how this rhetoric was received and adapted in the Dominions. In doing so, this work heavily draws from Thompson and Toye’s approach to rhetoric, in terms of prioritising contexts of creation and delivery in understanding rhetoric.³ Together these approaches show a familiar Greater British dynamic to the familiar rhetoric of British war justifications that has so far gone un-noticed.

Further developing Thompson and Toye’s approach, this chapter explores the relationship between rhetoric and propaganda: the former being the language of ‘message,’ and the latter being the intent and the method. This chapter examines political speeches, especially of the British Prime Minister, as Greater British propaganda. The immediate context of their delivery, and the ways they

¹ E.g. Connelly, ‘Image of Empire,’ 188-213.

² See, Ward, ‘Wind of Change,’ 198-219; Ward, ‘Decolonization,’ 227-260; Ward, ‘Introduction,’ 1-20; Ward, ‘Imperial Identities Abroad,’ 219-243; see also, Thompson, ‘Languages of Loyalism,’ 617-650; Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism,’ 147-77; Dilley, ‘cultural economy,’ 45-55.

³ Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*; Toye, *Rhetoric*.

were communicated throughout Greater Britain, including through the press and pamphlet literature, are explored to contextualise the speeches as Greater British propaganda. The chapter explores how these speeches set the terms of engagement with Greater Britain in much British propaganda, and the particular conversational dynamics they used to engage the Dominions.

Analysing early war British propaganda rhetoric in these ways reveals a considered approach to engaging the Dominions. The virulence of German propaganda criticism of British or ‘English’ imperialism, informed how Britain represented the Greater British relationship. Accordingly, official rhetoric emphasised the informality and spontaneity of the Greater British relationship, to avoid any accusation of Dominion coercion. Notably, New Zealand’s early war rhetoric was much more strident in expressing its imperial ties and perceived duties than was Britain’s.

The same emphasis on responsible government that informed the Colonial Office’s also informed the conversational dynamics of this Greater British rhetoric. Analysis of notable political speeches shows a careful balancing act of Britain engaging the Dominions between gratitude and familiarity, while avoiding any perceived pressure or request. The subtlety of this language has so far gone un-noticed in scholarship.

Like the previous chapter, this chapter shows that the particular dynamics of Greater Britain informed the conduct of Greater British propaganda in particular ways. Once again, the pressures of the war often provided more inhibitions or disconnections than in peacetime. By taking Greater Britain seriously as a distinct cultural space, and the language of imperialism and Greater Britain as uniquely adaptive, this chapter reveals subtleties to British propaganda rhetoric that are hard to ascertain otherwise.

2.1 – Greater Britain and War Justifications

The overwhelming priority of British propaganda rhetoric for the first years of the war was bolstering Britain’s war justifications, for domestic but especially for neutral international audiences. In particular, British rhetoric pivoted around the priority of courting the neutral United States, up to

its entry on the Allied side in 1917.⁴ Britain cast its declaration of the war as a defence of Belgium and, therefore, as chivalrous and just to international audiences. British rhetorical priorities therefore mirrored Germany's: to cast the enemy's motivations as aggressive and expansionist, largely for American benefit.

Imperialism, in its most pejorative definition – connoting selfish, exploitative, militaristic expansion – was a key rhetorical weapon for both sides. The terms of this debate were to cast the enemy as the specifically *imperial* aggressor. In this rhetorical clash, Britain and the Allies had to contend with aggressive and initially better prepared German propaganda. This constrained the nature and intensity of rhetorical engagement with Empire and Greater Britain in British propaganda. There was a strategic imperative to portray the Empire at war as *non-imperial* as possible.⁵

Against this rhetorical priority, there was deemed comparatively little initial need to court Dominion opinion. An existing culture of trust and familiarity, the Dominions' ready mobilisation, and – save for South Africa – the relative stability of their initial internal politics,⁶ meant they were not a primary consideration in shaping initial British rhetoric. Noting the scale of the Empire's contribution was useful to bolster domestic British confidence, but Dominion loyalty was taken more or less for granted by British politicians, at least initially.

The Dominions were not actively obscured in initial British rhetoric, but that their presence was qualified, or even obfuscated, to mitigate potential rhetorical risk. British Liberals had long been uneasy and vague about Empire.⁷ The Boer War deepened and intensified the existing ideological split, and left the party lacking a firm direction on Empire. It made Lord Rosebury's 'sane imperialism' of the 'Liberal imperialists' into a factional position, rather than as a unifying ideology, as hoped. Both sides were vague and contingent in their position, with much qualification necessary on either a simplistic 'pro' or 'anti' imperial position, though critics tended to be louder.⁸ This split prevented the emergence of a more coherent whole-party position on Empire, and made it an

⁴ E.g. Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, esp. 185.

⁵ See, Proudman, 'Words for Scholars,' 395-433; Thompson, 'Languages of Imperialism,' 147-177.

⁶ See, Hucker, 'Great Wave of Enthusiasm,' 59-75; Olssen, 'Waging War,' 299-318.

⁷ Michael Bentley, *The Climax of Liberal Politics: British Liberalism in Theory and Practice, 1868-1918*, (London: 1987), 90.

⁸ Bentley, *Climax*, 88-89.

uncomfortable topic for most Liberal politicians.⁹ Insofar as a moderate or party-wide line on the Empire emerged from the Boer War, it was centred on the progressive and developmental potential of empire – a vision focused on self-government and the Dominions – to which Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith aligned.¹⁰ British propaganda rhetoric of the First World War therefore emerged at a time of deep complexity and contingency for the language of Empire in British politics.

At the same moment, Unionists retreated to a vision of the Empire centred on Greater Britain, as a response to the shock of the Boer War. This vision of the Empire allowed politicians of all stripes to embrace *empire* while rejecting *imperialism*, especially Lord Curzon's brand of rule in the Indian Raj, and the excesses of the Boer War associated with Alfred Milner.¹¹ A Seeley-influenced reading of Greater Britain therefore provided useful recourse for Unionists but especially Liberals in the years before the war. This vision of Greater Britain's 'natural' overseas expansion, through the growth of self-government in the Dominions, recast the Empire as specifically non-*imperial*. Seeley's ambivalence about the future of British possession of India underscores this. This conveniently obfuscated the complications of the Colonial Empire.¹² This was for *Empire* but against *imperialism*.

At the outbreak of the war, the place of *imperialism* was complex and fraught in British political, while Greater Britain provided some recourse. The strategic pressures at the outset of the war reinforced the rhetorical usefulness of a focus on Greater Britain as the face of Empire, even if changing its terms slightly. British political language and official propaganda early in the war further made the Empire non-imperial through vagueness, obfuscation, and selectivity.

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Initial British propaganda war rhetoric fit Greater Britain within the logic of British war justifications by foregrounding self-government, and by extension the supposed choice and self-

⁹ Blaxill, 'Language of Imperialism,' 431-434; Scally, *Origins*, 29-30.

¹⁰ David Brooks, *The age of upheaval: Edwardian Politics, 1899-1914*, (Manchester: 1995), 101; Windscheffel, *Popular Conservatism*, 187-8; George L. Bernstein, *Liberalism and Liberal Politics in Edwardian England*, (Boston, MA: 1986), 27-29.

¹¹ Thompson, 'Language of Imperialism,' 151.

¹² Seeley, *Expansion*, 37-51.

sufficiency inherent in it. The running theme was to emphasise the spontaneity of the Dominion entry into the war: the Dominions *chose* to take part in the war, and were *convinced* by British war aims – implying that neutral audiences should do likewise. The Dominions were not compelled or obliged in any way, by constitutional or legal coercion. This of course evaded the constitutional reality that the Dominions and the rest of the Empire were automatically at war once Britain declared, and the political reality that their representatives were not consulted.¹³

Asquith's earliest speeches establish the emphasis on the Dominion *decision* to go to war. In a speech on the 4th September, 1914, he took pains to characterise the Dominion entry in non-coercive terms:

Our self-governing Dominions throughout the Empire, without any solicitation on our part, demonstrated with a spontaneousness and unanimity unparalleled in history [showed] their determination to affirm their brotherhood with us and to make our cause their own. Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and Newfoundland, children of the Empire, assert, not as an obligation but as a privilege, their right and their willingness to contribute money and material, and, what is better than all, the strength and sinews, the fortunes of the lives of their best manhood.¹⁴

Asquith put this logic even more clearly in a speech on 2nd October, 1914:

We still believe here ... in the sanctity of treaties, that the weak have rights and that the strong have duties, that small nationalities have every bit as good a title as large ones to life and independence, and that freedom for its own sake is as well worth fighting for to-day as it ever was in the past ... Stated in a few words that is the reason for our united front, the reason that has brought our gallant Indian warriors to Marseilles, that is extracting our most distant Dominions the best of their manhood, and which in the course of two months has transformed the United Kingdom into a vast recruiting ground.¹⁵

The metropolitan British position was that the Dominions were free to choose, and as such were convinced by heinous German actions and British war justifications; not that they were brought into the war by any coercive means. This afforded potency to British moral propaganda and obscured the uncomfortable realities of the Greater British relationship; characterising Dominion entry into the war as voluntary, rather than automatic, as it was.

¹³ See, Stephen Garton, 'The Dominions, Ireland, and India,' in *Empires at War, 1911-1923*, ed. Gerwarth & Manela, (Oxford: 2014), 152-177.

¹⁴ Herbert Asquith, "'To a Victorious Conclusion!': The Prime Minister's Appeal to the Nation', (London: 1914), 8.

¹⁵ Herbert Asquith, 'A Speech in Cardiff,' in *The War; its Causes and its Messages: Speeches August-October 1914*, (London: 1914), 38.

These official speeches set the tone for British propaganda's rhetorical framing of Greater Britain more generally. Asquith spoke for Greater Britain, explaining the Dominions' involvement. Asquith's 'To A Victorious Conclusion' speech of September 1914, for instance, is an example of the extension of a British speech as Greater British propaganda. The initial speech at the Guildhall in London, on behalf of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, was staged as a Greater British event. Among the notables present at the speech were the High Commissioners of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. In a sense, this theatrically underwrote Asquith's capacity to speak for Greater Britain.¹⁶ The speech was then expended, being reproduced in New Zealand newspapers,¹⁷ and in a series of pamphlets compiling Asquith's speeches published by the PRC. Copies were likely disseminated throughout the Dominions.¹⁸ These efforts extended the initial London audience into a generalised Greater British audience. This demonstrates the importance of considering the interplay between contexts of creation and delivery in understanding rhetoric.

The sentiment of Asquith's early speeches likewise informed broader British propaganda rhetoric. The same message is reinforced in the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee's most famous exclusively Imperially-focused poster, Arthur Wardle's 'Lion poster.' In it, the young lion cubs of India and the Dominions 'answer the call' of Britain – implying a choice to do so – the inclusion of India showing that the choice went beyond kinship.¹⁹ [Figure 4].

Wardle's poster also tapped into more extreme rhetoric of Empire in Britain during the war. It was seized upon by religious proponents of Biblical millenarian prophecies, which cast the war as Armageddon, Britain as God's instrument to establish his authority on earth, and the Dominions as the prophesied 'Merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof.'²⁰ Whether this is a knowing

¹⁶ Herbert Asquith, "'To a Victorious Conclusion!'" The Prime Minister's Appeal to the Nation,' (London: Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, 1914).

¹⁷ E.g., 'A United Empire,' *Waikato Times*, 27 January, 1915, 27;

¹⁸ See Chapter 1 for details of British official pamphlet distribution to the Dominions.

¹⁹ Imperial War Museum (IWM): Art.IWM PST 5110 – 'The Empire Needs Men', 1915; see also, Stephanie Gibson, 'First World War posters at Te Papa', *Tuhinga*, 23 (2012), 69-84; Aulich & Hewitt, *Seduction or Instruction*.

²⁰ Eric Michael Reisenauer, "'The Merchants of Tarshish, with all the Young Lions Thereof.'" The British Empire, Scripture Prophecy, and the War of Armageddon, 1914-1918,' *Journal of the Bible and its Reception*, 4:2 (2017), 387-318.

allusion is questionable. Regardless, the poster reflects a recurring tactic of rhetorical pliability in British official propaganda rhetoric, allowing different types of engagement.



Figure 4 – ANZ: R22444232 – 'The Empire Needs Men!', 1915 (Arthur Wardle).

Other official or officially sponsored British propaganda was even more insistent in extending Asquith's avoidance of any suggestion that the Dominions, and India, were compelled, coerced, or obliged to join the war effort. The tone is almost one of favourable surprise at the scale, spontaneity,

and vociferousness of the imperial response. Emphasising the apparent informality in Greater British relations was essential. H.E. Edgerton's 'The British Dominions and the War' contribution to the Oxford Pamphlet series, sponsored by Masterman's Wellington House,²¹ begins by sketching the same frame as Asquith:

[U]pon the cynical violation of Belgian neutrality, the whole British Empire rallied to the support of the mother country with a unanimity perhaps without precedent.²²

Edgerton emphasised that the informal nature of the Empire meant that Britain could not coerce the Dominions into any war they saw no interest or benefit in. He argued that this informality, lacking functional constitutional ties, was the Empire's genius, and had allowed informal bonds of sentiment to develop as its connective tissue. This echoed Seeley:

'The fact remains that, under this defective system, there has grown up amongst millions of free men a temper of passionate loyalty to the Empire, as representing cherished ideals.'²³

This cast Dominion involvement as a conscious alignment with the ideals that drew Britain into war to defend Belgium, rather than loyalty for Empire. For Edgerton, it was this informality that Germany supposed could not function as a means to draw the Dominions into the war, nor hold the empire together under 'the strain of real sacrifice.'²⁴ This emphasis on the almost casual nature of the Greater British relationship recalls Seeley's emphasis on the 'natural' and spontaneous expansion that created Greater Britain, and Asquith's own praise of the 'value of elasticity and flexibility in our Imperial Organization' during the 1911 Imperial Conference.²⁵ This rhetoric was not new, but provided useful refuge during the war. In many ways Asquith's speeches set the blueprint for other British official propaganda to follow, and this often made even more explicit reference to the conceptual language of Greater Britain.

A particular device used to frame Greater British relationships along these lines was Greater Britain as a family of mature children or brothers, rather than infants in need of instruction. Asquith's speeches abound in this language characterising Greater Britain as a global family. For Asquith, the

²¹ See, Peter Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words: Literature as Propaganda 1914 and After* (London: 1989), 12-20.

²² H.E. Edgerton, 'The British Dominions and the War,' *The Oxford Pamphlets 1914*, V, 3.

²³ Edgerton, 'Dominions,' 7.

²⁴ Edgerton, 'Dominions,' 6.

²⁵ Kendle, *Conferences*, 175.

Empire is a ‘family of nations,’²⁶ the Dominions as both children and brothers to Britain as the Mother Country,²⁷ even Ireland, as a ‘loyal daughter of the Empire.’²⁸ Here Asquith tapped into deeply familiar imperial language. This was once again a technique of Seeley, for whom Greater Britain not only shared political interest and tradition, but crucially ‘blood’ as well.

Importantly, this demonstrates the different terms with which British propaganda rhetoric engaged Greater Britain, compared to other communities in the Empire. Once again, this built on established language: Seeley was explicit in tying the ‘natural,’ and informal expansion and unity of Greater Britain to race, for instance in discussing India’s future connection to Greater Britain:

[I]t strikes us at once that this enormous Indian population does not make part of Greater Britain in the same sense as those the millions of Englishmen who live outside of the British Islands. The latter are of our own blood, and are therefore united with us by the strongest tie. The former are of an alien race and religion, and are bound to us only by the tie of conquest.²⁹

Asquith was, at least rhetorically, more inclusive, or implicit, than Seeley, defining the imperial family of nations as ‘without distinction of creed or party, of race or climate, of class or section.’³⁰ Even so, the rhetorical terms of engaging India in British propaganda rhetoric were distinct from those of Greater Britain generally. This shows the significance of the specific cultural dynamics of Greater Britain in shaping rhetorical language, and the implicit importance of race therein. There was strategic imperative to validate and incorporate the Indian contribution to the war.

This recourse to family also served to reinforce the essential point that the Dominions were not bound to Britain by constitutional compulsion, and further that the ‘expansion’ of Greater Britain had been natural, almost incidental, rather than *imperial*, in the sense of actively expansionist and coercive. Even so, the concept of family, and especially bonds of blood and brotherhood, narrowed the boundaries of Greater Britain along racial lines. None of this was explicit, importantly so. There is a substantial scholarship on the cultural construction of ‘whiteness,’ which has increasingly

²⁶ Herbert Asquith, ‘A United Empire: A Speech by the Prime Minister,’ (London: 1914), 3.

²⁷ Herbert Asquith, “‘To a Victorious Conclusion!’” The Prime Minister’s Appeal to the Nation,’ (London: 1914), 8.

²⁸ Asquith, ‘United Empire,’ 7.

²⁹ Seeley, *Expansion*, 11.

³⁰ Asquith, ‘United Empire,’ 3.

intervened into imperial history, and proposed global dynamics for this process.³¹ The British rhetoric under consideration here certainly connects to this wider cultural development. But racialism was subsumed and implicit in this rhetoric. If the implication of a familial representation of Greater Britain was to draw a colour line, specific terminology often avoided the issue. This is unsurprising and was deliberate. Perhaps even more than imperialism in general, discussion of race and Empire was strategically dangerous for Britain, in the face of German propaganda determined to make it a point of contention and criticism.

2.2 – German Propaganda and Greater Britain

It is important to understand how the critics or opponents of British official propaganda defined British imperialism, and Greater Britain in turn. Criticisms of German propaganda influenced the rhetorical choices of British propagandists. Given the greater pre-war organisation and sophistication of German official propaganda organisation, British propaganda began on the back foot, responding to aggressive German rhetoric.³² The priorities of German propaganda, in painting Germany as nobly defending its interests, mirrored those of Britain: to cast the enemy entry into the war as unjustified and immoral. For this, British or ‘English’ Imperialism was an overwhelmingly important theme of German international propaganda. The flexibility and pejorative potential of the concept was weaponised against Britain from the outset.

Hatred of England and criticism of ‘English imperialism’ was a central, unifying theme in German propaganda, described as its rhetorical ‘engine.’ It was not only an effective way to defame the Allies in neutral eyes, but was also a domestic rallying point to unify diverse German internal factions. In both contexts, criticising the British Empire usefully obscured the expansionist

³¹ E.g., Schwarz, *White Man’s World*; Radhika Mohanram, *Imperial White: Race, Disapora, and the British Empire*, (Mineapolis, MN: 2007); Marilyn Lake & Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men’s Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality*, (Cambridge: 2008); Angela Woolacott, ‘Whiteness and ‘the Imperial Turn,’ in *Historicising Whiteness: Transnational Perspectives on the Construction of an Identity*, (Melbourne: 2007), 7-15.

³² Welch, *Sins of Omission*, esp.58.

undercurrents of German war aims.³³ This deflection was critical for Germany: its invasion of the neutral Belgium made the notion that Germany was acting defensively conceptually difficult. The priority was therefore to cast British Imperialism so negatively, as such a serious and imminent threat to world security, as to recast Germany's invasion of Belgium as a necessary pre-emptive strike.³⁴ This dynamic only intensified in the wake of the highly effective Bryce Report, Britain's major propaganda coup in the first year of war, which outlined German atrocities in Belgium.³⁵ This logic is outlined in the intelligence report, commissioned for MI7b, by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, on Britain's intelligence library of German propaganda, compiled in August 1917.³⁶

Chalmers Mitchell's report was commissioned for the use of later-stage British propaganda bodies such as the Enemy Propaganda Bureau at Crewe House, the National War Aims Committee, and the Ministry of Information. Even so, it speaks to the longer-term influence of German propaganda arguments in shaping the rhetorical choices of British propagandists.³⁷ Chalmers Mitchell devotes an entire section to unpacking how imperialism functioned in German propaganda, beginning:

Many writers ... see in what they call imperialism, a word to which many shades of meaning are attached, the ultimate cause of the war. In the general sense of German propagandists, except the Socialists, imperialism is the desire of any nation except Germany to protect or extend its foreign possessions.³⁸

Whether a purely objective perspective on the German use of imperialism as a rhetorical weapon, or also tapping into British anxieties about the domestic and international dangers of the amorphous concept, this demonstrates how British propagandists understood imperialism as a linguistic weapon in German hands.

³³ Welch, *Sins of Omission*, 59.

³⁴ Mahon Murphy, 'Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees Captured by British and Dominion forces from the German Colonies during the First World War,' (PhD Thesis: London School of Economics, 2014), esp. 127.

³⁵ Welch, *Sins of Omission*, 62.

³⁶ British Library (BL): B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917, 7.

³⁷ David Monger, 'Know Your Enemy: Peter Chalmers Mitchell, British military intelligence and the understanding of German propaganda in the First World War,' *History*, 103:358 (2018), 777-799.

³⁸ BL: B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917, 7.

That both sides could both weaponise their opponent's brand of imperialism, and seek to redeem their own, further underscores the 'protean imprecision' of the concept at this time.³⁹

Chalmers Mitchell summarised German claims as follows:

The British idea can be summed up in the sentence "Only one can be master of the world." The German imperialism, on the contrary, says, "No one must be the master; no one must be over me; no one must bar the roads of the world to me; all countries must be free for the establishment of German influence and German culture. The English imperialism is opposed to pacifism; the German imperialism is not opposed to pacifism. The English imperialism is the imperialism of might, of supremacy, of property; the German imperialism of work, of thought, of kultur."⁴⁰

Both sides tried to evacuate the pejorative, Napoleonic definition, and occupy a benevolent, non-imperial imperialism.

German criticisms probed deeper into definitions of British imperialism. The language of Greater Britain also became a target of German criticism. This heightened the stakes of British engagement with the Dominions even more. The report notes German efforts to negatively characterise Greater Britain, including specific German criticism of the term's conceptual originators Dilke and Seeley. It states that some German propaganda blamed the ideology of Greater Britain specifically for corrupting British imperialism, from regrettable to malignantly expansionist, to the detriment of all other world powers, and to a notably lesser extent, to colonised peoples.⁴¹ This underscores the need to adapt representations of the 'safe' Greater Britain in British propaganda.

Certainly there is much in Dilke's and Seeley's writing to indicate the sometimes-explicit racism in constructions of Greater Britain, however much British propagandists subsumed this. The German rhetorical attack on the concept flipped its British use: rather than being an informal, familial, natural expansion, German propagandists characterised Greater Britain as the expansionist heart of British imperialism, particularly by linking it to the imperial preference ideology of Chamberlain and the federal ambitions of Milner. The German emphasis on 'English Imperialism' over 'British Imperialism' also showed a desire to fracture not only Britain from its Empire, but England from the Union, cast as an imperial product. This struck at a deep well of feeling in Ireland at least.

³⁹ Thompson, 'Language of Imperialism,' 147-177; Proudman, 'Words for Scholars,' 395-433.

⁴⁰ BL: B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917. 9.

⁴¹ BL: B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917, 10, 26; Welch, *Sins of Omission*, 59.

The German interpretation increased the risk of expressing even a pared down Greater British imperialism in British wartime propaganda, formerly a safe refuge for Liberals and Unionists alike. Instead of separating Greater Britain out as the benevolent face of the Empire, German propagandists attacked British Imperial ideologies on all fronts, by linking settler colonialism with policy in India and Africa, as all being the products of repressive authority and aggressive expansionism, and thus all ripe for resistance and rebellion against British control. As the report put it:

India was obtained by force and is held only by force. England is not really doing it any good, but is reaping vast benefit from it. Now Germany, in alliance with Islam, will free it. Germany will give Canada the chance of being independent, a chance that Canada has long looked for. Australia was thought by England and by herself to be quite secure, as she was separated from the rest of the world by a long stretch of ocean. The rise of Japan has altered the situation and when Germany ... has secured the freedom of the seas, Australia will have the opportunity of developing independently on her own lines. South Africa is still riper for independence, and certainly must be given the right of entering into independent economic relations with other Powers, instead of being exploited by England. Egypt has its supreme importance in the Suez Canal, the route between Europe, Africa, and the Far East. Germany and Austria must support Turkey until she recovers Egypt from England.⁴²

This awareness of the German attack on Greater Britain was evinced more widely in British official propaganda, such as in E.M. Grigg's 1915 Victoria League pamphlet 'Why the Dominions Came In', which was likely sponsored by Wellington House:

The Germans have always assumed that the British Empire would crumble at the first touch of war; and *from their own point of view* they have had some reason for assuming it. They have seen, for instance, that while the whole Empire would nominally be engaged in war as soon as Great Britain was engaged in it, none of the self-governing Dominions could be called upon to help Great Britain with men or material unless they chose to do it of their own accord. Thus Canada could not be counted on to help unless the people, the Parliament, and the Government of Canada so desired and the same was true of Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand, because in all those Dominions, as in Canada, the action of the country depended on its own will, as expressed through its elected Ministers, whom Great Britain could not control. The decision on their part to help the Mother Country had, in other words, to be a free decision; and since they were free to decide, the Germans believed that they would wash their hands of responsibility and leave the Mother Country to face her enemies alone.⁴³

This passage takes the same line as Asquith's speeches, emphasising the capacity of the Dominions to choose to go to war, even if it concedes the nominal authority of the initial British declaration of war.

⁴² BL: B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917, 25.

⁴³ E.M. Grigg, 'Why the Dominions Came In: The Power of Liberty and Law,' 2.

It also highlights German assumptions regarding the weakness of Greater British unity, and perceptions of agitation for independence in the Dominions.

This was a line that carried through the war, likewise found in a parody ‘German alphabet’ in the National War Aims Committee’s soldier periodical *Welcome*, defining ‘D’ for Dominions as, ‘Countries seething with revolt, but bribed by England to fight for her.’⁴⁴ While sentiment in Australia and New Zealand, and save for long term Anglo-French tensions in Canada, was calm enough during the war to give agitative German propaganda little leverage, such loyalty could not be taken for granted with regard to the rest of the Empire, in India, South Africa, and Ireland in particular. Here German critiques of Empire were seriously threatening.

Chalmers Mitchell’s report shows the peculiar blend of cautious pride and deep anxiety that informed British representations of Greater Britain and the Empire during the war. At least until war weariness and the travails of 1916 and 1917 made Dominion enthusiasm less automatic, British propagandists could creatively skirt German attacks through a subtle adaptation of the language of Greater Britain. More targeted German propaganda attacks where anti-British sentiment posed a real threat were taken more seriously.

2.3 – German Propaganda and India

German propaganda criticisms in the Chalmers Mitchell Report underline even more acutely that a different rhetorical approach was required for the rest of the Empire outside of Greater Britain. Just as British propaganda was informed by real strategic concerns, German propaganda critiques of British imperialism were also targeted for strategic pay off. The latter focused on areas that were justifiably seen as rich soil for discord and anti-British agitation, and populations that had challenged British imperial authority in the preceding decades, namely India, Ireland, South Africa, and Egypt. German propagandists sought to embolden existing resistance by publishing pamphlets on the

⁴⁴ ‘A German Alphabet of the War, Compiled by the Kaiser and translated by Lieut. A.A. Milne,’ *Welcome*, 1:1, 25 March, 1918, 40.

corruption of British authority in these regions, and by practical efforts to assist such groups.⁴⁵ German criticisms of India, for instance, were specific, and so required a distinct response from British propagandists. The rhetorical dynamics of Greater Britain were specific to that community, and not generalised.

Revolutionary challenges in Punjab and Bengal before 1914, under the long shadow of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, caused enough anxiety for British authorities to make German rhetorical claims and efforts at agitation in India a serious strategic concern, unlike easily parodied claims of Canada's long-held desire for independence, for instance.⁴⁶ India required specific treatment in British political rhetoric during the war, and was therefore sometimes sectioned off from Dominion characterisations.

The representation of India within British war justifications is distinct from that of Greater Britain, for instance. In an effort to rhetorically quell accusations of imminent Indian rebellion, the motivation for India's choice was typically given as strong Indian loyalty, rather than a considered understanding of British war aims, or natural unity, as with Greater Britain. India's involvement was rationalised through sentiment and loyalty, rather than choice. This afforded India less political agency than the Dominions. In the same speech in Cardiff that Asquith praised the choice of the Dominions to enter the war, he represented the terms of Indian involvement differently:

In India – where whatever we won by the sword we hold and we retain by the more splendid title of just and disinterested rule, by the authority, not of a despot, but of a trustee – the response to our common appeal has moved all our feelings to their profound depths, and has been such as to shatter the vain and ignorant imaginings of our enemies. That is a remarkable and unique spectacle.⁴⁷

Asquith cast Indian involvement as the result of disinterested and just British rule, emphasising the overwhelming and loyal participation of Indian troops. The same argument was put even more forcefully by Grigg, arguing that India's ingrained imperial loyalty motivated its war effort, where the Dominions made a considered choice:

⁴⁵ Welch, *Sins of Omission*, 62; Murphy, 'Prisoners,' 129.

⁴⁶ For the significance of the Indian Mutiny see, Guatam Chakravarty, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination*, (Cambridge: 2005).

⁴⁷ Herbert Asquith, 'A Speech in Cardiff,' in *The War*, 35.

...the self-governing Dominions have joined Great Britain heart and soul for the defence of treaties, not because they are subject to British authority, but because they have the same conscience as the British people, the same traditional instinct for law, the same desire to maintain the rule of law among nations ... And India has sprung to our side for similar reasons. We have given her justice and peace but while seeking to make law prevail over lawlessness and orderly government over anarchy, we have left the Indian peoples the utmost liberty consistent with those principles to follow their own creeds, maintain their own customs, and shape the course of progress in their own way. India stands with us because our government has bred in her a sense of loyalty to the King-Emperor as strong as our own. We have not imposed upon her the duty of participation in the war; her princes and peoples have sought it of their own accord.⁴⁸

As a further counter to German accusations, and another example of strategic reality informing rhetorical construction, a sense of Indian religious and ethnic unanimity despite diversity was also commonly emphasised in British propaganda. Ernest Trevelyan's 'India and the War' entry in the Oxford Pamphlet Series, underlines this clearly:

Never has there been an occasion when India has been more united than at the present time ... There has not been a single note of discord. Every class and every race have shown their loyalty and their anxiety to take their share of the burdens and duties of citizens of the Empire ... Distinctions of race and creed have disappeared at the first suggestion of danger in the Empire.⁴⁹

While Trevelyan claims that India's entry into the war was more considered than Grigg allowed, he still emphasises 'bonds of friendship' as binding the British and Indian efforts together. This was further echoed in Asquith's rhetoric, in his September 1914 speech, stating that 'every class and creed, British and native, princes and people, Hindus and Mohommedeans' are united behind the war effort, with the only point of rivalry between them being how strongly they can demonstrate their commitment to the war.

It is no coincidence that such rhetoric intensified with the Ottoman Empire's declaration of war against the Allies, seen by the British as a serious danger in terms of stirring Muslim anti-British sentiment in the Empire. This was a major strategic concern, and one which British propagandists sought to counter directly. Deploying the King as the benevolent patriarch of his loyal multi-ethnic and multi-religious subjects was a particular trope used in this direction. A British cablegram

⁴⁸ Grigg, 'Dominions,' 7-8; Ernest J. Trevelyan, 'India and the War,' *Oxford Pamphlet Series*, no.22, 6-8.

⁴⁹ Trevelyan, 'India and the War,' 6-8.

circulated to the Dominion press, described the King's speech during the opening of parliament in November 1914, itself staged as a thoroughly imperial event:

Turkey appears to have claimed a particular share of the King's attention – a disproportionate share, as many may be inclined to think. But those who are disposed to take this view must remember that Great Britain is the greatest Mussulman Power in the world. King George has four times as many Mohammedan subjects as the Sultan whom "Hadji Wilhelm" has taken under this protection and egged on to war ... The absence of any flutter of unrest among the Mohammedans of India, even after the power which claims their sympathy on religious grounds has joined the enemy, is indeed a marvellous testimony to the justice and the wisdom of British rule in India, and the Kings' Advisers were wise to emphasise their loyalty in his speech as strongly as the valour of the Army and Navy.⁵⁰

Asquith afforded George V the same role, stating that under the Empire, 'which knows no distinction of race or caste,' Indian troops, 'as subjects of the King-Emperor, are joint and equal custodians of our common interests and fortunes [stand] side by side and shoulder to shoulder, with our home and Dominion troops.'⁵¹ It is notable that where Asquith could act as a political representative for Britain and the Dominions, it was the King who acted as the same unifying figure for India and the Empire, another example of the distinct rhetorical terms of India and Greater Britain.

This rhetorical emphasis of Indian loyalty was intended to meet the very real German efforts to exploit the rise of Indian nationalism and other currents of rebellion. As Chalmers Mitchell's report states, German propaganda argued that '[t]he English took India by violence and have held it by violence,' and have 'done no good for India.'⁵² The same anxiety informed British operation of propaganda in South Africa, where anxiety about renewed rebellion – after the rebellion of 1915 – meant blanket rules regarding propaganda distribution in the Dominions were often adapted in the case of South Africa.⁵³

Despite these German critiques of British rule in India, German and British imperial critiques diverged rather starkly on the issue of racial hierarchies in the Empire. British official propaganda rhetoric left the racial dimensions of the limits of Greater Britain implicit. Short of arguing any sense of equality, British propagandists emphasised imperial racial cooperation and understanding during the war, such as between Britain and India. By contrast, German propaganda represented the

⁵⁰ 'British Politics and the War,' *Evening Post*, 13 November, 1914, 6.

⁵¹ Asquith, 'Victorious Conclusion,' 9.

⁵² BL: B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917, 39.

⁵³ See Chapter 1.

contravention of racial hierarchies in war as a major point of outrage. German rhetoric attacked the British (and Allied) use of non-white troops against a white enemy, presented as a betrayal of ‘colour solidarity.’ This point was most famously expressed in the German propaganda tract *Employment, Contrary to International Law, of Coloured Troops in the Western Front Upon the European Arena of War by England and France*, issued in July 1915, based on accusations of atrocities visited upon German troops by British and French colonial soldiers.⁵⁴ Chalmers Mitchell noted the particularly harsh and more violent tone of German discussion of race, including an emphasis that white races should cooperate for their mutual benefit, that black labour was necessary, and that native populations need not be exterminated ‘except in a few troublesome cases.’⁵⁵

German propaganda promoted this strict racism as the only appropriate form of imperial control, especially in war. This was cynically deployed: German propaganda in India and Egypt, for instance, criticised British imperial racism, and appealed to sentiments of self-government, while propaganda for domestic German audiences was virulently, explicitly, racist.⁵⁶ Germany’s often-virulent and cynical racist rhetoric provided a clear foil for Britain to define itself against, in the interest of eliding its own complex imperial racial politics. Asquith’s inclusive statements about the cooperation and equality of Dominion and Indian troops can be interpreted as further effort to set the British Empire up as the antithesis of the German Empire.

Britain’s record was more complex in practice of course. While Indian troops were deployed in France from as early as autumn 1914, the deployment of black African troops in Europe was deemed more problematic and consistently stalled. A campaign for a ‘million black army’ following the French example was ultimately rejected for reasons of both logistics and prejudice.⁵⁷

This same anxiety also initially stalled New Zealand’s formation of a separate Māori Contingent on this basis. As in the case of Indian troops, this anxiety was rhetorically recast as pride and confidence in the use of Māori troops through application of martial race theory, which cast both

⁵⁴ Murphy, ‘Prisoners,’ 126-7; Welch, *Sins of Omission*, 61.

⁵⁵ BL: B.S.45/202 Report on the Propaganda Library [by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell], 1917, 34.

⁵⁶ Welch, *Sins of Omission*, 62; see also, Troy R.E. Paddock, ‘German Propaganda: The Limits of *Gerechtigkeit*,’ in *A Call to Arms: Propaganda, Public Opinion, and Newspapers in the Great War*, ed. Troy R.E. Paddock, (London: 2004), 115-160.

⁵⁷ David Killingray, ‘The Idea of a British Imperial African Army,’ *The Journal of African History*, 20:3 (1979), 421-436.

as acceptably martial, particularly under white leadership; an at least somewhat less malignant application of racial theory in German propaganda.⁵⁸

2.4 – Responses and Discordance

British official propaganda rhetoric of course existed within the wider context of Greater British propaganda. As such, it was also in conversation with Dominion rhetoric. Subtly different emphases in defining the Greater British relationship show the internal complexity of Greater Britain as a cultural community. These often sat comfortably together. Circulation and co-creation of propaganda – notably political speeches such as Asquith's – facilitated a broad Greater British rhetorical alignment. Occasional discordances are evident, however. Tracking these is a useful lens into the changing internal dynamics and tensions of Greater Britain during the war.

New Zealand's framing of its war effort aligned strongly with Britain's, but differed in subtle but key tonalities and emphases. British and New Zealand rhetoric both emphasised New Zealand's choice to go to war based on the weight of British war justifications. New Zealand propaganda added the dimension of a New Zealand duty and debt to Britain behind its choice, as repayment for its political inheritance. New Zealand rhetoric layered a Greater British duty on the British blueprint.

This is expressed in the New Zealand official poster 'To New Zealand's Manhood,' describing a sacred heritage New Zealand had to live up to during the war.⁵⁹ Defence Minister James Allen played on the same concept as late as mid 1916, stating:

It is a privilege to share in the traditions of the Motherland. She has helped to make us what we are; we inherit much from the past, and we are confident that our New Zealand men and women serving at the front, with their comrades from other parts of the Empire, are securing for us something now which will make our own country and the Empire and our people nobler and better in the days that are to come.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ See, O'Connor, 'Maori Soldiers,' 48-83; Cowan, *Maori in the Great War*; Walker, 'Warrior Race,' 1-21; Pugsley, 'Te Hokowhitu A Tu,' 194-210.

⁵⁹ Auckland War Memorial Museum (AWMM): UB325.N45 NEW 'To New Zealand's Manhood', 1916, Government Printer, Wellington.

⁶⁰ 'To Win the War', *NZ Truth*, 3 June 1916, p.6; see also, 'Trafalgar Day', *Dominion*, 22 October 1914, p.8; 'Recruiting Rally', *Dominion*, 1 November 1915, p.6.

The concept of New Zealand's duty to fight *for* Britain as the main motivation, even if cast warm Seeley-esque language of shared heritage, was subtly but significantly discordant with the aims of British rhetoric. British rhetoric represented the Dominions as fighting for British values, not Britain itself.

The repurposing of Admiral Nelson's famous 'England Expects' line for a prominent official New Zealand Defence Department poster reflects this almost contentious complexity, when set against British framing of the war through its war justifications.⁶¹ This almost embarrassingly effusive New Zealand loyalty, further bolstered the British belief that Dominion opinion 'needed no spur,'⁶² with homespun enthusiasm strong. This would not always be the case. War weariness made the discordance between British and Dominion representations of Greater British solidarity, and the purpose and worth of continued fighting, slightly more pronounced, and much more dangerous.

These internal tensions did not grow anew from 1917, but were simmering throughout the war to varying degrees. The terms of rhetorical engagement of Greater Britain in the Asquith-era British rhetoric caused considerable criticism with some. Milner's Round Table Movement became particularly frustrated with Asquith's obfuscation. A piece on the outbreak of the war from the 1914 war-focused edition puts this complaint plainly:

The whole British Empire, including five self-governing Dominions, found itself suddenly at war on the morning of August 5, 1914. The decision has been taken by the British Government, which first consulted the Parliament of the United Kingdom, but could not in the circumstances consult the Dominion Governments. The latter, though autonomous national Governments in their own and in our esteem, had no more voice in the decision than the Borough Council of West Ham. In the present constitutional conditions of the Empire this anomaly was inevitable. The diplomatic crisis preceding the war moved so rapidly that consultation was simply impracticable. And fortunately the action of Germany which brought us into the war was so flagrantly opposed to treaty faith, and so clearly menacing to British security, that public opinion supported the British Government instantly and unanimously throughout the Empire. But the process cannot be repeated in the settlement of peace, if the unity which the war has so finely brought out is not thereafter to be jeopardized.⁶³

Though affirming Greater British loyalty, and the persuasiveness of British war justifications, this passage undermines the representation of the Dominion entry into the war as presented in early British rhetoric.

⁶¹ Poster reproduced in, Baker, *King and Country Call*, 22.

⁶² TNA:PRO, CO 323/733 – 55353 'Propaganda in the colonies', 17 November, 1916, 22.

⁶³ 'The Dominions and the Settlement - A Plea for Conference,' *The Round Table*, 5:17-20 (1914), 325-344.

Instead of skirting the reality of the Dominions' lack of choice in going to war, as Asquith's speeches did, the Round Table emphasised this (to them) regrettable constitutional reality, however eager and convinced the Dominions were. This was a delicate line that British rhetoric walked. British propaganda tended to obfuscate this, focusing more on the scale of the Dominion contribution – *how* the Dominions fought.

British rhetoric carefully managed the constitutional reality that the Dominions could not *choose* to go to war. This was navigated by the very specific conversational dynamics of Asquith's speeches. Understanding these as Greater British propaganda, engaging Dominion audiences, shows the importance of these dynamics. Asquith was careful to avoid such pitfalls of suggesting that the Dominions were fighting *for* rather than *with* Britain. This was evinced in the limitations of who he spoke for, and in what context, in his speeches. Asquith was comfortable speaking *for* the Empire and Greater Britain, explaining the motivations of the Imperial war effort. In a speech to the House of Commons on 27th August, 1914, Asquith spoke on behalf of the United Kingdom and the Empire to Belgium: 'We assure her to-day, in the name of the United Kingdom and of the whole Empire, that they may count to the end on our whole-hearted and unfailing support.'⁶⁴ Likewise, in his Cardiff speech of October 1914, Asquith spoke on behalf of the Empire: 'Let us gladly acknowledge what becomes clearer and clearer every day, that the world is just as ready as it ever was, and no part readier than the British Empire, to understand and respond to moral issues.'⁶⁵

By contrast, Asquith was careful not to make any request of the Dominions or India as to *how* they went to war, in the sense of calling for specific effort or recruitment. This was a key distinction. The Dominions could not constitutionally choose to go to war, but through responsible government, they did have exclusive authority on the question of the degree and intensity of how to fight. This was a strategic reality that would weigh on British propagandists throughout the war.

Asquith, aware of this delicate line, switched voices in the course of the same speech from speaking on behalf of the Empire at war, but only specifically asking or suggesting *how* to fight of the United Kingdom. As per his speech of September 1914: 'With these inspiring appeals and examples

⁶⁴ Herbert Asquith, 'A Speech in the House of Commons,' in *The War*, 11.

⁶⁵ Asquith, 'A Speech in Cardiff,' in *The War*, 35-6.

from our fellow-subjects all over the world, what are we doing and what ought we to do here at home?’⁶⁶ Asquith may have felt particular authority to speak *for* the empire, given the presence of imperial representatives at the Guildhall in London for this speech, including High Commissioners of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, noted as ‘thoroughly representative, not merely of the first City of Empire, but of the Empire itself.’⁶⁷ For the first years of the war, Asquith’s rhetorical boundaries were complex. He spoke for Greater Britain, but was careful in overstating his authority. His rhetoric did not ask anything of Greater Britain, or expose internal debates in this way. Here Asquith’s rhetoric directly engages the complex question of the acceptable role of a Greater British statesman. This will be explored in great depth in Chapter 4. In this public-facing rhetoric, at least, Asquith’s boundaries were clear – he spoke for the general Greater British effort, but did not demand anything of the Dominions as he did of domestic British audiences.

Despite Asquith’s delicacy, tensions around the terms of Greater British rhetorical engagement grew. The Round Table was persistently critical, and outlined the significance of unrepresentative rhetorical engagement. An excerpt from their journal from 1917 demonstrates a continued bristling at the tone of representation of and communication with the Dominions during the war:

Though the war is now well on in its third year hardly a week passes without some minister, or ex-minister, or other of our public men expressing his “deep gratitude for the noble sacrifices which the Dominions have made in coming so loyally to fight for the Old Country in her time of trial.” In spite of their natural good manners, our fellow-subjects from overseas have, on various occasions, expressed their aversion to this form of compliment with such uncompromising bluntness, that one cannot help marvelling at the force and obstinacy of a tradition that has caused the most eminent persons in the United Kingdom to go on stubbing their toes against the same stump. So far as the Dominion conceive themselves to be engaged in a chivalrous adventure, they are thinking of Belgium, Serbia, and France. So far as they regard the struggle as a practical matter affecting the subjects of King George, it appears to them as one in which they themselves have quite as much at stake as the rest of us. The Dominions are not fighting this war for the Old Country but for the British Empire. No English politician or journalist would commit the absurdity of thanking Scotland for her noble sacrifices, or of praising the “loyalty” with which Scotsmen have rallied to the assistance of England. They have learned by this time to regard Scotland as an equal share in their interests and perils. But they have not grasped the fact that the Dominions are likewise equal sharers ... This is by no means the attitude of the Dominions themselves, who, if the truth may be stated frankly, have divined the actual meaning of the British Empire somewhat earlier and less vaguely than the people of the United Kingdom.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Asquith, ‘Victorious Conclusion,’ 10.

⁶⁷ Asquith, ‘Victorious Conclusion,’ 3.

⁶⁸ ‘The War Conference of the Empire,’ *The Round Table*, 7:26 (1917), 218-252.

To the Round Tablers, the Dominions were fighting *for* an Empire they were (or should be) equal partners and co-owners of. Asquith and the Round Table ironically were arguing essentially the same point: as partners, the Dominions' *decision* to go to war should be respected as such. The Round Table frustration came from a perceived lack of respect of the Dominions choice. Any choice they made was not, according to the Round Table, an informed one, given a lack of consultation. The Round Table decried the gulf between rhetoric and reality, a furtherance of long-held concerns.

For the early years of the war, however, the Round Table's frustration tended not to be shared, or at least expressed, by Dominion politicians. As late as 1916, New Zealand politicians spoke of duty *to* Britain as a motivating factor in New Zealand's war effort. By 1917, however, this reliable Dominion dedication was less sure. The rise of war weariness in the British Empire and beyond brought even the formerly enthusiastically loyal New Zealand to a point of frustration similar to that expressed in *The Round Table*.

The events of late 1916 and 1917 changed the strategic priorities for Britain's war effort. A generalised war weariness, or domestic exhaustion from the emotional and physical toll of the prolonged war – from 1917 – caused serious anxieties about the potential endurance of the imperial, even Allied, war effort. This affected all belligerents in some way, but certainly spread throughout Greater Britain.⁶⁹ Just as the great advantage of American entry on the Allied side in 1917, its most reliable source of support, the Dominions and India, suddenly became cause for anxiety. Mollifying these imperial tensions, while also drawing down even further on necessary Dominion military and material support, was a key strategic realignment for the new Lloyd George coalition upon its accession.⁷⁰

This change is evident rhetorically. New Zealand leaders shared newly strident, frustrated, even questioning sentiments by 1917 and 1918. The New Zealand Defence Minister and Acting Prime Minister James Allen illustrates the changing mood well in a speech from 1917:

⁶⁹ French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, esp. 68-93; Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 195-211; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, esp.5-7; For New Zealand see, Loveridge, *Calls to Arms*.

⁷⁰ French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, 63-65.

