

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

OPENING SPEECH OF NEW ZEALAND DELEGATE, HON. H. G. R. MASON,
FOURTH PLENARY MEETING, 1 AUGUST, 1946

MR PRESIDENT, AND FELLOW DELEGATES, —

I join with other speakers in expressing to the Government of France, and to the people of this