It is unfortunate, of course, that the broader interests of New Zealand, as a dominion of the British Empire, should pull in a direction contrary to what we may term her domestic interests, but there is no question which of the two should be regarded as the more important at a time like this. The paramount consideration for New Zealand, as for every part of the Empire, must be the successful prosecution of the war.⁷¹

This is a striking concession to a growing domestic feeling that New Zealand's immediate interests may be somewhat different to Britain's, and even more dangerously, to continued effort in the war, in contrast to Allen's earlier definitive language.⁷² Allen was more perceptive to these frustrations with War Office pressure on New Zealand, domestically and in Cabinet, compared to Prime Minister Massey and his deputy Ward, both absent in London for much of 1917.⁷³ This shows how the pressures of 1917 caused fissures in Greater British rhetorical solidarity.

These feelings even caused minor controversy, such as through a speech made by the New Zealand High Commissioner, Sir Thomas Mackenzie, in 1918, at a patriotic rally in Leeds. Amidst broader statements of New Zealand support and loyalty to the Empire, Mackenzie conceded the undue strain New Zealand was under:

New Zealand, he said, had sent 110,000 soldiers out of her one million inhabitants, but, he confessed, the strain on the man-power and the resources was now beginning to tell. New Zealand, however, could supply a superabundance of foodstuffs and raw material, while America – “Thank God for America!” – had men in plenty, willing to go. It would be sound policy to accept men from America and foodstuffs from New Zealand.⁷⁴

To a certain degree this was a critique of the British wartime policy of import raw materials and food from the most geographically convenient locations including the United States, rather than through established Dominion trade relationships. This caused political consternation, and had economic implications, in Australia and New Zealand.⁷⁵ Mackenzie passive aggressively suggested that New Zealand could instead become a supply partner, and leave military contributions to America.

⁷¹ ‘The Obligation of Service,’ *Otago Daily Times*, 12 July 1917, p.4.

⁷² E.g. ‘To Win the War’, *NZ Truth*, 3 June 1916, p.6; see also, ‘Trafalgar Day’, *Dominion*, 22 October 1914, p.8; ‘Recruiting Rally’, *Dominion*, 1 November 1915, p.6.

⁷³ John Crawford, “‘The Willing Horse Is Being Bled to Death’: New Zealand’s Manpower Problems and Policies during 1917”, in *Turning Point 1917: The British Empire at War*, ed. Douglas E. Delaney & Nickolas Gardner (Vancouver: 2017), 125-6.

⁷⁴ ‘After the War – Keeping Trade from the Huns,’ *Evening Post*, 11 July, 1918, 7.

⁷⁵ Richard Kay, ‘In Pursuit of Victory: British-New Zealand Relations During the First World War,’ (PhD Thesis: University of Otago, New Zealand: 2001), 135-6; see Chapter 4.

This caused significant concern amongst Allen, Massey, and Ward. Just as Asquith's speeches had audience in the Dominions, Massey and Ward understood the potential of such a Dominion speech in London reverberating throughout Greater Britain, potentially undermining New Zealand's image. Corresponding with Massey as he was in transit to London, Allen warned that the speech had 'created difficulties for us,' and that 'there was considerable agitation in favour of what he said,' in New Zealand, urging Massey and Ward to make clear that they did not endorse Mackenzie's sentiments. Allen went so far as to state that to allow Mackenzie's statement to stand would be 'a disgrace and would destroy all the kudos we have earned so far.'⁷⁶

Allen therefore had to walk a delicate line – mollifying these sentiments, while rejecting talk of slackened effort, as per a speech in July 1918:

I know there is a great strain upon our manpower and our resources; but we, like other nations – like our Allies – are prepared to meet this strain, and are prepared to give what we have to give, and will give – and willingly give – in order that we may take part in this great fight for freedom.⁷⁷

The Round Table's brusque admonishments of the tone of Dominion communication by the Asquith government represented the most strident and confidently critical examples of Greater British opinion by 1914. The fact that by 1917 even New Zealand was rising to similar levels of frustration and assertiveness explicates the scale of the shift in Greater British opinion and endurance. Appealing to Dominion pride and sensitivity therefore became a real strategic, and in turn propagandistic and rhetorical, priority for the Lloyd George government by 1917. By 1917 and beyond, Bonar Law's assertion that opinion in the Dominions 'need[ed] no spur'⁷⁸ was clearly out of date.

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This chapter has shown that approaches that seek to detect an 'imperial message' in either a thematic or quantitative way miss a crucial subtlety. Instead, this chapter has shown Greater Britain as

⁷⁶ ANZ: R22319675 – Miscellaneous files and papers – Correspondence between J Allen and WF Massey, 1st September 1916 – 1st August 1919; Allen to Massey, 12th August 1918, 10.

⁷⁷ 'To the End – New Zealand's Part in the Fight for Freedom,' *Sun*, 17th July, 1918, 8.

⁷⁸ TNA:PRO, CO 323/733 – 55353 'Propaganda in the colonies,' 17 November, 1916, 22.

a factor informing the construction of British propaganda rhetoric, and explored how this rhetoric operated distinctly in that context. This approach shows that Greater Britain and the Empire were serious considerations for British politicians and propagandists, in making rhetorical choices, even in their ostensible ‘absence.’ Greater British propaganda rhetoric was therefore awkward, even dangerous, but not absent minded.

Greater Britain was not only an operational or organisational space for propaganda during the war, but an important cultural space. An important assumption that informed British rhetoric was the trust and familiarity within Greater Britain. Propagandists had faith that their subtle messages would be acceptable and understandable, given the shared culture between Britain and the Dominions. For the early years of the war, this was justifiable, as the confident initial response of the Dominions to mobilisation meant that they needed little prompting from Britain, and would project themselves into this delicate British rhetoric. This would not be the case later in the war, as war weariness grew.

The following chapter continues this focus, into the later years of the war. It explores how the rhetorical stakes of Greater British propaganda rhetoric were impacted by changing strategic realities of the war, most notably the entrance of the United States, and a generalised war weariness in Greater Britain. While this entailed changes, the rhetorical dynamics remained complex and particular to Greater Britain. Together, both chapters affirm Stuart Ward’s approach in taking Greater Britain seriously as a cultural space.

Chapter 3: ‘We Are Not an Empire: Greater British Rhetoric and War Aims in Official Propaganda, 1916-1918’

The accession of the Lloyd George Government entailed a change in British propaganda in both message and operation. This chapter examines the impact of this change on the rhetoric of Greater British propaganda. It focuses on two important rhetorical pillars of late war British propaganda rhetoric – war aims and language of the Commonwealth – in the context of Greater British propaganda. It explores these concepts in terms of their strategic provenance, their initial delivery, via Lloyd George and General Smuts, and their development and dissemination. It concludes by exploring how the pressures of war weariness from 1917 changed the rhetorical dynamics of appealing to various national sentiments and perspectives within Greater Britain.

Building on the approach from Chapter 2, this chapter also follows Thompson and Toye’s approach to rhetoric, in highlighting the importance of context and medium in understanding the message of propaganda.¹ For Greater British propaganda, this entails focusing both on the important figures who delivered key messages – notably Lloyd George and Smuts. This includes understanding their significance as Greater British messengers. Beyond this, the chapter also considers how these messages were co-opted and developed by different propaganda bodies, and how they in turn disseminated these words.

This chapter also follows Stuart Ward’s approach by reframing familiar concepts of British war aims and the language of the Commonwealth in a Greater British frame.² Lloyd George’s original war aims speech was deliberately adaptable for multiple audiences, but its imperial messaging has been overlooked. Likewise, the war is typically agreed as a key moment in bringing the terminology of the British Commonwealth of Nations into greater common and official use. Historians of Anglo-Dominion relations have claimed this development as a grand moment in the development from Empire to Commonwealth. Examining this wartime language in context, and through a Greater

¹ Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*; Toye, *Rhetoric*.

² See, Ward, ‘Wind of Change,’ 198-219; Ward, ‘Decolonization,’ 227-260; Ward, ‘Introduction,’ 1-20; Ward, ‘Imperial Identities Abroad,’ 219-243; see also, Thompson, ‘Languages of Loyalism,’ 617-650; Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism,’ 147-77; Dilley, ‘cultural economy,’ 45-55.

British lens, however, shows it to be more an expedient adaptation of familiar language, than a dramatic rhetorical shift.

The pressures of war weariness and remobilisation from 1917 changed the rhetorical stakes for Greater British propaganda. Complexities still persisted, however. Changing British strategy made engaging Greater Britain in propaganda not only less dangerous, but advantageous, due to the increased demands on Dominion manpower from 1917. This renewed rhetorical approach, however, was still informed by the complexity of Greater British dynamics, and the various opinions and sentiments within it. Greater British propaganda rhetoric of the late war walked a delicate balance between appealing to changing international perspectives, while accommodating an increasingly fraught internal Greater British audience. Examined in this context, then, rhetorical approaches of late war British propaganda were significantly tailored to accommodate this Greater British complexity. This is something established scholarship has missed.

Together with Chapter 2, this chapter shows Greater Britain as a distinct cultural space. This informed British and Dominion propaganda rhetoric in various ways. This is a more complex prospect than simply noting imperial language where it arose. Instead, this demands considering how the dynamics of Greater Britain informed rhetorical choices, and how propaganda worked.

3.1 – War Aims

Lloyd George's 'war aims' speech of January 1918 was perhaps the most consequential of his wartime leadership. It summarised the wartime values and ambitions of his government, and set the tone for Britain's diplomatic and strategic approach to the rest of the war and the coming peace negotiations. The speech was a clarification of the impulses that guided much of Britain's propaganda under his leadership, especially the National War Aims Committee. It also illustrates a strategic balancing act. As such, it was characteristically flexible, messaging to multiple audiences and interests at once.

The speech made Britain's case internationally, and struck several strategic deals with different internal interests for continued effort. The speech underwrote Britain's rhetorical remobilisation; as grist for the NWAC's mill it marked a significant government reconceptualization

of the utility of propaganda, away from the expectation of national self mobilisation earlier in the war, to a state remobilisation for total war. In doing so, it balanced various domestic pressures: from Unionist calls to move away from the principle of absolute German defeat as a prerequisite for peace; to radical and organised labour agitation against greater state control, and more generalised domestic war weariness.³

Internationally, the speech was a strategic alignment with American values, to later be clarified in Wilson's Fourteen Points. It made Britain's case both for its redoubled commitment to the war, and positioned it in a favourable light for an eventual peace settlement, correctly assuming a degree of American arbitration. The speech had therefore to balance anti-imperial international opinion from the USA and the Bolsheviks, whose ascendancy drew Russia out of the war. All of this was essentially responding to the challenge of Germany's strong military position at the outset of 1918.⁴ The speech reassured Allies and struck deals with domestic and imperial audiences for continued effort.

The speech had to combine clarity, while deftly balancing multiple aims and perspectives. The speech therefore evinced a rhetorical shift from the vagueness and implication of Asquith's rhetoric, towards a necessary specificity. The extrapolation of war aims entailed a differentiated approach, making firm statements, rather than vague platitudes. The strategic pressures on the Lloyd George coalition entailed striking these deals for continued effort with multiple interests. British war aims became the engine of British propaganda rhetoric, as war justifications had been earlier.

Lloyd George's speech established the rhetorical blueprint of British war aims. It balanced multiple interests, all towards the goal of maintaining stability, and securing continued or increased effort. British organised labour – specifically a delegation of trade union leaders – was the direct audience of the speech, addressed to a delegation of trade union leaders. The speech aimed to quell rising tension in organised labour of the perceived unequal distribution of sacrifice caused by total war mobilisation;⁵ a political strain that had shown its teeth in the Russian Revolution. The speech

³ Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 195-211; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*.

⁴ Woodward, 'War Aims Speech,' 22-39; Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 195-211.

⁵ Ben Jackson, *Equality and the British Left: A Study in Progressive Political Thought, 1900-64*, (Manchester: 2012), 18-20; John Horne, *Labour at War: France and Britain, 1914-1918*, (Oxford: 1991), esp. 304-205.

carries a consultative authority by noting Lloyd George's discussions with British politicians, and in something of a concession, with the Irish Nationalist leader John Redmond. These theatrical aspects, in terms of the staging of the speech, are similarly relevant to Asquith's utilising the Greater British authority of the Dominion High Commissioners in some of his speeches. These aspects of political theatre are important in exploring the significance of the rhetoric within the speech.

The Greater British aspects of the war aims speech have been under explored. They are nonetheless important. Similarly to conceding to consultation with organised labour, the speech highlights the importance of consultation of the Dominion Prime Ministers. In this way, the speech was a shift in Asquith's communicative boundaries with Greater Britain. Characteristic of the wider rhetorical shift under Lloyd George, this speech did not simply speak for Greater Britain, but spoke directly to the Dominions, striking an important deal.

Greater Britain was an important audience the Lloyd George coalition ingratiated with strategic compromises, within the wider balancing act of British war aims. This has received less attention than other aspects of the speech. Rather than simply gesturing to Greater Britain, or to secondary Greater British authority by the presence of Dominion representatives, Lloyd George's speech made specific concessions to its future form – conceding to the type of complaints posed by the Round Tablers, and increasingly by Dominion leaders themselves.

This changed British rhetorical engagement with Greater Britain. Lloyd George derived newfound political and rhetorical authority to speak for Greater Britain by specifically engaging them, directly through the Imperial War Cabinet, and rhetorically, as in this speech:

I am glad to say as a result of all these discussions that although the Government are alone responsible for the actual language I propose using, there is national agreement to the character and purpose of our war aims and peace conditions, and in what I say to you to-day, and through you to the world, I can venture to claim that I am speaking not merely the mind of the Government, but of the nation and of the Empire as a whole.⁶

Lloyd George was less hesitant and more explicit than Asquith in claiming and deploying this authority. This was based on an acknowledgement of actual consultation. Through this authority, Lloyd George could ask things of the Dominions, where Asquith avoided this. This shift was not

⁶ David Lloyd George, 'The War Aims of the Allies,' in, F.L. Stevenson (ed.), *The Great Crusade: Extracts from Speeches Delivered During the War by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George*, (New York, NY: 1918), 252-3.

merely a concession to imperial pride, nor solely a product of Milner's influence.⁷ By 1917, Britain needed the Dominions more desperately than ever. The campaigns of 1917, particularly Verdun, had not provided the breakthrough planned, but instead, the increased cost of attrition drained the will of troops and those on the home front alike.

At exactly the time that Dominion morale was waning under war weariness, the frustration of Dominion leaders at their lack of consultation was growing. Lloyd George could not speak past Greater Britain. By the later years of the war British propaganda had to speak *to* the Dominions, directly and rhetorically, where Asquith had been vague and evasive in both regards. The war aims speech struck a deal with Greater Britain: continued effort for future reform and increased consultation. Lloyd George could no longer avoid and obfuscate, and so British rhetorical engagement with Greater Britain became more specific from 1917. This echoed the Dominions' more formalised place in British propaganda organisations, and so too, echoed the essential strategic shift of the new government.⁸

The rest of this chapter explores how this change in the rhetorical and conversational dynamics of Greater British propaganda, prompted by the shift to war aims, affected Greater British rhetoric more widely.

3.2 – British Strategy and Dominion Manpower

Lloyd George was keenly aware of the power of propaganda and much more willing to utilise it than his predecessor.⁹ For the Lloyd George coalition, military strategy and propaganda were heavily interconnected; initiatives such as the capture of Jerusalem, or the Balfour Declaration of 1917 regarding a Jewish homeland in Palestine, were both calculated and stage-managed, for their

⁷ See, John Turner, *Lloyd George's Secretariat*, (Cambridge: 1980), 26, 123-138; Michael Fry, 'Political Change in Britain, August 1914 to December 1916: Lloyd George Replaced Asquith: The Issues Underlying the Drama,' *The Historical Journal*, 31:3 (1988), 609-627. 613-620.

⁸ See Chapter 1; French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, 3-11.

⁹ E.g. Justin Fantauzzo, 'The Finest Feats of the War? The Captures of Baghdad and Jerusalem during the First World War and Public Opinion throughout the British Empire,' *War in History*, 24:1 (2017), 64-86; Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 60-64.

propaganda potential as much as their strategic significance.¹⁰ This was an even grander evocation of the stage-managing of speeches mentioned earlier, but operated on the same principles. For Greater Britain, the immediate theatricality of these events would be communicated through the press, cinema or photography.¹¹

Lloyd George's approach to Greater Britain was also strategically different to Asquith's, if in a more reactive sense. Lloyd George inherited a military situation of acute insecurity. Throughout 1917, the pillars of Allied stability either collapsed or showed their weakness, most dramatically in the exit of Russia. While the USA's entry was an immediate morale fillip, British calculations suggested the Americans could not fully mobilise until 1918 or 1919.¹² British strategists now fully realised that the war was one of attrition, just as Allied manpower reserves were less certain than ever.

Lloyd George's priority was therefore to wrest the fullest possible potential from Britain's resources. The Empire, particularly the Dominions and India, therefore became a greater strategic priority than earlier. An audit of the imperial contribution carried out by the new government, however, found that the Dominions were already stretched, and only India realistically had significantly more capacity to contribute.¹³ Dominion morale was fraying under war weariness, but military pressures meant Britain asked for increased effort. This request for the formation of a second New Zealand Division caused considerable consternation in the Dominion, which Allen had to manage at home.¹⁴ While this is a familiar story in terms of high politics, the rhetorical implications, for Greater British propaganda, have received less attention.

This British request for greater effort – on *how* the Dominions fought – was dangerous, and entailed a characteristically different approach, politically and rhetorically. While the Dominions could not technically choose *to go* to war, they could at least choose *how*, and to what degree, they contributed. It was anticipated but not guaranteed that they mobilised as enthusiastically as they did,

¹⁰ E.g. William M. Mathew, 'The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate, 1917-1923: British Imperialist Imperatives,' *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 40:3 (2013), 231-250.

¹¹ See, Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*, esp. 1-18.

¹² French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, Chapter 2, esp. 62-3.

¹³ French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, 62-3.

¹⁴ Crawford, 'Willing Horse,' 114-138.

and the propaganda characterisation of the Asquith government was extremely careful in this regard: emphasising British surprise and gratitude at the response, but being cautious not to specifically ask or tell the Dominions *how* to contribute.

The strategic imperatives of total war changed this calculus. By 1917, Britain was now not only deciding *whether* the Dominions were at war, but also requesting *how* they went to war, in asking for increased effort. This was a subtle but important transgression of the informality emphasised under Asquith, and necessitated not only a consultative change – the familiar innovation of the Imperial War Cabinet – but also a new rhetorical approach to Greater Britain, through propaganda and political language.

The main tonal shift was a greater clarity on the nature of interactions with the Dominions, and at least the acknowledgement of the need for reform. Certain tropes remained from earlier rhetoric. As late as June 1918, at the second meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, Lloyd George repeated the familial metaphor of Greater Britain as ‘the sort of a motherland, “beset by cruel foes,” whose children rushed from, the end of the earth to shield her with their sturdy strength.’¹⁵ Asquith’s familiar pride and surprise at the spontaneity and scale of Dominion mobilisation remained. The major rhetorical addition under Lloyd George was the motif of a shift from abstraction to fact as regards the Empire and Greater Britain, from vague assumption to reality.

A new rhetorical device of Lloyd George’s rhetoric was the Empire’s shift from ‘fact’ to ‘reality’ in the British awareness, as the main lesson of the war. In a speech at the Guildhall in London on 27th April 1917, Lloyd George characterised this Greater British lesson for domestic Britons:

In the past we treated it as an abstraction – a glorious abstraction, but an abstraction. The war has shown us, all of us, that the British Empire is a fact, nay, a factor, the most potent factor to-day in the struggle for human liberty.¹⁶

¹⁵ ‘Historic Empire Gathering,’ *Nelson Evening Mail*, 22 August 1918, 5; HCPP: [Cd.9177] Imperial War Conference, 1918 Extracts from minutes of proceedings and papers laid before the conference.

¹⁶ David Lloyd George, ‘The War and the Empire’, 27th April 1917, *The Great Crusade: Extracts from Speeches Delivered During the War by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George*, ed. F.L. Stevenson, (New York, NY: 1918), 136.

This encapsulated the rhetorical and strategic shift towards Greater Britain under his premiership. As the Dominions achieved greater strategic importance, their place in British propaganda operations was formalised and expanded, while rhetoric engaged Greater Britain more specifically and confidently.

In addition to the warm familial satisfaction and gratitude of Asquith's rhetoric, this was infused with a clear anxiety:

The Dominions and the great Empire of India have contributed one million men. That has transformed our ideas as to the reality and beneficence of the British Empire. The world cannot afford to let it dissolve ... the choice must be between immediate concentration and ultimate dissolution.¹⁷

This reopened the question of Greater Britain's future development Asquith confidently claimed as settled at the 1911 Conference.¹⁸ Concomitant with this emphasis on the 'reality' of Empire, and part of implied Greater British deal from 1917, was a promise for future reform.

The high-political aspects of Lloyd George's concessions to Dominion consultation have been thoroughly explored, even exaggerated by historians of Anglo Dominion relations. It is important to consider the rhetorical and emotive dimensions of this change. David Monger has argued that the rhetoric of the National War Aims Committee at this time used an approach of engaging audiences in an emotive imagining of the future, better society to be forged post-war, as a way of maintaining domestic morale.¹⁹ Lloyd George's promises for imperial reform echo this emotive appeal in a wider, Greater British sense.

Lloyd George's government struck an expedient compromise for increased effort from Greater Britain: 'If our action brings them into trouble, as it has, costing them myriads of precious lives, they must henceforth be consulted beforehand.'²⁰ Instead of the earlier strident avoidance or dismissal of discussions of future reform from 1917 early British rhetoric, most clearly through Lloyd George's speeches, clear concessions were now made to Dominion frustrations. In a speech from April 1917, for instance, Lloyd George struck a conciliatory tone:

¹⁷ Lloyd George, 'The War and the Empire,' *Crusade*, 136.

¹⁸ See, HCPP: [Cd. 5745] Imperial Conference, 1911. Dominions no.7 Minutes of proceedings of the Imperial Conference, 1911, 23; Kendle, *Conferences*, 175.

¹⁹ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, esp. Chapter 6; Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 195-211.

²⁰ Lloyd George, 'The War and the Empire,' *Crusade*, 137.

We can never let things remain the way they were. It may be said that the shadowy character of relations between us and the Dominions and the great territories of the East have produced this real cohesion. That was all very well and good before they made great sacrifices. They have established claims now to a real partnership. Henceforth consultation must be the only basis of cooperation.²¹

While specific reform regarding Dominion consultation was still delayed until after the war, this was a deal instead of dismissal: if the Dominions continued and increased their efforts, reform would eventuate. In Lloyd George's own words, 'the whirl of a great war is not the best time for thinking out perhaps new Constitutions, but our Councils of Empire must at any rate be a reality.'²²

This rhetoric was not dryly political, however. High-political approaches to this shift have not grasped the highly emotive tone of this Greater British deal. In another speech, Lloyd George equated Dominion consultation, especially in the peace settlement, as the reward for the blood sacrifice of war:²³

It is unthinkable that their disposition after the war should be determined without consulting the Dominions, since they have shed their blood in acquiring them.²⁴

Discussion of the promised imperial future was not simply constitutional, but similarly idealistic to the 'concurrent community' the NWAC evoked nationally.²⁵ The Imperial War Cabinet and Conference initiated under Lloyd George was the obvious practical manifestation of this rhetoric, and a significant step change in imperial relations, not least of all for India's representation at a council of Empire for the first time.²⁶ This was both a political advance and a symbolic propaganda gesture; reinforcing the interplay between strategy, politics, and propaganda, just as the capture of Jerusalem functioned as strategic and propagandistic.

Lloyd George's rhetoric also moved away from a generalising impulse, to specifically praising Dominion successes. Reflecting on the Dominion contributions to the campaigns of 1917,

²¹ Lloyd George, 'The War and the Empire,' *Crusade*, 136.

²² Lloyd George, 'The War and the Empire,' *Crusade*, 137; see also, Lloyd George, 'The New Government,' *Crusade*, 82-3.

²³ For this concept see, Gregory, *Last Great War*.

²⁴ David Lloyd George, 'Sowing the Winter Wheat - Speech delivered at Carnarvon, to a Meeting of Constitutions, after becoming Prime Minister, February 3rd, 1917,' in *Crusade*, 99.

²⁵ For this concept see, Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, esp. Chapter 6.

²⁶ Robert Holland, 'The British Empire and the Great War, 1914-1918,' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV The Twentieth Century*, ed. Brown & Louis, (Oxford: 1999), 123-25.

following the success of the Battle of Messines, in which Canada, Australia, and New Zealand played a key role, for instance:

I must say a word now about the Dominions. They have contributed between 700,000 and 800,000 men. What does that mean? - five times the number of our Expeditionary Force. And what a contribution!²⁷

This same praise was increasingly prudent after the much greater tests of the Battle of Passchendaele, for instance, where New Zealand sustained heavy losses. This tested even Massey's apparently inexhaustible patience with British leadership and apparent waste of Dominion troops.²⁸ These developments pushed an expansion of Lloyd George's focus of domestic morale from 1917, towards the semi-domestic Dominions. This was a change in approach, not only scale. No longer was Dominion mobilisation a surprising and gratifying dedication, spontaneously given, as under Asquith. Once Britain requested expanded effort, it became an implicit deal. This deal was framed in requisite shared grief. Now, instead of almost speaking past the Dominions, mainly to the USA, British propaganda became more an internal conversation within Greater Britain, beyond simple praise, establishing the terms of the imperial bargain for continued and expanded effort. In these speeches, Lloyd George was speaking *with* Dominion – and Indian – leaders, as much as *for* them.

3.3 – Commonwealth of Nations

The increasing use of the language of Commonwealth in British propaganda and political language from 1917 has often been claimed by Anglo Dominion relations historiography as a concession to the development of the Empire towards the modern Commonwealth.²⁹ This misses crucial immediate context in drawing a grand teleology. It also misses the rhetorical utility of the language of Commonwealth during the war for British propagandists.

The following sections of this chapter instead understand the utility of the language of the Commonwealth of Nations to Greater British propaganda, and the strategic demands of British

²⁷ Lloyd George, 'Restatement of the Causes and Aims of the War,' *Crusade*, 211.

²⁸ See, Olssen 'A Nation,' 319-339; Crawford, 'Willing Horse,' 122-126; Baker, *King and Country*, 142-152.

²⁹ See, Wigley, *Canada*; Stacey, *Canada*; Martin, 'Watershed,' 164-171; see also, Kendle, *Conferences*.

official propaganda generally. This is shown to be less a rhetorical concession to inevitable change, than a strategic adaptation of familiar language. This was the latest in a series of adaptations: the language of Greater Britain and the Empire were uniquely adaptable, and meaning changed according to context and the purposes of who was using it. This chapter therefore presents the increasing prevalence of the language of Commonwealth from 1917 in the context of Greater British propaganda. Certain historiography has seen this as a rhetorical development away from the language of Greater Britain.³⁰ This was instead an affirmation of Greater Britain, via an adaptation.

The entry of the USA for the Allies meant that German propaganda was no longer as determinative in shaping Britain's imperial language. Greater Britain's rhetorical risk declined for British propagandists, and it therefore became more a 'fact' of British rhetoric. The vagueness and anxious obfuscation of the Asquith era was exchanged for specificity, validation, even formality.

International opinion was still important, however. After its entry Britain still sought to align itself with American values, particularly Wilsonianism and the Fourteen Points, in hopes of a post-war alliance.³¹ Most challenging of these for Greater Britain was the notion of self-determination of small nations, which would run up against Dominion sub-imperial ambitions at the Paris Peace Conference.³² This continued perspective on courting American opinion determined the tone of this newly specific engagement with Greater Britain. Britain's late war propaganda needed to satisfy those within Greater Britain, and be acceptable to international eyes. The rhetorical reframing of Greater Britain as the British Commonwealth of Nations in propaganda and political rhetoric was a compromise to satisfy both of these needs.

From 1917, British propagandists were just as eager to avoid the pejorative, Napoleonic definition of 'imperialism' as before. Instead of avoiding and obfuscating Greater Britain and the Empire, as rhetoric under Asquith had, later British rhetoric directly engaged and recast both for strategic incentive. From 1917 the 'British Commonwealth of Nations' was increasingly used in British propaganda and political language as the new byword for Greater Britain, by extension the benevolent face of the Empire. As the danger of German criticisms waned from 1917, British

³⁰ E.g. Martin, 'Watershed,' 164-171; Lloyd, 'Empire to Commonwealth,' *The Round Table*, 335-336.

³¹ Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire*, (Oxford: 2015), esp.23-4.

³² Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, esp. Chapter 4.

propagandists were now able to make a confident case for how the British Empire was different, rather than working in response to German propaganda. Propagandists began to offer a formalised view of what the non-imperial Greater Britain *specifically* was, rather than what it was not.

This rhetorical logic of the ‘British Commonwealth of Nations’ was based on the argument that the British Empire was so distinct that the very concept of ‘empire’ did not apply to it. A piece in the NWAC’s *Welcome* of June 1918, proposed a specific vision of Greater Britain as a partnership, to suggest that the Empire was characteristically different, taking South African General Jan Smuts’ logic:

We talk about “the British Empire,” and it is a convenient term. But, in point of fact, the realm of King George was better described by General Smuts as the “British Commonwealth of Nations.” What is a “Commonwealth”? It is a partnership to secure the common well-being of all its members. All must have a voice in saying in what well-being consists. Great Britain does not want to interfere in the life of her children overseas, and she takes no tribute from them. She flings the broad shield of her sea power over them, and leaves them free to develop their own life.³³

This motif, and Smuts’ promotion of it specifically, was widely reiterated, and became an increasingly standard byword for Greater Britain in propaganda and political language from 1917.

The rhetorical shift towards the ‘Commonwealth of Nations,’ as a specific and decisive representation for Greater Britain, in British rhetoric was strategic. It turned the danger of engaging *imperialism* to an opportunity of aligning the Empire with a more benevolent internationalism. Importantly, however, it was also a concept acceptable to a range of Greater British opinion. In this sense, it can be seen in similar utility to other vague concepts of Greater British language, such as Dominion status, which appealed to a range of opinion through their deliberate ambiguity.

The language of the British Commonwealth of Nations was not invented in 1917. By 1914 the term Commonwealth of Nations as a more benevolent byword for the Empire was one of a clutch of phrases used by imperial advocates and politicians to characterise the unique associational nature of the empire.³⁴ It had already gained popularity within the Round Table Movement, for instance.³⁵

³³ ‘Glad to See your ‘Master’ Ain’t yer’, *Welcome*, 1:13, 26th June 1918, 147.

³⁴ See, Bell, *Greater Britain*; McIntyre, *Britannic Vision*; see also, Proudman, ‘Words for Scholars,’ 395-433; Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism,’ 147-177.

³⁵ Goldstein, ‘Round Table,’ esp.181.

South African General Jan Smuts was its major proponent during the war. Smuts' speeches became a blueprint for this in the same way that Lloyd George's did for war aims.

Smuts was South Africa's Minister of Defence during the war, but was most prominent as an advisor to the War Cabinet, and later the South African representative in London at the War Cabinet. Smuts' main preoccupation during the later war years was the Empire's post war settlement, and the future world order. Smuts' answer to both was the British Commonwealth of Nations – to affirm the strengths of Greater Britain, as he saw it, as an example for the rest of the world to follow into peace.³⁶

Smuts' words were particularly used in the NWAC's pamphlet literature. This represented a similar repurposing and extension of political speeches as explored for Asquith's speeches. The NWAC published Smuts' speeches individually, and as part of a series of speeches by eminent politicians.³⁷ This shows that the importance of such speeches as propaganda statements if anything grew throughout the war.

In Smuts' speech from 15th May 1917, his rejection of the terminology of empire is highlighted:

The British Empire is much more than a State. I think the very expression "Empire" is misleading, because it makes people think as if we are one single entity, one unity, to which that term "Empire" can be applied. We are not an Empire. Germany is an Empire, so was Rome, and so is India, but we are a system of nations, a community of states and of nations far greater than any empire which has ever existed; and by using this ancient expression we really obscure the real fact that we are larger and that our whole position is different, and that we are not one nation, or state, or empire, but we are a whole world by ourselves, consisting of many nations and states, and all sorts of communities under one flag. We are a system of states, not only a static system, a stationary system, but a dynamic system, growing, evolving all the time towards new destinies.³⁸

Smuts made this a conceptual argument: the British Empire, through Greater Britain, was something beyond an empire. Smuts' emphasis on the importance of the system's evolution – again drawn from

³⁶ Peder Anker, *Imperial Ecology: Environmental Order in the British Empire, 1895-1945*, (Cambridge, MA: 2001), 48; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, 55; Antony Lentin, *General Smuts: South Africa*, (London: 2010).

³⁷ See, TNA:PRO - Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918'; see also, Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*.

³⁸ TNA:PRO: 'Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918', 'The British Commonwealth of Nations: A Speech Made by General Smuts on May 15th, 1917', 5.

his ecological conceptions of holism – likewise conceded the importance of change and reform, rather than the avoidance of this question under Asquith.

The concept served multiple purposes, both within Greater Britain and beyond. For Greater Britain, it had specific and generalised utility. In the first sense, especially when advocated by Smuts, the concept had utility in appealing to the most contentious member of Greater Britain – South Africa. Smuts infused the concept of the Commonwealth of Nations with his conception of ‘holism,’ his self-developed ecological and political concept. Holism emphasised that the whole was greater than the sum of its parts, and the importance of unified systems. This principle informed Smuts’ perspective on the unification of South Africa. Obviously this had British strategic utility, given the serious rebellions in South Africa of 1915. Smuts therefore rhetorically extended this notion of holism to Greater Britain in general. Political discord in the rest of Greater Britain was certainly not as serious as in South Africa, but each Dominion saw their degree of political unrest prompted by war weariness by 1917. In this way, the concept was used a convenient rallying point to the propaganda aim of encouraging continued strength through unity in the Empire.³⁹

Furthermore, the concept was also deliberately flexible. While the increase in official British use of the term has been seen as an indication of constitutional reform in the Empire,⁴⁰ at this time its utility was more in further delaying any such change, and containing the various strands of opinion within Greater Britain. Much like Dominion status, rather than representing a specific change, it was in many ways a convenient salve. Just as the essential vagueness of Greater Britain accommodated the varying attitudes and national confidences of the various Dominions without bringing them to a head, so too ‘Commonwealth’ bridged different attitudes regarding the future direction of Greater Britain internally. It therefore appealed to varying opinions, from the Round Table, as a byword for a desired closer imperial union.⁴¹ At the other end of the scale, it fit with the opinions of figures like Smuts, who, while endorsing the Empire, certainly was against greater centralisation. For Smuts, the concept represented more an enshrining of the informal, voluntary alliance of Greater Britain.

³⁹ Peder Anker, *Imperial Ecology*, esp. Chapter 2.

⁴⁰ E.g., Wigley, *Canada*; Stacey, *Canada*; Martin, ‘Watershed,’ 164-171; see also, Kendle, *Conferences*.

⁴¹ McIntyre, *Britannic Vision*, 116.

Smuts' particular framing of the concept continued the impulse to reject empire and imperialism in negative terms, but instead proposed a new conceptualisation of what the British Empire was, rather than what it was not:

Now, you see that no political ideas that we evolved in the past, no nomenclature will apply to this world which is comprised in the British Empire; any expression, any name which we have found so far for this group has been insufficient, and I think the man who would discover the real appropriate name for this vast system of entities would be doing a great service not only to this country, but to constitutional theory ... I think this is the fundamental fact which we have to bear in mind – that the British Empire, or this British Commonwealth of nations, does not stand for unity, standardisation, or assimilation, or denationalisation; but it stands for a fuller, a richer, and more various life among all the nations that compose it.⁴²

In its way, Smuts extended the representation of the Empire as 'non-imperial,' putting meat on the bones of a concept hinted at under Asquith.

It is important to consider, again, the contexts around the rhetoric, to gain a fuller understanding of how this served British propaganda interests. Smuts' political and military identity gave his promotion of the concept particular potency, and was the perfect messenger for this recasting of Greater Britain. As a former Boer commander now fighting for the Empire – an enemy turned loyalist – he represented the very concept of the Dominions convinced by British values, not compelled or blindly following.⁴³ Smuts became another uniquely Greater British propaganda figure. He was distinct from Beaverbrook and Murdoch, who utilised political and Fleet Street connections and influence. Smuts, instead, was an imperial hero, and this fame recommended him as a Greater British propaganda spokesman. His identity as an enemy-turned-loyalist gave further implicit weight to the moral persuasiveness of the British cause. As such, Smuts' use as a propaganda figurehead by British propagandists is an important dynamic of Greater British propaganda. The degree to which New Zealand politicians and press figures took on similar roles, or 'failed' to, is explored further in Chapter 4.

⁴² TNA:PRO : 'Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918', 'The British Commonwealth of Nations: A Speech Made by General Smuts on May 15th, 1917', 6-7.

⁴³ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, 52; see also, Lentin, *General Smuts*; see also, O. Geyser, 'Jan Smuts and Alfred Milner', *The Round Table*, 90:360 (2001), 415-432.

Smuts was a fixture of NWAC meetings, and deployed by the government in particularly problematic regions such as in response to Welsh mining disturbances.⁴⁴ Smuts drew on his, and by extension South Africa's, *choice* to fight for the Empire in his speeches, for instance stating:

... even nations who have fought against you, like my own, must feel that they and their interests, their language, their religions, and all their cultural interests, are as safe and as secure under the British flag as those of the children of your household and your own blood.⁴⁵

Through Smuts, the British Commonwealth of Nations was a formalised vision of Greater Britain, as a rhetorical flourish to the necessarily changed relationship resulting from the war. Smuts' role as messenger seemed to underline the moral potency of the concept.

3.4 – League of Nations

The Commonwealth served not only internal Greater British rhetorical aims, but also served Britain's strategic priorities regarding international, especially American, opinion. With American entry on the Allied side, the threat of German propaganda was reduced, though delicacy in engaging Greater Britain in British propaganda rhetoric remained. By 1917, this was more to seize the opportunity of aligning the Empire with American values, than exclusively avoiding German criticisms. Delicacy was therefore still required.

The concept was characteristic of the rhetorical efficiency of this late-war propaganda: flexible enough to serve multiple audiences. Lloyd George's strategy was to keep a firm eye on securing a favourable peace settlement that would protect, and if possible expand, Britain's imperial security and world power status. Crucial to this was a post-war alliance with the USA.⁴⁶ Even if the spectre of German propaganda was reduced by 1917, courting American opinion remained a priority, if in a slightly different tenor.

⁴⁴ Thompson, *Imperial Britain*, 160.

⁴⁵ TNA:PRO : 'Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918', 'General Smuts's Message to South Wales - Speech Delivered at Tonupandy, Rhondda, on October 29, 1917,' 4; see also, 'The British Commonwealth of Nations: A Speech Made by General Smuts on May 15th, 1917', 7.

⁴⁶ Pedersen, *Guardians*, 19; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, esp.45; French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, esp. Chapter 11.

Recasting Greater Britain as the Commonwealth of Nations not only made it acceptable to American opinion, but also aimed to make it attractive, by aligning it with Wilsonianism. This fit a wider rhetorical trend in British propaganda of drawing links between British and American politics and culture. This even included re-contextualising the American Revolution as the natural and acceptable result of the Empire, based on natural association and self-government. The war was ‘a reunion as happy and as cordial as the first break was painful; and the celebration is one in which every Briton can join with full heart,’ according to *Welcome*.⁴⁷ The *Mayflower* was even recast as an emblem of the British navy.⁴⁸ New Zealand wrote itself into this Anglo-American lineage. James Allen appealed to Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War as an example of just application of military conscription.⁴⁹

Smuts’ rhetoric of the Commonwealth of Nations fit within this, as a specific vision of the current and future alignment of British and American values.⁵⁰ Smuts’ vision not only made the Empire ‘non-imperial,’ but a distinct international force for good, worthy of trust and reward in the peace negotiations. If an aim of Wilsonianism was to reform European imperial practice, the notion of the Commonwealth allowed Britain to be out ahead of its European rivals, the most trusted and most aligned with American values. Smuts was blunt here, recasting the Commonwealth of Nations as a proto-League of Nations, of which he was a major proponent:

It seems to me this British Empire has only one mission, and that is a mission for greater liberty and freedom and self-development. Yours is the only system that has ever worked in history where a large number of nations have been living in unity. Talk about the League of Nations - you are the only league of nations that has ever existed; and if the line that I am sketching here is correct you are going to be an even greater league of nations in the future; and if you are true to your old traditions of self-government and freedom, and to this vision of your future and your mission, who knows that you may not exercise far greater and more beneficent influence on the history of mankind than you ever have done before?⁵¹

⁴⁷ See, Jessica Bennett & Mark Hampton, ‘World War I and the Anglo-American Imagined Community: Civilisation vs. Barbarism in British Propaganda and American Newspapers’, in *Anglo-American Media Interactions, 1850?—2000*, ed. (Basingstoke and New York, NY: 1988), 155-175.

⁴⁸ ‘Some Sea ‘Salts of the Earth’,’ *Welcome*, 1:14, 3rd July 1918, 159-163; see also, ‘Glad to see your ‘Master’ Ain’t yer,’ *Welcome*, 1:13, 26th June 1918, 147.

⁴⁹ “‘To Win the War’”, *NZ Truth*, 3 June 1916, p.6; see also, ‘Military Service’, *The Press*, 12 June 1916, p.7.

⁵⁰ Pedersen, *Guardians*, 24.

⁵¹ TNA:PRO : ‘Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918’, ‘The British Commonwealth of Nations: A Speech Made by General Smuts on May 15th, 1917’, 2.

The same was even more directly expressed by Lloyd George, proposing the Empire as a guarantor of world peace, in a speech likewise reproduced by the NWAC:

I am for a League of Nations. In fact, the League of Nations has begun. The British Empire is a League of Nations. The Allied countries who are fighting the battle of international right are a League of Nations ... The British Empire will be needed after peace to keep wrongs in check. Its mere word will count more next time than it did the last. For the enemy know now with whom they have got to deal.⁵²

This was an active engagement, even use, of Greater Britain: rather than avoiding criticism, positively recasting for Britain's advantage.

The concept of the Commonwealth of Nations also aligned effectively with the conceptual language of the mandatory system proposed to distribute former German colonies and Ottoman territories. This served wider British post-war imperial strategic aims and Australian and New Zealand sub-imperial ambitions. In a speech in Glasgow from June 1917, Lloyd George sketched this argument, pre-empting the Fourteen Points, outlined in January 1918. The Prime Minister conceded to the ideal of self-determination, and in doing so, suggested that the natural choice of the inhabitants of Germany's Pacific colonies would be the 'gentler' British Empire:

When you come to settle who shall be the future trustees of these uncivilised lands, you must take into account the sentiments of the people themselves, what confidence has been inspired in their untutored minds by the German rule of which they have had an experience, whether they are anxious to secure return of their former masters, or whether they would rather trust their destinies to other and juster and - may I confidently say - gentler hands than those who have had the governing of them up to the present time. The wishes, the desires, and the interests of the people of these countries themselves must be the dominant factor in settling their future government. That is the principle upon which we are proceeding.⁵³

By the time of Lloyd George's consequential 'war aims' speech of January 1918, he was explicit on the point of Britain abiding by the ideal of self-determination for Germany's Pacific colonies, where systems of native government existed to make such a decision,⁵⁴ while remaining committed to the belief that the right decision was for them to find their way to British or Dominion possession.⁵⁵

⁵² TNA:PRO : 'Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918', 'Lloyd George's Message - Looking Forward,' Substance of a Speech delivered by the Prime Minister at Manchester, September 12, 1918.

⁵³ Lloyd George, 'Restatement of the Causes and Aims of the War,' *Crusade*, 157.

⁵⁴ Lloyd George, 'The War Aims of the Allies,' *Crusade*, 262-3.

⁵⁵ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, 54; Richard Kay, 'Caging the Prussian Dragon: New Zealand and the Paris Peace Conference 1919', in *New Zealand's Great War: New Zealand, the Allies & the First World War*, ed. John Crawford & Ian McGibbon, (Auckland: 2007), esp.129.

Serving these multiple aims therefore required delicacy in engaging the language of Empire and Greater Britain.

The significance of this concept for Greater British propaganda rhetoric is therefore an important dynamic to explore in its own right. The language had to be adaptable to appeal to multiple sentiments within Greater Britain, while also being acceptable to international opinion. Interpretations that see this change as merely the cultural manifestation of the high-political shift in Anglo-Dominion relations embodied by the Imperial War Cabinet miss the strategic importance of how this rhetoric worked, in the context of the war, and within Greater British propaganda. The increased deployment of the language of the Commonwealth was less a signal than a considered strategy. It was an impulse in rhetorical efficiency and expediency, rather than a deliberate concession.

However else this language may have developed in the interwar years and beyond, its significance for Greater British propaganda of the war was a more direct and confident, if still careful, rhetorical embrace of the Dominions in British propaganda rhetoric. Just as in organisational aspects, the Dominions became a more definitive feature of British rhetoric from 1917.

3.5 – Domestic Audience

The previous sections have largely considered how international audiences and broad strategic changes affected the rhetorical stakes of British propaganda rhetoric engaging and representing Greater Britain. The pressures of war weariness also affected the internal rhetorical dynamics of Greater British propaganda itself. Most notably, war weariness caused fractures in the rhetorical unanimity of Greater British rhetoric. Greater British propaganda rhetoric subtly adapted from 1917 to meet a new reality wherein the various domestic pressures of Greater Britain threatened to outweigh Greater British loyalty. Greater British propaganda became more agile as a result, presenting arguments and motifs flexible enough to meet the varied and war wearied sentiments of Greater Britain.

As the NWAC's instructions for speakers illustrates, from 1917 appeals to Greater Britain and the Empire were increasingly used in service of domestic British propaganda.⁵⁶ This was a marked shift in approach in British official propaganda, which had ripple affects for Greater British propaganda generally. Earlier in the war, British propagandists relied on a degree of self-mobilisation, both of British and Dominion audiences. For Greater Britain, political speeches, communicated and disseminated as Greater British propaganda, provided a rhetorical blueprint from which different propaganda efforts would draw and shape. They appeared in the Dominion press, and in the form of pamphlet literature could also inform local speeches and meetings. Just as British propaganda shifted to more directly managing domestic morale from 1917,⁵⁷ so too did its engagement with Greater Britain become more direct. Discussion and praise of the Greater British contribution to the war became more specific, rather than implicit, in British official propaganda.

This was not always a simple prospect. Engaging in specific Dominion praise could be reasonably straightforward. An edition of NWAC's soldier magazine *Welcome*, focusing on the Dominions, is indicative. The anxious constitutionality of Asquith's speeches is replaced by a warm familiarity. The cover shows an illustration of Australian, Canadian, New Zealand, and South African soldiers, titled 'Four of the Finest,' [Figure 5] a smiling, familial portrait of the Dominions, to which the emotive editorial adds:

The cover drawing of this week's issue of *Welcome* should be a bracing tonic to any of us who may give a momentary fit of blue pall. Watch the faces of "Four of the Finest." Don't they look happy. We defy the Huns with their hate-drill and so forth to show the counterpart of these four musketeers, men who are daily encountering powers of evil and performing gallant deeds, such as the men of old never achieved, and all the time – with a smile.⁵⁸

This was a more emotive depiction of Greater Britain, for British and Dominion troops on leave, than evinced under Asquith.⁵⁹ It is notable that even this represented the blurriness of Greater British propaganda, being a validation of Dominion soldiers, in a periodical ostensibly for British troops, published by the main domestic British propaganda organisation, the NWAC. As evinced in its

⁵⁶ TNA:PRO: T102/18 National War Aims Committee (Guest Committee): Records. Meetings Department – 'Meetings Department Report, 25th September, 1917.'

⁵⁷ Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 198; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, esp. Chapter 2; Gregory, *Last Great War*, esp. Chapter 7.

⁵⁸ 'Four of the Finest,' in, *Welcome*, 1:16, 17th July 1918, 184.

⁵⁹ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 103-4.

operational activities, the familiarity of the Dominions brought them under the NWAC's aegis in this ambiguous way.⁶⁰ The same shift towards praise and specificity of Dominion representations is also evinced in cinema propaganda, which Chapter 6 explores in detail. Engaging Greater Britain as a whole, however, was a more complex proposition.



Figure 5 – ‘Four of the Finest,’ *Welcome*, 1:16 (17th July, 1918).

⁶⁰ See Chapter 1; E.g., TNA:PRO – T 102/16 National War Aims Committee (Guest Committee) – ‘Meetings Department Report, 25th September, 1917,’ 5.

War weariness began to make appeals to Greater British unity more dangerous than unifying. Similar sentiments – that the war was forcing New Zealand national interests and imperial loyalties – in opposite directions, as evinced by Mackenzie,⁶¹ were growing more generally, including in Britain. This made engaging Greater Britain as a whole a fraught prospect.

From a domestic British perspective, gestures of Dominion praise were somewhat exhausting by 1917. If official rhetoric had been vague and magnanimous towards the Dominions, British audiences had not been short of Dominion publicity in the early years of the war, through Beaverbrook and Murdoch's aggressive publicity efforts, for instance. Therefore, what seemed newfound validation to the Dominions in official propaganda, could clearly be exhausting for domestic Britons, well versed in Canadian and Australian achievements through photography, film, the press, and publications by 1917.⁶² Ironically, while the rhetorical risk of Greater Britain receded internationally, it developed new complexity and risk internally, of exhaustion and jealousy. British opinion was therefore just as serious a consideration in shaping the rhetorical dynamics of Greater British propaganda.

The NWAC intended to use the Dominions' contribution to 'stifle party class dissensions,' and provide a form of friendly reassurance to the British public.⁶³ There is evidence, however, that this caused frustration and even discord. At least some amongst the war weary British public were tired of hearing about the tremendous contributions of others, and desired validation of the national British effort. Validation, encouragement, and enticement were the pillars of the NWAC's rhetoric, just as important as continued reminders of the stakes of the war and civic duty.⁶⁴ This was occasionally met through a particular framing of Greater British contributions, walking a delicate line between validating the British contribution, and using the Dominion and Indian contributions as encouraging, rather than as praise. An extract from the Royal Colonial Society's journal *United*

⁶¹ See Chapter 2.

⁶² See Chapter 1; E.g. Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295; Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake,' 165-179; Putnis, 'Lord Northcliffe' 71-86.

⁶³ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 132-33; Horne, *Labour*, 309-311.

⁶⁴ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Horne, 'Remobilizing,' 195-211.

Empire – which became an unofficial organ of the Ministry of Information in 1918⁶⁵ – of August 1918, reflects this impulse, of praising the domestic British contribution within the Imperial effort:

The Old Country is not a good hand at advertising herself, and it is significant that when Mr. Lloyd George appointed the first Minister of Information to supervise the work of British propaganda abroad, he chose a Canadian for the post. For more than two years, the War Office refused to allow the correspondents at the front to name specifically the British regiments which had taken part in the fighting. Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans were repeatedly mentioned, but the people of the Motherland were allowed to learn only from the casualty-lists that their sons had been in action. The example is typical. Our enemies have assiduously spread the slander that Britain was leaving her Allies and her sons from overseas to bear the brunt of the struggle, and, if the libel has unfortunately gained some currency, the Old Country has her taciturn and stubborn pride to blame. For the facts themselves are indisputable. Out of a 7,500,000 men provided by the Empire up to the end of last year, “for the armed forces of the Crown,” 4,530,000 (or 60.4 per cent.) had been contributed by England, 620,000 (or 8.3 per cent.) by Scotland, and 280,000 (or 3.7 per cent.) by Wales. The total number contributed by Great Britain therefore amounted to 5,430,000. It is impossible to give the gauges of casualties, but it may at least be said that proportionately they were as high as those among any of the contingents from overseas.⁶⁶

This represented an internal stock take of Greater Britain, validating the individual parts as much as the whole. On its face, the passage is similar to earlier refutations of German criticisms; deflecting suggestions that Britain was exploiting the Empire and the Dominions, while taking little cost. Making this claim was necessary, given the journal’s Empire-wide circulation – this sentiment had to be acceptable throughout Greater Britain. The same point, however, also serves to specifically validate the British contribution. This was characteristically kaleidoscopic imperial rhetoric.

Hinting particularly towards Beaverbrook, the passage notes how much specific praise had been heaped on Dominion forces in the British press, with relatively little afforded to national British troops. Ironically, Murdoch levelled exactly the inverse critique at the War Office for adhering to the censorship principle of ‘generalisation’ in describing the Imperial war effort, claiming that it disadvantaged the Australians from validation of their particular success.⁶⁷ British and New Zealand propagandists noted Beaverbrook’s success, with a certain frustration, that Canada was excessively well represented in propaganda. Britain was therefore just as much a part of the internal competition and tension of Greater British propaganda. Indeed, the same sense of being elided by a wave of

⁶⁵ Trevor R. Reese, *The History of the Royal Commonwealth Society, 1868-1968*, (London: 1968), 52.

⁶⁶ Elliott Dodds, ‘After Four Years: The Transformation of the Motherland,’ *United Empire*, 9:8, August 1918, 4-5.

⁶⁷ TNA:PRO, CO 537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), p.8-9.

Canadian publicity led New Zealand to finally form its Publicity Branch in 1918. British audiences clearly felt similar pangs of frustration, and a desire for specific recognition.⁶⁸

The success of Canada and Australia's self promotion in London, and the simmering resentments it caused in Britain, and even New Zealand, was therefore another complicated dynamic British propaganda had to respond to within Greater Britain. Mark Connelly's assertion that British propaganda lacked a coherent message on Empire therefore somewhat misses the point.⁶⁹ British propagandists had to contend with various internal dynamics of Greater British propaganda, which became more tense and dangerous from 1917. This was therefore not met with a unified message, but by carefully engaging the community in different ways, in both method and message. Praising the contributions of Greater Britain, and at once valorising the British contribution, was partly then an attempt to salve this frustration.

This careful management of Greater British dynamics also had to be weighed against other external priorities. Lloyd George's war aims tried to appeal to both domestic organised labour, and Greater British interests, even if the rhetoric of the former was often explicitly, even aggressively, anti-imperial. The NWAC's slate of literature, for instance, included anti-imperial labour manifestos, alongside Greater British discourses by Smuts and the Earl of Curzon.⁷⁰ This speaks to the ambidextrous nature of propaganda under Lloyd George: propaganda rhetoric had to be both definitive, but still flexible enough to serve the multiple audiences and ambitions of British war aims.

This careful rhetorical balancing act – to validate all parts of Greater Britain without offending any through over or under representation – was also expressed as a visual metaphor. Displayed alongside the passage in *United Empire* was a stylised graph with soldiers representing the proportion of the imperial effort, titled 'The Proportionate Contribution of the Empire to the British Army on the Western Front.' [Figure 6]. The British soldier is of course vindicatingly large. Soldiers for Canada, and a joint ANZAC soldier are next largest, while soldiers for India and South Africa are

⁶⁸ PA: BBK/E/2/8 – July-Aug. 1917 – General Correspondence and War Cinematograph Committee – John Buchan to Sir Reginald Brade, 14 August 1917. See also, Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295; Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake,' 165-179; Wellington, *Exhibiting War*.

⁶⁹ Connelly, 'Image of Empire,' 189.

⁷⁰ E.g., TNA:PRO – 'Miscellaneous – NWACPD – 1917-1918' – Harry Gosling, 'Peace and How to Keep It'; Earl of Curzon, 'Great Britain's Share.'

comparatively dwarfed. Using a supposedly objective statistical representation of military numbers, the image is loaded with an implied vision of Greater Britain.

The scale of the graph is only accurate to actual numbers through a focus on the Western Front alone, which allows the illustrator to relegate India – which contributed significantly more men than any of the Dominions, if not proportionately to population – to the fourth position. Indeed, 1917 to 1918 saw an increase in Indian recruitment. The combination of Australia and New Zealand into one solider likewise strategically brings them to the third position, almost equal to Canada. This is a further skewing of the numbers to prioritise the three ‘whitest’ Dominions as those making the greatest contribution, and thus closest to Britain. This ordering is reminiscent of Wardle’s ‘Lion poster,’ adaptations of which often included India as the fourth listed ‘young lion’ over the racially and politically turbulent South Africa.

The same scaled graph recurred in the Ministry of Information-sponsored illustrated film ‘Britain’s Effort,’ created by illustrator Lancelot Speed.⁷¹ The film even brings the graph to life: as a giant British solider reclines, the Canadian and ANZAC soldiers climb to stand on each of his knees, while he looks lovingly on. The tiny Indian and South African soldiers perch in the background. [Figure 7].

This visual motif makes the implicit racial boundaries of the community explicit. In conjunction, through creative statistics, it elevates Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, to reinforce whiteness, and political Britishness, as important for inclusion. This created an inner circle even within Greater Britain. India and South Africa, both politically contentious and more racially diverse, were more kept distant from a full Greater British embrace. This was one of the greatest discordances between propaganda rhetoric and political intent under Lloyd George: India could not be militarily ignored because of its depths of manpower reserves. While it was marginalised rhetorically, it was included at the table in the Imperial War Cabinet, even if through British representatives.

⁷¹ IWM: IWM514 ‘Britain’s Effort: drawings by Lancelot Speed, 1918; see also, David Monger, ‘Propaganda at Home (Great Britain and Ireland),’ *1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. Daniel et. al., (Berlin: 2016).

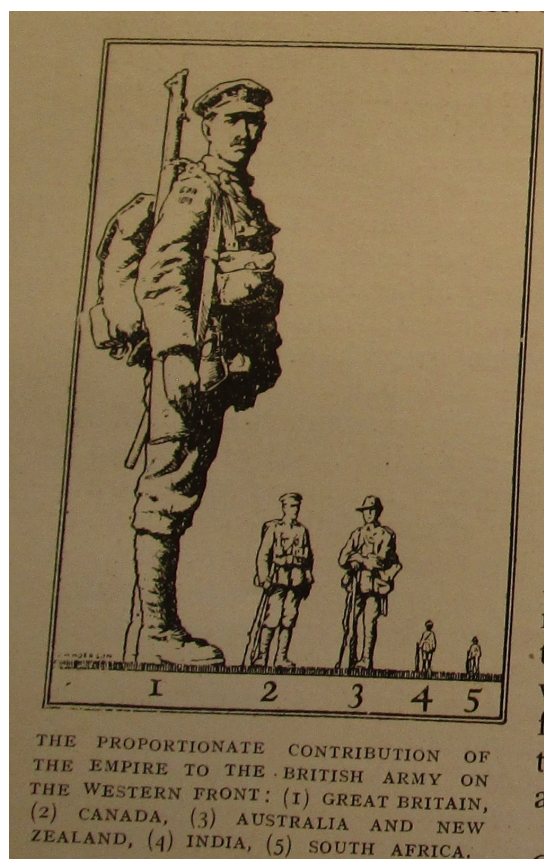


Figure 6 – Elliott Dodds, 'After Four Years: The Transformation of the Motherland,' *United Empire*, 9: August 1918, 4-5.



Figure 7 – IWM: IWM514 'Britain's Effort: drawings by Lancelot Speed, 1918.

The motif is indicative of the flexibility of Greater British propaganda rhetoric. It is akin to an 'imperial Rorschach test,' allowing multiple interpretations to different viewers within Greater

Britain. To a domestic British audience, weary of the deluge of Canadian publicity, it validates the scale and sacrifice of the domestic British war effort; to Dominion and Indian audiences, weary of their own sacrifices and patchy consultation from London, it reassures that Britain is carrying her share of the sacrifice. The complexity of this varied messaging is therefore illustrative of the internal complexity of Greater Britain. It too shared the tension of broad identification with the community, alongside a national identity that, while not necessarily in *conflict* with Greater Britain, required validation in its own right. Colonial nationalist readings of Dominion identities miss this complexity. Greater Britain's internal complexity was reflected in its propaganda. Messages had to be as acceptable in Washington, as in Westminster, as in Wellington.

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This chapter has examined how the pressures of the late war years changed the rhetorical dynamics of Greater British propaganda. This entailed a change not necessarily just of the scale of Greater British representation in British propaganda, but also a different approach. In outlining British war aims, Lloyd George could not simply speak past the Dominions, as Asquith did. Instead, this speech represented a larger rhetorical deal with the Dominions, for greater manpower. The language of the Commonwealth was a similarly expedient and flexible rhetorical innovation, which catered both to Dominion sensitivities, and to international opinion. Growing internal frustration and war weariness in Greater Britain likewise entailed more flexible rhetoric, which appealed to all and offended none within Greater Britain.

Together with Chapter 2, this chapter shows Greater Britain to be a particular cultural space. The dynamics and tensions of Greater Britain played on British propagandists' minds, and informed rhetorical choices. This is not evinced in a quantitative sense, by noting a change in the scale of imperial language in British propaganda rhetoric. Instead, exploring how rhetoric worked in relation to propaganda reveals this.

Re-framing the language of the Commonwealth in the frame of Greater British propaganda shows a more complex, and less grandiose, picture than the typical Anglo-Dominion relations

scholarship does. The following chapter continues this approach. It examines the visits of the Dominion Prime Ministers to Britain during the war. These visits have also been claimed by Anglo-Dominion relations historiography. This historiography reads the wartime visits as exclusively high-political summits, in which confident Dominion leaders re-forged their constitutional relationship with Britain. The following chapter instead reads these visits in the context of Greater British propaganda. This also shows a more complex picture of these visits, which were informed by the particular dynamics of Greater Britain at war.

Chapter 4: 'A Mere Bauble Hunting Expedition': Dominion Prime Ministers' Wartime Visits to London

Through their speeches, Asquith, Lloyd George, and Smuts acted as spokesmen of Greater British propaganda in varying ways. Chapter 4 focuses more closely on this through a case study within Greater British propaganda. It explores the Dominion Prime Ministers' visits to Britain during the war. These visits are explored for their propaganda and publicity dimensions, rather than only their political aspects. In this regard, this chapter follows Chapters 2 and 3 in re-contextualising a familiar aspect of the war in a Greater British frame. It also follows Chapter 1 in demonstrating the particular dynamics of interaction, collaboration, and competition, which characterise Greater British propaganda.

Historians of Anglo-Dominion relations have dominated interpretation of these visits, as high-political summits, which reshaped the constitutional relationship between Britain and the Dominions. This is a limited understanding. They did not exist solely in the realm of high politics. This chapter re-contextualises the Prime Ministers visits as Greater British propaganda events.

Reframing the visits in Greater Britain shows how the Dominion Prime Ministers operated in multiple roles; they were at once national advocates, spokesmen for British propaganda, antagonists for British politicians, potential imperial heroes, and more general Greater British propaganda figureheads. This unique tessellation of roles was particular to Greater Britain. Here, the more general notion of a culture of Greater British familiarity and trust is explored more specifically through the significance of Dominion status, and a Dominion authority, in London. This chapter therefore again follows Thompson and Magee's approach, by giving meaning to interactions that seem discordant outside the context of Greater Britain.

It explores the role of the press, and Greater British press figures, to the conduct and reception of the visits. This shows the importance of the press as an agent of Greater British propaganda, and as a space in which Greater British politics and rivalries were played out. The chapter shows how the particular dynamics of Greater Britain at war provided opportunities for Dominion publicity, propaganda, and political intervention. This inverts the typical high-political approach to the visits, by focusing on press and propaganda representations as the main source body.

Political, governmental, and politicians' private papers are instead used to provide useful organisational context.

This chapter provides notable reinterpretations to the visits, across multiple historiographies. It shows the importance of Asquith's initial half-hearted invitation in informing the conduct of the initial visits, and the importance of Dominion publicity advocates in shaping the reception of different leaders in many directions. This challenges the notion that New Zealand, and in particular its press correspondent Malcolm Ross, failed in relation to the publicity of these visits. New Zealand was less strident in publicising a mythic narrative of its war effort, as did Australia and Canada. Instead, New Zealand's approach was different, favouring a more modest public approach. The chapter concludes by exploring how this modest, cooperative approach in publicity and propaganda eventually paid off for New Zealand.

The approaches of the previous chapters dovetail in this case study. This chapter looks at how rhetoric and representation played out in the cultural space of Greater Britain. It also shows how the political, press, and private interactions informed these rhetorical aspects. In this way, the visits are presented not only as examples of propaganda, but instead as distinctly Greater British propaganda.

4.1 – Visits in Greater Britain

Imperial travel, specifically political and royal visits, tours, and missions, have been interpreted specifically in existing scholarship. This chapter agrees that such Greater British official travel was significant, but argues that the Prime Ministers' wartime visits to Britain have been incorrectly interpreted, particularly by Anglo Dominion relations historiography. This chapter reinterprets these visits *as* Greater British propaganda.

Historians of Greater Britain and the Empire have highlighted the importance of mobility of people, politicians, imperial notables, and academics, facilitated by nineteenth century technological innovations, as important to cohering an imperial awareness, identity, and culture.¹ Dilke's and

¹ E.g., John Kendle, 'New Zealand Groups,' 33-50; Keith Jeffrey, 'Distance and Proximity in Service to the Empire: Ulster and New Zealand between the Wars', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36

Seeley's theories of Greater Britain were forged through such imperial tourism, while the Round Table Movement likewise utilised Dominion tours to foster important connections, and inform their plans for reform.²

Royal tours of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were an even grander, official example of imperial tourism for cultural and political cohesion, even a form of imperial propaganda.³ The Prince of Wales' 1921 tour of the Raj,⁴ and the 1901 royal tour of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall – the future George V – to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa served the same aim. They were a gentle application of royal imperial authority through ceremony, to reaffirm imperial loyalties in the wake of challenging wars. A royal visit could validate and gratify and strengthen local imperial loyalty.⁵ Regarding the 1921 Durbar, Lloyd George stated that a royal visit could 'do more to calm the discord than half a dozen solemn imperial conferences.'⁶ For the settler colonies, these were recolonial gestures, reinforcing Greater Britishness.⁷ The Dominion leaders' visits to London during the war sit within this tradition but inverted familiar dynamics by bringing the Dominions Home.

Directionally the visits were an inversion: rather than a projection of British imperial authority outwards, they saw Dominion leadership reverberating back to Home. The appropriate role of a Dominion leader in the imperial metropole was, however, less clear than that of the monarch

(2008), esp. 455-56; Kosmas Tsokhas, 'Tradition, fantasy and Britishness: Four Australian prime ministers', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 31:1 (2001), 4; Marion Wallace, 'Personal Circuits: Official Tours and South Africa's Colony', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 41:3 (2015), 635-652; Tamson Pietsch, *Empire of scholars: Universities, networks and the British academic world, 1850-1939* (Manchester: 2013); Marjory Harper, 'Personal contact is worth a ton of text books': educational tours of the empire, 1926-39', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 32:3 (2004), 48-76.

² Dilke, *Greater Britain*; Seeley, *Expansion*; Richard Jebb, *Studies in Colonial Nationalism*, (London: 1905); see also, David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Colonial Administration*, (Durham, NC: 1993).

³ E.g. Charles V. Reed, *Royal tourists, colonial subjects and the making of a British world, 1860-1911*, (Manchester: 2016).

⁴ Chandrika Kaul, 'Monarchical Display and the Politics of Empire: Prince of Wales and India 1870-1920s', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17:4 (2006), 464-488; Hilary Sapire, 'Ambiguities of Loyalism: the Prince of Wales in India and Africa, 1921-2 and 25', *History Workshop Journal*, 73 (2011), 37-65; see also, Jane Stafford & Mark Williams, 'Indian Mysteries and Comic Stunts: The Royal Tour and the Theatre of Empire', *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 44:2 (2009), 87-105.

⁵ Phillip Buckner, 'Casting daylight upon magic: Deconstructing the royal tour of 1901 to Canada', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 31:2 (2003), 158-189; Judith Bassett, 'A Thousand Miles of Loyalty: The Royal Tour of 1901', *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 21:1 (1987), 125-138; Stephen Alomes, 'Ceremonial visions of Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*, 11:20 (1987), 49-58.

⁶ Sapire, 'Ambiguities', 43; Buckner, 'Casting daylight', 162.

⁷ For recolonisation see Belich, *Paradise Reforged*; Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*.

throughout the Empire, befitting the informality of Greater Britain. Where royal tours had a ceremonial precedent,⁸ visits of Dominion leaders were more ambiguous. They were also more than ceremonial.

The war exaggerated this ambiguity. Due to the deferral of the 1915 Imperial Conference, they also lacked a formal purpose. Out of this ambiguity, historians of Anglo-Dominion relations, especially of Canada, have claimed these visits as part of the constitutional development of Greater Britain.⁹ Australian scholarship likewise has claimed the publicity of Hughes' visit for a heroic national mythology of the war.¹⁰ For these scholars, the issue of political consultation was foremost. This chapter moves beyond this high-political focus, to understand the visits in relation to Greater British propaganda.

The visits served many functions. They were part pilgrimage, part publicity stunt, and part political mission. These publicity and propagandistic elements were important aspects of the visits. As explored for Smuts in Chapter 3, the continued impact of public meetings and speeches into the First World War alone meant that the Dominion Prime Ministers had utility within Britain's campaign as spokesmen, speaking for British and Greater British interests and campaigns.¹¹ The conduct of these visits was significantly informed by the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. These both legitimised the Dominion leaders' presence in London, and informed the operational and media contexts they existed in.

The ambiguity of Greater Britain both rationalised and complicated how the Dominion Prime Ministers operated in London. The culture of trust and familiarity within Greater Britain – their semi-

⁸ David Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition', c.1820-1977', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, (Cambridge: 1983), 101-164; see also Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, ed. Paul Smith (Cambridge: 2001); John D. Fair, 'Walter Bagehot, Royal Mediation, and the Modern British Constitution, 1869-1931', *The Historian*, 43:1 (November 1980), 36; David Cannadine, 'From biography to history: writing the modern British Monarchy', *Historical Research*, 77:197 (August 2004); John Canon, 'The Survival of the British Monarchy: The Prothero Lecture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 36 (1986); David M. Craig, 'The Crowned Republic? Monarchy and Anti-Monarchy in Britain 1760-1901', *The Historical Journal*, 46:1 (2003), 167-185; William M. Kuhn, *Democratic Royalism: The Transformation of the British Monarchy, 1861-1914*, (London: 1996).

⁹ E.g., Sinclair, *A History*, esp. Chapter 4; Brown, 'Sir Robert Borden,' 201-224; Wigley, *Canada*.

¹⁰ See, Carl Bridge, *William Hughes: Australia*, (London: 2011), esp. Chapter 1.

¹¹ For the importance of public meetings see, Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 31, 42-43; see also, Jon Lawrence, *Speaking for the People: Party, Language and Popular Politics in England, 1867-1914*, (Cambridge: 1998), 164, 180-182.

domestic status – allowed them a curious intervention in domestic politics and propaganda. At the same time, this essential ambiguity, and the vagueness of Asquith's initial invitation left them unmoored, with the purpose of their visits seeming vague, especially to Dominion audiences. As more generally, this provided challenges and opportunities, which the Dominions seized in different ways.

In the context of Greater British propaganda, the Dominion Prime Ministers in London were spokespeople, public speakers, campaign advocates, imperial experts, and figures of fun. Dominion publicity advocates, most notably Beaverbrook for Canada and Murdoch for Australia, were crucial in shaping the conduct and reception of their leaders' visits, through personal propaganda and Fleet Street connections. Beaverbrook and Murdoch had different capacities and approaches, which were often more determinative in shaping the conduct of their leaders' visits, than were the efforts of the leaders themselves.

British politicians likewise utilised the ambiguous authority of the Dominion leaders for their own political aims. The community of trust and political dynamics of Greater Britain allowed this. This is demonstrated most dramatically by Australia's Billy Hughes interjections as a booster for Lloyd George in the shell crisis of 1916, which led to Asquith's downfall. By this interpretation, the Imperial War Cabinet of 1917 and 1918 were less the culmination of these visits, than they were the 'anchoring' of the Dominion Prime Ministers' ambiguous authority, much as Lloyd George anchored Northcliffe and Beaverbrook with roles in official propaganda.

At a wider level, the ways in which these visits, speeches, and meetings were then represented, reinterpreted, and reverberated throughout Greater Britain, as Greater British propaganda, is therefore the major focus of this thesis. This re-contextualises the visits away from the interpretations of Anglo-Dominion relations historiography.

The visits of Australia's Hughes and Canada's Borden have received significant scholarly attention, through colonial nationalist framings.¹² This has shaped interpretations of the visits both in general, and specifically for New Zealand. Massey and Ward's visit has received less attention, and

¹² E.g., Donald Horne, *Billy Hughes: Prime Minister of Australia, 1915-1923*, (Melbourne: 2000), esp.13-18, 25-26.

has little to no place in the New Zealand public memory of the war, as Hughes' does.¹³ Judging New Zealand's visits by Australia and Canada's standards, and particularly through their contribution to a colonial nationalist mythology of the war, has led them, and their ostensible advocate Malcolm Ross, to be read as 'failures' in London. This is a significant misreading this chapter challenges. Instead, exploring these visits collectively – in the context of Greater British propaganda – shows New Zealand's distinct approach. Each Dominion responded to the challenges and opportunities of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda differently. This chapter shows this complexity.

4.2 – Initial Invitations

Due to the pressures of mobilisation, Britain and the Dominions agreed to postpone the planned Imperial Conference for 1915. This was under the Dominion assumption that they would be engaged in peace negotiations later in the war. Consultation was expected. The Dominion leaders fairly felt their national interests at stake in this regard, especially as the war went on and manpower demands increased. They all felt the need to press their shared and individual cases as a reward for their effort in a peace settlement. Immediate national interests were served through their visits.¹⁴ These dynamics did not play out solely around the Cabinet table, however. The public-facing aspects of these visits, especially their depiction in the press, became an important staging ground. This section contextualises the political genesis of the visits in terms of public and press reception, to show how the visits existed in the context of Greater British propaganda, not just high politics.

The Dominion leaders' pressure for consultation throughout the war was therefore more pressingly to do with the immediate demands of the war, than necessarily about broader constitutional

¹³ Erik Olssen, 'Towards a Reassessment of W.F. Massey: One of New Zealand's Greatest Prime Ministers (Arguably),' in *A Great New Zealand Prime Minister? Reappraising William Ferguson Massey*, ed. James Watson and Lachy Paterson (Dunedin: 2011), 15-30; see also, Bruce Farland, *Farmer Bill: William Ferguson Massey and the Reform Party*, (Wellington: 2008); Glyn Harper, "'Old Bill was all right': William Ferguson Massey and the Soldiers", in *A Great New Zealand Prime Minister? Reappraising William Ferguson Massey*, ed. Watson and Paterson, (Dunedin: 2011), 87; for Ward see, Michael Basset, *Sir Joseph Ward: A Political Biography*, (Auckland: 1993).

¹⁴ Kay, 'In Pursuit,' esp. Chapter 4.

development. British decisions had immediate military and economic consequences for the Dominions.

For New Zealand, this was not contradictory with a cooperative commitment to Greater Britain and British leadership. The war both fuelled and reinforced its recolonial tightening with Britain. Massey emphasised in negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference success for New Zealand would be through a unified Empire.¹⁵ Massey and Ward, therefore, brought expectations and demands to London, but also saw their presence as part of a collective Greater British effort. In a sense, they demonstrated New Zealand's readiness to assist Britain.

Much of New Zealand's war effort was, in this way, gestured to London. New Zealand's high rate of mobilisation – the highest per capita of the Dominions – was promoted as a point of pride. Defence Minister James Allen captures this particularly devotional conception of New Zealand's war effort, in relation to its reward in the peace:

I do not want Australia and New Zealand to be in the position of Australia and Canada. We have a higher aim, a higher purpose, and I hope at the end of the war we shall reap a higher reward.¹⁶

Britain received this Dominion support with satisfaction. The reception of the Dominion leaders to London, however, was more complicated. Other Dominion leaders saw their presence somewhat differently.

The ambiguity of the Dominion Prime Ministers' visits Home, particularly the crucial first visits, was set largely by the character of the initial British invitation. Only Australia initially objected to the postponement of the 1915 Imperial Conference.¹⁷ Strategic realities informed this: Asquith could defer the Dominions while their commitment seemed secure. Likewise, political pressures of mobilisation kept the Dominion leaders busy.

¹⁵ James Watson, *William Massey: New Zealand*, (London: 2010), 65-66.

¹⁶ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 111-112.

¹⁷ Bodleian Library (BOD): MS.Harcourt 490 – Correspondence with Lord Liverpool, Governor General of New Zealand, 1912-1917: Harcourt to Liverpool, 23/12/1914, 277/1. L.F. Fitzhardinge, *The Little Digger, 1914-1952: William Morris Hughes, A Political Biography Vol. II*, (London: 1979), 48; Kay, 'In Pursuit,' 129.

The deferral was initially expedient for New Zealand, due to contentious internal politics resulting from the almost inconclusive result of the recent election.¹⁸ New Zealand officials were clear that the principle of consultation could not be deferred, especially on military and trade matters. The New Zealand Governor General Lord Liverpool expressed as such to then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lewis Harcourt:

Although my telegram of December 7th will have explained to you that Mr. Massey and his colleagues desire to associate themselves entirely with your views regarding the undesirability of holding an Imperial Conference until after the completion of the war, nor do I think any Minister here of whatever party is in power could leave these Islands at the present time ... The Government feel that, as far as possible, they should be consulted regarding the terms of peace, so far as it affects the British Possessions in the Pacific and the interests of this Dominion.¹⁹

Liverpool also stated the matters New Zealand wished to be consulted on, which included longer-term issues of imperial migration, naval defence, and, notably, the quality of imperial political and press communications.²⁰ Trade was a particular focus for Massey and Ward, particularly advocating for New Zealand farmers, frustrated by Britain's wartime imperial commandeering policy. Publically, however, Massey and Ward stated their willingness to delay such discussion, and promoted a strong unified line with British interests.²¹ Even so, they still intended to visit, despite the delay.

The Dominions were happy to delay the *conference*, but not *consultation* in general, while Asquith showed little enthusiasm for formal consultation. Into 1915, this perceived British dismissal of Dominion consultation engendered criticism, at least privately from New Zealand, and publically from imperial interest groups.²² An editorial in *The Times*, from December 1914, for instance, pressured the Asquith government to invite the Dominion Prime Ministers to London for formal

¹⁸ BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Liverpool to Harcourt, 22/7/1915, 343-344/79; Liverpool to Harcourt, 19/11/1915, 357-358/84; Liverpool to Harcourt, 23/1/1916, 359-364/85; see also, W.J. Gardner, 'W.F. Massey in Power, 1912-1925', *Political Science*, 13:2 (1961), 10-13; Kay, 'In Pursuit', 126-128; James Watson, 'The Continuation of Politics: Parliamentarians and the Great War', *New Zealand Society at War 1914-1918*, ed. Steven Loveridge (Wellington: 2016), 50-53.

¹⁹ BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Harcourt to Liverpool, 20/1/1915, 280/1.

²⁰ BOD: MS.Harcourt 490 – Harcourt to Liverpool, 280/1-283/4.

²¹ Kay, 'In Pursuit', 133-6; Watson, *Massey*, 55-7.

²² E.g., 'The Voice of the Dominions', *The Times*, 31/12/1914, 9; 'A New Imperial Opportunity', *The Times*, 18/12/1914, 7; 'Empire Councils', *The Times*, 25/1/1915, 7; 'Imperial Council of War', *The Times*, 29/10/1915, 8; 'Australia', *The Round Table*, 6:24 (1916), 747-763; see also Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 47; Kay, 'In Pursuit', 126.

consultation.²³ Opposition MPs made similar calls to both Harcourt and his successor Andrew Bonar Law as Colonial Secretary.²⁴ Harcourt was forced to clarify the government position to Parliament in April 1915, hinting that despite the postponement of the Imperial Conference, the Dominions would be consulted on peace terms ‘when the time arrives.’²⁵

Harcourt explained the ‘invitation’ privately to Liverpool, as more a demonstration of the government’s *willingness* to meet with Dominion leaders if they were able to come, than a formal invitation:

I should be glad if you would tell your Prime Minister that if by any chance he saw his way to pay a private visit to England at any time from now onwards that it would be a great pleasure to Asquith and myself to discuss all questions with him personally, but you should ask him not to regard this as a formal invitation, which would get me in trouble with the other Dominions. I have sent similar messages to Canada and Australia and I want Mr. Massey to feel that he is on equality with them in this matter.²⁶

Bonar Law expressed the same sentiment: willingness to meet Dominion Prime Ministers should they come to London, but stopping short of a formal invitation.²⁷ Harcourt deliberately ‘generalised’ the invitation to avoid perceptions of favour between the Dominions. This was a characteristically obfuscation of the Asquith government, which the Dominion leaders responded to in differing ways. This vagueness certainly informed the political conduct of the visits, but also informed their public reception, which has been less explored.

Canada’s Robert Borden was the first to arrive in late 1915; being closer to Britain made the visit an easier prospect than for the antipodean leaders. Politically, Borden’s visit was fairly inconsequential, and he was invited to only one Cabinet meeting.²⁸ Australia’s William ‘Billy’ Hughes, meanwhile, interpreted the Colonial Secretaries’ statements as a specific, formal invitation,

²³ E.g., ‘The Voice of the Dominions’, *The Times*, 31/12/1914, 9; see also, ‘Sir Robert Borden on the War’, *The Times*, 14/7/1915, 9; ‘Sir Robert Borden in London’, *The Times*, 10/7/1915, 7.

²⁴ Historical Hansard: HC Debate, 14 April 1915, vol.71 cc16-8, ‘Imperial Conference’; HC Debate 20 April 1915, vol.71 c172, ‘Dominions and Peace Negotiations’, HC Debate, 22 September 1915, vol.74 c438, ‘Imperial Government and Dominions’; HC Debate, 7 July 1915, vol.73 cc378-9W, ‘Colonial Prime Ministers’.

²⁵ HCPP: [cc16-8] House of Commons Debate, 14 April 1915, vol.71; BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Harcourt to Liverpool, 26 March, 1915, 311/1.

²⁶ BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Harcourt to Liverpool, 16 April, 1915, 329/1-2.

²⁷ HCPP: [c438] House of Commons Debate, 22 September 1915, vol.74, ‘Imperial Government and Dominions.’

²⁸ Wigley, *Canada*, 23.

which confused Borden in correspondence.²⁹ Hughes eagerly travelled to London in early 1916. Despite his enthusiasm, his experience was much the same as Borden's. He was invited to attend only one cabinet meeting. Hughes gained more traction by meeting with Lloyd George, who convinced Asquith to allow Hughes to act as an imperial representative at the 1916 Allied Economic Conference in Paris.³⁰ Politically frustrated, therefore, Hughes had more success making his case in the press.

New Zealand's greater distance from Home, its internal politics, made an extended absence a tricky prospect in 1915, and delayed a visit. The result of the 1914 election was essentially an equal split, with Massey achieving a marginal win. Given this, and the degree of personal antipathy between Massey and Ward, calls to form a coalition government, following Britain's lead of 1915, were difficult to achieve. Negotiations stretched to August 1915, resulting in an uneasy compromise with Massey as Prime Minister, and Ward occupying a role somewhere between Deputy Prime Minister and co-Prime Minister, the latter self-styled at least.³¹ New Zealand's conscription crisis further delayed a New Zealand visit, and the two leaders eventually left in late 1916.³² Somewhat playful criticism was directed at Ward's joining Massey – a prerequisite of their uneasy compromise – as being costly and unnecessary. The pair was parodied as the 'Siamese Twins Abroad,' a phrase apparently coined by Sir Maurice Hankey.³³

While not as serious as the issues facing South Africa, where domestic unrest kept Prime Minister Louis Botha from visiting at all, these issues slowed Massey and Ward. The ambiguity of the invitation made it difficult to treat the visit Home as a priority. These dynamics – both Asquith's invitation, and the demands of domestic Dominion politics – not only shaped the political conduct of the visits, but also their depiction and reception as Greater British propaganda, especially through the press.

²⁹ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 50.

³⁰ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 95-6.

³¹ Gardner, 'W.F. Massey', 10-13; Watson, *Massey*, 47-48.

³² Gardner, 'W.F. Massey', 10-13; Kay, 'In Pursuit', 129; Watson, 'Continuation', 50-53; Baker, *King and Country Call*.

³³ E.g. William Macbeth, *Christmas Cartoons, 1916 – drawings by W. Macbeth, writing by W. Macbeth*, (Wellington: 1916); Kay, 'In Pursuit', 128; 154.

The vague purpose, and half-heartedness of the invitation, affected the reception of these visits in the New Zealand press, for instance.³⁴ It was initially dismissed as a waste of time and taxpayer money, and represented a dereliction from home front priorities. A harsh editorial in *The New Zealand Observer* summarised:

Mr Law has said that "Premiers will be welcomed." He doesn't say that they are necessary or desirable in London, but merely that they will be welcomed... The suggestion is that if the tiller can get along without these hands during a jaunt to London in war time, it could do without these hands in peacetime.³⁵

The New Zealand press dismissed the visits as a holiday, or even more directly, as a 'mere bauble-hunting expedition.' The crux of the criticism was that Massey and Ward's place during the war was in New Zealand, that their duties were towards the home front, and not London. This criticism was not unanimous, but was strong enough that Massey would later have to respond to it publically, in a speech to Parliament. Massey stated, it 'was not, as appears to be imagined by a minority, anything in the nature of a holiday trip or a picnic, or something of that sort.'³⁶

This criticism, and Massey's efforts to respond to it, shows how these visits operated as more than simply political summits. The press representation of the visits was just as significant, and was a space in which Greater British politics played out. The public perception of these visits was just as significant as the conduct of private negotiations. This was not new. Ward's predecessor Richard Seddon, for instance, through his visits to London for the 1897 and particularly the 1902 Colonial Conferences made his name both in New Zealand and in Britain as 'King Dick – the man who saved the Empire,' an only somewhat satirical title. By courting the press he became a firm favourite with the British public.³⁷ By contrast, Ward had embarrassed himself at the 1911 Imperial Conference,

³⁴ Harper, 'Old Bill', 87; Kay, 'In Pursuit', 171-172.

³⁵ 'Home, Boys, Home! What for?', *The New Zealand Observer*, 20/11/1915, 3; see also, 'Be It Ever So Humble, There's No Place, Etc. Etc. Etc.', *The New Zealand Observer*, 26/5/1917, 17.

³⁶ New Zealand Parliamentary Debates – Legislative Council and House of Representatives, Third Session, Nineteenth Parliament, Vol.178, June 28 to August 3, 1917 (Wellington: 1917), 'Ministerial Visit to the United Kingdom', 49; see also, Kay, 'In Pursuit', 171-172.

³⁷ James Drummond, *The Life and Work of Richard John Seddon*, (London: 1907); Jeremy Martens, 'Richard Seddon and Popular Opposition in New Zealand to the Introduction of Chinese Labour into the Transvaal, 1903-1904,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, 42:2 (2008), 176-195; David Hamer, 'Seddon, John Richard,' *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, (Wellington: 1993).

harming his domestic credibility.³⁸ This risk was heightened given the domestic pressures of mobilisation on the home front. Massey and Ward's first visits Home during the war placed them in the latter category. This rather raised the stakes for both leaders to enact both immediate and long-term rewards for New Zealand from the visit.

Timing was also important in defining the character of these visits. New Zealand's delays in accepting Asquith's half-hearted invitation left the stage clear for Hughes. Arriving in early 1916, Hughes struck the ideal moment, with *The Times* representing him as the ambassador of 'the three greatest Dominions', Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, again giving his visit outsized prominence.³⁹

4.3 – Personality versus Propaganda

Established interpretations of the Dominion leaders' visits tend to note the popularity and favourable reception of leaders such as Hughes, but do not interrogate this sufficiently. Instead, these tend to slip into 'great man' readings. The remainder of this chapter explores the visits through the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. It demonstrates that the reception of each leader was informed by the ambiguity of the Dominion leaders' roles in London, and the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. Rather than being related to the political identity and skill of each leader, the reception of these visits was managed by Dominion advocates, who seized the opportunity of Greater British propaganda to engender favourable reception.

The Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes' 1916 visit garnered him considerable fame, and remains a popular feature of Australian national memory of the war. The visit is a key part of the folkloric 'great man' mythology of Hughes in Australian memory, particularly in a cultural nationalist reading.⁴⁰ Massey and Ward's visit did not achieve this status – Massey himself who has somewhat

³⁸ E.g., Hancock, '1911,' 356; Kendle, 'Round Table,' 495-508; see also, E.F. Hiscocks, *Joe Ward Abroad*, (Wellington: C.M. Banks, 1911).

³⁹ 'Mr. Hughes in London. Ambassador for the Three Dominions', *The Times*, 8/3/1916, 9; see also, Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 72.

⁴⁰ See, Carl Bridge, *William Hughes: Australia*, (London: 2011); Horne, *Billy Hughes*, esp.13-18, 25-26; Tsokhas, 'Tradition, fantasy', 3-30.

fallen between the cracks of New Zealand historiography.⁴¹ Likewise, contemporary British reaction to Hughes' 1916 visit was fawning, and highlighted his singular personality and appeal as a public speaker as a reason for his popularity and impact.⁴² Lloyd George claimed, in his introduction to a wartime collection of Hughes speeches, that '[n]o modern speeches of modern times have made such an impact on the British public as the series appearing in this book.'⁴³ The collection sold over 34,000 copies during the war in Britain.⁴⁴ Hughes achieved a celebrity status in London, and became a regular and popular press figure during his first visit.

Hughes, probably more than any other Dominion Prime Minister, utilised the propaganda opportunities of his visit. Of all the Dominion leaders' visits, Hughes' was the most self-consciously conducted as a propaganda mission. Notably, Hughes was more aggressive and willing to take his case to the press, than were the New Zealand leaders. Hughes' first visit was a product of the particular dynamics of Greater British propaganda, especially its ambiguity, and Australia's more confident, combative approach to Greater British interactions. Australia had already been vocal in criticising the generalisation of the Dominions. Australian war correspondent C.E.W. Bean, and Murdoch, complained to the Colonial Office regarding generalised reportage of Imperial troops as a generalised Imperial force, rather than highlighting the specific Dominion origin.⁴⁵ Dominion demands for consultation therefore also played out in public, through the press, and Australia took an aggressive and eager approach.

Colonial nationalist explanations of Hughes' reception in London tend to focus on Hughes' personality and political skills – slipping into a heroic 'great man' mythology. Hughes was certainly skilled, but the public success of his visit had as much to do with the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, and how Hughes, and those around him, utilised those dynamics. Hughes was a talented speaker, but Massey had likewise made his name in New Zealand as a strong and effective public

⁴¹ Olssen, 'Reassessment', 15-30; Olssen 'A Nation,' 319-339; Farland, *Farmer Bill*; Basset, *Sir Joseph Ward*.

⁴² Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 77.

⁴³ David Lloyd George, 'An Introduction', *"The Day" – And After: War Speeches of the Rt. Hon. W.M. Hughes*, (London and New York, NY: 1916), v; see also, 'Reviews: The Australian Prime Minister', *United Empire*, Vol.VII:7 (July 1916), 481.

⁴⁴ Thompson, *Imperial Britain*, 159-160.

⁴⁵ TNA:PRO, CO 537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), pp.2-3.

speaker.⁴⁶ Hughes' Welsh heritage was an often-parodied aspect of his visit, and arguably afforded him a certain Celtic authority – of British origins, and settler political wisdom and insight.⁴⁷ A cartoon of an imagined clash between Hughes and Lloyd George in Welsh, by New Zealand cartoonist David Low, became an iconic image of his visit.⁴⁸

Hughes was not alone in this – Massey and Ward could draw on their Irish backgrounds in a similar manner. The coalition of the two Irish-born New Zealanders was used as a rhetorical call for Irish solidarity in the wake of the Easter Rising. The speech of Chairman of the Royal Colonial Institute welcoming Massey and Ward drew this analogy:

On my right hand and on my left sit two Irishmen. I think I may fairly say that Mr. Massey represents the sturdy independence of the North, and Sir Joseph Ward all that we know of the poetry and fighting power of the South. In this national emergency, though long separated in politics, they have been able to join together, and, I may add that I hope that other Irishmen in Ireland and elsewhere may emulate their example.⁴⁹

Hughes had a particularly 'caricaturable' image, but so too were Massey and Ward. The representation of Massey and Ward as oblivious, somewhat bewildered 'Siamese Twins Abroad' was a similarly sharp satirical icon as Low's famous shaping of Hughes as the small, delusional megalomaniac, as portrayed in Low's *Billy Book*.⁵⁰ Borden's more staid personality and measured rhetoric did not catch on in the same way in London, but equating the entire conduct of his visit to this alone is limiting.⁵¹ Focusing only on personality is insufficient to explaining the variance of these Dominion visits. It took promotion, utilising the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, to achieve Hughes' particular reception.

Hughes' lionisation in London is even more notable, given the deterioration of his reputation in Australia at the same time. As Low notes:

⁴⁶ Gardner, 'W.F. Massey', 4; Watson, *Massey*, 26-41.

⁴⁷ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 100; Bridge, *Hughes*, 3, 11, 19; Horne, *Hughes*, 25; Lloyd George, 'Introduction' in *The Day*, vi-vii.

⁴⁸ David Low, 'When Welsh Meets Welsh', in *The Billy Book: Hughes Abroad – 50 New Drawings by Low*, (Sydney: 1918), Low, *Autobiography*, 64-78.

⁴⁹ 'Luncheon to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of New Zealand', *United Empire*, 7:11 (November 1916), 722; see also, Macbeth, 'We Part to Visit Ireland', *Christmas Cartoons*.

⁵⁰ See David Low, *The Billy Book: Hughes Abroad – 50 New Drawings by Low*, (Sydney: 1918); Macbeth, *Christmas Cartoons*; Low, *Autobiography*, 39; see also, Hiscocks, *Joe Ward*.

⁵¹ John English, 'Political Leadership in the First World War', in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David Mackenzie, (Toronto: 2005), 76-95; Wigley, *Canada*, 61.

Unfortunately, as Billy's stock rose in London, it fell in Australia. The fulsome tributes to the new leader from the Antipodes ... when cabled back to Australia, did not impress Billy's labour supporters favourably.⁵²

Hughes' antagonistic style and shameless self-promotion in London, and his handling of the conscription referenda, damaged Hughes' political standing in Australia, as his star rose in London. Hughes further alienated his base by clashing with union leaders, undermining his identity as an advocate for organised labour.⁵³ Just as Massey and Ward's proposed visits drew negative criticism amongst the New Zealand press, Hughes' reception in London was discordant with his reputation in Australia.

Rather than exploring the different reception and conduct of these visits as due to personality, therefore, this chapter considers how each visit navigated the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, especially press reception. Australia and New Zealand took divergent approaches to both the political and public dimensions of their leaders' visits. Hughes utilising the Fleet Street connections of his eager Dominion advocate Murdoch to make his case in public, and interjected in politics in sometimes-uncomfortable ways. Massey and Ward received less fanfare, adopting a more modest and cooperative approach, preferring to make their case around the negotiating table. Instead of flattening this divergence, or taking the conduct and intention of Australia as representative, it is more revealing to understand how this was a product of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda.

It is important to briefly consider how the terms of Hughes, Massey, and Ward's reception as Dominion Prime Ministers were somewhat different to Smuts'. Here, as elsewhere, South Africa complicates the picture. Domestic instability kept the Prime Minister Louis Botha from making a similar visit to Britain during the war. In his absence Smuts became the South African figurehead in London. Both Botha but especially Smuts' cultural and political identity in Britain, and utility in British propaganda, were different to the other leaders. The South African leaders were contextualised more through their military achievements in South Africa, as imperial military heroes. An expert from *The Times* discussing Botha's absence demonstrates this:

⁵² Low, *Autobiography*, 67.

⁵³ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 95-100; Bridge, *Hughes*, 46; see also, 'Australia', *The Round Table*, 6:24 (1916), 751-754; Low, *Autobiography*, 67-69.

The case of South Africa is less simple. Public opinion in this country would rightly set great store upon the presence of General Botha if anything in the nature of an Imperial Defence Conference is to be held. His resolution and his efficiency, no less than his striking loyalty to his Imperial obligations, have won him a great and deserved reputation for military and political insight.⁵⁴

This military identity was a more familiar role in British politics and culture, than was the more ambiguous meaning of a Dominion Prime Minister in London. Bill Schwarz has approached this in a discursive way, arguing that Smuts occupied a unique place in the ‘imperial imagination’ as a ‘vanguard’ of the white race.⁵⁵ This is intriguing but too diffuse.

Smuts and Botha were more familiar imperial ‘types.’ Nineteenth and early-twentieth century British imperial culture already had numerous examples of the archetype of an imperial military hero. In this regard, Smuts and Botha, often represented as ‘South Africa’s two remarkable soldier-statesmen’⁵⁶ arguably fit a much more perceptible position, similar to that occupied by Kitchener.⁵⁷ While the culture of trust and shared political tradition of Greater Britain allowed these leaders to integrate into British domestic politics in interesting ways, this was still an essentially ambiguous and ill-defined process. Smuts and Botha’s particular journey from antagonist in the Boer War, to imperial loyalist in the First World War, added further rhetorical utility. This made Smuts a useful advocate of British war justifications, and later as the standard bearer of the British Commonwealth of Nations, as explored in Chapter 3. He was readily deployed in numerous propaganda campaigns, his efforts at calming agitating Welsh miners is a famous example.⁵⁸ Accordingly, the terms of Smuts’ operation in Greater British propaganda was different to that of the Dominion Prime Ministers.

The ambiguity of Dominion status generally, and the appropriate role of a Dominion Prime Minister in London more specifically, was another important dynamic of Greater British propaganda. As elsewhere, this provided both difficulties and opportunities; both a unique authority through

⁵⁴ ‘A Mission from New Zealand’, *The Times*, 3/11/1915, 11; see also, BOD: (RHO) 100.28 r.20 ‘United Empire’ (Royal Colonial Institute), 7 (War Series):12 (December 1915), 863-4;

⁵⁵ Schwarz, *White Man’s World*, 24-25; 280-340.

⁵⁶ ‘General Smuts,’ *United Empire*, 8:6 (June 1917), 358; ‘General Smuts,’ *United Empire*, 8:4 (April 1917), 246.

⁵⁷ E.g. John M. Mackenzie, ‘Heroic myths of Empire’, ‘Introduction’, in *Popular Imperialism and the Military, 1850-1950*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: 1992), 109-138; 1-24; Stephen Heathorn, *Haig and Kitchener in Twentieth Century Britain: Remembrance, Representations and Appropriation* (Farnham: 2013).

⁵⁸ Thompson, *Imperial Britain*, 160; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 149-151.

familiarity, and an isolating vagueness. The different Dominions navigated these dynamics in their own ways.

Accordingly, examining the visits as British propaganda shows the dynamics of Greater British propaganda in a distinct way. In particular, they show the unique tessellation of messaging to multiple audiences, and how this made sense through the culture of trust, familiarity, and shared political and cultural language. During their visits, the Dominion leaders played to multiple audiences: to domestic British and Dominion audiences, through official propaganda routes, and through the press. Timing, political contexts, and personal connections mattered as much in this process as personality, or even more vaguely, constructs of imperial imagination.⁵⁹ As a result, the different Dominion leaders used their peculiar semi-domestic Dominion authority in London, and the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, in their own ways.

4.4 – Intervention In Official Propaganda and Politics

The first major difference in approach between the Dominion leaders' visits was their integration with official British propaganda, and their intervention in British domestic politics. The ambiguous authority of Dominion status in London – as familiar, domestic, and acceptably British, and yet distant, informed and improved by the imperial frontiers – afforded the Dominion Prime Ministers a curious authority in Britain; a 'wisdom of distance.' This provided opportunities in both directions. As trusted Greater British leaders, the Dominion Prime Ministers functioned as spokesmen for British official propaganda campaigns. This was not a contradiction, but an example of the distinct tessellation of Greater British propaganda, which would perhaps make less sense outside this frame. The Dominion leaders were therefore used in various ways as propaganda figures in Britain.

The same ambiguous authority provided potential to intervene in British politics in a less cooperative way. This is best evinced in the Dominion leaders' different involvement in the political campaign to unseat Asquith. Here, critics of Asquith wielded the unique and familiar authority of Dominion status in London against Asquith. In general, New Zealand preferred the former, more

⁵⁹ E.g. Schwarz, *White Man's World*.

cooperative path, acting as propaganda spokesmen for official purposes, when requested. Hughes, by contrast, was very ready to intervene in British politics, and the campaign against Asquith.⁶⁰

Both of these approaches show the importance of exploring the public-facing aspects of these visits as Greater British propaganda. They particularly show how the press was an important staging ground for Greater British politics and debates in this period, and how even the political dimensions of these visits cannot be understood by exploring Cabinet negotiations alone.

The notion of the Dominion leaders' wisdom and insight of imperial distance from Home – a 'wisdom of distance' – became an important rhetorical idea in framing how the Dominion leaders were utilised in British propaganda campaigns, both official and unofficial, and was applied to Hughes, Massey, Ward, and Borden in turn.⁶¹ This was a concept that Lloyd George cited in a speech from 1918, and would anchor through the Imperial War Cabinet. He explained:

They have had a real share in our councils and in our decisions, and they have been a great source of strength and wisdom to our deliberations. They have come there with fresh minds. They have viewed this world-conflict from, as it were, different peaks.⁶²

Before this period, however, this Dominion authority was more ambiguous, and was utilised in multiple directions, both by Dominion advocates, and British politicians. While this made them useful potential propaganda figures in Britain, this concept equally caused parody criticism amongst Dominion audiences. New Zealand criticism of Massey and Ward's visit, questioned what possible insight the Dominion leaders could offer the British government. For British propagandists, the Dominion leaders could be validating voices in domestic debates and campaigns. Conversely, this was parodied by the Dominion press. This notion of the leaders' inflated imperial egos was parodied in Low's and against Massey and Ward, such as in the *Christmas Cartoons* collection.⁶³

Both official and unofficial British propagandists sought to utilise the ambiguous authority of the Dominion leaders for their purposes as effective spokesmen. Hughes' identity as a Labour

⁶⁰ Low, *Autobiography*, 67; Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 81-82; 95-100.

⁶¹ For Massey and Ward see, 'Two Wise men from the South', *Chronicles of the NZEF*, 1:5 (30 October, 1916); 'Our New Zealand Visitors', 691-2; 'Luncheon to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of New Zealand', 721-722, *United Empire*, Vol.VII:No.11 (November 1916); 'Dominion Statesmen', *United Empire*, Vol.VIII:No.3 (March 1917), 147-8; for Hughes see, 'Children Educate Their Parents', *The British Citizen and Empire Worker*, 4:1 (15 September 1916), 69; 'A Lead from New Zealand', *The Times*, 28/10/1916, 9.

⁶² Lloyd George, 'The War and the Empire,' 137.

⁶³ See, Macbeth, *Christmas Cartoons*.

politician, gave him particular utility for Lord Milner's nascent British Workers' National League. The BWNL was an imperial interest group designed by Milner to mobilise British workers towards imperial causes, especially reconfiguration of imperial trade and economic relations. Hughes embodied the aims of the BWNL, being both a Greater British figure, and a Labour leader, with a working-class background.⁶⁴ The group's aim of advocating imperial trade likewise dovetailed with Hughes, and indeed Massey and Ward's, aims in their visits. Hughes was the keynote speaker at the inaugural meeting of the BWNL, and received frequent praise in the League's newspaper, *The British Citizen and Empire Worker*. A BWNL women's campaign called for Hughes to return to England to take a permanent role in British politics and the direction of the war – a significant manifestation of cultural trust in Greater British leaders, even if this did not eventuate.⁶⁵ Ironically Hughes' mismanagement of conscription in Australia, and the resulting split in his own Labour Party in Australia, did not seem to dampen this enthusiasm.⁶⁶ Once again, perceptions differed between London and Canberra.

Similarly, Massey's London speeches, warning against future German trade in the Pacific were utilized by the vociferous British Empire Union (BEU), in a pamphlet 'Close the German Banks.' This was an imperially-focused trade organization, which during the war focused exclusively on a jingoistic campaign of eliminating the 'black hand' of German influence from the British economy.⁶⁷ Though perhaps less aggressive, Massey and Ward's message with regard to German trade in the Pacific was much the same as Hughes. Beyond this, however, the New Zealand leaders

⁶⁴ James Cotton, 'William Morris Hughes, Empire and Nationalism: The Legacy of the First World War', *Australian Historical Studies*, 46:1 (2015), 100-118; J.O. Stubbs, 'Lord Milner and Patriotic Labour, 1914-1918', *The English Historical Review*, 87:345 (1972), 730; see also, 'Thinking Imperially', *United Empire*, Vol.VII (New Series): No.6 (June 1916), 384.

⁶⁵ 'Mothers, Wives and Maids in Council: Why the Women ask for Hughes', 69; 'Children Educate their Parents', 69, *The British Citizen and Empire Worker*, 4:1 (15 September 1915).

⁶⁶ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 56-64; Bridge, *Hughes*, 46.

⁶⁷ 'Mr. Massey (the Prime Minister and Representative of New Zealand), at a meeting held latterly, said: "we who are in the heart of the Empire must see that the peace when it comes will not be an intermittent peace, just to last a sufficient period to enable Germany to recover its strength, and get into a position to attack us again.": BOD: (ESC)22281 e.1507 (1) 'Close the German Banks', *British Empire Union*, 1917. 2; see also, Panikos Panayi, 'The British Empire Union in the First World War', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 8:1 (1989), 113-128.

tended to work through channels of official British propaganda. Massey and Ward delivered speeches in support of the British War Loan campaign during their visit, for instance.⁶⁸

The biggest divergence in approach between Hughes and Massey and Ward, was the former's willingness to intervene aggressively in British politics, especially to criticise British leadership. Hughes did this most dramatically by inserting himself into the campaign to unseat Asquith as Prime Minister. Encouraged by Murdoch, and introduced to key Asquith rivals, notably Alfred Harmsworth, Lord Northcliffe, and Lloyd George himself, Hughes became a staunch public critic of Asquith. His public statements against him were widely publicised. Hughes was willing, and eager for the publicity. Hughes intervention in these debates shows the importance of the press as a staging ground for Greater British politics.

Papers owned by Alfred Northcliffe praised Hughes' words, and held him up as a 'man of action,' notably in contrast to Asquith, thereby weaponising the 'wisdom of distance.' This was typically further linked to Lloyd George's similar determination. Lloyd George likewise advocated for an expanded role for Hughes, and was instrumental in gaining Hughes a role at the Paris Economic Conference of 1916.⁶⁹ Hughes became a Lloyd George booster, and an Asquith antagonist. As the *United Empire* profile continued, Hughes worked to 'overcome inertia in high places,'⁷⁰ or as Lloyd George again characterised, 'he is a man who can do things ... Mr. Hughes is essentially a man of action, a man who can do things.'⁷¹

Hughes was a convenient cipher for Milner, and indeed other politicians, to project their arguments, as he was unencumbered by domestic British political connections and baggage. Hughes thus provided not necessarily new ideas, but a fresh new personality and perspective.⁷²

By stark contrast, Massey and Ward avoided such intervention, despite some private misgivings about Asquith's leadership. They refused to be drawn into the controversy, or say anything against Asquith. The New Zealand leaders were alarmed by Hughes' imprudence in

⁶⁸ E.g. 'Great War Loan Effort', *The Times*, 31/1/1917, 9; 'The War Loan', *The Times*, 20/1/1917, 7; 'The War Loan', *The Times*, 23/1/1917, 9; see also Kay, 'In Pursuit', 151.

⁶⁹ Bridge, *Hughes*, 19-20.

⁷⁰ 'Reviews: The Australian Prime Minister', *United Empire*, Vol.VII:7 (July 1916), 481.

⁷¹ Lloyd George, 'Introduction' *The Day*, vi-vii.

⁷² Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 81-82.

criticising British leadership, believing it would harm the Dominions' position.⁷³ Characteristically, their approach was one of public cooperation and conciliation; any concerns were managed privately, through imperial political channels. Unlike Hughes, Massey and Ward strove to avoid any suggestion of criticism against Asquith, and thereby were hesitant to utilise the public and press potential of their visits. They were still very much aware of how their actions played out in the press, however, and publicly refuted an article in the *Daily Mail* that suggested New Zealand's supposedly negative opinion on the Asquith government, stating that it was false, and inappropriate to represent New Zealand opinion as such.⁷⁴ The leaders themselves were very aware of how their visits functioned as propaganda, and were staged in the British press, as much as around the Cabinet table.

Hughes meanwhile courted the attention, and built his legend as a firebrand. He was even suggested as a potential replacement to Asquith himself. This was devised in a scheme amongst frustrated Liberal advocates of the Liberal *New Europe* journal, notably Robert Seton-Watson, who later directed British propaganda to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The plan was to form a new Imperial Democratic Party, with a Dominion leader as its head. Wickham Steed, the future editor of *The Times*, even apparently called on Hughes to suggest the idea. Despite apparent interest by Round Tablers such as Leo Amery and Phillip Kerr, the idea faded when Hughes sailed for Australia.⁷⁵ Even more than the BWNL's 'women's campaign,' this was a dramatic example of the unrealised potential of Dominion authority in London. While Hughes' influence was never used this dramatically, he certainly played a role in undermining Asquith.

Massey and Ward's lower profile in the British press during their visits was not so much due to a 'failure of political imagination' as Sinclair would have it,⁷⁶ but was a consciously different approach to the dynamics of Greater British politics and propaganda. Massey and Ward were acutely aware of the potential of the press, and how this would affect their interests in London. This more modest approach meant that their visit did not contribute to a heroic national ANZAC mythology, as Hughes' did for Australia. Even so, it would be wrong to deem the visits a 'failure' on this metric.

⁷³ Kay, 'In Pursuit,' 131-2.

⁷⁴ 'The War', *Otago Daily Times*, 5 November, 1915, 6.

⁷⁵ Goldstein, 'The Round Table,' esp.181.

⁷⁶ Sinclair, *A History*, 247.

Massey and Ward took a different approach. Unlike Hughes, Massey and Ward made a virtue of cooperation and moderation in public.⁷⁷ The two leaders avoided making unsettling or contentious political statements as Hughes did. Instead they preferred to present a united coalition front, to emphasize New Zealand's commitment to the cause.⁷⁸

This was not simply avoidance by Massey and Ward. They actively promoted the cooperative spirit of their visits. Massey outlined this approach specifically, warning against the dangers of political bickering and criticism in his speeches. Tellingly, Massey vilified such 'croakers' as much as ultimate wartime domestic villain – the 'shirker.' Massey argued that political criticism was encouraging to the enemy:

If there is one thing more than another that seems to me to have encouraged the enemy recently, it is the very serious bickering – not to use too strong a word – among men very near to the heart of affairs in the Old Country. I am quite certain that this sort of thing has encouraged the enemy as much as, or even more than, victory in the field would have done.⁷⁹

This rhetoric contained both an implicit criticism of Hughes, while also deflecting New Zealand and British press criticism at the delay the disagreements caused in following the British example of a coalition.⁸⁰ Massey and Ward were determined in putting on a united front in London: even while the relationship continued to be strained Ward frequently threatened to break the coalition in private, and return to Wellington.⁸¹ New Zealand's Governor General Liverpool emphasized this to Harcourt, stating that he did not think Massey and Ward's public speeches would be 'anything but correct,' and further that Massey and Ward had been 'anything but enthusiastic over Mr. Hughes' speeches'.⁸²

Massey's speech was an implied criticism of Hughes' vocal criticism of Asquith in London, which both New Zealand leaders saw as inappropriate and dangerous. The New Zealand leaders

⁷⁷ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, esp. 112-113.

⁷⁸ Kay, 'In Pursuit', 131-133; 140-144; Watson, *Massey*, 55.

⁷⁹ BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Liverpool to Harcourt, 25 April, 1916, 368/2; 'Croakers and Shirkers', *Star*, 26 April, 1916, 3; 'Close Up Our Ranks', *Grey River Argus*, 28 April, 1916, 4; 'The Croakers', *New Zealand Times*, 26 April, 1916, 7.

⁸⁰ Watson, 'Continuation', 52; Gardner, 'W.F. Massey', 10; Kay, 'In Pursuit', 128; Watson, 'Massey', 48.

⁸¹ Kay, 'In Pursuit', 150-151; Watson, 'Continuation', 52; Gardner, 'W.F. Massey', 10.

⁸² BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Liverpool to Harcourt, 21/7/1916, 90/378.

refused to accept Hughes' offers to act in concert against Asquith.⁸³ Liverpool expanded on this to Harcourt, specifically differentiating the Australian and New Zealand:

Mr. Hughes' public utterances here have not been considered judicious, so much so that Mr. Massey has expostulated strongly to any question of being committed to any of Mr. Hughes' statements, and has pointed out that he is against important subjects having publicity until they have been carefully considered, both the leaders dislike the interviewing which seems to be the fashion as soon as any overseas ministers get home, and which is apt to create ... impressions in the Dominions.⁸⁴

Despite their private misgivings about Asquith, Massey and Ward presented a united front in their public engagements, and stayed out of this debate.⁸⁵ Both leaders felt this cooperative approach would ultimately serve their interests more than public attacks.

Closer examination of the conduct of the New Zealand and Australian leaders' visits to Britain show a greater complexity than an argument based on personality and discursive imperial imagination. The dynamics of Greater British propaganda, especially the ambiguity of what it meant to be a Dominion leader in London, provided different opportunities for intervention in British propaganda and the press. Rather than connoting success or failure, the antipodean leaders simply took very different approaches to this situation. Where Hughes relished taking Greater British politics to the press, Massey and Ward preferred a more cooperative public approach. The dynamics of Greater British propaganda also informed the conduct of these visits in terms of how they directly facilitated the public-facing aspects of these visits. Dominion publicity advocates were important in informing and enacting the different approaches of these visits.

4.5 – Publicity Advocates

The dynamics of Greater British propaganda also facilitated the publicity of the Dominion Prime Ministers' visits, and the different approaches of the antipodean leaders. Operational ambiguity connected with rhetorical and political ambiguity here, as Dominion propaganda and publicity

⁸³ Kay, 'In Pursuit,' 131-33.

⁸⁴ BOD: MS.Harcourt 490: Liverpool to Harcourt, 25 April, 1916, 368/2; 'Croakers and Shirkers', *Star*, 26 April, 1916, 3; 'Close Up Our Ranks', *Grey River Argus*, 28 April, 1916, 4; 'The Croakers', *New Zealand Times*, 26 April, 1916, 7.

⁸⁵ Kay, 'In Pursuit', 131-33; 140-144.

‘advocates’ utilised the dynamics of Greater Britain. Here, again, each Dominion had a slightly different approach. Australia’s Keith Murdoch was perhaps most aggressive, by using his Fleet Street connections to enable favourable press reception for Hughes. Beaverbrook for Canada was in a different position, with influence in official British propaganda.⁸⁶

New Zealand lacked a similar advocate. Its closest equivalent, the official press correspondent Malcolm Ross, was far less aggressive than Murdoch, and less well connected and influential than either he or Beaverbrook, to enact a similar campaign. Echoing the approaches of his leaders Massey and Ward, Ross worked more through established official channels of Greater British propaganda, which were often difficult to navigate. Even so, it is important to reinforce that an aggressive publicity campaign was not Ross’, nor Massey and Ward’s, essential aim. New Zealand and Ross therefore did not so much ‘fail,’⁸⁷ but their cooperative approach proved somewhat limiting. Once again, the influence of Dominion publicity advocates was a product of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, but within this, each Dominion took a distinct approach.

Keith Murdoch was Hughes’ advocate in London. As such, he was a distinct figure and product of Greater British propaganda. Murdoch specifically utilised the British press to stage-manage Hughes’ visit, and garner favourable Australian coverage. Murdoch was an Australian journalist, who, after being denied the role of Australian war correspondent to C.E.W. Bean, was sent to London as the manager of the United Services Limited cable service, providing news to Sydney and Melbourne newspapers. Through this job Murdoch met and eventually gained the close mentorship of Lord Northcliffe, arguably the most powerful British press baron at the time, and a key figure in the campaign against Asquith.⁸⁸ Through the Northcliffe Press, Murdoch stage-managed Hughes’ personal propaganda and publicity in London. He facilitated important meetings, speeches, and introductions for Hughes, while also authoring favourable coverage in *The Times* and other Northcliffe papers. Privately Murdoch was bold in admitting his effort as such, commenting, ‘I can do

⁸⁶ See, Cook, ‘Documenting War,’ 265-295.

⁸⁷ See, Palenski, ‘A New Zealand Failure,’ 19-35; see also, Palenski, ‘A forgotten casualty,’

⁸⁸ Putnis, ‘Lord Northcliffe,’ 71-86; J.M. McEwen, ‘The Struggle for Master in Britain: Lloyd George versus Asquith, December 1916,’ *Journal of British Studies*, 18:1 (1978), 131-156.

what I like with the Northcliffe Press and the *Daily Chronicle*.⁸⁹ Murdoch therefore not only recognised the importance of the press as a staging ground for Greater British propaganda and politics, but actively utilised it. As such, his work is a particular product of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda.

Unlike Beaverbrook, however, Murdoch's authority was second-hand, and relied on his connection to Northcliffe. Importantly, Northcliffe, much like Milner, saw Hughes' potential as a propaganda figurehead for his campaign against Asquith and Kitchener. Hughes struck the right moment and had the right connections to aggressively promote his views publically. Accusations of Hughes' 'use' by Northcliffe is then partly true – the two used one another. Importantly, this was contingent – Murdoch's claimed free reign of the Northcliffe press had its limits. Hughes' second visit, for instance, received a more measured reception in the press as Northcliffe tired of Hughes, and his utility waned.⁹⁰

Beaverbrook filled a similar role for Borden's visit.⁹¹ Beaverbrook, though also a particular Greater British propaganda figure, was distinct in his approach and capacity to Murdoch, however. Where Murdoch utilised Northcliffe's authority, Beaverbrook had a great deal of political and press authority of his own to wield. Aside from his rise in British official propaganda, Beaverbrook was already a British MP and owned the *Daily Express*. He was also a key player in Asquith's downfall. Beaverbrook therefore shows a different manifestation of the unique dynamics of Greater British politics and propaganda than does Murdoch.

Beaverbrook's leadership in British official propaganda organisations meant that he ensured that the Canadian Prime Minister was given full publicity. In his role as head of the War Office Cinematograph Committee, Beaverbrook cautioned against cinematographers to focusing heavily on Hughes, stating that coverage was already of an 'excessive scale,' and risked overshadowing Borden. Beaverbrook cautioned that 'too many efforts should not be made in this direction, as I am afraid that a glut of Pictures and newspaper matter on this event would rather take the [e]dge off the [Borden's]

⁸⁹ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 75.

⁹⁰ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, esp. 74-75; Putnis, 'Lord Northcliffe,' 72.

⁹¹ See, Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295.

visit to Witley.’⁹² This shows the persistence of inter-Dominion rivalries within Greater British propaganda. Even so, Beaverbrook does not seem to have made such a sustained effort in lionising Borden as did Murdoch for Hughes.

Massey and Ward were by no means ignorant or shy of publicity. Massey was renowned in New Zealand for his effective public speaking style in campaigns.⁹³ Ron Palenski also states that Massey and Ward had a particular awareness of the potential of film publicity, compared to their fellow Greater British leaders. Despite this, New Zealand lacked a similar, or similarly effective, advocate to Murdoch or Beaverbrook. New Zealand’s closest equivalent was the official press correspondent Malcolm Ross.⁹⁴ Even if Ross’ directive had been to promote Massey and Ward as Murdoch had, his effectiveness was somewhat undermined from the outset. Ross’ appointment was controversial, as he was accused of only gaining the role because of his personal connections to Massey.⁹⁵ This controversy delayed Ross’ appointment, which meant, for instance, that the first reports of the Gallipoli Campaign to reach New Zealand papers were the Australian correspondent Bean’s, rather than Ross’.

Ross’ positioning also limited him substantially. Unlike Murdoch, who as an unofficial outsider was more nimble in utilising Fleet Street connections on behalf of Hughes, or Beaverbrook, who gained increasing control over the mechanisms of British official propaganda, Ross simply worked within these official structures. Accordingly, the delays, disruption, and disconnection of those systems, as explored in Chapter 1, impacted his work. Ross’ work was limited by Press Bureau delays of his despatches, which again, meant that his reports were often scooped by faster British, American, and Australian reportage in both the British and New Zealand press.⁹⁶ Ultimately, Ross

⁹² PA: BBK/E/2/4 – April 1917 – General Correspondence – Beaverbrook to Major Monague, 4 April 1917.

⁹³ Gardner, ‘W.F. Massey’, 4; Olssen, ‘Reassessment’, 15-30.

⁹⁴ Palenski, ‘A New Zealand Failure,’ 19-35; see also, Allison Oosterman, ‘Malcolm Ross,’ esp.229-233; Allen noted to Massey in 1917: ‘There has been a good deal of talk about Malcolm Ross’ letters. The general opinion is that they are unsatisfactory.’ Allen to Massey, 17 March, 1917, 2; see also, New Zealand Parliamentary Debates – Legislative Council and House of Representatives, Third Session, Nineteenth Parliament, Vol.178, June 28 to August3, 1917, (Wellington: 1917), ‘Ministerial Visit to the United Kingdom’ – The Right Hon. Mr. Massey (Prime Minister), 55.

⁹⁵ Oosterman, ‘Malcolm Ross,’ esp.229-233.

⁹⁶ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919; Gambrill to Headquarters, NZEF, London, 15th October, 1918.

lacked the capacity and connections that Murdoch or Beaverbrook had to remedy these issues alone, as Gambrill of the New Zealand War Records Section noted:

New Zealand has only one correspondent and we are entitled to ask for our rights in this matter. The Press Bureau here are sympathetic and helpful in every way, and the fault apparently lies at the French end of the cable of at GHQ.⁹⁷

Once again, Greater British sympathy could only go so far in mitigating these issues.

New Zealand's more modest, cooperative approach to diplomacy – preferring private political influence to aggressive publicity – combined with its lack of a comparable advocate to remedy its operational issues, caused problems for New Zealand publicity beyond merely delay. New Zealand also became something of a victim of Murdoch's aggressive publicity, through mischaracterisation. This occasionally rose to an issue of serious political concern, reinforcing the importance of the press as a staging ground for Greater British politics, and the stakes of Greater British propaganda.

New Zealand's lack of a strong advocate undermined its ability to distinguish itself from Australia in the ANZAC relationship, in British press and propaganda representations.⁹⁸ Accounts from the solidier publication *Chronicles of the NZEF* show this widespread frustration of misrepresentation of elision within the 'ANZAC' banner.⁹⁹ As an editorial from a November 1916 edition explained:

Several letters, remarking upon the adoption of the word Anzac, almost solely for the Australians, have come my way lately. In a paper recently I saw Australians and New Zealanders referred to as 'Anzacs and the New Zealanders.' We like to be linked with our good cobbles the Australians by this war-worn name. We remember how well we worked together out on the Peninsula, and what good mates we were, and we want to keep the name Anzac in memory of those times. So we hope the British Press will not forget that its second and third letters mean those weather-scarred islands twelve hundred miles east-sou'-east of Australia.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ ANZ: R25103023 – War Records section – General file – Reports on War Records section and Publicity branch, 13 December 1918 – 20 September 1919; Gambrill to Headquarters, NZEF, London, 15th October, 1918.

⁹⁸ Jeffrey, 'Distance and Proximity', 455.

⁹⁹ See, Carolyn Jane Carr, 'A Most Creditable Production': *Chronicles of the N.Z.E.F. (New Zealand Expeditionary Force), 1916-1919: Their Publication and Utility for Historical Research*, (Masters Thesis, Massey University, New Zealand, 2011).

¹⁰⁰ *Chronicles of the NZEF*, 1:6 (November 5, 1916), 124, in *Chronicles of the NZEF Volume I, Aug. 20, 1916 to Feb. 14 1917, Volume II, Feb. 28, 1917 to Aug. 8, 1917, Volume III, Aug. 22, 1917 to Jan. 30, 1918*, (Christchurch: 2014).

From its origins ‘ANZAC’ captured as much the disconnection of the antipodean Dominions as their cooperation. For neither Australia nor New Zealand did it equate to engagement with ‘Australasianism.’ Both Dominions largely ignored one another in constructing their ANZAC mythologies.¹⁰¹ Certainly in cultural representations, both strove more for self-interest and differentiation – for the benefit of British eyes especially in the New Zealand case.

This Australasian overshadowing caused frustration at the highest levels of New Zealand politics. In his communications to Allen while travelling to and from London, Massey, for instance, complained to Allen while in London, that New Zealand was not receiving proper consideration, and was being overshadowed by Australia in the press:

New Zealand soldiers have been given a good deal of publicity, but unfortunately the public in many instances mix them up with the Australians, and think they are one and the same. New Zealand itself is hardly ever mentioned, and the country suffers accordingly.¹⁰²

This reinforced a deeper displeasure with Australia’s conduct, and soured the dynamic between them.

This frustration at being overshadowed by Australia was persistent. As early as 1915, New Zealand’s Governor General, Lord Liverpool, complained to Harcourt that New Zealand’s fundraising and donations to British War Funds were not being fairly represented, but combined with and overshadowed by Australia in the British press:

I should say at once that neither the Government, nor the people of New Zealand are desirous of advertising their good deeds in any way; but I have heard remarks to the effect that the newspapers in the United Kingdom hardly give as much prominence to what has been done by New Zealand as to the larger Dependencies of the Crown. There appears to be too much of a tendency to mix the affairs of this Dominion with those of Australia.¹⁰³

Allen, raised the issue again to Massey in 1918, reinforcing that this was a serious enough concern to reach Cabinet:

The question of the use of the word ‘Australasia’ also came up for consideration ... I think it is necessary that steps should be taken to stop the wholesale use of the word ‘Australasia’ because it swamps the name ‘New Zealand’ altogether.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 118.

¹⁰² ANZ: R22319675 – Miscellaneous files and papers – Correspondence between J Allen and WF Massey, 1st September 1916 – 1st August 1919: Massey to Allen, 2 January, 1917, 4.

¹⁰³ BOD: MS. Harcourt 490 – Correspondence with Lord Liverpool, Governor General of New Zealand, 1912–1917: Liverpool to Harcourt, 16 April, 1915, 323/5.

¹⁰⁴ ANZ: R22319675 – Miscellaneous files and papers – Correspondence between J Allen and WF Massey, 1st September 1916 – 1st August 1919: Allen to Massey, 12 August, 1918, 2.

Without an advocate of the same energy as Murdoch or Beaverbrook to make the New Zealand case in Britain, it was generalised and overshadowed. Even if New Zealand's leaders preferred a more modest and cooperative approach, they were aware of stakes of the public reception of their visits – they understood them in the context of Greater British propaganda. Eventually this concern led to the creation of New Zealand's Publicity Branch in 1918, to better respond.

New Zealand became a victim of Australia's publicity success, and its lack of an advocate made it difficult to rebut criticisms. This caused particular tension over Australian representation of the Dominions' respective conscription campaigns. New Zealand adopted conscription in 1916. Though materially necessary, New Zealand politicians cast this favourably as a marker of New Zealand's commitment to the war, following the British example.¹⁰⁵ Conscription presented a potential source of embarrassment: read the wrong way it could bespeak a lack of New Zealand enthusiasm for the war. Managing New Zealand's image in light of its introduction of conscription was an impetus behind Massey and Ward's visits to London.¹⁰⁶ Without an advocate, however, Massey and Ward were hampered by Australia.

New Zealand became a victim of Hughes' success. During his first visit to London, Massey complained to Allen of the danger of the Northcliffe press, and its unflattering representation of New Zealand:

I have come to the conclusion that the Northcliffe press is a real danger. They seem to be able to make or unmake Ministers just as they seem inclined, this the British public are beginning to understand, and by the way they are no friend of New Zealand. For some reason which I cannot understand. Before I leave this country, I intend to have a heart to heart with some of the newspaper people, and I shall endeavour to give them a better understanding of what New Zealand and its people are.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 112; Baker, *King and Country Call*, 142-152.

¹⁰⁶ Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, 112; see also, Baker, *King and Country Call*.

¹⁰⁷ ANZ: R22319675 – Miscellaneous files and papers – Correspondence between J Allen and WF Massey, 1st September 1916 – 1st August 1919: Massey to Allen, 2 January, 1917, 2.

Massey was likely referring to a negative representation of New Zealand's introduction of conscription, in the Northcliffe-owned *The Times*,¹⁰⁸ within a piece praising Hughes' wisdom in calling a referendum for conscription in Australia.

The article in question was likely Murdoch-authored, or at least encouraged. It praises Hughes effusively, stating that the British public 'having acclaimed Mr. Hughes ... while he was here, are now watching his course in Australia with keen interest and undiminished admiration.'

Further echoing rhetoric of Hughes as a man of action and imperial standard bearer, it goes on:

His insight, his bluntness, his gift of eloquent and impassioned speech, made a great difference. Men felt that here was a man who said with singular felicity what most were thinking. His single-minded devotion to the pursuit of victory – at whatever cost – became a standard raised aloft for every one to follow. Mr. Hughes went back to Australia having achieved for himself a statesman of Empire position of almost unprecedented authority.¹⁰⁹

The offending passage of the article, in relation to New Zealand conscription, centres on the inapplicability of the New Zealand example to the Australian case, claiming New Zealand was forced to introduce conscription because of the voluntary system:

It has been suggested that the case of New Zealand, which has adopted conscription, has some application to that of Australia. It has none. New Zealand found herself unable, while she still relied on voluntary service, to fill the drafts which she had promised. Australia has had throughout as many volunteers as she has been able to equip, even with such help as the War Office has been able to give.¹¹⁰

The piece caused such offence that New Zealand took its complaint to the Colonial Office.¹¹¹

New Zealand's Governor General, Lord Liverpool complained to Bonar Law:

Leading article of the London Times quoted in a press report here of 26th August states that voluntary system in New Zealand has failed and that it was necessary to introduce a Compulsion Bill and unfavourably comparing New Zealand at the same time with the position of Australia. Statement is absolutely false. My Ministers trust that you will take an early opportunity to have it contradicted ... the voluntary system has not failed but so as to be prepared for all eventualities before Parliament meet next year the New Zealand Government took precaution to taking powers to maintain their obligations to the Imperial Government. The powers of the Bill have so far not been required. The Government cannot permit the

¹⁰⁸ Kay, 'In Pursuit', Farland, *Farmer Bill*, 269; Baker, *King and Country*, 95-101.

¹⁰⁹ TNA:PRO: CO209/288 – Colonial Office and Predecessor: New Zealand Original Correspondence – Dispatches, June – August 1916: New Zealand; CO40961 – 'Voluntary system and Compulsion Bill. Statement in "Times", 815; 'Australian Service Conditions', *The Times*, 25/8/1916.

¹¹⁰ TNA:PRO: CO209/288 – Colonial Office and Predecessor: New Zealand Original Correspondence – Dispatches, June – August 1916: New Zealand – CO 40961 – 'Voluntary system and Compulsion Bill. Statement in "Times", 815; 'Australian Service Conditions', *The Times*, 25/8/1916.

¹¹¹ TNA:PRO: CO209/288 – 40961 – 'Voluntary system and Compulsion Bill. Statement in "Times", 813.

Northcliffe Press to make such an unfortunate statement without contradicting it emphatically. My Ministers have carefully avoided making comparisons of the efforts of the other dependencies of the Crown with those of the Dominion if they did it would be found that the numbers of men despatched under the voluntary system from New Zealand would probably exceed all others on a population basis.¹¹²

Echoing Massey, the complaint singled out the Northcliffe Press as an antagonist, indicating that this was not an isolated complaint: '[t]his is not the first time that NZ has inveighed against the Northcliffe Press.'¹¹³ The essence of New Zealand's complaint was that it was being unfairly compared to Australia, unable to assert its own voice and justification for the Military Service Act, as the CO complained noted:

It is worth nothing that Mr. Hughes frankly admits the failure latterly of voluntary recruiting methods in Australia – which was exactly what the 'Times' said had not happened! It was the unfair contrast which annoyed New Zealand.¹¹⁴

This incident is characteristic of the divergent approaches of the two antipodean Dominions to publicity and politics during the war. Where Australia sought to manage its conscription issues through aggressive publicity, New Zealand managed its reputational issues in response through private communication the Colonial Office.

As in other regards, New Zealand, without a similar advocate, relied on the advocacy role of the Colonial Office. Once again, New Zealand relied more on the collaborative and official avenues of Greater British propaganda co-creation, rather than the more aggressive efforts of Australia.

Further complaints of the Northcliffe Press' representation of New Zealand emerged. In particular was a minor controversy over an editorial by Northcliffe himself, which suggested that NZEF recruits' training period was too long. While the piece in general contained fulsome praise of the NZEF's effort, the criticism added weight to a perception that the Northcliffe press was not a friend of New Zealand.¹¹⁵ It is debatable to unlikely that Northcliffe had a particular agenda against

¹¹² TNA:PRO: CO209/288 –40961 – 'Voluntary system and Compulsion Bill. Statement in "Times", Liverpool to Bonar Law, 816.

¹¹³ TNA:PRO: CO209/288 – 40961 – 'Voluntary system and Compulsion Bill. Statement in "Times", 815.

¹¹⁴ TNA:PRO: CO209/288 – 40961 – 'Voluntary system and Compulsion Bill. Statement in "Times", 815.

¹¹⁵ 'Lord Northcliffe on New Zealanders', *Evening Star*, 27 January, 1917, 6; 'Lord Northcliffe's Criticisms', *Manawatu Standard*, 27 January, 1917, 5; 'New Zealand Forces – Replies to Lord Northcliffe', *Wanganui Herald*, 29 January, 1917, 7.

New Zealand. Either way, it represents the challenges faced by a lack of advocate, against a wave of aggressive Australian publicity.

Australian publicity even fed back to political negotiations, and caused serious issues. New Zealand politicians, for instance, took the War Office's request for a Second Division particularly badly. As Acting Prime Minister, Allen wrote to General Godley that New Zealand was being 'bled to death whilst Australia and Canada are not making fair contributions.'¹¹⁶ This perception of frustration was at least partly informed by a speech by Hughes in which he mischaracterised the Australian Infantry Force's recruitment rates.¹¹⁷

New Zealand became a by-standing victim of Murdoch's campaign of lionisation of Hughes, particular to deflecting criticism regarding his handling of the conscription referendum in Australia, which seriously damaged his already somewhat shaky political reputation in Australia.¹¹⁸ This reinforces the seriousness with which Dominion politicians saw the press as a staging ground of Greater British politics, and more generally, the extent to which the visits operated in the context of Greater British propaganda. The visits did not exist in isolation, but in this collective context, being both a product of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, and in turn shaping them.

4.6 – Formalisation and the Imperial War Cabinet

The first wartime visits of the Dominion Prime Ministers to Britain were products of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, utilised in different ways by each of the propaganda, and their various advocates in Britain. The variance and ambiguity of these visits receded, however, under Lloyd George's leadership. Echoing the increased specificity, and distinct conversational dynamics, of Greater British rhetorical engagement under Lloyd George explored in Chapter 3, the public significance of these visits became more specific from 1917. In effect, Lloyd George 'anchored' and harnessed the ambiguous authority of the Dominion Prime Ministers through the Imperial War Cabinet and Conference of 1917.

¹¹⁶ Crawford, 'Willing Horse,' 125-6.

¹¹⁷ Crawford, 'Willing Horse,' 122-126; Baker, *King and Country*, 142-152.

¹¹⁸ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 56-64; Bridge, *Hughes*, 46.

Asquith's informal and ambiguous invitation de-contextualised the initial visits. This was reminiscent of the dispersal and informality of Greater Britain in the initial organisation of British official propaganda. This collective ambiguity provided opportunities for Dominion propagandists to intervene, including in the promotion of their leaders in London. This changed from 1917. Just as the Ministry of Information claimed Dominion propaganda and press interactions, and so rationalised the Dominions' place in official British propaganda, Lloyd George's Imperial War Cabinet gave the Dominions a logical political home and purpose in London. This legitimised the Dominion leaders' visits, by offering them a means of consultation.¹¹⁹

Lloyd George made this explicit in advocating the Imperial War Cabinet. Notably, he often emphasised its importance to the direct issues of the war, rather than as a gesture of constitutional reform, as historians of Anglo-Dominion relations often emphasise. In a speech from 17th April, 1917, for instance, he put this point clearly:

The Imperial War Cabinet, the first ever held, has been a demonstration of the value of these councils. Our colleagues from the Dominions and from the great Empire of India have not taken part, believe me, in a formal conference to carry resolutions. They have had a real share in our councils and in our decisions, and they have been a great source of strength and wisdom to our deliberations.¹²⁰

Much in the same way that Lloyd George 'anchored' the notable influence of Beaverbrook in his appointment as Minister of Information, so too did the Imperial War Cabinet 'anchor' the Dominion leaders to him, in political and propagandistic ways.

This reorganisation changed the publicity environment the visits operated in. Changing operational and political contexts from 1917 also reduced Australia and Hughes' publicity advantage. From 1917 Northcliffe had apparently tired of Hughes, and was less willing to publicise his visits. With Lloyd George in place he had served his purpose, and the British public began to tire of him.¹²¹ *The Daily News* captured a degree of public tiring at Hughes in Britain with the lament: 'Have we to get rid of the Kaiser in order to be saddled with Mr. Hughes?'¹²² At the same time, the Ministry of Information's press initiatives for the Dominions levelled the playing field to a degree in recreating

¹¹⁹ Holland, 'Great War,' 123-25; see also, French, *Lloyd George Coalition*, 62-64.

¹²⁰ Lloyd George, 'The War and the Empire,' 137.

¹²¹ Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*, 331.

¹²² *Daily News*, February, 1919, 4 – Cited in, MacDonald, 'Massey's Imperialism,' 11.

the organisational advantages that Canada and Australia had made for themselves earlier in the war. The Ministry's Dominion press tours in Britain and to the front met the demand to keep Dominion publics better informed by means of 'personal propaganda,' as the Imperial War Cabinet kept their leaders similarly better informed.¹²³ Of course Beaverbrook's leadership meant a continuing Canadian advantage; it also dulled the potency of Australia's aggressive publicity in London by expanding representations of other Dominions in the British press.¹²⁴ New Zealand likewise made its own efforts in this direction in 1918 with the formation of its Publicity Branch, which left it less exposed to Australian publicity's friendly fire.¹²⁵ Hughes entered less of a Greater British vacuum in his second visit, compared to his first.

The changes of 1917 to the dynamics of Greater British propaganda formalised and rationalised the Dominion leaders' place in British propaganda, and their presence in London. They were less the free agents they were before, which lessened their potential risk. British propagandists began to direct the Dominion leaders' authority themselves, rather than it being used as a weapon against them, as Hughes certainly was to Asquith.

The Dominion Prime Ministers were also more formally integrated into British propaganda efforts from 1917. The British government seized the authority of the Dominion leaders, and directed it towards domestic propaganda goals, deploying them as speakers. Smuts' role as a spokesman for British official propaganda grew substantially from 1917. He was a frequent star speaker at NWAC meetings throughout the country,¹²⁶ and his speeches were likewise published in a pamphlet series on 'important men.'¹²⁷ Massey and Ward's work on behalf of the British War Loan campaign also began

¹²³ PA, BBK/E/3/4 – 'Memorandum of the Committee', 29-30; PA, BBK/E/3/4 – 'The Ministry of Information – Report', 4 March – 4 August, 1918, 31; see also, TNA:PRO, CO 209/299 – Mackenzie to Massey, 1918, 53.

¹²⁴ PA, BBK/E/3/4 – 'Cheques refunded by Lord Beaverbrook in respect of Luncheons and Dinners paid for by the Ministry'.

¹²⁵ ANZ: R22319675 – Miscellaneous Files and papers – Correspondence between J Allen and WF Massey, 1st September 1916 – 1st August 1919. (Allen Papers): Allen to Massey, 11 June 1918, 10-11; ANZ: R22436310 – Propaganda Department: Extract from Report No.29 dated 12th October by O.O.C. Administration NZEF in United Kingdom: 'Publicity Department.' see also, Palenski, 'Malcolm Ross', 19-35; Oosterman, 'Malcolm Ross', esp.229-233.

¹²⁶ Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Thompson, *Imperial Britain*, 159-161.

¹²⁷ TNA:PRO: *Miscellaneous – N.W.A.C.P.D. – 1917-1918*, 'The British Commonwealth of Nations: A Speech Made by General Smuts on May 15th, 1917'; see also, BOD: Per.22281.c99 – *Welcome* (National War Aims Committee), 1:13 (26 June, 1918), p.147; Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; Thompson, *Imperial Britain*, 159-161.

in earnest in 1917 throughout Britain – their cooperative and unifying approach and rhetoric recommended them this role.¹²⁸

Just as the initial visits served multiple political and propaganda purposes for the Dominions themselves, the Imperial War Cabinet likewise served multiple purposes for Lloyd George. It too can be seen as partly an effective Greater British propaganda effort. In this sense it is characteristic of Lloyd George's bold gestural propaganda, sitting alongside other gestural propaganda, such as the 1917 Balfour Declaration for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, or the capture of Jerusalem, both stage-managed for their propaganda utility as much as their strategic pay off.¹²⁹ The Imperial War Cabinet gave weight to Lloyd George's rhetoric of Greater British inclusion. This formalised setting also legitimised the cooperative approach of Massey and Ward.

4.7 – The Paris Peace Conference and Nauru

The more modest and cooperative approach of Massey and Ward in London was not without intention. By the Paris Peace Conference, this approach paid off for the New Zealand leaders, while Hughes' continued aggressive publicity undermined his efforts. Despite political controversy surrounding the outbreak of the Spanish Influenza in New Zealand, notably an accusation that the ship that carried Massey and Ward back to New Zealand, *Niagara*, carried the flu to New Zealand, Massey and Ward hurried back to London upon the declaration of peace.¹³⁰ The peace negotiations were where the Dominions would seek their reward for their bargain of entry and continued effort in the war. Linking the wartime visits to the Peace Conference further elucidates New Zealand's moderate approach to imperial relations during the war as a strategy.

Lloyd George intended to return his end of the 1917 bargain with the Dominions as much as he could. Maurice Hankey, the Secretary of the Imperial War Cabinet, underlined in his memoirs of

¹²⁸ E.g. 'Great War Loan Effort', *The Times*, 31/1/1917, 9; 'The War Loan', *The Times*, 20/1/1917, 7; 'The War Loan', *The Times*, 23/1/1917, 9; see also Kay, 'In Pursuit,' 151.

¹²⁹ See, Matthew, 'Balfour Declaration,' 232-233; James Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade: The Birth of the Anglo-Zionist Alliance, 1914-1918*, (Basingstoke: 2007).

¹³⁰ Watson, *Massey*, 85-6.

the Peace Conference the strong Dominion feeling that their contribution of men to the war effort be an accounting for the reward they were to receive in Paris:

All that time, from the very outset, Lloyd George was steadily keeping up the end of the Dominions – Canada, who had lost more men than Belgium; Australia, who had sent more men than the United States; New Zealand, with her wonderful fighting record; and South Africa, who ‘had conquered their enemy,’ and fought many campaigns. India, too, would not be over looked. Her armies had fought in every theatre of war, and the Native States alone had raised 180,000 men. That raised questions.¹³¹

This same accounting had been central to New Zealand’s case for its war effort, to emphasise its dedication and loyalty to Britain. It had also always carried a suggestion of New Zealand’s reward, or at least repayment, to come later. Paris was where the Dominions sought to settle this bill, in their own ways. As Hankey noted, ‘The Dominions and India were fighting the battle of their future status, and the Empire Delegation was meeting daily’.¹³² The Dominions would not get their way on every matter in the negotiations, but in this recognition alone was a victory.¹³³

Massey’s operation at the Paris Peace Conference represented the furtherance, and utility, of New Zealand’s cooperative approach to imperial relations, which characterised Massey and Ward’s wartime visits.¹³⁴ In the formal setting of the Peace Conference, New Zealand could project its voice in a way that was drowned out earlier in the war by Murdoch’s aggressive publicity.

Massey’s aims for the negotiations were a generous reparations bill, and retention of captured German colonies in the Pacific.¹³⁵ New Zealand of course did not get everything it wanted in Paris, but its moderate, cooperative approach amplified its voice around the table, and earned Massey notable victories that might not have been expected otherwise. Its achievement in its share of the island of Nauru is the most notable example of this.

Nauru, or Pleasant Island, was a small German colony in the Pacific, captured by Australian troops soon after the outbreak in 1914. It was a particular prize for the antipodean Dominions for its rich deposits of phosphate and phosphate-rock, suitable for agricultural use. Massey made the island a

¹³¹ Maurice Hankey, *The Supreme Control at the Paris Peace Conference 1919: A Commentary*, (London: 1963), 34.

¹³² Hankey, *Supreme*, 26

¹³³ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, 52.

¹³⁴ Barrie MacDonald, ‘Massey’s Imperialism and the Politics of Phosphate: Massey Memorial Lecture, 1982,’ (Palmerston North: 1982), 17.

¹³⁵ Kay, ‘Dragon,’ 125-7; Watson, *Massey*, Chapter 4.

particular point of pride, promising its pay off to his rural supporters, to reinforce his 'Farmer Bill' political image at home.¹³⁶ Hughes was just as insistent at retaining control of the island.¹³⁷ The final settlement for Nauru saw Britain, Australia, and New Zealand hold it as co-administrators. New Zealand also gained a 16% share of the island's phosphate exports, with Britain and Australia splitting the rest.¹³⁸ This was a notable achievement given New Zealand's weaker claim than Australia's, under the agreed conventions for C-Class mandates.¹³⁹

In these negotiations, Hughes' continuation of his aggressive publicity undermined him. He continued to take advice from Murdoch, and was defiant, even abrasive, in his dealings around the negotiation table.¹⁴⁰ Lloyd George became deeply frustrated at Hughes' aggressive and unreasonable negotiations on this issue, and his antagonism of President Wilson, accusing Hughes' intransigence of risking American support.¹⁴¹ In an attempt to get his way, he caused further irritation by leaking draft articles from the conference to the press, which caused further anger from Lloyd George. He even threatened to refuse to sign the peace agreement over the matter.¹⁴² This lost him the sympathy of politicians in Australia, who advised him to let the matter go.¹⁴³

Massey, meanwhile, continued the modest, cooperative approach of his earlier visits, both in public and around the negotiating table. Particularly for Milner, who oversaw the issue, Massey was simply easier to work with than Hughes.¹⁴⁴ Massey had laid the groundwork during his wartime visits, and presented a clear, patient, and polite case. Hughes meanwhile continued his aggressive publicity approach at Paris.

By 1919, the dynamics of Greater British propaganda had changed once again. In the formalised and tense environment of the peace negotiations, Hughes' aggressive publicity not only delivered diminished effectiveness, but also undermined his case in negotiations. Hughes was no

¹³⁶ MacDonald, 'Massey's Imperialism,' 2, 6; Watson, *Massey*, 95-98.

¹³⁷ Bridge, *Hughes*, 92-96; Macdonald, 'Phosphate,' 4-6.

¹³⁸ Kay, 'Dragon,' 134-5.

¹³⁹ MacDonald, 'Massey's Imperialism,' 10; Kay, 'Dragon,' 134-5.

¹⁴⁰ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, 56.

¹⁴¹ Bridge, *Hughes*, 79-80.

¹⁴² MacDonald, 'Massey's Imperialism,' 11; Kay, 'Dragon,' 134; Bridge, *Hughes*, 92-96; Watson, *Massey*, 77-80.

¹⁴³ Kay, 'Dragon,' 134.

¹⁴⁴ MacDonald, 'Massey's Imperialism,' 11; Watson, *Massey*, 77-80; Bridge, *Hughes*, 92-96; Hankey, *Supreme*, 18.

longer playing to the same adoring crowd, with the backing of Northcliffe, in Paris as he had in his first visit to Britain.

Historiography has portrayed Massey's conduct in Paris as boring, ineffectual, and excessively deferential, or 'John Bullish.'¹⁴⁵ Murdoch, sharing Hughes' frustrations, even accused Massey of being manipulated by British officials to undermine Hughes.¹⁴⁶ This underestimates the intent behind Massey's conduct, and the utility of his approach. The New Zealand press certainly did not see Massey as being passive or used in parodying his insistence at gaining Western Samoa – or 'Some More' – Pacific territory at Paris [Figure 8]. Judged on the basis of colonial nationalist historians, and in terms of its contribution to national memory of the war, Massey and Ward's visits have been deemed 'failures.' Understood in the context of Greater British propaganda, however, the complexity and intent of these visits is better revealed.

¹⁴⁵ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, 53-54.

¹⁴⁶ 'The Claim to Nauru,' *Evening Post*, 26 March 1919, 7; 'The Competition for Nauru,' *Evening Post*, 29 March, 1919, 4; Bridge, *Hughes*, 92-96.



Rt. Hon. W. F. Massey, N Z's Peace Conference Rep.:—"What New Zealand wants is territory, and territory it will have."

Figure 8 – 'Some More,' *Observer*, 15 February 1919, 1.

This chapter has shown how the particular dynamics of informality, familiarity, and trust within Greater Britain opened a particularly ambiguous space for the Dominion Prime Ministers' visits to Britain during the war. How this ambiguity was seized by each Dominion varied. Through

their well-connected and confident publicity advocates, Canada and Australia fully seized the publicity and propagandistic potential of these visits. While New Zealand was less effective, and less antagonistic, in promoting itself, its leaders remained useful figures for British propaganda. The New Zealand approach was more subtle and cooperative. While this did not inform a confident national mythology of the war in the same way as Canada and Australia, it paid off politically in Versailles at least.

Instead of seeing these visits in isolation, or tying them to a national mythology of the war, this chapter therefore shows the importance of understanding them collectively as Greater British propaganda. The complexity, ambiguity, and potential of the visits were a distinct product of the dynamics of Greater Britain at war.

The following chapters continue the approach of using a case study to see the application of the dynamics explored earlier in the thesis. Chapters 5 and 6 apply this approach to the case study of Greater British cinema propaganda. This chapter showed how the wide publicity and propaganda potential of the Dominions Prime Ministers' visits was unique to Greater Britain, and the particular and ambiguous authority of Dominion status in London. The operation of cinema propaganda in Greater Britain is presented as similarly distinct and governed by the dynamics of the community. Chapter 5 explores the organisation of cinema propaganda. This propaganda inverts the picture of disconnection and vagueness in Greater British propaganda organisation established in Chapter 1. Here, the commercial operation of cinema propaganda rationalised Greater Britain as a market for propaganda – the authorised area. This was an inversion of the general pattern, but still a product of the distinct dynamics of Greater Britain.

Chapter 5: 'The Authorised Area': The Organisation and Operation of Greater British Cinema Propaganda

Chapter 1 showed the dispersal and occasional incoherence of Greater British propaganda. It was not a defined or directed campaign. As a market for propaganda, Greater Britain was more coherent. Chapter 5 continues the more specific approach of Chapter 4, through an examination of cinema propaganda in Greater Britain. This shows that cinema was a distinct medium that inverted the general picture of Greater British propaganda established in Chapter 1.

Cinema propaganda still shows how determinative Greater British dynamics were in the organisation and creation of propaganda. In contrast to the disconnections, dispersal, and ambiguity that Greater British dynamics prompted elsewhere, cinema propaganda was a particularly coherent and effective space for Greater British propaganda. Through its commercial operation, Greater Britain became a clear *market* for British cinema propaganda – the authorised area. Similarly, through Beaverbrook, cinema propaganda was an area of Dominion leadership, and significant Dominion representation.

Despite this, exploring Greater British cinema propaganda shows the continuation of a disparity in the Dominions' experience of Greater British propaganda. Focusing on New Zealand's experience specifically shows that Dominion leadership, and British control, were similarly as inhibitive as the Colonial Office's restrictions. New Zealand struggled to assert itself.

Once again, this chapter follows Thompson and Magee's approach.¹ Notably, however, it inverts their premise that culture underwrote economics and investment in Greater Britain. The commercial operation of cinema propaganda, and the conceptualisation of Greater Britain as a propaganda *market* shows how economics and commerciality underwrote culture in this context.

This chapter takes a specific approach to cinema. Following James Curran's caution, cinema is not explored in a medium-specific sense.² Instead, this chapter tries to contextualise cinema in the wider scope of wartime propaganda. Much established historiography on British propaganda takes

¹ Thomson & Magee, *Empire and Globalisation*.

² Curran, 'Media,' 135-154.

this medium-centric approach, by isolating cinema from wider explorations, and treating it as a dramatically new medium. British and Dominion propagandists did see cinema as having distinct properties and applications, but this chapter tries to examine how cinema functioned in the wider context of Greater British propaganda.

The New Imperial History, meanwhile, has claimed cinema as an inherently ‘imperial’ medium, having a distinct role in forming imperial identities and domestic British visions of empire.³ This imprecisely bundles cinema with other ‘connective’ nineteenth century communications technologies, and within the clutch of media associated with ‘imperial propaganda.’ This chapter questions this notion, and instead focuses on how cinema functioned in Greater Britain in a commercial and operational sense.

Cinema propaganda in particular shows the unique intersection, overlapping, collaboration, and competition that define the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. Filming New Zealand’s frontline experience was conducted by a British cinematographer, appointed by an official organisation headed by a Canadian press magnate, and the discretion of the British war office. This is an example of the sort of Greater British overlapping that, to colonial nationalist historians like Stacey, is an imperial ‘loose end’ to be rationalised and explained away. Instead, these unique interactions are characteristic of Greater British propaganda.

5.1 – Historiography

Historiographies of British wartime propaganda, and of British imperial culture have approached cinema propaganda in distinct ways, with their own limitations. Cinema has been treated as a unique and innovative method of propaganda during the war,⁴ despite its use in political

³ E.g., Chapman & Cull, *Projecting Empire*; Maurizio Cinnergrani, *Of Empire and the City: Remapping Early British Cinema*, (Bern: 2014); John M. Mackenzie, ‘Introduction’, 8; Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*.

⁴ See, Reeves, *Official British Film*; Reeves, ‘Film Propaganda and Its Audience,’ 463-494; Nicholas Hiley & Luke McKernan, ‘Reconstructing the News: British Newsreel Documentation and the British Universities Newsreel Project’, *Film History*, 13:2 Non-Fiction Film (2001), 185-199; Adrian Smith & Michael Hammond, ‘The Great War and the Moving Image’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 35:4 (2015), 553-558; Kelly, *Cinema and the Great War*; Stephen Badsey, ‘The ‘IWM Series’. A guide to the Imperial War Museum collection of archive film of the First World War’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*,

campaigning before 1914.⁵ Cinema tends to be isolated from wider discussions of Britain's propaganda campaign.⁶ The New Imperial History, meanwhile, has claimed cinema was an inherently 'imperial' medium,⁷ as having a distinct role in forming imperial identities and domestic British visions of empire.⁸ This imprecisely bundles cinema with other 'connective' nineteenth century communications technology and media, focusing on how it projected empire to domestic British eyes.⁹ This tends to simply note the proliferation of imperial imagery, and ignores the wider commercial context these depictions existed within.

British wartime cinema propaganda bears out what James Curran deems the limitations of established media history: it has been written as *medium* history, disconnected from the context of Britain's wider propaganda campaign, and often from wider social and political trends, in favour of content-based readings of British national identity.¹⁰ Both historiographies tend to skirt or isolate the First World War as a dividing mark, as is sometimes used in histories of wireless and telegraphy.¹¹ The war is variously used as a conclusion to nineteenth century imperial visual media, alongside lantern slide shows, and music hall,¹² or as a preamble to examinations of later imperial culture, especially the work of the Empire Marketing Board, and domestic British cinema culture in the interwar years.¹³ Both approaches tend to ignore the overseas context of British cinema, and Greater British connections.¹⁴

13:2 (1993), 203-214; S.D. Badsey, 'Battle of the Somme: British war-propaganda', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 3:2 (1983), 99-15.

⁵ See James Thompson, 'Electric Octopus,' 331-356.

⁶ E.g. Reeves, *Official British Film*; Rachael Low, *The History of British Film 1914-1918*, (London: 1950); Rachael Low, *The History of British Film 1906-1914*, (London: 1973).

⁷ E.g., Chapman & Cull, *Projecting Empire*; Cinquergrani, *Of Empire*; Mackenzie, 'Introduction', 8; Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*.

⁸ E.g. Jeannie Woods, *Reimagining Ireland: Visions of Empire and Other Imaginings: Cinema, Ireland, and India 1910-1962*, (Bern: 2011), esp.2-9.

⁹ Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge, MA: 1983); Cinquergrani, *Of Empire*, esp. 2-7; Chapman & Cull, *Projecting Empire*, 3; Maurizio Cinquegrani, , 'A fit of absence of mind?' Empire and urban life in early non-fiction films (1895-1914)', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 9:4 (2011), 325-336.

¹⁰ Curran, 'Media,' esp.135-136.

¹¹ See, Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914*, (London: 1994); see also Bell, 'Dissolving Distance,' 525-526.

¹² E.g., Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 195-200.

¹³ Uma Kothari, 'Trade, consumption and development alliances: the historical legacy of the Empire Marketing Board poster campaign', *Third World Quarterly*, 35:1 (2014), 43-64; Nadine Chan, 'Remember the empire, filled with your cousins': Poetic exposition in the documentaries of the empire Marketing Board', *Studies in Documentary Film*, 7:2 (2013), 105-118.

¹⁴ For Canada and New Zealand's pre-war cinema propaganda see, Gary Evans, *John Grierson and the National Film Board: The Politics of Wartime Propaganda*, (Toronto: 1984), 17; J. Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 195-200.

This chapter furthers Thomas and Toye's approach to rhetoric in terms of cinema.¹⁵ Before exploring the rhetorical aspects of Greater British cinema propaganda, this chapter examines the contexts of its creation and dissemination. As furtherance to this general approach, this chapter draws from the methodology of the 'social life' of images, to consider how creation, organisation, distribution, adaptation, and market context impacted the visual rhetorical aspects of official films.¹⁶ This goes beyond recent media studies approaches, specifically the 'new cinema history,' which treats cinema as a unique social and cultural phenomenon.¹⁷ This chapter does not make similar assumptions regarding audience engagement. Instead, it considers how the dynamics of Greater British propaganda were evinced in terms of cinema propaganda.

New Zealand's engagement with Greater British cinema propaganda shows the importance of these contexts acutely. Prosaic issues of weather, transport, technological failure, and politics were influences in New Zealand's cultural engagement with the imperial war effort, and representation of itself therein.

5.2 – Cinema Potential

Cinema propaganda became a major focus of British official propaganda because of its connective potential and social utility, domestically and imperially. Domestically, official cinema propaganda, specifically footage of troops, provided a connection point between home and the front. This imbued cinema with a particularly emotive potential, compressing distance by bringing some suggestion of the reality of the war to audiences, maybe even representing absent loved ones.¹⁸ Official cinema propaganda offered a sense of connection and community engagement with the war,

¹⁵ See, Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*; Toye, *Rhetoric*.

¹⁶ Edwards & Hart, 'Photographs as Objects,' 2; Jordanova, 'Approaching Visual Materials,' 41-42; Jordanova, *Look of the Past*, 4-5.

¹⁷ E.g. Richard Maltby, Melbyn Stokes, and Robert C. Allen (ed.), *Going to the Movies: Hollywood and the Social Experience of Cinema* (Exeter: 2007); Karina Aveyard & Albert Moran (ed.) *Watching Films: New Perspectives on Movie-Going, Exhibition and Reception*, (Bristol: 2013); Denis Condon, 'Brightening the dreary existence of the Irish peasant': Cinema transforms leisure in provincial Ireland', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 11:2 (2013), 126-139; Chris O'Rourke, 'Afterwards to see a Cinema show': The diary of a London cinema-goer in 1915', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 13:1 (2015), 66-82.

¹⁸ Jan Rüger, 'Entertainments', in *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914-1919*, ed. Winter, (Cambridge: 2007), 116.

while non-war cinema entertainments offered a form of relaxation and escapism.¹⁹ This brought with it a degree of moral panic surrounding cinema, which tapped into wider discussions surrounding the appropriateness of ‘frivolous’ enjoyment on the home front during the war. Concerns over potential sexual laxity of troops on leave in cinemas, and even panic at potential health risks of cinema added to this concern.²⁰ Cinema was not an innovation of the war, but this newfound attention initiated early legislation on British cinema.

Much in the same way that domestic British political speeches were extended to communicate Greater British propaganda messages, the connective potential of cinema was likewise extended under Greater British propaganda.²¹ Cinema provided a unique and emotive link to the homes of Dominion soldiers on leave in London. The YMCA’s ‘huts’ in Britain for Dominion soldiers on leave were popular in this regard, and created crucial ‘homes away from home.’²² Cinema shows were an important aspect of creating this connection with Dominion homes.²³ The typical dynamic of projecting ‘exotic’ imperial scenes to domestic Britons was inverted in this case, as Dominion troops requested scenes of their home fronts left behind in YMCA shows. NZEF officials relayed such requests on behalf of their soldiers:

Requests for films of New Zealand scenes are continually being received from our camps and Depots. The supply available from the High Commissioner’s Office is limited, and the films have been exhibited so often as to become almost monotonous. It is possible that there are in New Zealand many films of local interest which are not in use and if some of these could be obtained here, they would be of immense assistance in the work of entertaining the troops ...

¹⁹ Michael Hammond, *The Big Show: British Cinema Culture in the Great War 1914-1918*, (Exeter: 2006); Rosalind Leveridge, ‘Proud of our little local Palace’: Sidmouth, cinema, and community 1911-14’, *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 8:4 (2010), 385-399; O’Rourke, ‘Afterwards’, 66-82; Condon, ‘Brightening’, 126-139; Keith B. Wagner, ‘Historicizing labour cinema: recovering class and lost work on screen,’ *Labour History*, 55:3 (2014), 309-325.

²⁰ Rüger, ‘Entertainments’, esp. 109-116; Laura Ugolini, *Civvies: middle-class men on the English home front, 1914-18* (Manchester: 2013); Alex Rock, ‘The ‘khaki fever’ moral panic: Women’s patrols and policing cinemas in London, 1913-19’, *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 12:1 (2014), 57-72; See also, National Council of Public Morals Cinema Commission, *The cinema, its present position and future possibilities, 1917* (Reprint) (New York, NY: Arno Press, 1970).

²¹ Toby Haggith, & Richard Smith, ‘Sons of Our Empire: Shifting Ideas of ‘Race’ and the Cinematic Representation of Imperial Troops in World War I’, in *Empire and Film*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 35-53.

²² Emma Hanna, ‘Putting the moral into morale: YMCA cinemas on the Western Front, 1914-1918’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 35:4 (2015), 615-630;

²³ E.g., Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in the Great War*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Edmund G.C. King, ‘E.W. Hornung’s Unpublished “Diary,” The YMCA, and the Reading Soldier in the First World War’, *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 57:3 (2014), 361-387; ‘Soldier Work – What the Y.M.C.A. Is Doing’, *Waikato Independent*, 30 March, 1916, 3.

it would meet a demand which we are at present unable to fulfil and be a means of keeping our men more closely in touch with their Home.²⁴

Australian troops on leave exhibited the same demand for scenes of their home. Australian officials accordingly sent 40,000 feet of film of Australian scenes to London in March 1918.²⁵ Film communicated less the imperial exotic than the familiar here. As Greater British propaganda, cinema could compress imperial space in an emotive and reassuring way.

British propagandists quickly seized on the potential of cinema. This was not a complete innovation; cinema was a familiar feature of British political campaigning by 1914.²⁶ Likewise, Canada and New Zealand had both pursued cinema in official publicity efforts for imperial tourism and emigration.²⁷ British military interest in the potential of cinema propaganda even predated the war, with the War Office creating a recruiting film – *The British Army Film* – as early as 1913.²⁸ British propagandists and officials therefore scrambled to create cinema propaganda, with notable examples of such as the 1916 *The Battle of the Somme*.²⁹ Almost every official British propaganda organisation experimented with film in some way throughout the war for a variety of audiences.³⁰ Beyond major films, smaller-scale cinema work was created for the Ministry of Food,³¹ and the

²⁴ ANZ: R24428229 – Photographic – Proposal to use camp cinemas as adjunct to the NZEF [New Zealand Expeditionary Force] educational scheme and to obtain the necessary films – Captain in charge NZ War Records Section to Secretary of NZ War Contingent Association, London, 3 October 1918.

²⁵ Amanda Laugesen, 'Forgetting their troubles for a while: Australian soldiers' experiences of cinema during the First World War', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 35:4 (2015), esp.604.

²⁶ James Thompson, 'Electric Octopus,' Wagner, 'Labour cinema', 309-325.

²⁷ Evans, *John Grierson*, 17; Bush, *Edwardian Ladies*, 195-200.

²⁸ Nicholas Hiley, 'The British Army Film', 'You!' and 'For the Empire': reconstructed propaganda films, 1914-1916,' *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 5:2 (1985), 165-182; Reeves, *Official British Film*, esp. 45; Nicholas Hiley, 'Hilton DeWitt Girdwood and the origins of British official filming', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 13:2 (1993), 129-148.

²⁹ E.g., Kelly, *Cinema and the Great War*; Nicholas Reeves, 'Cinema, spectatorship and propaganda: 'Battle of the Somme' (1916) and its contemporary audience', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 17:1 (1997), 5-28; Badsey, 'Somme,' 99-15.

³⁰ See, Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*; for the files of the NWAC's 'National Film' see, TNA:PRO: T1/12519/13904 – National War Aims Committee and Ministry of Information. Provision of funds for the preparation of a British national film ('the Hall Caine film'), Reeves, *Official British Film*, 125-130.

³¹ Stella Hockenull, 'Everybody's Business: Film Food and Victory in the First World War', *Historical Journal of Film Radio and Television*, 35:4 (2015), 579-595; Hiley, 'DeWitt,' 129-148; see also, Nicholas Hiley, 'The Play, the Parody, the Censor and the Film', *Intelligence and National Security*, 6:1 (1991), 218-228; Nicholas Hiley, 'Review: The Pictorial Media', *The Historical Journal*, 31:1 (March 1988), 241-247; Hiley & McKernan, 'British Newsreel,' 185-199.

National War Savings Committee.³² This enthusiasm is notable given GHQ's initial strong hesitancy in allowing the recording of footage at the front.³³

This enthusiasm was well placed. Weekly wartime attendance figures in Britain are estimated at around twenty million.³⁴ The same popularity was true in New Zealand; cinema attendance was beginning to rival church attendance by the early twentieth century,³⁵ with estimated weekly audiences figure of around 500,000 by 1917.³⁶ Some propagandists even saw cinema as the most important and effective aspect of Britain's entire propaganda campaign.³⁷ Its effectiveness was likewise noted in New Zealand, as per the secretary of New Zealand's Recruiting Board:

Picture theatres are largely patronised by the public at the present time, and particularly by many eligible men who probably would never see the ordinary posters or attend recruiting meetings.³⁸

Already strong pre-war audience numbers were boosted during the war by men on leave, and families at home in need of rest, and often with newfound female earning potential.³⁹

Cinema promised a large captive audience for propagandists, but was also seen as a cross-class medium. Contemporary propagandists noted this broad appeal, at times grudgingly, including a clearly resentful Northcliffe:

As a newspaper man, I hate to confess it, but the motion picture is doing more for the Allied cause than any other means of thought transmission. Not everyone reads the newspapers, and those who do forget what they have read, but no one can forget what he has seen actually happen on the screen.⁴⁰

³² Hiley, 'DeWitt,' 129-148.

³³ Reeves, *Official British Film*, esp. 45-45.

³⁴ PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee: Draft statement to be placed before proposed conference of Pressmen to whom will also be shown a selection of films; TNA:PRO: CO323/786 – Colonies, General: Original Correspondence: Offices: Miscellaneous: '2366 – General Dominions – Cinematograph films for purposes of Propaganda – Requests CO to nominate a representative to attend a Conference on Tuesday 15th January 1918'; see also Rüger, 'Entertainments', pp.108, 116.

³⁵ Pugsley, 'Te Hokowhitu A Tu,' 195.

³⁶ Charlotte Greenhalgh, 'Bush Cinderellas: Young New Zealanders and Romance at the Movies, 1919-1939', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 44:1 (2010), 4.

³⁷ TNA:PRO – INF 4/4A – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services'; 'Great War Publicity – Particular Countries', 2, see also, 10-11, 13, 21; FO 228/2922 – Dossier 29 War Propaganda Films.

³⁸ ANZ: R10075029 – Secretary of Parliamentary Recruiting Committee memorandum, 1916.

³⁹ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 13-14.

⁴⁰ TNA:PRO – INF 4/6 – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services': 'Minute on the Cinema Industry and its Relation to the Government (a) During the War, (b) After the War', 2.

Attendance numbers of films such as *The Battle of the Somme* show that official war films in particular drew large and diverse audiences in Britain.

Cinema propaganda therefore had the same potential and appeal in the Dominions as in Britain, but distance and transmission made its operation slightly distinct. As in other regards, the operational and material realities of Greater Britain impacted the dissemination of cinema propaganda. Much like the circulation of war news, prosaic and political issues of access, organisation, and logistical organisation informed the creation and circulation of cinema propaganda. Also like war news, cinema propaganda in Greater Britain operated in a commercial context. Official films were set within a wider market of private topical wartime material, boom in fictionalised ‘war dramas’,⁴¹ general peacetime entertainments, and American cinema. Structural and political issues added another layer of complexity, as front line footage of the British and Dominion troops required War Office approval. The operational, political, and economic dimensions of cinema propaganda made its operation as Greater British propaganda distinct.

At the same time, cinema was a unique area of particular coverage, operational inclusion, and opportunity for Greater British propaganda, in terms of official British propaganda efforts. The War Office Cinematograph Committee, and to a lesser extent its forerunners the British Topical Committee for War Films, took a particular focus on distribution to the Dominions, much earlier than the Ministry of Information did. Beaverbrook’s leadership in these organisations is important. The increasing leadership of a Greater British propagandist like Beaverbrook is itself notable. More specifically, his leadership exaggerated existing dynamics of Greater British propaganda.

While the Dominions generally were a more coherent audience and market for British cinema propaganda, compared to other areas, the competitive dynamics of Greater Britain were still determinative. The Dominions had to specifically push their way into British efforts for not only greater representation, but also greater ownership of their own images, against Beaverbrook’s Canadian dominance, and British authority. New Zealand remained particularly disadvantaged in this regard. Cinema propaganda was a distinct medium, but its operation as Greater British propaganda shows recurrent Greater British dynamics at work. It was the exception that proved the rule.

⁴¹ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 29.

5.3 – Greater Britain the ‘Authorised Area’

The initial strategic priorities of British propaganda, combined with the Colonial Office’s restraint of official coordination, left the Dominions somewhat disconnected and widely dispersed in the structure of British official propaganda. This ambiguity, disconnection, and dispersal is an important dynamic of Greater British propaganda generally, especially for how it opened opportunity for more diverse forms of propaganda activity.⁴² Cinema propaganda presents a unique inversion of this disconnection between British and Dominion efforts, which in doing so reinforces the broader dynamics. Where the *laissez faire* commercial operation of Britain’s imperial communications networks complicated the flow of Greater British war news, the commercial operation of Britain’s cinema propaganda, through the British Topical Committee for War Films, and especially the WOCC, facilitated its circulation to the Dominions. The Topical Cinema Committee and the WOCC were distinct as trade-based but officially sanctioned propaganda bodies.⁴³ Where the commerciality of war news distribution caused disruption and delay, the commercial operation of cinema propaganda facilitated connection. It rationalised Greater Britain a coherent and acceptable *market* for cinema propaganda, where it was an uneasy *audience* for other propaganda efforts.

More than most other propaganda media, cinema propaganda existed in a market context, requiring trade collaboration. In terms of creation but especially in terms of dissemination, it required the involvement of industry and cinema owners. As such, Britain’s main cinema propaganda body originated from a trade initiative, which was increasingly incorporated and formalised as a government organisation. The Topical Trade Committee was created in early 1915 through collaboration of various firms of the Kinematograph Manufacturers Association, to collect frontline footage. It was later renamed the British Topical Committee for War Films, once it was given the

⁴² See Chapter 1.

⁴³ For the Topical Committee, see, TNA:PRO - BBK/E/2/1 – 27 July – Nov. 1916 – Correspondence of British Topical Committee for War Films - Agreement between His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for the War Department and The Gaumont Company Limited and Jury’s Imperial Pictures Limited, 25 October 1915; for the WOCC, see PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee - Beaverbrook to Gilmour.

official backing of the War Office. It was then reorganised with greater official involvement and ascent to collect frontline footage, as the British Topical Committee for War Films, before eventually being taken under the aegis of the War Office as the War Office Cinematograph Committee in 1916.⁴⁴ Trade pressure therefore motivated an increasing adoption of cinema propaganda by the British state. After initial hesitancy, the War Office's relented and appointed Geoffrey Malins and Edward Tong as the first official British cameramen to reach the front in November 1915, for the Topical Trade Committee.⁴⁵

The WOCC became the official body with authority for the organisation and collection official British and imperial military, air, and naval footage from the front. It created the notable official battle films such as *The Battle of the Somme* and *The Battle of the Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks*.⁴⁶ Other propaganda bodies creating cinema propaganda, such as Wellington House, could only rely on home front footage for their initial films, such as the successful *Britain Prepared* film, documenting Britain's mobilisation through army camp, munitions, and naval footage. The WOCC worked through a trade-based model. It took no official funding, and worked with prominent trade figures to be self-sustaining.⁴⁷ The WOCC's authority over official front line footage only increased through its later incorporation into the Ministry of Information.

The WOCC's commercial operation meant that it unusually claimed the British Empire, and more specifically the Dominions, as its sole focus. Beaverbrook, as the WOCC's head, made this clear in 1917, over division of duties between the WOCC and the Department of Information, stating: 'We have not power to enter into negotiations with Foreign Countries. We are confined to the Empire.'⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 62; Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 125-26; TNA:PRO: T 1/12299/12464 – Ministry of Information. Scheme for cinematographic propaganda – 'Memorandum re. War Office Cinematograph Committee.'

⁴⁵ Sanders and Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 124-125; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 56-61.

⁴⁶ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 45-61.

⁴⁷ E.g., Beaverbrook's insistence, 'The War Office Cinematograph Committee does not ask for any financial assistance from the public funds as has been the case with organisations of this character in other countries, as it has made a profit of [P]60,000 on its films since [its] inception.', PA: BBK/E/2/8 – July-Aug. 1917 – General Correspondence and War Cinematograph Committee – Beaverbrook to Brade, 9 July 1917.

⁴⁸ PA: BBK/E/2/8 – July-Aug. 1917 – General Correspondence and War Cinematograph Committee. Beaverbrook to Holt-White, 29 August 1917.

Just as imperial interest societies, such as the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organisations, were encouraged to confine their propaganda efforts to the Empire, because of their non-governmental status,⁴⁹ the commercial focus of the WOCC constrained it to an imperial focus. This was an inversion of the wider dynamics of Greater British propaganda, where official efforts were usually directed elsewhere, with Greater Britain fitting awkwardly between categories of work. Here, the informal, commercial underpinnings of Greater British cultural interaction facilitated official Greater British propaganda coordination. While the Dominions found varying degrees of inclusion in other propaganda bodies, with both domestic and overseas focuses, official film propaganda organisations were the only ones in which the ‘Greater British’ community was the specific, sole focus. The semi-domestic nature of the Dominions made their institutional place in other official propaganda efforts confusing. As a commercial prospect, however, cinema propaganda rationalised the Dominions as a market. The distinctiveness of cinema for Greater British propaganda is reinforced for how it likewise inverted the dynamics of Indian representation and connection.

Indian troops were a main focus of these early cinema efforts, true to the claim of their pursuit by the ‘imperial paparazzi’ during the war.⁵⁰ Fears of Indian sedition had allowed the less famous Canadian geographer Hilton DeWitt Girdwood to convince the War Office to permit him to take footage of Indian troops for propaganda films earlier in May 1915, in an unofficial capacity.⁵¹ Malins and Tong’s appointment superseded this ad hoc arrangement, however, and Girdwood’s film – *With the Empire’s Fighters* – was delayed in favour of Malins and Tong’s first feature – *With the Indian Troops at the Front*.⁵² The prevalence of Indian troops as a focus for early visual propaganda held for cinema propaganda, where limitation on Greater British coverage was more stringent. Notably, Girdwood was expressly forbidden, at the insistence of Haig, from taking film of white British troops.⁵³ Early official British film propaganda drew on a longer tradition of ‘exotic’ imperial

⁴⁹ See, Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda*, 24, 32-33; Hendley, *Organised Patriotism*.

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Edwards, ‘Photographic Uncertainties: Between Evidence and Reassurance’, *History and Anthropology*, 25:2 (2014), 171-188; Cinquegrani, ‘Absence of mind?’ 325-336.

⁵¹ Hiley, ‘DeWitt, 129-146; see also, Edwards, ‘Photographic Uncertainties,’ 171-188; Cinquegrani, ‘Absence of mind?’ 325-336.

⁵² IWM: IWM202-1 ‘With the Indian Troops at the Front’, British Topical Committee for War Films, 17/1/1916 [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022700>]

⁵³ Hiley, ‘DeWitt, 129-146.

cinema focused on non-white bodies. Illustrating ‘the power of the Indian Empire, the loyalty of the Native States, and the beneficent of the Indian Government’⁵⁴ was a constant interest.⁵⁵ The representation of Indian troops in initial cinema was extensive, but their role as its audience was more constrained.

Operationally, the commercial nature of British cinema propaganda inverted these dynamics, and distribution was restrained to Greater Britain alone. India was excluded from the WOCC’s networks of distribution. The TTC and the WOCC specifically claimed the Empire as their exclusive and sole focus in a way unique within British propaganda organisations, but were limited in India. In formal negotiations regarding the distribution of films, it was specifically stated ‘the contractors shall have the sole right ... to issue for exhibition in the British Empire (except India and Egypt) (hereinafter known as the authorised area),’ noting additionally that distribution to foreign countries was arranged separately, through Wellington House and later the Department of Information.⁵⁶ Here, institutional organisation was an inhibition in extending cinema propaganda to India and Egypt, where it was an advantage in terms of India’s supply of war news, both in and out.⁵⁷

The particular semi-official and trade-based nature of Britain’s cinema propaganda bodies created an institutional demarcation that kept India and Egypt separate. Authority for Indian matters remained with the India Office, while Egypt was notably administered under the Foreign Office, where the Department of Information was also housed. The Department’s Government Cinema Committee, which lacked the WOCC’s authority to collect footage, took responsibility of India and Egypt. This was significantly due to the sensitive racial and religious politics of India and Egypt, making more considered distribution necessary. More broadly, however, it shows the variance in terms of inclusion and authority of different parts of the Empire. Particular dynamics that held for Greater Britain were not blanket imperial rules. Cinema propaganda is a clear example of definitive

⁵⁴ PRO: INF4/2 – ‘War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services’ - J. Brooke Wilkinson, ‘Films and Censorship in England’, 315.

⁵⁵ Toby Haggith and Richard Smith, ‘*Sons of Our Empire: Shifting Ideas of ‘Race’ and the Cinematic Representation of Imperial Troops in World War I*’, in *Empire and Film*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 35-53.

⁵⁶ PA: BBK/E/2/1 – 27 July – Nov. 1916 – Correspondence of British Topical Committee for War Films – ‘Agreement between His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for the War Department and the Gaumont Company Limited and Jury’s Imperial Pictures Limited, 25 October 1915’.

⁵⁷ Sanders & Taylor, *British Propaganda*, 153-4; Robb, *British Culture*, 15.

exclusion of India from Greater British networks, and one where the formality of British authority hindered propaganda distribution, rather than facilitating it. The operational dynamics of cinema propaganda show a particularly stark demarcation of Greater Britain as a distinct imperial community, with its own dynamics and boundaries – as the ‘authorised area.’

5.4 – Beaverbrook and Reorganisation

Cinema propaganda also allowed unique Greater Britain inclusion in British official propaganda, due to the influence and eventual leadership of Beaverbrook, the perennial Greater British propaganda figure. As explored in the previous chapter, the disconnection between official British and Dominion propaganda efforts created by the Colonial Office’s intervention, and the more general community of cultural and political trust within Greater Britain, provided opportunity for advocates such as Murdoch and Beaverbrook to gain publicity for their Dominions. While this was occasionally problematic for British authorities, such as in their intervention in the campaign against Asquith, British propagandists nonetheless noticed the success of this work. Beaverbrook’s success in Canadian cinema propaganda facilitated his rise in British official propaganda.

Beaverbrook’s success in cinema propaganda through the Canadian War Records Office was unrivalled. It was so successful that it provided a model for Britain to follow, and he was appointed to the chairman of the WOCC through its reorganisation under the War Office. In doing so, the WOCC incorporated and was built into Beaverbrook’s existing Canadian official war film work.⁵⁸ This is an important and notable tessellation of Dominion and British organisations and efforts, through the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. Notably, the dynamics of Greater Britain allowed this sort of cooperation. It was not simply Dominion efforts that fit into British organisation, but British propaganda could likewise take their lead from Dominion work. Cinema propaganda is where this co-creation was most extensive. Beaverbrook’s initial success in Canadian film propaganda had likewise been facilitated through the cooperation War Office to allow the collection of Canadian footage.

⁵⁸ TNA:PRO: T 1/12299/12464 – Ministry of Information. Scheme for cinematographic propaganda – ‘Memorandum re. War Office Cinematograph Committee.’

Through this unique tessellation, Beaverbrook gained success as a cinema propagandist, and so became an obvious pick to lead Britain's efforts.

The official justification for Beaverbrook's appointment was to rationalise the Canadian and British efforts into one organisation, noting that by late 1916 the separate arrangements of both had 'ceased to be satisfactory,' and the WOCC formed 'as a single authority to take over the arrangements existing with the British Government and the Government of Canada.'⁵⁹ This was a formalisation of this unique intersection of Greater British operation. Rather than any particular problem with the British Trade Committee, which was genuinely successful and profitable, it seems likely that the appointment was at least partly to capitalise on the wild success of Beaverbrook's efforts through the Canadian War Records Office. Dispersal of profits from official films was also a likely motivation. Beaverbrook used War Office-approved footage for his official work, and so the War Office wanted a greater authority in the final distribution of the profits gained from these films. Under the WOCC, all profits were to be donated to charity, though Beaverbrook would ultimately decide the split. The appointment, as a testament to his success, satisfied Beaverbrook's ambition to more firmly cement his role in British politics, and was precursor to his 'anchoring' appointment as Minister of Information.⁶⁰

Beaverbrook's appointment as Chairman of the WOCC marked the success of his publicity efforts with institutional recognition. He was a distinct figure to Murdoch for instance, whose influence was somewhat secondary via Northcliffe. Beaverbrook was able to cement his influence through British official efforts. The appointment was also a formalisation of the informal publicity campaign, which, like Murdoch's, was forged through the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. It presaged the increasing inclusion of the Dominions in official propaganda from 1917.

Beaverbrook's appointment represented a distinct Greater British propagandist at the head of a British organisation, not just appointing an imperially minded figure. Other leading figures in British propaganda operation, notably Robert Donald, who created the report into propaganda reorganisation for Lloyd George, Charles Masterman, the head of Wellington House, and John

⁵⁹ TNA:PRO: T 1/12299/12464 – Ministry of Information. Scheme for cinematographic propaganda – 'Memorandum re. War Office Cinematograph Committee', 1.

⁶⁰ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 62; Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295.

Buchan, head of the Department of Information, all had strong imperial sympathies, and even ties to the Round Table Movement.⁶¹ The Round Table member Frederick Scott Oliver was even appointed head of the Dominions section within Wellington House.⁶² Unlike other bodies, the WOCC was distinct in taking its lead from a previous Dominion-focused propaganda body, the Canadian War Records Office, and which retained its Greater British focus. Beaverbrook is better seen as a product of the dynamics of Greater British propaganda. This was a unique projection of the ambiguous political potential of Dominion figures in Britain.

Beaverbrook's career more generally represents the opportunities afforded by the community of political and cultural trust and familiarity within Greater Britain. By 1916 Beaverbrook had already established a foothold in British politics, becoming MP for Ashton-Under-Lyne in 1910. He was still closely tied to the Canadian Government, acting as their 'eye witness' to wartime politics in Britain.⁶³ Beaverbrook of course did not pioneer cinema propaganda to the extent claimed in some historiography, including by his flattering biographer A.J.P. Taylor.⁶⁴ His success did prove appealing for British officials. Beaverbrook's varying British and Canadian political roles make sense within the dynamics of Greater Britain. It was not contradictory for him to hold interests and leadership roles for each.

Despite this success, Beaverbrook had his sights set higher than control of cinema propaganda, and seemed rather uninterested in the WOCC at times. By 1917 he was already looking to pass off film work to a 'willing horse'.⁶⁵ He complained to Masterman, 'I look forward to the time when we will talk no films and much politics.'⁶⁶ Still, his appointment was a watershed, and represented increasing formalisation of the Dominions' place in British propaganda. True to Beaverbrook's typical aggressive style, and foreshadowing his claims as Minister of Information, the

⁶¹ Robb, *British Culture*, 12; see also, J. Lee Thompson, *A Wider Patriotism: Alfred Milner and the British Empire*, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2007); Strachan, 'John Buchan,' 298-234.

⁶² NLS: MS 24853 – Family and General Correspondence of Frederick Scott Oliver, 1915 – February 1917.

⁶³ Cook, 'Documenting War', 265-295; Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 122-126.

⁶⁴ Taylor, *Beaverbrook*, 137; Haste, *Home Fires*, p.44.

⁶⁵ PA: BBK/E/2/3 – 24 Oct. 1916 – 20 March 1917 – General Correspondence; Beaverbrook to Faunthorpe, 23 February 1917.

⁶⁶ PA: BBK/E/2/3 – 24 Oct. 1916 – 20 March 1917 – General Correspondence; Beaverbrook to Charles Masterman, 9 March 1917.

WOCC under his leadership actively defended its claim to authority of distribution in the ‘authorised area’ of Greater Britain.

The WOCC’s main focus remained the ‘authorised area’ of Greater Britain – the Empire less India and Egypt – as the Topical Committee’s had been. Under War Office sanction the WOCC expanded this authority as explicitly in charge of the collection of British imperial footage, as Beaverbrook noted:

The War Office Cinematograph Committee of which I am Chairman sends out Cinematograph operators to work amongst the troops in France, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, and Salonkia, and in fact wherever British troops are fighting.⁶⁷

Under Beaverbrook the WOCC became the gatekeeper for frontline footage for all other British and Greater British propaganda organisations. As such, the WOCC became the central body through which the Dominions could collect footage, and hope to be represented in Britain’s extensive body of cinema propaganda.⁶⁸ This tessellation of British and Dominion authority therefore supplied Britain and the Dominions with the footage to create their own cinema; this is a distinct example of organisational co-creation. Unsurprisingly, this did not mean each of the Dominions’ experiences in navigating this system was uniform, as will be explored in New Zealand’s experience below.

This authority caused tension between the WOCC and other cinema propaganda bodies, most notably the DOI’s Government Cinema Committee. This dispute reinforces the imperial exclusivity of the WOCC, and Beaverbrook’s operational dominance in cinema propaganda. In a meeting between the two bodies on 1 June 1917, for instance, this demarcation was discussed. Beaverbrook put down any suggestion that the GCC could distribute films in the Dominions, drawing on a market saturation argument, stating: ‘if the G.C.C. put out films in any quantity the market might be flooded and so the W.O.C. would be injured.’ Later, the WOCC’s control of the Imperial market for its films was made more explicit, to little objection:

⁶⁷ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – Beaverbrook to Kemp, 26 July 1917.

⁶⁸ Daniel Eisenberg, ‘“A most miserable hotchpotch”: Charles Bean and the origins of the First World War film collection’, *Studies in Australasian Cinema*, 10:2 (2016), 199-210; Stephen Badsey, ‘Introduction’, *Imperial War Museum Film Catalogue: Volume 1 – The First World War Archive*, ed. Roger Smither (Wiltshire: 1994), esp. ix.

No question was raised as to the existing demarcation of areas for distribution of films produced by the W.O.C., it being recognized that the W.O.C. had the whole of the British Empire, less India and Egypt, and the G.C.C. had the whole of the neutral and allied nations, plus India and Egypt.⁶⁹

The WOCC's authority to distribution in Greater Britain was overtly commercial, which Beaverbrook stridently defended.

Once again, the separation of India and Egypt to the Foreign Office-run Department of Information is significant, and kept them distinct. In cinema propaganda distribution, the boundaries of authority around Greater Britain were particularly clear, much more than in any part of British propaganda, because of the commercial operation of the campaign. These boundaries drawn, the more significant issue of the actual collection of film material from the front was raised, deepening tensions.

From the outset, Beaverbrook and the WOCC established their dominance over frontline footage collection:

Lord Beaverbrook stated that the W.O.C. would do all the producing of the films on the military Fronts and in connection with the weekly War Budget would themselves cover all topical news items, whatever the subject might be and whether in this country or abroad.⁷⁰

After again reinforcing their control of naval films through their agreement with the Admiralty, Beaverbrook and the WOCC, ostensibly striking a more conciliatory tone, emphasised that the WOCC was in control of the actual collection of frontline footage:

Lord Beaverbrook suggested that, except, of course, where the W.O.C had a monopoly as at the various Fronts, the G.C.C. should be equally at liberty to take any films it wished to take, but, at the same time, offered that the W.O.C. would either themselves take films for the G.C.C. or would arranged for their being taken. It was pointed out that this might lead to a very undesirable competition between the two official Committees, and would certainly not be economical.⁷¹

⁶⁹ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – ‘Cinema Sub-Department: Memorandum of a Conference Held in Sir Reginald Brad’s Room at the War Office on Thursday, 31st of May, 1917.’, 3.

⁷⁰ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – ‘Cinema Sub-Department: Memorandum of a Conference Held in Sir Reginald Brad’s Room at the War Office on Thursday, 31st of May, 1917.’, 1.

⁷¹ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – ‘Cinema Sub-Department: Memorandum of a Conference Held in Sir Reginald Brad’s Room at the War Office on Thursday, 31st of May, 1917.’, 2.

This caused the consternation of T.L. Gilmour, in charge of the Department of Information's cinema branch, at the WOCC's dominance in collecting official footage, which he relayed to Beaverbrook:

[T]he attitude you so frankly adopted will make it very difficult for us to do even the small amount of producing which we had contemplated. It leaves us in any case only the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, and even in these hard times I am not much enamoured of a diet of crumbs.⁷²

Beaverbrook's protection of his authority on this matter also brought him into conflict with the domestic National War Aims Committee, foreshadowing their later dispute under the Ministry of Information over Dominion propaganda.

The NWAC undertook its own cinema work, though unsuccessfully, funding an elaborate 'national film' directed by Hall Caine, which never saw the release.⁷³ Their supply of frontline footage remained at the discretion of the WOCC.⁷⁴ Edward Carson, as head of the Department of Information, admitted as much at a conference organised to promote the DOI's cinema propaganda work to various government ministries, that the GCC and NWAC's cinematic efforts were slowed by the continuing authority of the WOCC to frontline footage.⁷⁵ As the main selling point of official propaganda films was their access to high quality official frontline footage, this was a major inhibition to their work.

Through cinema propaganda the success of Dominion publicity efforts in London was formalised and institutionalised into Britain's official campaign. The WOCC can justifiably be considered a uniquely Greater British propaganda organisation, as the exception that proved the rule of Greater Britain's ambiguous place in British propaganda. Just as the war inverted the peacetime dynamics of Greater British interaction, cinema propaganda was an inversion of the particular dynamics of Greater British wartime propaganda.

⁷² PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – Gilmour to Beaverbrook, 1 June 1917.

⁷³ TNA:PRO: T1/12519/13904 – National War Aims Committee and Ministry of Information. Provision of funds for the preparation of a British national film ('the Hall Caine film') [Hall Caine to Captain Guest, 12 January 1919].

⁷⁴ PA: BBK/E/2/17 – 1 Jan. – 14 May 1918 – General Correspondence – War Office Cinematograph Committee – Holt-White to Secretary, War Office, 9 January 1918.

⁷⁵ TNA:PRO: CO323/786 – Colonies, General: Original Correspondence: Offices: Miscellaneous - [Minutes of Conference Called by Sir Edward Carson, at 2, Whitehall Gardens, Tuesday, Jan. 15th. 1918, at 4 p.m. with the object of discussing certain questions relating to the use of the cinema screen for Government purposes], p.2.

5.5 – Empire and Race

While the WOCC's claim for Greater Britain as the 'authorised area' was relatively straightforward, the broader imperial dynamics of cinema propaganda were more complex. The Colonial Office's position on cinema propaganda complicates the picture. Firstly, Beaverbrook and the WOCC were able to so confidently claim their control over the Greater British 'authorised area' because the Colonial Office was largely unaware of the specifics of its work, or cinema propaganda generally. It presumed that whatever work was being done followed its guidance in terms of approach. In discussion of cinema propaganda distribution throughout the Empire, the Colonial Office at most offered vague acquiesce to the WOCC, unsure of the scale of its work:

No action on our part is required in regard to the self-governing Dominions. I believe that the War Office Cinematograph Committee have already done what is needful as regards those Dominions, presumably in consultation with the High Commissioners and Agents General.⁷⁶

This was rather less alarmed and sceptical than it had been of Wellington House's aspirations. Satisfied that the WOCC was following its advice, and operating through the High Commissioners, the Colonial Office largely stayed out of the WOCC's work. In a sense, the CO was happy to concede to propaganda coordination that conformed to the peacetime dynamics of Greater British interaction.

Tellingly, the Colonial Office was much more hesitant around the Department of Information's cinema work, through its Government Cinema Committee. This was likely in part due to the Department's administration under the Foreign Office. The Department of Information held a conference in January of 1918 – very soon before its closure and reformation as the Ministry of Information – to inquire about existing cinema propaganda work, and potential areas of collaboration for the Department. The Colonial Office's ignorance of the scope of Imperial film distribution was clear, with its appointed representative, T.C. Macnaughton, noting at the outset:

I enquired to what extent cinema films are being sent to various parts of the Empire, and it appears that this is being done on a considerable scale. I said I was not prepared to commit myself to saying whether it was or whether it was not desirable that the Colonial Office or the Dominion authorities should be consulted with regard to the circulation in various parts of the

⁷⁶ TNA:PRO, CO 323/789 – 'Distribution of Official Cinematograph Films in the Colonies', p.149.

Empire of all cinema films, but I said that I thought the question wanted raising officially. I made it clear that I did not wish to deprecate the use of cinema films either as commercial ventures or for propaganda purposes in the Colonies and Protectorates, but that I thought the whole question of their use in the Empire ought to be (carefully considered, and should therefore be) raised officially in some form or another.⁷⁷

The Colonial Office's hands-off approach meant that it was rather unaware of the extent of the WOCC's work.

Notably, Macnaughton's admission that the Colonial Office was involved in the distribution of the *Britain Prepared* film throughout the Empire, through the Department of Information, highlights a significant undercutting in the WOCC's claims to empire exclusivity, so strongly expressed by Beaverbrook:

It will be remembered that we took a considerable interest 18 months ago in pushing a cinema film "Britain Prepared" in various parts of the Empire ... I have expressed the hope that Colonel Buchan's Department will take an early opportunity of approaching us officially with regard to their cinema work.⁷⁸

Characteristic of Beaverbrook, his claim to authority over the Empire for cinema propaganda was somewhat exaggerated, but the significance of the claim, the War Office's backing of it, and the recognition of this exclusivity by other propaganda bodies is still significant. In this case, while other bodies had aspirations for greater involvement in Dominion propaganda, in the case of cinema, these efforts confronted Beaverbrook's existing work, rather than the Colonial Office's resistance alone.

Importantly, once again inverting the established dynamics of imperial propaganda, the Colonial Office was much more strident in insisting that cinema propaganda be cleared through the proper channels for non-white imperial subjects. Macnaughton insisted as such in a follow up letter to G. Grindle, assistant director of the Department of Information:

I am to state that as, throughout the Colonies and Protectorates, legislation exists to prevent the exhibition of films without the consent of the Colonial or Protectorate Govt., it is

⁷⁷ TNA:PRO: CO323/786 – Colonies, General: Original Correspondence: Offices: Miscellaneous - 2366 – General Dominions – Cinematograph films for purposes of Propaganda – Requests CO to nominate a representative to attend a Conference on Tuesday 15th January 1918'

⁷⁸ TNA:PRO: CO323/786 – Colonies, General: Original Correspondence: Offices: Miscellaneous - 2366 – General Dominions – Cinematograph films for purposes of Propaganda – Requests CO to nominate a representative to attend a Conference on Tuesday 15th January 1918'; see also in same file: Minutes of Conference Called by Sir Edward Carson, at 2, Whitehall Gardens, Tuesday, Jan. 15th. 1918, at 4 p.m. with the object of discussing certain questions relating to the use of the cinema screen for Government purposes; '5142' – General Dominions – The use of the Cinema Screen for Govt. purposes.'

desirable, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, that this Dept. should be consulted before a film is sent to any Colony or Protectorate for exhibition. Mr. Long does not anticipate, however, that any difficulty will occur unless the colour question should happen to be raised; and it will probably be sufficient if a printed synopsis of the subject of any films which it is propose to send to the Colonies or Protectorates is submitted to the Colonial Office.⁷⁹

This is an echo of the exclusion of India and Egypt from the WOCC's 'authorised area.' It is also in contrast of the Colonial Office's indifference towards printed propaganda being distributed to the colonies, which was deemed 'pointless' but acceptable.⁸⁰ India's exclusion from this work was likely down to observance of the India Office's authority. Likewise Egypt, as a protectorate, was just beyond the Colonial Office's authority at the Foreign Office, in its own ambiguous position in terms of administrative authority. To an extent, this was also particular to cinema, and speaks to a deeper complex intersection of attitudes about race and cinema.

The question of audience agency with regard to non-white subjects' interaction with cinema propaganda was a central debate in determining its distribution in the Empire. During the war, non-white troops were of course members of the cinema propaganda audience as much as white soldiers, both at the front and in London. Grindle's particular hesitation regarding the exhibition of cinema films to the Colonies and Protectorates was just one voice in a range of perspectives on the suitability of cinema as an Imperial, or colonial, medium.

This took on a racialised tone, for instance, noting the effectiveness of cinema in Asian countries: 'Cinema films of first importance: the Oriental trusts the photograph but not the drawing.'⁸¹ Perhaps more egregious is Lord Beaverbrook's outline of cinema's appeal in colonial settings:

Amongst the large masses of native population in lands where the ability to read is the exception, the film is the only effective means of propaganda – the only way in which the realities of the British was effort can be brought home to unlettered people.⁸²

In this light, contemporaries took cinema as an imperial medium in a highly racialised sense, emphasising its potential to communicate not only above linguistic barriers, but also to the illiterate.

⁷⁹ TNA:PRO: CO323/786 – Colonies, General: Original Correspondence: Offices: Miscellaneous - G. Grindle to The Assistant Director, Department of Information, 20 February 1918].

⁸⁰ TNA:PRO, CO 323/733 – 55353 'Propaganda in the colonies', 17 November, 1916, p.22.

⁸¹ TNA:PRO – INF 4/4A – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services'; 'Great War Publicity – Particular Countries', 2.

⁸² PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee: [Draft statement to be placed before proposed conference of press-men, to whom will also be shown a selection of films].

Likewise, in a post-war appraisal of cinema's effectiveness, the 'levelling' potential of cinema was again highlighted with regard to its effectiveness and acceptability as a means of communicating to non-white imperial races:

The cinematograph has a wider range of appeal than any other medium of propaganda. It speaks to the hearts of the duskiest aborigines and the smallest school-children; and the right film can have as great an effect on a mature and educated audience.⁸³

Conversely, popular responses to the intersection of race and cinema also occasionally questioned non-white troops' capacity to understand and engage with cinema, in an infantilising light, as an article describing Indian troops' attendance at a New Zealand YMCA cinema show indicates:

[I]f you wish to explore the really curious effects, the laughable vistas of the cinema to-day, owing to various local causes, you have to get away to the places where native people and native ways still hold sway ... When the native races in those regions were first allowed to come with our soldiers and watch the pictures, they were very much afraid, and looked on the whole business as some kind of witchery of the "foreign devil". But as time passed, and they saw that the troops were no worse, nor themselves either, bodily or mentally, after such amazing sights, they began not only to enjoy the films, but to develop striking critical abilities, so that what at first puzzled and frightened them is now frequently the subject of real delight.⁸⁴

The piece notes that these troops struggled with the humour of Charlie Chaplin, but patronisingly compliments their perception in identifying the villain and heroes of typical American 'western' films. This variance in opinion alone represented the particularity with which cinema was seen as a medium during the war. Similar to concerns regarding its social or even sexual danger in Britain during the war, cinema likewise stirred racial prejudices and perspectives.

Cinema propaganda was therefore a distinct medium, not for inherent reasons, but for how it interacted, or was perceived to interact, with existing Greater British and imperial dynamics. Wartime cinema propaganda efforts confronted an extremely complex web of imperial perceptions and politics at work. Cinema cut across anxieties about appropriate cultural interaction through responsible government, and racial attitudes in relation to communications and governance at the Colonial Office. Despite these complexities, the WOCC in particular shows the operational significance and reality of Greater British propaganda. Here, the particular dynamics of Greater British propaganda created a

⁸³ TNA:PRO: INF4/4A - 'The History of Propaganda – Cinema Films', 22.

⁸⁴ 'Cinema Abroad – How Natives Regard It', *Ashburton Guardian*, 21 January 1919, 6.

space of particular authority and connection for Dominion and British propaganda efforts. Despite this, the Dominions' experience within this system was, once again, not uniform. While Greater Britain was a coherent market for cinema propaganda, New Zealand still struggled to navigate the system.

5.6 – New Zealand and the WOCC

While cinema propaganda inverted some dynamics of Greater British propaganda established in earlier chapters, it reinforces New Zealand's persistent struggles of distance, capacity, and influence within the broader picture. Unsurprisingly, being in large measure a development of an aggressive Canadian publicity campaign, the WOCC entrenched Dominion competition and inequity of influence in propaganda. New Zealand struggled within the WOCC structure.

Beyond Beaverbrook's influence, the War Office's authority remained important in the creation of Greater British cinema propaganda. Beaverbrook made much of the trade-based nature of the WOCC, emphasising that its consigning any profits to British imperial military charities made it an 'unofficial' body. The WOCC was official, however, as it operated under the War Office's authority in terms of collection of footage. This meant that collection of Dominion footage and access for Dominion cameramen was arranged and approved at the pleasure of the War Office. This was a further complex tessellation within the operation of cinema propaganda: the WOCC was run by a Canadian, at the discretion of the British War Office, which in turn appointed Dominion-specific cameramen to collect national footage.

Within this system, the Dominions had to agitate for this specific coverage. Canada was effective in this regard – unsurprising given Beaverbrook's leadership – and had two appointed cameramen, compared to every other Dominion's one each.⁸⁵ Beaverbrook did not go out of his way to ensure equal coverage for the Dominions. The other Dominions had to push for representation in the WOCC's work, and for the appointment of their cameramen. This situation maintained British

⁸⁵ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – Beaverbrook to Kemp, 26 July 1917.

authority, and institutionalised the competitive dimensions of propaganda co-creation, evinced in the competition for publicity and prominence between the Dominions evident in their leaders' visits to London.

The process of organising an official cameraman at the front demonstrates New Zealand's struggles with the WOCC. It was only after the specific request of New Zealand's High Commissioner in London, Sir Thomas Mackenzie, for better representation of New Zealand troops in official films, that some efforts to provide New Zealand with a dedicated cameraman by the WOCC, rather than New Zealand footage being incidentally collected. Here the High Commissioner was less the channel of propaganda interaction, and more New Zealand's advocate, lacking a more singular figure like Beaverbrook for New Zealand efforts. The WOCC initially responded by stating its willingness to provide footage of New Zealand troops directly to the New Zealand government, and to share Australia's cinematographers. Neither of these solutions proved workable or desirable – officials were no more ready to accept being subsumed in Australasia organisationally than they were rhetorically. Eventually the WOCC agreed to appoint a dedicated New Zealand cameraman at the front. Henry Arymtage Sanders, previously of Pathe Frères, not a New Zealander, was appointed on 23 March 1917. These negotiations were harried, with Minister of Defence Allen largely out of the loop.⁸⁶ As in the distribution of war news, British authorities tended to show sympathy to New Zealand's complaints, but actually remedying them required further action.

Australia likewise had its own struggles in the WOCC. Australia's official correspondent Charles Bean was constantly frustrated at the operation of the WOCC. He resented the tight control of both access and editorial output by WOCC establishment figures such as William Jury, owner of Jury's Imperial Pictures. Jury was an important figure in cinema propaganda, involved in the inception of the original Topical Trade Committee, and retained a role to help maintain the strong trade links for the WOCC.⁸⁷ Australian and New Zealand officials felt to varying degrees that the work of the British official cameramen was insufficient in properly documenting their wartime

⁸⁶ Christopher Pugsley, '“Who is Sanders?” New Zealand's Official Cameraman on the Western Front 1917-1919', *Stout Centre Review*, 1995, 19-22.

⁸⁷ Eisenberg, 'Miserable hotchpotch' 199-210.

experiences, and so pushed for their own cameramen at the front.⁸⁸ The WOCC facilitated this, but this was only after direct agitation; Beaverbrook certainly made no particular efforts for his fellow Dominions. This foreshadowed the similar impact of the Ministry of Information's efforts in terms of Dominion war news distribution. While these efforts helped, New Zealand still felt the need for its own Publicity Branch by 1918.⁸⁹ Equally as vexed was the question of ownership of the Dominions' official footage after the war. The antipodean Dominions found themselves in complex negotiations regarding the ownership of the films and images collected by appointed cameramen at the end of the war.

New Zealand was extremely frustrated at the difficulty and delay involved in collecting the, albeit meagre, footage collected by Sanders for post-war collection. Negotiations were complex, with the War Office insisting its need to retain negatives 'for some time yet.'⁹⁰ Without an influential advocate like Beaverbrook to promote and organise on behalf of New Zealand, nor the financial capacity to make its own arrangements, New Zealand's official filming was at the mercy of the WOCC. The War Office had the final word on any filming, even of New Zealand troops in Britain, and retained ultimate ownership of the footage.⁹¹ New Zealand was unable to impose as strong and defined a place in British official filming as Canada was.⁹²

Sanders put this frustration bluntly in a letter responding to apparent criticism of his work, stating, '...the arrangements under which I worked were a constant source of complaint ... and it is quite unfair to compare the Canadian War Records and the Australian War Records with ours.'⁹³ This echoed Gambrill's frustrated tone at Canada's success in publicity in London, where New Zealand had struggled, in discussions of New Zealand's eventual Publicity Branch.⁹⁴

⁸⁸ Eisenberg, 'Miserable hotchpotch' 199-210, Pugsley, 'Sanders', 20.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 1.

⁹⁰ ANZ: R24428246 – Photographic – Proposal to purchase official cinema films taken in France of New Zealand troops, 13 March 1919 – 24 January 1920 - Captain Sanders to Major Westmacott, Officer i/c New Zealand War Records Section, March, 1919.

⁹¹ ANZ: R25103173 – Health, Welfare, etc. – Pictures – Cinema shows in camp depots and hospitals - Brade to Brigadier General G. Richardson, 3 May 1917.

⁹² Cook, 'Documenting War', 265-295.

⁹³ ANZ: R24428246 – Photographic – Proposal to purchase official cinema films taken in France of New Zealand Troops, 13 March 1919 – 24 January 1920: Sanders to Westmacott, 5 August 1919.

⁹⁴ ANZ – R25103021 – Trophies and historical material – War Records section and Publicity branch, 15 July 1917 – 21 April 1920 – Gambrill, War Records Section, 21st June 1918, GOC NZEF in UK, 3; See Chapter 1.

Despite Sanders' envious comparison to the Australian War Records, ultimately Bean was no less frustrated in negotiations to collect Australian footage.⁹⁵ Existing dynamics of influence and authority within Greater Britain persisted in Greater British propaganda. Beaverbrook's aggressive Canadian promotion shows the persistence of Dominion competition and self-interest. Even so, the WOCC operated at the War Office's discretion, so British authority remained central. Without an aggressive Dominion advocate in the model of Bean or Beaverbrook, New Zealand's holdings of its own films was paltry. Even by the centenary of the war, New Zealand archives are still undertaking the process of repatriating New Zealand footage.⁹⁶

This friction and power imbalance is further underlined in the varying coverage of the Dominions. Unquestioningly, Beaverbrook retained his interest in Canadian publicity throughout his time in the WOCC. Indeed his success in promoting Canadian was such that it led to frustration in British propaganda circles. Specifically, the high volume of Canadian official photographs on the market led John Buchan, as head of the Department of Information, to complain to Sir Reginald Brade, Permanent Under Secretary of State for War in 1917, as such:

The position at present is that so many Canadian photographs are taken, and of so good a quality, that their circulation lends colour to the criticism which you will find to some extent in the British, and very largely in the American press, that Canada is running the war.⁹⁷

Beaverbrook's work therefore represents both the collaborative and competitive dimensions of Greater British propaganda co-creation.

Beaverbrook rarely shied away from an opportunity to wrest the spotlight from another Dominion towards his own, evinced in his efforts to tamp down coverage of Australian troops, lest it overshadow Borden's visit in 1917.⁹⁸ No other Dominion had the ability to dictate coverage in this regard. Bean certainly managed an impressive organisation of photographic output for Australia. Both

⁹⁵ Eisenberg, 'Miserable hotchpotch' 199-210.

⁹⁶ James Taylor, "'Raise the Roof Off!': Cinema in New Zealand during the First World War', Paper presented at New Zealand Historical Association 2015, 2 December 2015. Taylor explained New Zealand archive Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision's continued efforts to repatriate New Zealand official war footage; see also, Christopher Pugsley, *The Camera in the Crowd: Filming New Zealand in Peace and War, 1895-1920*, (Wellington: Oratia, 2017).

⁹⁷ PA: BBK/E/2/8 – July-Aug. 1917 – General Correspondence and War Cinematograph Committee – John Buchan to Sir Reginald Brade, 14 August 1917. See also, Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295.

⁹⁸ PA: BBK/E/2/4 – April 1917 – General Correspondence – Beaverbrook to Major Monatgue, 4 April 1917.

Australia and Canada utilised their official films and photography for ample publicity in London, something of a wartime stand-in for peacetime imperial exhibitions.⁹⁹ Australia likewise had the material capacity to create its own films. Australia's official Recruiting Campaign created two films in 1917: *Why Britain is at War*, and *A Soldier's Life in the AIF*, specifically for Australian audiences. These were well received and widely shown in Australia.¹⁰⁰ Much as in the case of posters, Australia at least had the greater material capacity than New Zealand to create its own internal, sophisticated propaganda. New Zealand was much more at the will of official British distribution.¹⁰¹ Even so, Beaverbrook was unique in his capacity to inform the representation and coverage of the Dominions in official British cinema, more so than Australia, and certainly than New Zealand.

No clearer indication of the dominant position of Canada in the picture of British official filming than is in the final distribution of the considerable profits of the WOCC – and later Ministry of Information's – cinema work. This conformed the long-standing agreement that such work could take place only if any profits were to be distributed amongst suitable war charities in the Dominions and India, established by Lloyd George and Bonar Law as Secretary of State for War and Colonial Secretary in 1916. This legitimised the commercial model of the WOCC.¹⁰²

Predictably in the final division of these profits, Canada dominated, receiving a share of £10,000, to Britain's £20,000, while Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and India received £5,000 each.¹⁰³ This was somewhat fair, given the prominence in official film and general size relative to the other Dominions, due to Beaverbrook's efforts. It also reaffirms the inequity the WOCC's informal model, reinforcing a distinct construction of privilege for Canada.¹⁰⁴

As ever, compared to the prodigious output of Canadian material, New Zealand's roughly 5,000 to 6,000 feet of film¹⁰⁵ – the estimated output of the New Zealand official cinematographer

⁹⁹ See, Wellington, *Exhibiting*; Wellington, 'Exhibitions,' 1917-1922,' 185-198; Dixon, 'Spotting the Fake,' 165-179; Cook, 'Documenting,' 265-295.

¹⁰⁰ See, National Archives of Australia (NAA): MP367/1/560/2/27 – Correspondence – Re. Films from Director General of Recruiting.

¹⁰¹ Pugsley, *Camera in the Crowd*.

¹⁰² PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee - BBK to Kemp, 26 July 1917.

¹⁰³ PA: BBK/E/2/19 – 'Second Report of the War Office Cinematograph Committee', August, 1919.

¹⁰⁴ Cook, 'Documenting War', 265-295.

¹⁰⁵ ANZ: R24428246 – Photographic – Proposal to purchase official cinema films taken in France of New Zealand troops, 13 March 1919 – 24 January 1920; Westmacott to NZEF Headquarters, 17 March 1919.

Henry Sanders – speaks volumes for New Zealand’s comparative lack of influence or impact in this regard. By this measure, the entire footage collected by Sanders would be short of the 7,000 feet of film deemed as an appropriate length for a single YMCA cinema programme for convalescent New Zealand soldiers.¹⁰⁶

Cinema propaganda was an area of particular influence and representation for Greater Britain in British official propaganda efforts – it was a coherent ‘authorised area.’ Within this, however, New Zealand struggled with familiar dynamics of capacity, competition, and influence. In terms of ownership and authority in determining such coverage and representation, through Beaverbrook, Canada had overwhelming influence, while New Zealand was firmly at the bottom of the pecking order. Cinema propaganda therefore further evinced the competitive dynamics at play in the publicity efforts surrounding the visits of Dominion leaders to Britain. In a sense, the WOCC formalised the publicity efforts of Dominion advocates in London.

5.7 – Late-War Ambitions

Upon the creation of the Ministry of Information, the WOCC was incorporated into its work. As Minister of Information, Beaverbrook finally gained full control of cinema propaganda.¹⁰⁷ A further irony of cinema propaganda is that this diffused the WOCC’s previously exclusive focus on the Empire, save India and Egypt. The Ministry’s remit for cinema propaganda was expanded to any non-enemy overseas territory:

The Cinematograph Department of this Ministry is engaged upon the control of official cinematographers on the various Fronts and with the Fleet, the production of story film of propaganda type and value, also short educational films for various Government Departments, and the distribution of these films in Great Britain (in licensed cinemas), and wherever desirable throughout the entire world, except in those countries occupied by the enemy.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ ANZ: R24428241 – Photographic – Proposal to obtain cinema films through American YMCA [Young Men’s Christian Association film bureau], 16 August 1918 – 13 February 1919: Westmacott to Fred H. Lawton (U.S. YMCA Motion Picture Bureau, 20 September 1918).

¹⁰⁷ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 64.

¹⁰⁸ PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee - [Draft statement to be placed before proposed conference of press-men, to whom will also be shown a selection of films].

Where the Ministry afforded greater focus on the Dominions generally, it diffused its previously unique primacy in the WOCC. Regardless, in focus at least, the Ministry's cinema work focused on Imperial content, retaining its control of frontline footage:

The Cinematograph Department of this Ministry is engaged solely upon the Production of films which illustrate the facts of the British and Colonial War Activities.¹⁰⁹

Indeed, the Ministry's cinema output not only expanded coverage of Imperial troops, but also overlaid this with specific imperial rhetoric, rather than relying on a generalised approach, as will be explored in the following chapter.

Notably, Beaverbrook had similar post-war ambitions for his cinema work as he did for imperial wireless, as explored in Chapter 1. His ambitions were focused on expanding the Topical Budget, a regular cinema newsreel taken over by the Ministry during the war. Beaverbrook had ambitious plans to extend this work into peacetime for the purposes of Greater British cohesion.

The Topical Budget was one of the most effective undertakings of the WOCC and later the Ministry. It received wide distribution, not just in Greater Britain, but also in France through an exchange with the French Government's cinema budget, and in neutral countries.¹¹⁰ Tailored editions of the Topical Budget, later renamed Pictorial News, were prepared for the Dominions, further examples of distinct Greater British cinema propaganda.¹¹¹

Beaverbrook proposed to extend the Pictorial News as an official peacetime initiative, and specifically wanted to expand the Greater British focus of the work. In discussing his proposal to Canadian politician N.W. Rowell, he stated:

At present, the Ministry of Information produces the Topical Budget. This is a short news film issued bi-weekly under the auspices of the Ministry of Information depicting incidents of interest, especially those having a propagandists and educational value ... But the subjects treated in it have necessarily been items of local or purely British interest, and I feel that it would be an immense step in advance if we could take advantage of this existing distributing

¹⁰⁹ PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee – Draft statement to be placed before proposed conference of Pressmen to whom will also be shown a selection of films.

¹¹⁰ PA: BBK/E/2/9 – 27 August – 31 October 1917 General Correspondence and Memoranda – War Cinematograph Committee – 'Memorandum re. 1. War Office Cinematograph Committee 2. War Office Official Topical Budget'.

¹¹¹ PA: BBK/E/2/8 – July-Aug. 1917 – General Correspondence and War Cinematograph Committee – Holt-White to Beaverbrook.

organisation in order to put into circulation Budget truly Imperial in its interest and character.¹¹²

Beaverbrook's proposed the work as an 'Imperial Budget,' to 'include the Dominions in a general plan for producing and exhibiting cinematograph films through the whole Empire and the World.'¹¹³

The proposed 'Imperial Budget,' as with the proposed wireless chain, was to extend the Greater British understanding and education brought about by the war into peacetime:

It is hardly necessary to urge on your attention the social, political and practical advantages of the scheme. Such exhibitions shown to tens of thousands every night in every civilised country would be the most effective form of advertising both for the Empire as a whole, and for each Dominion or Colony separately that it is possible to conceive. Governments already spend far more money than the small sum here required in endeavouring to push the manufactures of their people or to attract to themselves the tide of emigration. The cinematograph might have been invented to suit the purpose of an emigration agent. The actual picture of moving life in farm or field, or lumber camps, or of the streets of our towns, must in their very nature be not only more attractive but more convincing than any spoken assurance however eloquent, and the printed word is cold compared to the reality itself.¹¹⁴

The scheme would involve Dominion cinematographers submitting footage of interest, to be combined into budgets not only for overseas consumption, but also to counter the influence of American films in the imperial market.

Beaverbrook was not alone in seeing the post-war potential of such Greater British propaganda in peacetime, particularly the potential of cinema. In a speech ahead of the armistice, Prime Minister Massey made points strikingly similar to Beaverbrook's:

In the past the British people have to a great extent neglected their own history – the most glorious history in the world. They have not encouraged the patriotic sentiment, love of country, and pride of Empire as they should have done and as other nations have done in all ages. I trust that this state of things will be remedied in the future, and the cinema affords an unqualified opportunity. Scenes from the recent war, showing incidents of the parts which our soldiers and sailors and airmen have taken, will always be of intense interest to British citizens. Such pictures appeal to the imagination, and are certain to have a good effect in assisting to form the national character and developing those feelings of loyalty which are necessary to good citizenship ... I believe this matter to be so important that the state should take action ... that a proportion of pictures of historical importance, and even pictures of

¹¹² PA: BBK/E/3/35 – 4 June – 28 Sept. 1918 – General Correspondence – Beaverbrook to N.W. Rowell, 29 June 1918; see also, Phillip Taylor, 'British official attitudes towards propaganda abroad, 1918-39', *Propaganda, Politics and Film, 1918-45*, ed. Pronay & Spring, (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982), esp. 27.

¹¹³ PA: BBK/E/3/35 – 4 June – 28 Sept. 1918 – General Correspondence – Beaverbrook to N.W. Rowell, 29 June 1918.

¹¹⁴ PA: BBK/E/3/35 – 4 June – 28 Sept. 1918 – General Correspondence – Beaverbrook to N.W. Rowell, 29 June 1918.

commercial and industrial value and interest to the citizens of the Empire, shall be shown ... The same thing would apply to scenes from British countries in other parts of the world if reproduced here by means of the cinema. They would convey ideas and impressions of the possibilities and potentialities of our Empire which could not with anything like the same accuracy be gathered from books or newspapers.¹¹⁵

Massey's speech, like Beaverbrook's proposal, demonstrates a realisation amongst politicians of the further potential of wartime propaganda for the future of Greater Britain, and how Greater British propaganda had shown models of how to pursue this in peacetime.¹¹⁶ Beaverbrook's work showed what was possible in terms of more formalised Greater British cultural exchange. Like his imperial wireless and imperial news scheme, however, the Imperial Budget scheme was rejected. The British government was keen to wind its efforts up, and return to the pre-war informal approach to matters of imperial connection, at least initially.¹¹⁷ Like his other proposals, if not immediately successful, they were indicative of similar efforts that would follow soon after in this direction, notably the Empire Marketing Board.¹¹⁸

A figure who gained more success in transferring his wartime propaganda efforts into peacetime imperial promotion and propaganda was Stephen Tallents. Tallents' wartime work with the Ministry of Food's publicity campaign around efficiency and rationing provided him insights that informed his later work with the Empire Marketing Board.¹¹⁹ In his seminal 1932 pamphlet, *The Projection of England*, Tallents, at the time Secretary of the soon-to-be-wound-up Empire Marketing Board, illustrated the ways in which, through innovations in media technology, a woman in provincial England was now connected to the rest of the Empire and the world:

To-day a woman living in Miss Matty's house at Cranford reads on seven mornings of the week the world events of the evening before ... Tidings of her relations in Canada and Australia are dropped casually into her letterbox ... Her daily fare is brought to her from four continents, and her diet is modified by the acts of God and the activities of men in Africa and Brazil, in India and New Zealand.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ 'Welding the Empire by Film – How British Sentiment Can Be Fostered,' *Poverty Bay Herald*, 30 November 1918, 8.

¹¹⁶ Eisenberg, 'Miserable hotchpotch,' 199-210.

¹¹⁷ Taylor, 'Propaganda abroad', 26-30.

¹¹⁸ E.g. Felicity Barnes, 'Brining Another Empire Alive? The Empire Marketing Board and the Construction of Dominion Identity, 1926-33', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 42:1 (2014), 61-85; Kothari, 'Trade, consumption', 43-64; Chan, 'Remember the empire,' 105-118.

¹¹⁹ Scott Anthony, *Public Relations and the Making of Modern Britain: Stephen Tallents and the birth of a progressive media profession*, (Manchester: 2012), esp. 1-17; see also, Constantine, 'Anglo-Canadian,' 357-384; Stephen Constantine, *Buy and Build: The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board*, (London: 1986).

¹²⁰ S.G. Tallents, *The Projection of England*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1932), 9-10.

For all this potential connectivity, however, the essential point of Tallents' pamphlet is that such connectivity had not been seized upon by Britain for the projection of the Empire:

That aloofness that may have been becoming to her in the sixteenth century. It is tragically unfitted to her situation in the twentieth, when she is partner in an Empire that includes a quarter of the world's surface and a quarter of its populations.¹²¹

Throughout the remainder of his work, Tallents pushed for the need for England to 'project' itself through contemporary media, especially cinema, to promote its own values, and those of the Empire. The line between Beaverbrook and Tallents is not direct,¹²² due specifically to Lloyd George's hasty rejection of Beaverbrook's plans, and the diminished official appetite for further propaganda work immediately after the war.¹²³ Even so, into the interwar years, this sort of formalised Greater British cultural promotion gained increasing official backing.

The WOCC complicates the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, showing a distinct level of official collaboration. Even so, general dynamics and operational realities continued, which particularly frustrated New Zealand. The distinctiveness of cinema propaganda in Greater British propaganda was substantially due to its commercial operation. In this sense, cinema propaganda inverts Thompson and Magee's assertion that culture underwrote economic interaction in the British world economy.¹²⁴ In this case, the inverse was also true – for cinema propaganda economics underwrote cultural representation and connection.

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This chapter has shown how cinema propaganda was the exception that proved the rule for Greater British propaganda. The commercial operation of cinema meant that Greater Britain made more sense as a *market* – the 'authorised area' – than it did as an audience for many of Britain's

¹²¹ Tallents, *Projection*, 12.

¹²² Evans, *John Grierson*, 24-28.

¹²³ Taylor, 'Propaganda abroad', 26-30; Grant, *Propaganda*, 1-10.

¹²⁴ See, Thompson & Magee, *Empire and Globalisation*; see also, Smith, 'Empire Effect,' 59-80; Dilley, 'cultural economy,' 45-55.

propaganda organisations. Despite this, and Beaverbrook's leadership, however, the complexities of Greater British dynamics continued to be determinative. New Zealand, for instance, continued to struggle in the complex overlapping of authorities in the organisation of cinema propaganda.

Cinema propaganda shows, in detail, how the particular dynamics of Greater Britain informed similarly distinct dynamics for Greater British propaganda. The commercial operation of cinema propaganda fit more precisely with the wartime operation of Greater British communications, requiring little official intervention. This considers how cinema operated alongside other propaganda media, rather than isolating it as wholly unique, as has been typical in historiography.

The chapter has shown cinema propaganda as a distinct operational space for Greater British propaganda as a *market*. Chapter 6 furthers this case study on cinema, by exploring how cinema operated within the distinct cultural space of Greater Britain. This provides a detailed examination of the process of co-creation in Greater British propaganda. It explores how British films were reframed in the Dominions, and how rhetorical and symbolic features within these films facilitated this. This challenges established approaches of exploring a thematic or quantitative imperial presence in British official films, and instead looks at how the most famous examples of British wartime cinema propaganda functioned as Greater British propaganda.

Chapter 6 – ‘(Greater) Britain Prepared’: British Official Films as Greater British Propaganda

The commercial operation of cinema propaganda helped to rationalise Greater Britain as a propaganda *market*. The content of these films was likewise influenced by commercial, strategic, and operational realities. This chapter continues the cinema propaganda case study by examining the content of British official war films in a Greater British frame. Instead of trying to detect the scale of imperial representation in a quantitative or thematic sense, as has been more typical in scholarship,¹ it explores how the most popular and notable films worked *as* Greater British propaganda.

Imperial representations in British official films were as much determined by practical and organisational issues as rhetorical choices. Indian troops, and white British and Dominion troops are well represented in official films, where other imperial troops are less so.² British cinema propagandists wanted to depict the scale and racial diversity of the Empire. In general, however, they had a greater amount of footage of white British and Indian armies, as they had dedicated cameramen appointed to them. To properly understand the imperial and Greater British dimensions of official British film propaganda, both operational and organisational issues must be considered alongside rhetorical dimensions. Relying on quantitative readings of imperial representations misses these important contexts.

Ward’s approach is once again followed in this chapter.³ It takes familiar and famous examples of British cinema propaganda, and re-examines them in the context of Greater Britain, as Greater British propaganda. These films were designed to be effective to a multitude of audiences, and to communicate different messages at once. For Greater Britain, this shows the significance of shared cultural language and symbolism within the films, such as navalism. This clearly shows Greater Britain as a distinct cultural space, which propagandists realised and accounted for.

The chapter also clearly shows the process of co-creation in Greater British cinema propaganda. Most particularly, it shows co-creation through re-framing. British official films were

¹ See Haggith & Smith, ‘*Sons of Our Empire*,’ 35-53.

² Haggith & Smith, ‘*Sons of Our Empire*,’ 35-53.

³ See, Ward, ‘Wind of Change,’ 198-219; Ward, ‘Decolonization,’ 227-260; Ward, ‘Introduction,’ 1-20; Ward, ‘Imperial Identities Abroad,’ 219-243; see also, Thompson, ‘Languages of Loyalism,’ 617-650; Thompson, ‘Language of Imperialism,’ 147-77; Dilley, ‘cultural economy,’ 45-55.

given particular Greater British meaning in the Dominions. Politicians and propagandists often primed audiences to the distinct Greater British meanings of films, through speeches at screenings, which were then re-printed in the press. This therefore again favours Thompson and Toye's approach to rhetoric,⁴ in prioritising the contexts of creation and delivery in understanding the content.

The chapter explores how stylistic shifts in Greater British cinema propaganda responded to changing strategic realities of the war, particularly Greater British war weariness. It begins with the initial 'generalised' representation of Greater Britain in official films. During these early years, Dominion audiences imagined themselves into a generalised white British war effort. This was supplemented by gestures to established imperial symbolic language, such as navalism and the martial race myth, the latter to frame the Indian and Māori contribution.

War weariness meant that Dominion audiences were less willing to do the rhetorical heavy lifting of imagining themselves into this generalised British war effort. They demanded greater specification and praise. Later war Greater British cinema propaganda therefore increasingly noted the presence of Dominion troops, and framed the war effort as Greater British more explicitly. As in the organisational aspects, New Zealand struggled to assert itself here, in terms of either representation in British films, or in creating its own material, as Australia and Canada were able to.

The organisational and rhetorical dimensions of Greater British propaganda explored throughout the thesis dovetail especially clearly in this chapter. It shows how the political, operational, and economic dynamics of Greater Britain informed rhetorical choices, and how these rhetorical choices made sense in the cultural context of the community. It shows the variance of co-creation, in terms of collaboration, re-contextualisation, and even competition. This provides important new interpretations to important films, which have so far been missed in literature. These films were designed to work for multiple audiences, but most scholarship has only considered the British and American among them.

⁴ See, Thomas & Toye, *Arguing About Empire*; Toye, *Rhetoric*.

6.1 – ‘Factual’ Approach

British propagandists pursued a particular stylistic approach to cinema propaganda. Peter Buitenhuis argues that in general, British propaganda shifted throughout the war from a ‘literary’ style under Wellington House, towards a more news and reportage-based approach under the Ministry of Information.⁵ This does not hold for cinema propaganda, especially in the context of Greater Britain, where narrative and emotional appeals became increasingly important as the war developed. Understanding the context around stylistic developments in cinema propaganda requires first understanding how British propagandists understood cinema as a medium.

A report into Britain’s propaganda work during the war outlines the perceived utility of cinema propaganda, as supposedly uniquely factual:

The fact that cinema is incapable of argument is, from the point of view of promiscuous propaganda, an advantage. Some statements - for instance, those involving vast numbers of men and guns, or operations on a huge scale - can be brought home adequately, even to the abstruse-minded, only by pictures, and particularly by moving pictures.⁶

Cinema was seen as uniquely powerful in communicating complex messages through image, across linguistic, racial, and class lines.⁷ Suggesting an incapability to make an argument is an exaggeration, but represents a perception that cinema was harder to falsify and manipulate, and that messages would be more self-evident on screen. Cinema was seen to have a claim to a greater ‘factuality’ than other media. The clear official attribution of British cinema propaganda underscored the communicative authority of official films. Propagandists were aware that audiences interacted with cinema differently to other media.

Cinema and photographic propaganda were simply seen as possessing a certain authority over literary methods of propaganda, because of their capacity to visually capture and represent the

⁵ Buitenhuis, *War of Words*, xvii.

⁶ TNA:PRO - INF4/4A - British Propaganda During the War 1914-1918 - The History of Propaganda - ‘Cinema Films’, 22.

⁷ E.g., TNA:PRO – INF 4/4A – ‘War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services’; ‘Great War Publicity – Particular Countries’, 2.

‘reality’ of the front, in ways that literary or illustrative methods could not. This was how audiences interacted with cinema, as a piece in the New Zealand *Hawera and Normanby Star* suggests:

The great mass of [people] are for the most part shut off from any adequate grasp of this war, for the single reason that description of it too often has been a dimly-obscure recital of large processes, and a confusion of only half-understood technical detail. The cinema – direct, concise, comprehensive – would be an unrivalled popular war historian.⁸

Official British films therefore operated through this perception of cinema’s capacity to communicate war in ‘actuality.’ This was notably so in *The Battle of the Somme*.

The apparently unvarnished, even occasionally gruesome reality of the film was seen as a necessary shock for the public, providing a realisation of scale and deadliness of the war, and its major selling point.⁹ This was the intended impact, as a Ministry of Information summary notes:

What is wanted is the medium that has to the highest degree the qualities of downrightness and clarity. The picture is such a medium; and so for conveying a fact or the summary of an argument to immense masses, educated and uneducated, pictures, and particularly the cinematograph and the photograph, are generally used.¹⁰

The film therefore maintained a similar claim to communicating the reality of the front in an emotive sense as returned soldiers’ speeches. The visual nature of cinema made it a distinctive and instructive propaganda medium.

This is not to suggest that no editing or manipulation occurred, or that audiences were ignorant of the potential for manipulation. Audiences were savvy and more than willing to decry ‘faking’ in cinema propaganda. This was notably so against the WOCC’s *The Battle of the Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks*, in its depiction of tanks for the first time, despite the film being fairly lightly edited.¹¹ Audiences were not naïve, but had a unique relationship with – and expectation of – cinema and cinema propaganda.

This dynamic likewise made cinema propaganda a high-risk medium. This is demonstrated in British cinema propagandist Charles Urban’s difficulties in the promotion of *Britain Prepared* in the United States. German-American publications particularly attacked *Britain Prepared* as faked and

⁸ ‘The Cinema and the War’, *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 11 June 1915, 4.

⁹ E.g., for Britain: ‘War’s Realities on the Cinema’, *The Times*, 22 August 1916, 3; for New Zealand: Arthur Mason, ‘War By Cinema – Battle of the Somme – Realistic Pictures’, *Hastings Standard*, 25 October 1916, 2.

¹⁰ TNA:PRO: INF4/4A - ‘The Ministry of Information – Introductory’, 13.

¹¹ Hiley, ‘DeWitt,’ 145.

exaggerated, and so undermined the film's efficacy. The risks of being accused of faking film were much higher than accusations of manipulation in literary propaganda, where a degree of interpretation could cushion such accusations. 'Faking' would entail outright, obvious deceit, not simply exaggeration.¹² British audiences were just as ready to criticise perceived faking in German cinema propaganda:

For some of the pictures there has obviously been posing, but our enemies seem incapable of avoiding mistakes, and a picture which shows German soldiers piling up the *debris* and relics of a battlefield is unfortunate in presenting in the foreground great heaps of helmets which are only too obviously those of German troops.¹³

British cinema propagandists therefore practiced editorial restraint for much of the war. Staging scenes was used sparingly, typically only to overcome technical limitations in communicating the frontline environment, which was often not easily captured on camera. The risks were too high to attempt more overt deception – one obviously faked film could undermine the efficacy of all.¹⁴ British official cinema, for much of the war, therefore, favoured a 'documentary' rather than a narrative style, to reinforce the factuality of the films.

Greater British audience sophistication regarding cinema propaganda was so because cinema was already an established popular medium by 1914.¹⁵ The First World War was not even the first war to be depicted on screen, as is sometimes claimed. The Boer War of 1899 to 1902 and the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 were covered by trade cinematographers and presented to British audiences in newsreels.¹⁶ Likewise, despite the War Office's barring of official cinematographers at the front until late 1915, French official newsreels from the front were shown in Britain before the first official British films.¹⁷ The popularity of these French newsreels spurred the War Office to reluctantly allow

¹² PA: BBK/E/2/1 – 27 July – Nov. 1916 – Correspondence of British Topical Committee for War Films – 'The British War Films in America – Official Statement, on oath, by the Managing Director of the Patriot Film Company, *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, 26 October 1916, 19; see also, Luke McKernan, 'Propaganda, Patriotism and Profit: Charles Urban and British Official War Films in America during the First World War', *Film History*, 14:3/4, War and Militarism (2002), 369-389.

¹³ 'Films of the War', *The Times*, 18 January 1916, 5.

¹⁴ Roger Smither, "'A wonderful idea of the fighting": the question of fakes in 'the battle of the Somme'', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 13:2 (1993), 149-168.

¹⁵ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 13-14; Greenhalgh, 'Bush Cinderellas,' 4.

¹⁶ Stephen Bottomore, 'Filming, faking and propaganda: The origins of the war film, 1897-1902', (Doctoral Thesis, University of Utrecht, 2007), esp.xv; Rachael Low, *British Film 1906-1914*, 149.

¹⁷ E.g., 'The Cinema and the War', *Hawera & Normanby Star*, 11 June 1915, 4; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 197-200.

official cinematographers at the front.¹⁸ Additionally, the war boosted the existing popularity and proliferation of commercial fictionalised war films, spy stories, and ‘invasion dramas,’ the latter of which were a particularly prolific part of the culture of pre-war jingoism.¹⁹ Greater British audiences were not starved for choice, and had a familiarity with cinema. As such, official British cinema had to make its case in this competitive market.

It was the *official* nature of Britain’s official early war films, and their resulting access to frontline footage, which gave them their authority and appeal:

Besides the intrinsic interest of such subjects as the machine-gun of course, these films are distinguished from all others by the fact that they show the actual in which our men are fighting. The fact that they are official War Office films further ensures that no “faking” of any kind has been permitted.²⁰

This clear and advertised official attribution reinforced the authenticity of British cinema propaganda, and therefore its market appeal. Beaverbrook’s commentary on the *Pictorial News* illustrates this principle, noting ‘our activities in cinematography are universally recognised as a Government enterprise specially designed for propaganda purposes.’²¹ Official films made a specific intervention in the competitive cinema market by claiming their official status. This explains Beaverbrook’s defence of the WOCC’s control of frontline footage.²² Audience demand for official footage was extreme, as reviews noted.²³

Propagandists were therefore anxious to distinguish any unofficial films claiming this official authority, particularly if they were staged or less than accurate. Beaverbrook made this point frantically regarding concerns of a potential ‘staged’ film at the Aldershot Camp:

[W]e are greatly concerned at the grave consequences which are likely to follow the exhibition of ‘faked’ films. The greatest damage has already been done to the Official Films

¹⁸ Bottomore, ‘Filming’, I.3, II1-II3; Cinquegrani, ‘Absence of mind?’ 25-336.

¹⁹ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 178-186; Glen Turvey, ‘British and Colonial: What the Company Did in the Great War’, in *British Silent Cinema and the Great War*, ed. Michael Hammond and Michael Williams (Basingstoke and New York, NY: 2011), 39-48; Jay Winter, ‘Popular culture in wartime Britain’, in *European Culture in the Great War: The arts, entertainment, and propaganda, 1914-1918*, ed. Roshwold & Stites, (Cambridge: 1999), 330-348.

²⁰ ‘Films of Our Army in France’, *The Times*, 20 December 1915, 6.

²¹ PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee - ‘Ministry of Information – Cinema’.

²² See Chapter 5.

²³ ‘The Tanks on the Film’, *The Times*, 23 December 1916, 3; see also, ‘Films of Our Army in France’, *The Times*, 20 December 1915, 6; ‘New Films from the Front’, *The Times*, 17 March 1916, 5.

by the statement, systematically circulated with intent to do damage, that portions of the last Official Film are of a faked description.²⁴

Once again, cinema propaganda was distinct, and shared much with official war news: its official attribution was its major selling point. Audiences were most interested in its capacity to communicate a reality of the front. Where Wellington House utilised the authority of local speakers to filter their arguments to audiences, official cinema propaganda claimed its own authority through its official origin and use of official footage; this left facts to speak for themselves, un-editorialised.²⁵ Other British propaganda likewise made its official origin known, such as the printed material of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee.²⁶ For much of the war, Britain's official cinema output was clear in its attribution. Only at the end of the war did this begin to change.

Cinema propaganda therefore served wider propaganda aims. Official footage validated more interpretative accounts elsewhere. Instead of explicit argument, symbolism and inference were important in official films, to support or hint towards established propaganda narratives. Photography's relation to atrocity propaganda illustrates this well. Photographs could not represent the bulk of the more salacious atrocity stories regarding the German invasion of Belgium; instead they added emotional weight and visual realism. Photographs of the destroyed Belgian Louvain Cathedral, for instance, were numerous in the British press, and added a visceral realism to other atrocity stories.²⁷ For instance the WOCC's short *Ypres - The Shell Shattered City of Flanders* contained copious footage of the destroyed town and especially cathedral, emotively balanced against sympathetic depictions of two British soldiers comforting a local dog, for instance.²⁸

²⁴ PA: BBK/E/2/3 – 24 Oct. 1916 – 20 March 1917 – General Correspondence - Beaverbrook to The Secretary of the War Office, 16 February 1917.

²⁵ Buitenhuis, *War of Words*, xvii.

²⁶ Brendan Maartens, 'The Great War, military recruitment and the public relations work of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, 1914-1915', *Public Relations Inquiry*, 5:2 (2016), 169-185; Douglas Roy, 'Voluntary Enlistment in the First World War and the Work of the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee', *The Journal of Modern History*, 42:4 (1970), 564-585.

²⁷ Gregory, *Last Great War*, 50-51; Nicola Lambourne, 'Production versus Destruction: Art, World War I and art history', *Art History*, 22:3, (September 1999), 352-353; Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (Oxford: 2007).

²⁸ IWM: IWM206 – Ypres – The Shell Shattered City of Flanders 1916, (WOCC, 1916) [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022705>]; see also, 'New Films from the Front', *The Times*, 17 March 1916, 5; see also, IWM209 – 'Villages in Flanders, the Scenes of Hard Fighting, Now Held by the British' (TTC, 3/4/1916), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/45141>].

Through its apparent ‘factuality’ British cinema propaganda could therefore still be emotive. Audiences brought this meaning to the documentary style. British cinema gestured towards and reinforced broader arguments. This conformed to the early official approach to propaganda generally, seeking to supplement and manage wider public propaganda efforts, rather than manage or steer domestic sentiment directly.²⁹ This was at least the case for the first half of the war.

The distinctiveness of cinema propaganda is important in understanding how it operated as Greater British propaganda. Initially the Greater British effort was generalised in British cinema propaganda, visually represented, with scale and strength inferred. This visual and narrative restraint therefore demanded a degree of co-creation. Dominion audiences projected themselves into these ‘generalised’ and ‘documentary’ early official British films. Echoing broader patterns, Indian troops were treated more distinctly, and often specifically highlighted in early films.³⁰ By 1917, responding to changing strategic priorities, and under the firmer direction of Beaverbrook, British cinema propaganda increasingly specified Greater British efforts on screen, by highlighting and specifying Dominions depictions. Later official British film propaganda took more of the effort in this co-creation, as war weariness demanded.

British official cinema propaganda therefore operated even more specifically as Greater British propaganda. The lack of direct narrative of most films meant that communicating through a shared Greater British symbolic language was important. Cinema propaganda entailed particular types of co-creation in its operation as Greater British propaganda.

6.2 – Symbolism and *With the Indian Troops at the Front*

The first official film comprised of official frontline footage – by Malins and Tong – was the two-volume *With the Indian Troops at the Front*.³¹ Released in January of 1916 in two parts, the films focus on the behind the lines activities of Indian troops in France. Notably – given the Topical Trade

²⁹ Horne, ‘Remobilizing,’ 195-211.

³⁰ Eisenberg, ‘Miserable hotchpotch,’ 205; see also, TNA:PRO, CO 537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), 8-9.

³¹ Hiley, ‘DeWitt,’ 129-148.

Committee's distribution was restricted to the Empire, specifically excluding India and Egypt – this film was tailored for domestic British, Dominion, and potentially neutral audiences, rather than for India itself.³² Indian troops were pursued by an 'imperial paparazzi' throughout the war: footage and photographs of Indian troops were popular with British audiences.³³ So too were they an immediate focus for official films. Representing Indian troops had a particular utility in light of Turkey's recent entry into the war, to depict the racial diversity of the Empire so as not to alienate Muslim subjects. Even so, the film's exotic depiction of Indian troops drew on established and popular symbolic representations of Indian troops in British imperial military culture, particularly martial race theory.³⁴ Early British cinema propaganda therefore utilised familiar imperial symbolism.

From the mid nineteenth century Indian troops occupied a central place in the imperial culture through martial race mythology.³⁵ *With the Indian Troops at the Front* engages with mythology. Extended sequences show Sikhs performing a 'Khattak Dance', sharpening their *kukri* – the characteristic weapon of the Gurkha regiment – and in a wrestling match.³⁶ One sequence intercuts footage of troops of the 58th Rifles and 69th Punjabis at rest with similar footage of 'The Seaforth Highlanders',³⁷ symbolically aligning Sikh and Highland Scottish troops as racially martial.³⁸ The film also conforms to the restrained, documentary approach of official films, with simple, factual titles, and little to no commentary.³⁹ The Sikh and Highland connection was visually inferred and symbolic. This reinforces the wide comprehension of martial race mythology at the time, casting Indian troops as exotic and familiar, if not familial.⁴⁰

³² Hiley, 'DeWitt'; Tom Rice, 'With the Indian Troops at the Front', *Colonial Film, Database*, [<http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/6141>].

³³ Das, Santanu, 'Introduction', in *Race, Empire and First World War Writing*, ed. Santanu Das (Cambridge: 2011), 1-32; Haggith and Smith, 'Sons of Our Empire'; Rice, 'With the Indian Troops'; Robb, *British Culture*, 15.

³⁴ Haggith & Smith, 'Sons of Our Empire', p.42; Rice, 'With the Indian Troops.'

³⁵ Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The military, race, and masculinity in British imperial culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: 2004), 2, 52-53; see Robb, *British Culture*, 15.

³⁶ IWM: IWM202-1 'With the Indian Troops at the Front – Part 1', (TTC/Malins and Tong, 17/1/1916). [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/45134>].

³⁷ IWM: IWM202-2 'With the Indian Troops at the Front – Part 2', (TTC/Malins and Tong, 24/1/1916). [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022701>].

³⁸ Streets, *Martial Races*, 69.

³⁹ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 150.

⁴⁰ Streets, *Martial Races*, 2; Haggith & Smith, 'Sons of Our Empire', 42-44.

The reception of the film was mixed, however. *The Times* spoke of it favourably, noting the interest in depicting the bravery, resourcefulness, and cheerfulness of the Indian troops.⁴¹ Opinion in the trade press was less favourable, with *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly* noting scathingly:

Quite as good, if not better films, of the Indian troops and the training of officers had been taken in this country and supplied to the trade previously at a little over half the price asked for the Flanders films. Indeed, to put it mildly, the first series of the films was accepted by the trade with feelings of deep disappointment. We know for a fact that several important members of the trade suggested that the series should be withdrawn until something more nearly approaching war conditions was available.⁴²

Some trade papers even suggested a boycott of official films for their poor quality.⁴³ This foreshadows an on-going conflict. Throughout the war, cinema trade representatives complained of being taken advantage of by the government, by demands to screen films that were of mixed quality and appeal, and without the same concessions granted to the press.⁴⁴

Despite trade complaints, the subject matter was at least appealing for audiences. *The Times* noted that Indian troops were ‘always a picturesque and popular subject.’⁴⁵ This same enthusiasm was shared in New Zealand, where the film received a somewhat warmer reception. One paper noted similarly that the Indian troops would ‘be sure of a big reception when they are flashed on the screen tonight.’⁴⁶

With the Indian Troops at the Front set the tone for official cinema in a number of ways. It was the first taste for British propagandists of the complexities of dealing in the commercial cinema market; it set a tonal approach; and clearly demonstrates the symbolic operation of official cinema. Representations of Greater Britain in early films were less specific, by contrast. The next banner British official film, *Britain Prepared*, appealed to Greater Britain in a more implicit way.

⁴¹ ‘Films of the War’, *The Times*, 18 January 1916; see also, Tom Rice, ‘With the Indian Troops at the Front’, Colonial Film Database, 2009, <http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/6141>

⁴² *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, (464:21), 16 March 1916, 1.

⁴³ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 35.

⁴⁴ TNA:PRO – INF 4/6 – ‘War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services’ - 1. ‘Minute on the Cinema Industry and its Relation to the Government (a) During the War, (b) After the War.’

⁴⁵ ‘Films of the Front’, *The Times*, 5 January 1916, 11.

⁴⁶ ‘Amusements and Meetings’, *Wanganui Herald*, 18 May 1916.

6.3 – Generalisation and *Britain Prepared*

With the Indian Troops at the Front functioned as ‘imperial propaganda’ in the direct sense of depicting imperial troops, utilising familiar imperial language and symbolism. Later official films fall into the same mould, such as films focusing on the South African Labour Contingent, which emphasised the troops’ exoticism or racial difference.⁴⁷ These communicated the ‘exotic’ racial diversity of the Imperial war effort beyond white Greater Britishness. This is typically the extent to which historiography has understood the imperial dimensions of British cinema propaganda. It is a different question – and the focus of this chapter – to ask how cinema propaganda more generally functioned as Greater British propaganda, including less ostensibly ‘imperial’ films. Wellington House’s early official film efforts are good examples of how, through a ‘documentary’ yet flexible approach, official British films functioned as Greater British propaganda through co-creation.

Alongside *The Battle of the Somme*, one of the most significant official British cinema propaganda productions is Wellington House’s 1915 film *Britain Prepared*, depicting Britain’s initial mobilisation. The film was a significant, multi-purpose undertaking, for allied, neutral, and enemy audiences. It was also shown domestically and distributed to the Dominions.⁴⁸ *Britain Prepared* was extremely influential. Through its success it legitimised the use of cinema propaganda, and established a tone for official films that followed it.⁴⁹ The film was released in London in December 1915 in the Empire Music Hall to much fanfare, and distributed throughout the rest of Greater Britain thereafter.⁵⁰

The film consists of three thematic sections: the recruitment and training of Kitchener’s new army; the making of munitions – particularly focusing on female munitions workers at Vickers Ltd.; and a survey of the British navy. The film was intended to lionise Britain’s preparations for war, or,

⁴⁷ Haggith & Smith, ‘*Sons of Our Empire*’, 37.

⁴⁸ TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – ‘War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services’ - J. Brooke Wilkinson, ‘Films and Censorship in England’, 301; Messinger, *British Propaganda*, 42-44; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 89-94; Badsey, ‘The ‘IWM’ Series,’ 203-204.

⁴⁹ TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – ‘War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services’ - J. Brooke Wilkinson, ‘Films and Censorship in England,’ 305.

⁵⁰ TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – ‘War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services’ - J. Brooke Wilkinson, ‘Films and Censorship in England’, 305; Badsey, ‘The ‘IWM’ Series’, 203-204.

as a trade representative involved in the film's creation, J. Brooke Wilkinson, put it, 'to demonstrate the miracle of how, for a righteous cause, these Islands became an armed camp and training ground.'⁵¹

The film is restrained in its mediation or narration of footage. The film utilises montage to tell the story of Britain's mobilisation, and the recruitment of Kitchener's New Army.⁵² The film walks a rhetorical line, demonstrating both that Britain was responsibly *prepared* for the war, but in highlighting a sense of spontaneity and speed in the preparations, that Britain was not *aiming* for war. This was an essential theme of Britain's war justifications rhetoric. The war was 'Made in Germany,' but Britain was ready to respond on a reassuringly intimidating scale.⁵³ The tone of the intertitles is therefore encouraging, noting the 'liberal response' of the 'cheery non-slackers.' They do not mediate the images beyond this however. Visual scale and repetition – of men, munitions, and ships – make the essential points.

The film proceeds in a montage format. Long sequences run without cuts or intertitles to shape them into any more detailed narrative.⁵⁴ The first of the three sections was 'The New Army in the Making - How Three Million Civilians Became Efficient Soldiers'.⁵⁵ It portrays the 'Liberal Response to the Recruiting Officer's Appeal,' highlighting the initial recruitment of the New Army. Use of scale and perspective underscore this. From the initial scenes of a well-attended recruiting meeting in Trafalgar Square, to footage of new recruits undertaking physical drills, to newly-uniformed recruits marching, scale is emphasised through the use of high-angled shots, to show vast crowd scenes, or large formations of soldiers. The remaining sections of the film proceed in this mode. The second section, for instance, of footage of the Vickers Corporation munitions factories, only uses intertitles to note the names of munitions being created. Again, beyond noting the importance of female munitions work, visual scale provides the impact for these scenes.

⁵¹ TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services' - J. Brooke Wilkinson, 'Films and Censorship in England'; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 142.

⁵² Reeves, *Official British Film*, 142-145.

⁵³ See, NAA: MP367/1/560/2/27 – Correspondence – Re. Films from Director General of Recruiting – Synopsis of Films for Recruiting Campaign, 1; see Chapter 2.

⁵⁴ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 142-145.

⁵⁵ IWM: IWM580 - 'Britain Prepared', Wellington House, 29 December, 1915. [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023124>].

The film obviously lacks frontline footage, or specific depiction of imperial troops. The naval footage section was not battle footage. Wellington House lacked the access the WOCC would come to have to frontline footage, and the film was created before the appointment of Malins and Tong, and collected from British camps and factories.⁵⁶ *Britain Prepared* presents national mobilisation of British troops only. In a strictly quantitative reading, then, this film may not seem ostensibly 'imperial.' This is an insufficient reading, however. The rhetorical dynamics of Greater British propaganda, and its co-creative dynamics, meant this film functioned as Greater British propaganda – or 'Empire publicity' as it was specifically termed in this case⁵⁷ – in important ways, and was intended as such. The non-mediated and generalised nature of the film meant it was fit for exhibition to many audiences. This section explores how it operated in Greater Britain.

Britain Prepared was circulated throughout the Empire: Wilkinson's report notes that 'Colonial concessionaires' were appointed to handle the film in Australia and Canada. Special editions containing edited local footage were created and distributed to South Africa and the West Indies, furthering the particularity of South Africa in the context of Greater British propaganda.⁵⁸

The film premiered in Australia and New Zealand in late March and early April 1915 respectively to similarly favourable reception as in London, and with substantial official endorsement.⁵⁹ The film was so popular that a series of postcards, particularly focusing on the naval section of the film, and a book containing illustrations of the film, were produced and circulated throughout the Empire.⁶⁰

The response to *Britain Prepared* in Australia and New Zealand shows how the 'documentary' style of British official films facilitated a particular co-creation of this film as Greater British propaganda. The documentary or factual approach allowed varied audiences to identify or engage with different aspects of the film. Certain aspects were particularly resonant in Greater

⁵⁶ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 89-94.

⁵⁷ "'Britain Prepared.'" British Official War Films', *Punch*, 30 March 1916.

⁵⁸ TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services' - J. Brooke Wilkinson, 'Films and Censorship in England', 306.

⁵⁹ "'Britain Prepared.'" British Official War Films', *Punch*, 30 March 1916; 'Britain Prepared', *Evening Post*, 19 April 1916, 3; 'Entertainments', *Dominion*, 18 April 1916, 3.

⁶⁰ TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services' - J. Brooke Wilkinson, 'Films and Censorship in England', 315.

Britain. This was an easy prospect earlier in the war. Greater British identity in the Dominions allowed easy identification with the British story it depicted, without specific imperial intervention and mediation in a narrative sense. Dominion audiences were willing to, and encouraged to, bring Greater British meaning to the film, and imagine themselves into the narrative.⁶¹ In a sense this reinforces the importance of trust and shared cultural language of Greater Britain. British propagandists had faith that Dominion audiences would engage with and understand the intended messages within the film. This was a form of co-creation, in the sense of signalling to Greater British audiences through a shared symbolic language, and a culture of trust and familiarity.

The press reception for *Britain Prepared* in Australia and New Zealand was enthusiastic. Varied responses noted the film as ‘the greatest of all patriotic attractions,’⁶² and ‘the most wonderful war film ever screened.’⁶³ Distinctively, the film was highlighted in the New Zealand and Australian press for its operation both as a lesson and a way of connecting the Dominions to the ‘Old World,’ in a visual and moral sense.

In both Australia and New Zealand, key politicians endorsed the film, often through speeches at premier screenings.⁶⁴ This gave further weight to the film, as a further co-creation by explicitly reframing the film as Greater British propaganda. New Zealand Minister of Defence James Allen put this most plainly in a speech praising the film around its New Zealand premier. Allen noted that it ‘brought us more or less in touch with the people at Home, and [was] an object lesson representing the real life of the Motherland, which was the real life of the Empire to-day.’⁶⁵ Just as easily as Dominion audiences imagined London as Home, they were to imagine Britain’s mobilisation as just as much their own, as ‘Greater Britain Prepared.’

Joseph Ward’s introduction of the film struck clearly at the intended message of Britain’s responsible balance of preparedness and non-aggression: ‘It showed what wonderful people these old

⁶¹ For New Zealand’s internalised Britishness, see Loveridge, *Calls to Arms*, 10-27; McIntyre, W. David, ‘Imperialism and Nationalism’, *The Oxford History of New Zealand* (2nd edition), ed. Geoffrey Rice, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 337-347; Belich, *Paradise Reforged*; Barnes, *New Zealand’s London*.

⁶² ‘Britain Prepared’, *Terang Express*, 17 April 1917, 3.

⁶³ ‘Britain Prepared’, *Evening Star*, 1 August 1916, 2.

⁶⁴ ‘Britain Prepared’, *Ashburton Guardian*, 14 June 1916, 3.

⁶⁵ ‘Entertainments’, *Dominion*, 18 April 1916, 3; see also, ‘Britain Prepared’, *Evening Post*, 19 April 1916, 3.

Britishers were when they got under way, even if they were late in starting.’⁶⁶ Likewise, the Australian Minister of Defence George Pearce’s characterisation draws out the theme of Britain’s swift mobilisation, stating:

Two years ago Britain was unprepared; she was not then a military nation. But when we see what has been done in the way of preparing men, material, and equipment since the outbreak of the war, we can understand how Great Britain has worked in improvising in these past two years. It shows that Great Britain is in earnest.⁶⁷

Some adaptation, or specific Greater British interpretation was also applied. In Australia and New Zealand, however, the film was discussed as a lesson in the extension of duty, similarly to the theme of New Zealand’s duty to Britain and claiming of Empire’s responsibilities, explored in Chapter 2. This reinforced Greater British collective mobilisation, through an extension of Britain’s duties – its war justifications – to the Dominions. Australian Minister of Defence George Pearce’s praise of the film sums up this Dominion engagement with the film:

We have a special interest in these pictures ... They bring home to us a special lesson. They teach us in direct words that if it is the duty of Great Britain to prepare herself for war, how much more is it the duty of Australia and the Dominions to be prepared. We should leave no stone unturned to be as fully armed as possible, so as to take our places alongside those men whom we have sent yonder and those whom we are still sending. We must see that not only is Britain prepared, but that we are prepared also.⁶⁸

Allen similarly stated that the film reminded the Dominions of the need to find ‘our full quote of men to go and help the Motherland.’⁶⁹

This represents a particular form of co-creation in Greater British propaganda. Dominion politicians claimed ownership of Britain’s responsibilities, and framed this quite broad film as a particular evocation or reminder of this point. The film’s non-mediated, documentary style facilitated this. It allowed Dominion audiences to project themselves into the imperial war effort through an extension of British justifications for war and duty to Empire. The British troops depicted were not just British, but Greater British. The ‘factual’ tone of the film was flexible enough to be acceptable to American audiences, intimidating to German audiences, and warmly encouraging to Greater British

⁶⁶ ‘Britain Prepared – Sir Joseph Ward’s Praise’, *Dominion*, 20 April 1916, 3.

⁶⁷ ‘Great Britain in Earnest’, *Taranaki Daily News*, 26 June 1916, 2.

⁶⁸ ‘Great Britain in Earnest’, *Taranaki Daily News*, 26 June 1916, 2.

⁶⁹ ‘Entertainments’, *Dominion*, 18 April 1916, 3.

audiences. Dominion audiences were, at this time, enthusiastic enough to make this effort to project themselves into this depiction.

The response to the film in Australia and New Zealand seems to demonstrate the efficacy of operating through a more symbolic approach – allowing co-creation through reframing – than actively narrating the British justification for war, at least in the favourable context of the Dominions, ready to accept such a message. British propagandists trusted that Dominion audiences would draw out the intended message of the film, and did not have to explicitly make their case. Again, this approach is broadly in line with the operating principle of Wellington House. The film was distinct as being an official production of Wellington House, rather than being filtered through an eminent local voice, as was more typical of the bureau. In practice, however, politicians such as Allen, Ward, and Pearce extended this Wellington House practice by legitimising the message of the film at a distance.

Importantly, this was possible because of the existing dynamic of trust and shared cultural language in Greater Britain. Beyond it, this process could be more fraught. Charles Urban's difficulties in marketing the film in the United States suggest that it was not by the merits of the film alone that its message was effectively communicated, and that mediation and re-framing could help only so far. Despite official, even Presidential, endorsement and support upon exhibition in the United States, the film was poorly, even hostilely, received. It was criticised as 'too intellectual,' showing the limited appeal of the documentary style, and actively derided by the German American press as deceptive.⁷⁰ Even with similar political re-framing, audiences still had to be willing to engage with it.

6.4 – Navalism

More directly, *Britain Prepared* utilised the shared symbolic language of Greater Britain to operate as Greater British propaganda. Specifically, its extensive use of naval footage embedded a symbolic appeal to the Dominions. A significant degree of *Britain Prepared's* prestige was drawn from its footage of the Royal Navy. This was a coup for Wellington House, as initially the Admiralty

⁷⁰ McKernan, 'Propaganda, Patriotism', 369-389, TNA:PRO: INF4/2 – 'War of 1914 to 1918 Information Services' - J. Brooke Wilkinson, 'Films and Censorship in England.'

was reluctant to engage with official propaganda.⁷¹ It was not until the more ‘flamboyant’ Sir David Beatty replaced Admiral Sir John Jellicoe as commander in chief of the Grand Fleet in 1916 that the Admiralty engaged its own publicity. *Britain Prepared* marked the most substantial output of official naval footage until 1917, when the Admiralty’s own official films were released.⁷²

Comprising the final third of the film, the naval footage in *Britain Prepared* is extensive and varied. It includes the construction of a battleship at the Vickers Munition yards, the construction of shells, and sequences focusing on minesweepers in the North Sea. A final substantial sequence – ‘A Visit to the Royal Fleet in War Conditions’ – contains extended sequences of various battleships at sea. Again, this was unmediated with extensive intertitles.⁷³

The presentation of the navy as ‘The Sure Shield of Britain and Empire’ highlights the film’s strong symbolic engagement with the imperial ‘cult of the navy,’ or navalism. This was popular imperial rhetoric, casting the Royal Navy as an icon and embodiment of the British Empire. This rhetoric of navalism was familiar to Greater Britain by the outbreak of the war.⁷⁴ Despite the Admiralty’s hesitancy around propaganda early in the war, media culture from the late nineteenth century throughout Greater Britain emphasised the navy’s role in the formation and unity of the Empire, as arguably one of its clearest visual, physical symbols. Naval pageantry, particularly tours of battleships throughout the empire, were familiar and extremely popular by 1914. Navalism proliferated in popular entertainments, commercial advertising, and education.

Navalism had a strong place in the construction of Dominion identity. Donations of battleships to the British Fleet in New Zealand’s case – or even, paradoxically, the creation of national fleets in Canada and Australia – were not only strategic developments, but also propaganda gestures, validating Dominion identity. Dominion navies or donations of ships to the Royal Navy gestured political maturity within Greater Britain, and the Dominions taking full partnership in the

⁷¹ Jane Carmichael, Jane, *First World War Photographers* (London and New York, NY: 1989), 110-111; Reeves, ‘Film Propaganda and Its Audience,’ 464.

⁷² Carmichael, *Photographers*, 110-111; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 175-179.

⁷³ IWM: IWM: IWM580 - ‘Britain Prepared’, Wellington House, 29 December, 1915. [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023124>].

⁷⁴ Jan Rüger, *The Great Naval Game: Britain and Germany in the Age of Empire*, (Cambridge: 2007); Conley, Mary A., *From Jack Tar to Union Jack: Representing naval manhood in the British Empire, 1870-1918*, (Manchester: 2009). 3-8.

Empire's defence.⁷⁵ The cult of the navy was a similarly familiar imperial cultural trope as martial race theory. Notably, navalism shared the same implicit racial boundaries as Greater Britain: the non-white contribution to the navy was largely elided, sometimes formally, such as in the Royal Navy's refusal of the suggestion to name a battleship the HMS Māori. More practically, Indian and West Indian troops were excluded from naval service before and during the war.⁷⁶

The naval footage in *Britain Prepared* was particularly praised at its London premier. Arthur Balfour, then First Lord of the Admiralty, spoke in platitudes of the importance of the Royal Navy to the war effort – 'the foundation on which everything else has rested'⁷⁷ – and noted the important intervention that *Britain Prepared* had made in including naval footage. Balfour portrayed the film as providing an education in the importance of the navy to citizens of the Empire:

It is that true perspective the most important place undoubtedly is occupied, and ought to be occupied, by the British Fleet. To us who have always looked on that Fleet from our youth upwards as the protection of our liberties these lessons may be easy to learn, though I think they have not all been learned even by citizens of this Empire.⁷⁸

In noting the limitations of the film's national focus, Balfour drew an even further focus on the Greater Britain appeal of the film:

What would we not have given for a permanent record of the great deeds done by our Army in Flanders, or of such marvels of heroism as the Australians and New Zealanders have performed at Anzac?⁷⁹

Likely unaware as he was of the piecemeal collection of footage at Gallipoli,⁸⁰ Balfour's comments draw out the importance of the film's naval appeal to the Dominions.

True to the appeal of navalism in Greater Britain, the naval scenes of *Britain Prepared* garnered the most enthusiasm in Australia and New Zealand, for instance:

⁷⁵ John C. Mitcham, 'Navalism and Greater Britain, 1897-1914', in *Maritime History and Identity: The Sea and Culture in the Modern World*, ed. Duncan Redford (London: 2014), 272-275; Rüger, *Great Naval Game*.

⁷⁶ Daniel Owen Spence, *Colonial naval culture and British imperialism, 1922-67*, (Manchester: 2015); Mitcham, 'Navalism', 282-283.

⁷⁷ 'Our Sure Shield', *The Times*, 30 December 1915, 5; see also, 'Mr Balfour on the Navy – "Britain Prepared"', *Taranaki Daily News*, 30 June 1916, 2.

⁷⁸ 'Our Sure Shield', *The Times*, 30 December 1915, 5.

⁷⁹ 'Our Sure Shield', *The Times*, 30 December 1915, 5.

⁸⁰ Eisenberg, 'Miserable hotchpotch', 205.

[T]he feature of features in a series of soul-stirring snapshots is that portion of the film showing the great warships that took part in the first big battle in the North Sea and again recently in the historic battle off Jutland.⁸¹

Even more directly, the film appealed to the Dominion navalism by depicting various famous, national battleships, most notably, the *HMS New Zealand*:

There is a special set of pictures of 'Big Lizzie' (the battleship Queen Elizabeth), and for the particular interest of Australasians the Government provided facilities for photographing the battle cruiser New Zealand on her patrol station.⁸²

Depiction of the *HMS New Zealand* was taken as a specific New Zealand depiction, and validation of its place in the Imperial war effort.⁸³ Not depicted of course was the too-ironic-to-be-staged-collision between the *HMAS Australia* and the *HMS New Zealand*, after the Battle of Jutland. Apparently such ANZAC tensions were unacceptable to screen. In this way, *Britain Prepared* functioned as Greater British propaganda not by depicting the exotic, but representing and validating the familiar, just as Dominion troops on leave in London favoured footage of their Dominions.⁸⁴ This was then a further example of co-creation, utilising the symbolism of navalism, and depictions of national ships, to reinforce identification with the generalised British mobilisation in the film. The naval sections were equally designed to inspire awe and intimidation in allied, neutral, and enemy audiences.

Navalism continued to be an important device for propagandists throughout the war, as naval footage remained popular. The Admiralty's own official films obviously heavily indulge in this. As the somewhat fraught negotiations between Beaverbrook under the WOCC and Gilmour at the Department of Information illustrate, control over naval footage was a prize for propagandists. Latterly the Admiralty made its own arrangements, and created its own official films, with F.W. Engholm as official naval cinematographer.⁸⁵ The Admiralty's films stand out for their tendency towards greater narrative mediation, or florid, propagandistic language.

⁸¹ 'Britain Prepared', *Fielding Star*, 1 August 1916, 2; see also, 'Britain Prepared – Sir Joseph Ward's Praise', *Dominion*, 20 April 1916, 3; 'Entertainments', *Waikato Times*, 29 August 1916, 4; 'Britain Prepared', *Colonist*, 27 June 1916, 7.

⁸² 'Is Britain Prepared?', *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4 May 1916, 5.

⁸³ Mitcham, 'Navalism', 282-283; see also, Rüger, *Great Naval Game*.

⁸⁴ See Chapter 5.

⁸⁵ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 175.

The Empire's Shield (1918) opens strikingly with the title: 'To the people of the British Empire. Do you realise that the sea is your foster mother?'⁸⁶ The film can be considered the Admiralty's take on *Britain Prepared*. It shows the journey from the recruitment to service of naval cadets during the war. *Hands Across the Sea* (1918) uses the same appeal to Dominion named ships with the *HMS Canada*, as 'A Link in the Chain of Empire.' Equally, the film casts the arrival of the American Fleet to Europe as 'Uncle Sam's Aid' or 'Hands Across the Sea,' to reinforce the Anglo-British connection, and widen the cult of the navy.⁸⁷

Admiralty films tended much more than others to connect the war to a heroic imperial history. The opening title of *The Story of the Drifters and the Sea Dogs Who Man Them* (1917), focusing on British submarine fleets, draws parallels between the navy of the First World War with 'Drake's Navy' and 'Nelson's Heroes,' finally to the Admiralty in the war.⁸⁸ Semi-official efforts likewise utilised navalism, such as the Navy League's 'patriotic photoplay' *It is For England*, which included official footage of Dominion troops and Admiralty footage supplied by WOCC.⁸⁹ The increasingly emotive, and imperial, tone of the Admiralty's films are the first suggestion towards a wider shift in this direction by British cinema propaganda. This was partly due to an apparent public tiring of the earlier 'factual' style of films,⁹⁰ and more broadly to growing war weariness and changing British strategic priorities. Navalism was therefore a rhetorical signal to Greater Britain, and facilitated a wider co-creation of these films.

⁸⁶ IWM: IWM 551 – 'The Empire's Shield: The Royal Navy' (1918-10; F.W. Engholm/Admiralty). [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023093>]; see also, Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 156.

⁸⁷ IWM: IWM563 – 'Hands Across the Sea', (F.W. Engholm/Admiralty, 1918), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/45540>].

⁸⁸ IWM: IWM553 - *The Story of the Drifters and the Sea Dogs Who Man Them*, Admiralty/, 1917; see also, IWM554 – 'Rule Britannia', Admiralty/F.W. Engholm, 1918. [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023095>].

⁸⁹ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee - Lawrence Cowen, Navy League Patriotic Campaign Office to BBK, 8 June 1917.

⁹⁰ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 179; Hiley, 'DeWitt', 144; Badsey, 'The 'IWM series,' 203.

6.5 – Emotional Connection and *The Battle of the Somme*

The connective potential of cinema for Greater Britain was not only symbolic but also emotive. This is clear in Greater British reaction to arguably the most famous official film of this period, *The Battle of the Somme*. The emotional potential of the film for domestic British wartime audiences – to bring home the gravity of war to the home front – was again achieved through its restrained approach.⁹¹ This same emotional potency was witnessed in Dominion screenings. Like *Britain Prepared*, this required audience willingness to engage with the British troops as representative of the wider Greater British effort – directly relying on a familial Britishness. Lloyd George and King George V endorsed the film, and emphasised that it should be exhibited throughout the Empire to communicate the realities of war.⁹² Reactions to the film in the Australian press emphasise its importance in compressing distance, allowing Australian audiences to engage with troops at the front:

While you watch these pictures you are not in Tasmania, but at the front. Before your gaze British Tommies rescue a comrade under shell fire. He is brought so close that the stretchers seem to brush you.⁹³

This is similar to domestic British reactions to the film's connective impact, extended at a distance throughout Greater Britain.⁹⁴

In the Dominions, the film took on a distinct potency due to distance, bringing the reality of war to home fronts less directly impacted than those in Europe, as New Zealand reaction indicates:

It has often been said that we in the Dominion cannot realise the magnitude and the turmoil of the terrible war, and the tremendous events daily taking place in France, but a visit to His Majesty's Theatre next week will enable Canterbury people to visualise something of what happens in a great offensive similar to the Battle of the Somme.⁹⁵

The film played a similarly emotional and instructive role as accounts of returned soldiers and casualty lists from Gallipoli in 1915, which famously brought the reality of the war home to

⁹¹ Reeves, 'Somme,' 5-28; Hammond, *Big Show*, 99-127; Stephen Badsey, 'Battle of the Somme: British war-propaganda', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 3:2 (1983), 99-115.

⁹² 'The Battle of the Somme', *Marlborough Express*, 3 February 1917, 8.

⁹³ 'Battle of the Somme', *North Western Advocate and Emu Bay Times*, 24 November 1916, 2.

⁹⁴ E.g. 'War's Realities on the Cinema', *The Times*, 22 August 1916, 3, Ruger, 'Entertainments', esp. 109-116.

⁹⁵ 'The Battle of the Somme', *Star*, 21 October 1916, 2.

Australian and New Zealand home fronts in a powerful shock of reality and grief. The reality of *The Battle of the Somme* fulfilled its potential in overcoming the impediments of distance that characterised the Dominion home front experience, and reinforced cultural identification with the war effort.⁹⁶ In this way, cinema compressed space in an emotional sense. The film served a vital and particular purpose as Greater British propaganda. While *Britain Prepared* bolstered confidence and provided a lesson of imperial extension of duty, *The Battle of the Somme* provided a Greater British catharsis.

After the release of *Somme*, this process was less straightforward, as New Zealand and Australian demands for greater representation of their own soldiers grew. As war weariness grew, Dominion audiences were less willing to imagine themselves into a generalised British effort on screen. The timing of the release of *The Battle of the Somme* in New Zealand had a particularly moving impact, arriving more or less contemporaneously with the New Zealanders' first engagement in the campaign in September, and the first press reports from the campaign supplied by Malcolm Ross. This spurred greater calls for specific New Zealand footage, and led the New Zealand government to push for its own official cameraman.⁹⁷ In New Zealand, the film became a powerful auxiliary to strong national emotion. The film both served its purpose and showed the declining potential of a 'generalised' representation of the imperial war effort for Greater British audiences.

Though the Canadian Expeditionary Force appears in the film, they are not singled out for particular praise, in the 'generalised' British imperial approach that so exasperated Murdoch regarding British press reportage.⁹⁸ Operationally this was due to the Australian and New Zealand arrival in the campaign not coming until after the collection of the footage for the film.

While Australian and New Zealand audiences felt an emotional connection to this generalised representation, the film likewise stirred demand for greater connection to specifically Dominion images. Australian reviews commented that the film 'deals almost exclusively with the work of the British Tommy,' with necessary 'local colour' provided in the review by an account of the Australian

⁹⁶ For the impact of distance on the imperial home front see, Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War*, (Crawley: 2007); see also, Winter, *Sites of Memory*.

⁹⁷ Pugsley, 'Who is Sanders?', 19.

⁹⁸ TNA:PRO: CO 537/1119 – Recognition of Australian Troops (May 1917), p.8-9.

contribution at Pozieres.⁹⁹ These antipodean reactions represent a growing tide of Greater British war weariness.

6.6 – Magazine Films

By late 1916, due to concerns of the public tiring of the established style, and persistent complaints of quality, the WOCC began to experiment with new formats. Operating in a commercial context demanded this. By 1916 the ‘official’ designation was not enough of a continued draw.¹⁰⁰ Beaverbrook drove this change, commenting in 1917:

The truth of the matter is that the present style of Film is played out. The public is jaded and we have to tickle its palate with something a little more dramatic in future, if we are to maintain our sales. From this point of view one is naturally compelled to look at the matter from an entirely commercial standpoint.¹⁰¹

Growing war weariness demanded a stylistic response. This initiated a trend away from the earlier ‘factual’ style to increasing narrative mediation. Increasingly, Greater British engagement became less generalised and implicit, and more direct and narrative.¹⁰²

One innovation was shorter topical ‘magazine’ films, from 1917. These were facilitated by the influx of footage collected by the newly appointed Dominion cameramen, which gave many a clearer Dominion focus. These were also quicker to produce and easier to distribute.¹⁰³ Dominion shorts included *The Canadian Victory at Courcelette*,¹⁰⁴ *With the Australian Forces in France*,¹⁰⁵ and *The New Zealand Troops in France*. These represented an increasing shift away from the ‘generalised’ model of longer war films, towards specifically highlighting and validating the Dominions’ contribution.¹⁰⁶ Though the Australian official correspondent Bean complained at the

⁹⁹ ‘The Battle of the Somme’, *Albion and Western Advertiser*, 16 November 1916, 2.

¹⁰⁰ Luke McKernan, *Topical Budget: The Great British News Film*, (London: 1992), 38-39.

¹⁰¹ PA: BBK/E/2/5 – May 1917 – Cinematograph Committee – Beaverbrook to Hutton-Wilson, 8 May 1917; Hiley, ‘Reconstructed propaganda films,’ 177.

¹⁰² See Horne, ‘Remobilizing’; Reeves, *Official British Film*, 77-81.

¹⁰³ PA: BBK/E/2/11 – Oct. 1917 – Press Articles and copies re. Cinema Commission; see also, Reeves, *Official British Film*, 170-171.

¹⁰⁴ IWM: IWM446 – ‘The Canadian Victory at Courcelette’, War Office Cinematograph Committee, 1917.

¹⁰⁵ IWM: IWM138 – ‘With the Australian Forces in France’, (Jury/Bean/Australian War Records Section, 1/1918), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060008192>].

¹⁰⁶ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 169-171

poor quality of this initial output,¹⁰⁷ under the WOCC the Dominions certainly gained increased exposure. Canadian representation, naturally, remained overwhelming, with Beaverbrook ensuring that Canadian scenes were included in almost every edition of the *War Office Official Topical Budget*, later *Pictorial News*.¹⁰⁸

These films were distributed widely, including by the Foreign Office.¹⁰⁹ In the case of New Zealand, these magazine films captured several important events for New Zealand at the front, notably an inspection by Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig.¹¹⁰ These met growing demand for specific representation for New Zealanders at home, as one reviewer noted:

The march past of New Zealand troops before Douglas Haig was an excellent picture ... It conveyed a very good idea of the number of NZ troops now in France, and its appearance on the screen was naturally the subject of loud applause.¹¹¹

While mostly maintaining the established tone of restrained commentary, these films highlight the increased shift towards specifying the Greater British war effort from 1917.

Magazine films were a direct product of co-creation allowed by Beaverbrook's leadership of the WOCC. They furthered Australia and Canada's active self-promotion, as evinced in their photographic and art exhibitions in London from 1917. These films utilised official footage not only as a way of documenting history, but also as highlighting the particular Dominion contribution to the war.¹¹² As such, the same dynamics and imbalances in the Dominions' interaction with the WOCC as explored in the previous chapter were present here. As Bean's complaints show, at least for Australia, the centralisation of the WOCC was editorially unsatisfying – Australians wanted to shape their own representations.¹¹³ From 1917, Australia began to also create its own official films to spur domestic recruiting.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ Eisenberg, 'Miserable hotchpotch', 205.

¹⁰⁸ McKernan, *Topical Budget*, 61; Cook, 'Documenting War,' 267.

¹⁰⁹ TNA:PRO: FO228/2922 – Dossier 29 War Propaganda Films.

¹¹⁰ IWM: IWM156 – 'Inspection of New Zealand Troops by Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig', (Henry Sanders, 1917), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022662>].

¹¹¹ 'Entertainments', *Ashburton Guardian*, 19 August 1918, 3.

¹¹² Wellington, 'Empire and nation,' 185-198.

¹¹³ Eisenberg, 'Hotchpotch', 205; AWM: AWM38 – Official History, 1914-18 War: Records of CEW Bean, Official Historian. Diaries and Notebooks – Diary, January 1917.

¹¹⁴ See, NAA: MP367/1/560/2/27 – Correspondence – Re. Films from Director General of Recruiting.

The magazine films also drew back on racially exclusive depictions, such as *A South African Native Labour Contingent*,¹¹⁵ which gave particular focus to ‘exotic’ elements of such native labour contingents.¹¹⁶ Like *With the Indian Troops at the Front*, this short highlights exotic and martial aspects of the South African Native Labour Contingent, most particularly in a sequence covering a native war dance. This martial race extension echoed official British and South African anxiety over the question of allowing black South Africans to serve at the front.¹¹⁷

These films met trade requests for greater diversity in official films.¹¹⁸ In doing so, they likewise began to meet increasing Greater British frustration at generalisation, echoing the changing intent of British propaganda towards Greater Britain, as British strategic priorities moved in the same direction from the later years of the war.

6.7 – Specification, *Ancre*, and *Sons of Our Empire*

Beyond these shorter features, the WOCC’s major features for 1917 also show the trend away from generalisation and towards specification in Greater British cinema propaganda. Most notable are *The Battle of the Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks* and the serial *Sons of Our Empire*. New Zealand and Australian reaction to these films indicate the continuing desire for explicit rather than implicit national validation and representation on screen. While *The Battle of the Ancre* delivered this somewhat by including Australian troops, *Sons of Our Empire* (sometimes styled *Sons of the Empire*) stands out as explicit Greater British propaganda, in both content and function. It was an outward validation for the Dominions, rather than demanding their symbolic engagement inward. This film represented British propagandists carrying more of the rhetorical responsibility of Greater British

¹¹⁵ IWM: IWM413 – ‘South African Native Labour Contingent: Somewhere in France’, (WOCC, 11-1917), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022872>].

¹¹⁶ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 170-171; Haggith & Smith, ‘*Sons of Our Empire*,’ 37-38.

¹¹⁷ Haggith & Smith, ‘*Sons of Our Empire*,’ 46-47.

¹¹⁸ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 35.

propaganda co-creation. In distribution notes, these films were grouped together as the joint major overseas output for the WOCC for 1917,¹¹⁹ and were advertised as sister features in New Zealand.¹²⁰

The Battle of the Ancre was an attempt to recreate the structure and success of *Somme*. It achieved and even exceeded the success of the earlier film in terms of domestic British success. Like *Somme*, it was a longer sustained battle film telling a clear narrative from the preparation to aftermath. The tone of the intertitles remained mostly factual and restrained. Praise of the Irish regiments as having ‘behaved with the greatest dash and gallantry’ is specifically attributed to an ‘Extract from Official Communiqué,’ for instance.¹²¹ Attendance surpassed *Somme*, with greater British circulation and sustaining the highest demand for an official film to that point with 112 simultaneous London bookings.¹²² British press reception was effusive. The *Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly* noted that demand for the ‘Tank Film’, as it was commonly termed, was unprecedented.¹²³ Another review claimed ‘no single incident in connection with the War has made a stronger appeal to public imagination than the appearance of the Tanks on the battlefield.’¹²⁴

The biggest draw of the film in the British press was the depiction of the tanks, which debuted at the Ancre. As one review in *The Times* noted:

There is no doubt that the Tanks have seized the popular imagination ... Everywhere the first appearance of a Tank on the screen was greeted with rounds of applause ... In fact the only criticism to be heard of the pictures was that there was not more of the Tanks.¹²⁵

Ancre wrung further success from the established documentary approach, and official authority, through the novelty tank footage. Audiences were so dazzled that some claimed the tank footage must have been faked.¹²⁶

¹¹⁹ PA: BBK/E/2/5 – May 1917 – Cinematograph Committee. ‘Cinematograph Committee – period to 4th May 1917’; in ‘The War Office Cinematograph Committee Revenue Account for the period ended and Balance Sheet as at 4th May 1917.’; ANZ: R18919876 – Correspondence and telegrams – memorandum of agreement by New Zealand Government to lease New Zealand Picture Supplies Ltd., exclusive right to show in NZ films released by British War Office – 13 Feb. 1918. 5.

¹²⁰ ‘Entertainments’, *Dominion*, 14 October 1916, 16.

¹²¹ IWM: IWM116 – ‘The Battle of the Ancre and the Advance of the Tanks’, (WOCC, 1/1917), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/47210/4679>]. (Reel 2).

¹²² Reeves, *Official British Film*, 224-225.

¹²³ *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, 509:25, January 25 1917, 1.

¹²⁴ *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, 507:25, January 18, 1917, 1.

¹²⁵ ‘First Day of the “Tanks” Film.’, *The Times*, 16 January 1917, 4; see also, ‘The Tanks on Film’, *The Times*, 23 December 1916, 3.

¹²⁶ Hiley, ‘DeWitt’, 145.

In accordance with the King and Queen's 'hope that every success will attend the efforts of the War Office Cinematograph Committee to secure a wide circulation ... throughout the Empire,'¹²⁷ the film was distributed widely to the Dominions. In Australia and New Zealand the film debuted in late 1917, significantly after its London debut. Press enthusiasm for the film certainly drew on its sensational impact in Britain, its official status, and of course the appeal of the tank footage.¹²⁸ Response was favourable, and in the same way as *The Battle of the Somme*, was likewise noted for its capacity to bring home the 'grim reality' of war to audiences,¹²⁹ and the novelty of the tanks.¹³⁰ Yet, by 1917, the film's inclusion of Australian troops was cause for particular comment in the Dominion press.

Unlike *Somme*, *The Battle of the Ancre* contained more generous coverage of Australian and Canadian troops.¹³¹ Again, this was partly operational, down to timing and the presence of these troops for cameramen Malins and McDowell to capture. The film also contained brief footage of West Indian troops, though they were not specifically highlighted for comment in the intertitles.¹³² In Dominion papers, the greater representation of Dominion troops was praised as allowing audience interaction with the local contribution to the war, meeting disappointments evident in Dominion responses to *Somme*.¹³³ The presence of these troops was hardly mentioned in the British press, overshadowed by the novelty of the tank footage. Australian reaction was particularly enthusiastic. It debuted alongside the official Australian war film, *Australia In Action*, the combination of which specifically met the local demand for representation of Australians at the front.¹³⁴

¹²⁷ "'Tanks' Films To-Day', *The Times*, 15 January 1917, 11.

¹²⁸ For New Zealand: 'The Battle of the Ancre', *Thames Star*, 28 August 1917, 2; 'Government War Pictures', *Evening Post*, 11 June 1917, 2; 'Improved "Tanks"', *Dominion*, 13 June 1917, 6; 'Battle of War', *Auckland Star*, 8 June 1917, 7; 'The Ancre Pictures', *Evening Star*, 25 September 1917, 1; 'The Battle Picture', *Evening Star*, 26 September 1917, 3; 'Tanks at the Ancre', *Evening Star*, 24 September 1917, 1; For Australia, 'Official War Films – Australians in Battle', *Telegraph (Brisbane)*, 5 June 1917, 11; 'The Battle of the Ancre', *The Age*, 2 July 1917, 9; 'Tank Pictures – Battle of the Ancre', *The Maitland Daily Mercury*, 13 March 1917, 4; 'Advance of the Tanks', *The Mail*, 28 July 1917, 4.

¹²⁹ 'Realities of War', *Auckland Star*, 8 June 1917, 7.

¹³⁰ 'The Ancre Pictures', *Evening Standard*, 25 September 1917, 1; 'A British Tank in Action', *Free Lance*, 15 June 1917, 10.

¹³¹ Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 157.

¹³² Haggith & Smith, 'Sons of Our Empire,' 45.

¹³³ 'Official War Films – Australians in Battle', *Telegraph (Brisbane)*, 5 June 1917, 11; 'Authorised Battle Film', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 30 August 1917, 6.

¹³⁴ See, NAA: MP367/1/560/2/27 – Correspondence – Re. Films from Director General of Recruiting.

Ancre provided visual confirmation, and symbolic connection, to the rapidly developing mythology of Australian battle prowess. As one reviewer put it: 'What can be said of the Ancre combat can be applied with equal justice to the battle of Pozieres, where the Australians covered themselves in glory.'¹³⁵ This utility of official film to connect the Dominions and validate their contribution to the war is even clearer in discussion of *Australians in Action*:

The pictures are more intimate, so to state, than any of their kind which have been shown in Adelaide hereto, as it is possible to recognise many of the Australian troops in the trenches. The films are thus more than ordinarily interesting for Australians, but the doings of the troops are not confined to our own lads. Famous Scottish, Irish, Welsh, and English regiments are included, together with New Zealanders (Maoris and whites), and Canadians.¹³⁶

These depictions possessed a strong emotional appeal and validation for Dominion audiences. New Zealand's reception of *Ancre* was similarly framed through local interest, insofar as it could. Certain screenings in New Zealand even supplemented the film with local footage of training at the Trentham military camp.¹³⁷

British and Dominion propagandists clearly had diminishing confidence that audiences would carry the weight of co-creation by imagining themselves into British films by 1917, and made Dominion representations more explicit. For New Zealand this was a somewhat more challenging process at least technically. With its smaller capacity, this was somewhat the best New Zealand could do in representing itself, compared to Australia, which was by now creating its own films. In a small way this reflected the same impulse as the catered local version of *Britain Prepared* organised for South Africa the previous year. Increasingly New Zealand and Australian opinion needed a 'spur' in a way it earlier had not.¹³⁸

A Greater British divergence is even clearer in exploring the reception of *Ancre*'s companion film, the five part serial *Sons of Our Empire*. Comprising a series of five weekly shorts, released in Britain from April 1917, the film was a compilation series focusing on the Spring Offensive,

¹³⁵ 'Authorised Battle Film', *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 30 August 1917, 6.

¹³⁶ 'Australia in Action', *Register*, 2 August 1917, 6; 'Advance of the Tanks', *The Mail*, 28 July 1917, 4.

¹³⁷ 'Tanks at the Ancre', *Evening Star*, 24 September 1917, 1.

¹³⁸ See Chapter 1.

particularly the fall of Bapaume and the aftermath of the Battle of Jutland.¹³⁹ At least in the broad narrative it constructs, the film contains many of the same key focuses as earlier war films, including preparations for battle, supplemented by tank, aerial, and extended naval sequences. The form of the film was something of an innovation, as a serial of connected magazine films.¹⁴⁰

Sons of Our Empire is also notable for the broad diversity of troops depicted, incorporating numerous British regiments, including Scottish, Irish, and Welsh troops, the Bantams, along with Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, Indian, and West Indian regiments, all specifically highlighted in sustained sequences.¹⁴¹ The scale and diversity of the Imperial war effort was a central focus of the series. The series also marked an important tonal shift for British cinema propaganda, in its use of more narrative intertitles and tone.¹⁴²

The series highlights the imperial quality of the war effort in a notably literary tone. This was not implicit through image alone, but explicit in the intertitles, for instance:

From Castle and Cottage, From Office and Plough, The Empire's brood of heroes pour onward. The Bantams and Canadian Highlanders are determined to punish the enemy.¹⁴³

Similarly, highlighting the New Zealand contribution: 'Anxious to take their share in the struggle the New Zealanders entrain for a front line railhead.' In a closing sequence, the film explicitly links sacrifice in the war to protection of imperial ideals, in a title preceding an open-air funeral service:

The Inevitable Price of Victory: Ye mothers of men, take heart, they have given their lives for the Empire, - for you, that Freedom – Honour – and Civilisation may live.¹⁴⁴

This sacrifice for Empire was further highlighted in the framing of the Scottish contribution, in noticeably more florid language than was typically found in official film to that point:

¹³⁹ IWM: IWM130-03+4 – 'Sons of Our Empire Episode 2 – Glimpses of the British Navy in War Time', War Office Cinematograph Committee, 1917 [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060008189>].

¹⁴⁰ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 64-65; Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 158-159.

¹⁴¹ IWM: IWM130-05+6 – 'Sons of Our Empire (Episode 3 – 'The King's Message to his Troops')', War Office Cinematograph Committee, 1917.

¹⁴² Reeves, *Official British Film*, 182-183; Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 158; Rice, 'Our Empire's Fight for Freedom', Colonial Film Database, 2009, [<http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/6173>]; Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, 75.

¹⁴³ IWM: IWM130-05+6 – 'Sons of Our Empire' (Episode 3 – 'The King's Message to his Troops'), (WOCC, 1917), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022647>].

¹⁴⁴ IWM: IWM130-09+10 – 'Sons of Our Empire' (Episode 5 – 'Attacking Hard') (WOCC, 1917), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022649>].

Where Scotland's thistle sways on high, An foemen meet her knee to knee; Blow up the pipes, and then ye'll see Her courage wake, An learn how Scotland's sons can die for Empire's sake.¹⁴⁵

The inclusion of a quote from the Rudyard Kipling poem *For All We Have and Are*, serves to further reinforce this film's turn not only towards broader imperial framing, but a literary turn also.¹⁴⁶

These titles demonstrate a much more florid, literary language than almost any official film that came before it. They also represent a notably more direct and emotive engagement with Greater Britain than found in earlier films. In this sense, through the knitting of visual illustrations of the scale and diversity of the Imperial effort, framed within the discussion of the moral and civilizational values of the Empire, the film reflects the emergent impulse of British propaganda to 'advertise the British Empire [and] what it stands for,' as the Ministry of Information put it.¹⁴⁷ Increasingly official films made this point deliberately, rather than implicitly, and carried the rhetorical effort of co-creation.

Unsurprisingly, the film was warmly received in the antipodes. Grouped with *The Battle of the Ancre*, it was occasionally even described as the greater draw of the two films: 'It is a magnificent film, and in many respects far exceeds the 'Battle of the Ancre' in point of interest,' noting the film as a 'treat ... for those who love to see the Empire's finest men.'¹⁴⁸ The appeal of local representations was noted as a particular draw, in turn being linked to a wider validation of the imperial effort, for instance:

Particular interest attached to the pictures of our own New Zealanders entraining for the front, whilst men from all parts of the Empire are shown all engaged with the object of upholding the glory of the British Empire, and defence of justice and righteous treatment for all. There are touching and pathetic scenes of service at the front.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ IWM: IWM130-09+10 - 'Sons of Our Empire' (Episode 5 - 'Attacking Hard') (WOCC, 1917), [\[http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022649\]](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022649).

¹⁴⁶ IWM: IWM130-07+8 - 'Sons of Our Empire' (Episode 4 - 'Preparations for the Great Offensive') (WOCC, 1917), [\[http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022648\]](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022648).

¹⁴⁷ TNA:PRO, INF 4/8 - Deposited papers of Sir Robert Donald - correspondence and press cuttings - 'Advertising the Empire', 19 May 1918.

¹⁴⁸ 'The Battle Pictures', *Otago Daily Times*, 26 September 1917, 2.

¹⁴⁹ 'Sons of the Empire - Fine Picture Coming Next Monday Night', *Waikato Independent*, 23 October 1917, 4; Elsewhere, again, the importance of the naval footage is highlighted, e.g., 'Sons of the Empire', *Bruce Herald*, 3 December 1917, 5.

The emotional appeal of representing local troops to Dominion audiences, with the potential to recognise local faces, was frequently drawn out in press commentary.¹⁵⁰ *Ancre* of course held its own. The tank footage was just as compelling for Dominion audiences as British audiences. One reviewer even noted the smaller, but more enthusiastic crowd at *Sons of Our Empire* compared to *Ancre*.¹⁵¹

Reception of the series in Britain was more muted. While *The Bioscope* devoted an entire page review to the series, noting its ‘novelty’,¹⁵² press reaction was nowhere near as enthusiastic, nor circulation as prolific, as *Ancre*. The WOCC’s receipts reflect this, with proceeds from the renting of *The Battle of the Ancre* in British cinemas alone standing at £35,116 for the period to 4th May 1917, compared to a meagre £1,914 for *Sons of Our Empire*. Proceeds of the films in the Dominions were more balanced, with £2,619 for *Ancre* and £2,509 for *Sons*,¹⁵³ though these likely account for rental or sale fees rather than proceeds of Dominion screenings, as these were conducted as they were by local bodies, notably the YMCA in New Zealand’s case.

Timing may have played a role in this divergent appeal. By mid 1917 the attractions of *Ancre* were more appealing to British audiences than the further Somme footage, as *Sons of Our Empire* was comprised of, where Dominion audiences were eager for any official footage that depicted their troops.¹⁵⁴ This represents a divergence in Greater British audience interests and needs from the later years of the war. In much the same way that *Ancre* justified itself through showing tanks to audiences for the first time, *Sons of Our Empire*, made a specific contribution in the eyes of antipodean reviewers by providing ‘a living and up-to-date compendium of the war “from our side of the fence.”’¹⁵⁵ With Greater British war weariness, propaganda needed to be more specific in catering to Dominion needs, rather than flexible enough to rely on eager Dominion engagement. This is an explicit example of stylistic shifts being determined by broader Greater British political and strategic demands. If the generalised Britishness of *Britain Prepared* and *Somme* represented a British

¹⁵⁰ ‘Australians in Action’, *Keynton Guardian*, 6 October 1917, 2; ‘Sons of the Empire – Official War Film’, *Waikato Independent*, 25 October 1917, 4; ‘Sons of Our Empire’, *Dominion*, 16 August 1917, 3; ‘A Big War Picture’, *Bay of Plenty Times*, 24 October 1917, 3; ‘The Battle Picture’, *Evening Star*, 26 September 1917, 3.

¹⁵¹ ‘Sons of the Empire’, *Star*, 13 November 1917, 1.

¹⁵² ‘Sons of Our Empire’, *Bioscope*, 29 March 1917, 1.

¹⁵³ PA: BBK/E/2/5 – May 1917 – Cinematograph Committee – ‘The War Office Cinematograph Committee – Revenue Account for the period ended and Balance sheet as at May 4th 1917’,

¹⁵⁴ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 184.

¹⁵⁵ “‘Sons of Our Empire’ – A Notable War Film’, *Dominion*, 16 August 1917, 3.

confidence and trust in Dominion morale and enthusiasm, *Sons of Our Empire* reflects a growing concern, and realisation of the need for specific validation. Greater British cinema propaganda from 1917 became more disaggregated by specific audience demands, similar to the need for increased rhetorical flexibility for internal Greater British depictions, as explored in Chapter 3.

Sons of Our Empire appears at least in a small way to have met Dominion calls for representation, and the pressures officials from both Dominions applied to appoint national cameramen at the front.¹⁵⁶ The British preference for multi-purpose propaganda had not entirely waned by this point however: *Sons of Our Empire* was apparently designed to be intimidating in the same way as *Britain Prepared*, with a German language version of the serial created.¹⁵⁷ It is notable, therefore, that under the Lloyd George government, a depiction of the imperial dimension of the war effort was acceptable for external propaganda, for allied, neutral, and enemy audiences, than it had been under Asquith.

6.8 – Late War and *Britain's Effort*

In the final months of the war, official cinema production rapidly changed. As Minister of Information, Beaverbrook was finally able to centralise all cinema propaganda under his control, under the Ministry.¹⁵⁸ The tone of the Ministry's films shifted notably away from the documentary, montage style, towards greater narrative, emotive, even comedic styles. This led to a diverse and often bizarre slate of films towards the end of the war, pushing beyond even the florid and language of *Sons of Our Empire*.

Major productions of the late war were the American film maker D.W. Griffiths' WOCC – and later Ministry-sponsored – *Hearts of the World*, and the NWAC's ill-fated 'National Film,' the latter apparently Lloyd George's brainchild. Both were intended as official or semi-official narrative

¹⁵⁶ See, Pugsley, 'Sanders', 19; Eisenberg, 'Hotchpotch', 205.

¹⁵⁷ IWM: IWM1670a – 'Sons of Our Empire Episode 5 – Attacking Hard (German version), (WOCC, 1917), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023216>].

¹⁵⁸ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 130.

propaganda films.¹⁵⁹ Both films drew on atrocity rhetoric, focusing on German outrages in France in *Hearts of the World*, and the established ‘invasion drama’ genre in the ‘National Film,’ insofar as the structure of the NWAC’s film is understood, due to its swift destruction before completion at the end of the war.

Despite Beaverbrook’s hesitancy over Griffith’s use of ‘heart interest’ in *Hearts of the World*,¹⁶⁰ and some apparent NWAC reluctance over the Hall Caine film, these films reflect a growing diversity in the output of official cinema propaganda by the war’s end. In a discussion of the Ministry’s film work to press representatives, Beaverbrook explained the need for this innovation, with the surprisingly frank admission that the Ministry had undertaken sponsoring fictional war films without the official attribution:

The propaganda story films are from scenarios written by well-known writers, and frequently are issued through commercial channels carrying no hint of the actual object or of the source of supply.¹⁶¹

Both *Hearts of the World* and the ‘National Film’ were clear in their official sponsorship, but nonetheless denote this shift to fictionalisation.

Similar impulses are clear in the Ministry’s creation of ‘tag’ films, or ‘short instructional and educational films most produced at the request of other Ministries.’¹⁶² Designed to precede and follow cinema programmes, these films consisted of dramatized scenarios, mostly encouraging food economy.¹⁶³ The tag *The Leopard’s Spots* similarly revived atrocity propaganda. It depicts German soldiers harassing a woman holding a baby, before transitioning to a post-war scene of a German

¹⁵⁹ TNA:PRO - T1/12519/13904 – National War Aims Committee and Ministry of Information. Provision of funds for the preparation of a British national film (‘the Hall Caine film’) - Beaverbrook to Sir Malcolm Ramsay, 2 January 1919]; TNA:PRO – T1/12519/13904 – National War Aims Committee and Ministry of Information. Provision of funds for the preparation of a British national film (‘the Hall Caine film’) - Charles Davidson and C.C. Barrie to The Lords Commissioners of His Majesty’s Treasury, 19 March 1920; Hall Caine to Captain Guest, 12 January 1919; for more on the cancellation of the ‘National Film,’ see David Monger, ‘Sporting Journalism and the Maintenance of British Servicemen’s Ties to Civilian Life in First World War Propaganda’, *Sport in History*, 30:3 (2010), 378.

¹⁶⁰ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – Beaverbrook to Brade, 27 June 1917.

¹⁶¹ PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee - Draft statement to be placed before proposed conference of press-men, to whom will also be shown a selection of films.

¹⁶² PA: BBK/E/2/18 – 1 Aug. 1918 – Drafts by Cinematograph Committee – [‘Ministry of Information – Cinema’]

¹⁶³ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 201-205.

merchant attempting to sell German-made goods in Britain. The merchant is roundly refused by a diligent shopkeeper's wife, and moved along by a police officer. The film explained:

And When all this is Over, The Men who will Penetrate our Peaceful English Villages with German Goods to Sell ... will be the Same Beasts Then as they are Now. The Leopard Cannot Change his Spots.¹⁶⁴

The inclusion at the end of the British Empire Union (BEU) slogan 'Once a German, Always a German,' is notable. Associating with the BEU's rhetoric represented a departure from the 'factual' mode of early British cinema propaganda, towards a very charged message.¹⁶⁵ This suggests the degree to which such imperial interest groups, like the BEU, had already gained influence in propaganda circles, and could have extended its voice had the war continued past 1918.¹⁶⁶

Another film tag, *Give 'Em Beans* is more staid, but notable for its Canadian focus – hardly surprising under Beaverbrook. The tag appeals for food economy by portraying beans and pork as the food of Canadian lumberjacks, with footage of Canadian lumberjacks sped up to reinforce the point, and gesture towards a flatteringly rugged vision of Canadian manhood – a more obvious appeal to Greater British pride than the earlier symbolic style.¹⁶⁷ The film tags were more ephemeral than major films, but represent the innovative impulses of very late stage British propaganda.

This exaggerated impulse also informed imperially focused late war cinema propaganda sponsored by the Ministry, which notably lacked official designation.¹⁶⁸ An example is the animated short *Britain's Effort*, created by the noted animator Lancelot Speed of Neptune studios in 1918, sponsored by the Ministry.¹⁶⁹ The film took the sentiment of *Sons of Our Empire* in a more comedic and sentimental direction, constructing a narrative of the Imperial war effort to the end of 1917.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ IWM: IWM1209 – 'The Leopard's Spots', (Ministry of Information, 8/18), [\[http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/198\]](http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/198).

¹⁶⁵ Reeves, *Official British Film*, 206.

¹⁶⁶ For the operation of the BEU see, Gregory, *Last Great War*, 234-238; Panayi, 'British Empire Union,' 113-128.

¹⁶⁷ IWM: IWM 549-2 – 'Give 'Em Beans', (MOI, 5/1918), [\[http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023083\]](http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023083).

¹⁶⁸ PA: BBK/E/2/7 – June 1917 – General Correspondence – War Cinematograph Committee – Beaverbrook to Brade, 27 June 1917.

¹⁶⁹ Low, *British Film, 1914-1918*, 86, 170; *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, 511:25, 8 February 1917, 97.

¹⁷⁰ Paul Ward, 'Distribution and Trade Press Strategies for British Animated Propaganda Cartoons of the First World War Era', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 25:2 (2005), 189-201.

The film portrays the outbreak of the war as Britannia waking a sleeping John Bull to show Germany – a two-headed bat figure – attacking the female figure of Belgium. Britannia then blows a trumpet, stirring men to rise from the four Dominions and India, foregrounding Greater Britain.

Unbound from the restrictions of the ‘factual’ style of official film propaganda, *Britain’s Effort* bombastically engaged in imperial rhetoric, and evocative atrocity propaganda imagery. In both aspects it is extremely far from the early documentary style. The film features an extended sequence animating the ‘scaling’ of the Greater British war effort found in other Ministry of Information-sponsored propaganda, and explored in Chapter 3. In the film, this diagram comes alive, with the Canadian and ANZAC soldiers sitting on the knees of the large British soldier.¹⁷¹ This represents perhaps the most concerted effort at validating not only Greater British sympathies, but within it a particular construction of Greater Britain, with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand as the privileged three within Greater Britain.

The end of the war took British official filmmakers by surprise, with further innovation planned and expected. With the cessation of hostilities official cinema was rapidly wrapped up.¹⁷² Even so, these films demonstrate that explicit and emotive appeals to Greater British pride intensified by the end of the war, and would likely have continued as such. *Britain’s Effort* functioned in a notably more direct way as Greater British propaganda than did *Britain Prepared* earlier.

6.9 – The New Crusaders

The development of official newsreels integrated cinema propaganda into Greater British entertainment diets in a more substantial way. The *War Office Official Topical Budget*, later *Pictorial News*, was a late war innovation, under the WOCC and the Ministry of Information. These were shown widely alongside other non-official cinema shows. Many of the larger official films were repurposed within the official budget, including *Sons of Our Empire*.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ IWM: IWM514 – ‘Britain’s Effort: drawings by Lancelot Speed’, (Lancelot Speed, 6/1918), [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060008269>].

¹⁷² McKernan, *Topical Budget*.

¹⁷³ IWM: IWM1128a – ‘War Office Official Topical Budget 362-1’,

These newsreels facilitated frequent representation of Greater British troops, especially on leave in Britain, allowing connection to Dominion soldiers for British audiences by demonstrating their presence on the British home front in various actions. One newsreel, which repurposed *Sons of Our Empire*, featured footage of Lloyd George bidding farewell to Canadian troops, titled, ‘At the call of the Motherland came her Empire’s loyal sons.’¹⁷⁴

Sport was a particular focus, with several editions covering New Zealand triumphs at various inter-allied or inter-imperial rugby matches.¹⁷⁵ The Official Topical Budget therefore became a cypher for the many civic acts of Greater British propaganda, and illustrating the novelty of the presence of the influx of Dominion troops in London.¹⁷⁶ A piece from *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly* suggests this utility, while also reinforcing the emotional importance for New Zealand troops on leave seeing New Zealand figures represented to them on screen:

Kinema shows are a never-failing source of enjoyment to wounded soldiers. A day or two ago I popped into a picture theatre in an Essex town, and found a very lively crowd of fine, sunny fellows – Anzacs, they were – in blue hospital trousers and in excellent spirits, revelling in kinema drama, kinema comedy, and kinema “news”. The topical budget of pictures was especially interesting to them, for it included a film showing young New Zealand soldiers in training for their part in the big war. This picture, by the way, was of value to some of the soldiers in the Motherland, for I heard one remark upon the cleverness and smartness of the New Zealand men in fixing and unfixing bayonets. The film brought home very near to the wounded Anzacs who were at the show, and to the other soldiers was an inspiration. The Colonies are playing an important part in this great struggle, and the film is one of the most effective means of showing the people in the homeland something of the splendid work of the Colonials.¹⁷⁷

Much like the extension of British political speeches into Greater British propaganda, these films demonstrate how cinema likewise projected out civic or personal Greater British interactions to Dominion audiences. In this regard, the Topical Budget became its own network for projecting

[<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/116>].

¹⁷⁴ IWM: IWM1128a – ‘War Office Official Topical Budget 362-1,’

[<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/116>].

¹⁷⁵ E.g., IWM: IWM 1181 – ‘Topical Budget 233-1 (fragment)’ [1916-02-07]:

[<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060000171>];

NTB 242-1 – ‘Topical Budget 242-1’ [1916-04-12]:

[<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060005361>].

¹⁷⁶ E.g., IWM: ‘Honours for ANZACS at Cambridge’, IWM 661a – ‘War Office Official Topical Budget 349-1 (fragment)’ [1918-04-29], [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060023199>];

‘Nottingham’s Gift to New Zealand’, NTB 323-1 – ‘War Office Official Topical Budget 323-1’ [1917-10-03], [<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060005435>];

¹⁷⁷ *The Kinematograph and Lantern Weekly*, 510:25, February 1 1917, 5.

Greater British propaganda, and expanding specific British national or civic propaganda to a broader Greater British audience.

It was through the *Topical Budget* that some of the most successful official films of the later years of the war were created. Late-war British official cinema also represents the increasing government awareness of propaganda in connection to wider military and political strategy, and utilisation of large gestural propaganda specifically. Many of the wider strategic achievements under Lloyd George's leadership, such as the 1917 Balfour Declaration for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, the Imperial War Cabinet, and particularly the capture of Jerusalem, were stage-managed as propaganda gestures, for multiple audiences.¹⁷⁸ As one of the few bright spots for the British war effort throughout 1917, the capture of Jerusalem was extensively mined for propaganda value, especially so in cinema propaganda.¹⁷⁹

Film propagandists responded with a flurry of feature films documenting the capture, which relayed carefully stage-managed entry of Allenby into the captured city – a pageant of imperial cooperation, with Dominion troops prominently featured in Allenby's entry on horseback – to Greater British and international audiences.¹⁸⁰ The capture of the city was self-consciously stage-managed as an imperial victory, and official cinema was a key cypher in communicating this. Cinema therefore played an important role in Lloyd George's logic of bold gestural, strategic propaganda. The WOCC's *The New Crusaders* reflects the heroic narrative built around the capture of Jerusalem by Allenby, claiming a heroic Crusading glory as the inheritance of the British Empire. The British Imperial forces in Palestine were recast as the New Crusaders led by the prophetically ordained Allenby.¹⁸¹ These films represent a further distinct form of propaganda co-creation, no longer simply

¹⁷⁸ See, Alan Palmer, *Victory 1918*, (London: 1998).

¹⁷⁹ Luke McKernan, "'The supreme moment of the war': 'General Allenby's Entry into Jerusalem', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 13:2 (1993), 169-180; Eitan Bar-Yosef, 'The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign, 1917-18', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 36:1 (January 2001), pp.87-109; James E. Kitchen, James E., "'Khaki Crusaders': Crusading rhetoric and the British Imperial soldier during the Egypt and Palestine campaigns, 1916-18, *First World War Studies*, 1:2 (2010), 141-160; Palmer, *Victory 1918*.

¹⁸⁰ See, IWM: IWM13 – 'General Allenby's Entry into Jerusalem', (WOCC, 21/2/1918), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/47324>]; IWM17 – 'The New Crusaders', (WOCC, 3/1918), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/47200>]; IWM28 – 'With the Australian Forces in Palestine', (WOCC, 6/1918), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/47201/1930>]; IWM22 – 'Jericho', (WOCC, 1917), [<http://film.iwmcollections.org.uk/record/index/45012>]; see also, Low, *British Film 1914-1918*, 155.

¹⁸¹ Kitchen, 'Khaki crusaders,' 131.

playing on familiar Greater British symbolism, but constructing a new mythic Greater British history, playing on wider British historical traditions.

The official films of the capture of Jerusalem serviced the wider propaganda rhetoric surrounding the campaign. This drew on chivalric, romantic traditions of warfare, and conceptions of the British Empire's gallant medieval history. The campaign was distinct from the images of the Western Front: cavalry made it a campaign of movement, in a distant and historic foreign land, by the imperial hero Allenby. T.E. Lawrence's prominence as a mythic figure of the campaign grew mostly in the post-war period.¹⁸² In capturing the carefully stage-managed entry of Allenby into the city, especially with the prominence of Dominion soldiers in the party, *The New Crusaders* returns more to the symbolic, implicit style of earlier films, but presents a more confident, even romantic, vision of the imperial war effort. *With the Australians in Palestine*, compiled partly of footage by the official Australian cameraman Frank Hurley and Harold Jeapes, also depicted the capture of the city, and framed it as a Greater British, event.¹⁸³ This symbolism was just as potent amongst Australian and New Zealand audiences, with the crusading rhetoric permeating official histories of the war, and contemporary press reports of the campaign in the Dominions. Australian and New Zealand audiences revelled in their troops' involvement in the capture, recast in the press as 'Antipodean Crusaders.'¹⁸⁴

These films proved that relying on a Greater British symbolic signalling – allowing Dominion audiences to invest in heroic imperial symbols, and imagine themselves into official propaganda – still had potency late in the war. Increasingly, however, British propagandists made more of the effort in this cultural exchange, reaching out to the Dominions with specific and encouraging representations. The rhetoric of the New Crusaders allowed Australian and New Zealand audiences to affirm and imagine their heroic contribution to the war, not only their involvement.¹⁸⁵ These films borrowed the earlier style of *Britain Prepared*, but were more explicit in framing themselves as Greater British depictions of the war effort.

¹⁸² Michael Paris, *Warrior Nation: Images of War in Popular Culture, 1850-2000*, (London: 2000); Mackenzie, 'Heroic myths,' 130-132.

¹⁸³ McKernan, 'The supreme moment', 169-180.

¹⁸⁴ Robert Dixon, *Photography, Early Cinema, and Colonial Modernity: Frank Hurley's Synchronized Lecture Entertainments*, (London: 2013), esp.54; 'Antipodean Crusaders,' *Evening Star*, 27 January, 6.

¹⁸⁵ Wellington, 'Empire and nation', 185-198.

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As Chapters 2 and 3 showed more generally, the changing dynamics and pressures of Greater Britain at war informed rhetorical choices in British cinema propaganda. War weariness in particular made the earlier ‘generalised’ approach less tenable. Later cinema propaganda included greater specification and explicit praise of the Dominion contribution. This was given substantial fuel by Beaverbrook’s leadership at the War Office Cinematograph Committee, and by Bean’s efforts for Australia. New Zealand struggled at the same purpose, limited as it was within the operational structure of Greater British cinema propaganda.

Symbolic representations remained important throughout, and these too became more explicit. Earlier, Dominion enthusiasm was spurred by appeals to navalism. Later, more heroic symbolism of the capture of Jerusalem appealed to a mythic Greater British past. The capture was closely stage-managed, and cinema helped to communicate this widely.

This analysis furthers the case study of cinema propaganda in Chapter 5, showing both how cinema was distinct, and how it reinforced general patterns. Throughout both chapters, and the entire thesis, the dynamics of Greater Britain – political, operational, cultural, and economic – are shown as informing propaganda in distinct ways. In this lens, British and Dominion official films operated as something more – as Greater British propaganda. That British cinema propaganda was designed to serve multiple audiences, including Greater Britain, has been largely missed in scholarship. Acknowledging this shows much greater potential to understand them in the imperial context, beyond simply noting the scale of imperial depictions.

This chapter showed a wide variety of forms of co-creation in Greater British propaganda. It showed how Dominion figures utilised British structures to lead and create Greater British propaganda. It also showed co-creation via competition, evinced in inter-Dominion rivalries, with Australia and Canada jostling to create and promote their own visual propaganda, while New Zealand struggled. It also shows co-creation through re-framing, where British propaganda was given Greater British meaning in the Dominions. Most of all, it shows the wealth of complex meaning that is

revealed by taking Greater Britain and Greater British propaganda seriously, as topics worthy of exploration.

Conclusion

This thesis shows Greater British propaganda during the First World War as a distinct phenomenon. Its varied types of propaganda co-creation were informed by the dynamics of Greater Britain under pressures of the war. To understand this, Greater Britain must be understood as more than a collection of national stories, or a historians' tool, but as a lived historical community. This requires seeing the global *nature* of the war, of Greater Britain, and of propaganda, instead of global *scale* alone.

Greater British propaganda was more than the sum of its national parts, or a collection of national efforts. It was also less than a formal, directed campaign however. It was never centrally organised through any British or Dominion organisation, and had no central directing figure or approach. It was a product of the complex dynamics of Greater Britain. As such, it evinced a vast range of interactions, collaborations, competition, and re-contextualisation that were particular to Greater Britain, which this thesis terms 'co-creation.'

Greater British propaganda was explored through a focus on Britain and New Zealand. British wartime propaganda has been extensively explored by historians of the war and of British Imperial culture. Both approaches tend to see Empire and Greater Britain as discrete themes of British propaganda, often in a quantitative sense. This thesis instead places British propaganda in the frame of Greater Britain, and explores how that context informed organisational and rhetorical choices of British and Dominion propagandists.

Focusing on New Zealand also challenges existing approaches. A major focus of histories of Dominion propaganda of the war focuses on its role in shaping confident national mythologies of the war. Canadian and Australian scholarship has dominated here.¹ By this metric, New Zealand was less effective, often deemed a failure.² This thesis challenges this notion by re-contextualising and widening the picture. The confident publicity of Canada and Australia were products of the dynamics

¹ See, Paul Litt, 'Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism', in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David Mackenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 323-349; Cook, 'Documenting War,' 265-295; Fitzhardinge, *Little Digger*.

² See, Sinclair, *A History*, 247; Palenski, 'A New Zealand Failure,' 19-35.

of Greater British propaganda, just as New Zealand's more co-operative approach. New Zealand relied more on the collaborative aspects of Greater British propaganda co-creation. This was not a failure, but a difference. Explicating this reframes the efforts of each of the Dominions, and shows the diversity of activity in Greater British propaganda.

Each chapter of this work takes a specific focus, to explicate the broader dynamics of Greater British propaganda. The first three chapters provided broader overviews, while the remaining three took more specific case studies. All of these chapters are unified by collective aims. They show the reality and significance of Greater Britain, and its complex dynamics. They show how operational and rhetorical choices by Greater British propagandists were informed by these dynamics. They all account for the significance of time as context, in terms of the war inverting peacetime dynamics, and creeping impact of war weariness. Throughout, New Zealand's variance shows the importance of exploring these dynamics in a collective sense.

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Chapter 1 sketched the operational, organisation, and political aspects of Greater British propaganda. It showed the various interactions, intersections, and tessellation between different official and unofficial organisations, institutions, and personalities in Greater British propaganda. Echoing Thompson and Magee,³ this chapter makes sense of interactions that may seem contradictory outside the frame of Greater Britain, showing how they made sense given existing dynamics. Instead of dismissing these unite connections as 'colonial loose ends,'⁴ this thesis takes them as its main focus. In doing so, it provides a staging ground for the analysis of the rest of the thesis.

This chapter shows how the pressures of the war challenged and inverted the peacetime dynamics of Greater Britain. Wartime pressures slowed Greater British communications. New Zealand's experience revealed this issue in particular. New Zealand was more reliant on the collaborative aspects of co-creation, than were the larger Dominions of Canada and Australia. New

³ See, Thompson & Magee, *Empire and Globalisation*; see also, Smith, 'Empire Effect,' 59-80; Dilley, 'cultural economy,' 45-55.

⁴ Stacey, *Canada*, 239.

Zealand's distance from Home meant it was most affected by the delays and limitations of wartime communications.

The ambiguous constitutional status of the Dominions under the Colonial Office was another inhibition to cooperation between British and Dominion propaganda organisations. Responsibility for Greater British propaganda was dispersed across the British state, which provided opportunity, but also a lack of clarity. This led to a complex and often challenging system to navigate, especially for New Zealand. The remaining chapters explored different aspects of this complexity.

Chapters 2 and 3 show Greater Britain as a cultural space. Greater Britain's shared culture and language, and the 'moral' aspects of cultural trust and familiarity, informed the rhetorical choices propagandists made. Combined with the pressures of international and neutral opinion, these dynamics determined how British propaganda rhetoric represented and engaged Greater Britain. These chapters therefore pursue Stuart Ward's approach, by re-framing familiar rhetoric and ideas in the context of Greater Britain,⁵ specifically British war justifications and war aims. Greater British wartime propaganda rhetoric cannot be understood through quantitative or thematic approaches, but must accommodate context, and *how* rhetoric worked.

Chapter 2 showed that British war justifications engaged Greater Britain carefully. This entailed amplifying certain aspects of the relationship – such as the Dominions' capacity to choose *how* to go to war – while eliding other aspects – such as that the Dominions could not choose *whether* to go to war. German propaganda attacks particularly informed this approach. This qualifies Connelly's assertion that Britain lacked a coherent imperial message.⁶ Greater Britain was not a solitary theme, but a context that informed rhetoric in a more complex way. This was frequently awkward, but not absent minded.

Chapter 3 similarly reframed British war aims and the language of the Commonwealth. For the former, this chapter considered *how* Greater Britain was engaged through British war aims, rather than approaching Dominion representation thematically. The entry of the USA on the Allied side on the one hand, and the emergence of war weariness on the other, changed the rhetorical stakes of

⁵ Ward, 'Wind of Change,' 198-219; Ward, 'Decolonization,' 227-260; Ward, 'Introduction,' 1-20.

⁶ Connelly, 'Image of the Empire,' 188-213.

engaging Greater Britain from 1917. British rhetoric now struck an implicit deal with the Dominions. This Greater British dimension of British war aims has so far been unexplored in historiography.

The increasing reliance on the language of the Commonwealth in propaganda rhetoric from 1917 was also re-contextualised. Unlike Anglo-Dominion relations historiography, this thesis qualifies this change as a strategic rhetorical choice by British propagandists, rather than as a grand foreshadowing of wider change. The language of the Commonwealth was a subtle adaptation of existing Greater British language, acceptable to the Dominions and to international audiences, including the United States. Once again, this entails considering *how* this language worked, not simply noting its prevalence.

The methodologies and findings of the previous three chapters dovetailed in Chapter 4. Examining the visits of the Dominion Prime Ministers to Britain as Greater British propaganda missions showed the overlapping national, official, and unofficial interaction, facilitated by Greater Britain's culture of familiarity and trust. It also challenges the colonial nationalist and Anglo-Dominion relations interpretations of these visits, as only high-political summits relevant to constitutional reform.⁷ These visits were also Greater British propaganda missions. They show that Greater British politics and rivalries played out not just around the Cabinet table, but also in the press and in propaganda. The variance of each leader's visit showed the Dominions' different response to the complex dynamics of Greater British propaganda.

Hughes and Borden's visits have provided fuel and colour to colonial nationalist historians' readings of the war, as fiery Dominion figures challenging the British authorities.⁸ Their London-based advocates Murdoch and Beaverbrook helped to promote these national mythologies. New Zealand's publicity was markedly different, which in colonial nationalist terms has been deemed a 'failure.'⁹ New Zealand's approach and aims were once again different, however. New Zealand was

⁷ E.g., Brown, 'Sir Robert Borden,' 201-224; Wigley, *Transition*, esp. Chapter 1.

⁸ Stacey, *Canada*, 239; John English, 'Political Leadership in the First World War', in *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, ed. David Mackenzie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 76-95; Robert Craig Brown, 'Sir Robert Borden, the Great War and Anglo-Canadian Relations,' in *Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Grant Creighton*, ed. John S. Moir (Toronto: Macmillan, 1970), 201-224; Bridge, *Hughes*, viii.

⁹ Sinclair, *A History*, 247.

generally more cooperative with British authorities, even under pressure. Exploring the visits collectively allows this re-contextualisation.

Chapters 5 and 6 concluded the thesis with a case study of Greater British cinema propaganda. Like Chapter 4, they apply the approaches and findings of the first three chapters in close context. These chapters show the interplay between operation, culture, and economics in Greater British propaganda.

Chapter 5 looked at the organisation and operation of Greater British cinema propaganda. For cinema propaganda, the dynamics of Greater Britain, specifically informality in interaction, and a preference for commercial operation of communications, rationalised Greater Britain as a *market* for British cinema propaganda. Greater Britain was more contentious as an *audience* for Britain's other propaganda bodies, as explored in Chapter 1. Likewise, cinema was a notable area of Dominion leadership, through Beaverbrook. This did not lead to a uniform increase in representation for the Dominions. Beaverbrook's national self-interest, and the complex tessellation of Dominion and British authority at play in cinema propaganda, proved difficult for New Zealand to navigate.

Chapter 6 showed the variance of propaganda co-creation by reframing famous examples of British cinema propaganda as Greater British propaganda. This entailed rejecting a quantitative or thematic reading of Greater Britain and the Empire in British official films, which has been more typical.¹⁰ It furthers the approach of Chapters 2 and 3 by considering *how* these films worked as Greater British propaganda. This entailed a variety of different types of co-creation.

Appeals to martial race mythology and navalism in official films represented co-creation through utilising shared language and culture. Local politicians primed audiences to the particular Greater British lessons of British films. This was co-creation through re-framing. As Dominion war weariness rose, and Beaverbrook's influence grew, representation of Dominion troops became more specific, and the Greater British framing of the war more explicit. This was co-creation through collaboration, and Dominion intervention. Greater British audiences were interested in seeing themselves on screen. Even so, the way that these official films operated as Greater British

¹⁰ E.g., Chapman & Cull, *Projecting Empire*; Cinquergrani, *Of Empire*; see, Haggith & Smith, 'Sons of Our Empire,' 35-53.

propaganda was more complex than through direct representation. The stylistic development of Greater British propaganda films responded to the changing dynamics of Greater Britain at war.

Together these chapters show the dynamics of Greater British propaganda, and provide both general and specific perspectives of their operation. There is not sufficient space in this thesis to explore the full diversity of Greater British propaganda during the war. This work has established an approach that reveals this complexity, and shows the importance of taking Greater Britain seriously as an operational and cultural community. Through this approach there is much more to explore, during the First World War and beyond.

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Ward's work has shown the importance of seeing Greater Britain as a distinct cultural space, even into the 1950s and 60s.¹¹ The approach and methodology of this thesis would prove similarly revealing if applied beyond the First World War. Instead of drawing into the teleology of 'Empire to Commonwealth,' this work should continue to prioritise the complexity and breadth of Greater British cultural, operational, and political dynamics, as a distinct community.

Several historians have already examined the more organised efforts at Imperial publicity and propaganda in the interwar years, especially the Empire Marketing Board.¹² Likewise the development of the Dominions Office and campaigns for Imperial Preference has received attention.¹³ Applying the methodology of this thesis to these interwar developments would provide further context. This would show them not as discrete campaigns or organisations, but products of Greater British dynamics. As shown in this thesis, the breadth of Greater British propaganda cannot be explored through one organisation, such as the Ministry of Information, or the War Office Cinematograph Committee, alone. This approach could put these developments in closer dialogue.

¹¹ Stewart, 'Bloody Post Office,' 43-66.

¹² Constantine, 'Anglo-Canadian relations,' 357-384; Kothari, 'Trade, consumption,' 43-64; Chan, 'Remember the empire,' 105-118; Barnes, 'Brining Another Empire Alive?' 61-85.

¹³ Lobell, 'Second Image Reversed,' 671-693; Stubbings, 'Free Trade Empire,' 1-22.

An important aspect of a Greater British interwar history would be the evolving role and perceptions of Dominion leaders and politicians in Britain, from the First World War. The development of the Dominions Office and the Imperial Conferences would be part of, but not the sum of, this story. Massey's post-war career provides interesting avenues for this. While hesitant to intervene in British wartime politics, after the war he became a prominent figure in Britain, in the campaign for Imperial Preference, frustrating many British politicians in his efforts.¹⁴

Stuart Ward's work has shown that well past the Second World War, parts of Greater Britain remained culturally and ideologically invested in the community, even as Britain decolonised. Furthering this thesis' approach into the Second World War and beyond would therefore be revealing in showing how the fissures in investment in Greater Britain grew after the First World War. In the Second World War, for instance, Australia and New Zealand came to see their strategic priorities in the war itself in divergent ways. Understanding how this variance affected their propaganda and publicity is an important line to pursue. This requires understanding Greater Britain as a distinct cultural space, rather than as a thematic line that can be quantified in rhetoric.

Post-First World War propaganda has the ostensible advantage of being better organised, and more centralised, thus centred on a clearer body of archival sources. While this has the advantage of efficiency, this can be limiting. Just as Mariel Grant cautions for British interwar propaganda efforts, it is important to look beyond obvious organisational and archival frameworks.¹⁵ This thesis explored Greater British propaganda in a very broad way. This revealed the breadth, wide dispersal, and complexity of Greater British propaganda during the First World War. Taking a similarly broad approach beyond the war would be just as revealing.

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¹⁴ James Watson, '“The greatest commercial traveller in the Empire”: Massey and Trade', in *A Great New Zealand Prime Minister? Reappraising William Ferguson Massey*, ed. Watson & Paterson, 121-128; Jeffrey, 'Distance and Proximity,' 455-469.

¹⁵ Grant, *Propaganda Interwar Britain*, 1-9.

Historians have conceptualised Greater Britain in varying, often limiting, ways. Greater Britain has commonly been read as only an idea, a byword for imperial federation, in fatal decline in the face of constitutional reform. This focus on the ‘idea’ of Greater Britain has overshadowed Greater Britain’s reality. Building on the ‘British world’ history, this thesis has instead taken Greater Britain seriously as a real historical community, operationally, political, economically, and culturally. Greater Britain was not only imagined, but realised and relevant. The complex co-creation of propaganda within Greater Britain during the First World War shows the community’s reality, and its deep complexity.

Colonial nationalist and Anglo Dominion relations historiographies have looked past the unique and complex internal dynamics of Greater Britain. Stacey, for instance, dismissed the complex tessellation of Canadian and British military authorities as colonial ‘loose ends,’ to be rationalised in the progression towards Commonwealth.¹⁶ These nation-focused approaches have ignored crucial context, and missed the unique interactions of Greater British propaganda.

This thesis does not dismiss these interactions. Instead, it takes them as its main focus. Doing so has revealed how the dynamics of Greater Britain, under the pressures of the war, informed rhetorical and operational decisions of propagandists. This complicated peacetime dynamics of interaction, and created unique opportunities for interaction and publicity. All of these are missed by reading the war, Greater Britain, and propaganda itself, through national lenses, or as a collection of national stories. This thesis has shown them to be something more, as co-created, with Greater British propaganda as a phenomenon worthy of serious consideration.

¹⁶ Stacey, *Canada*, 239.

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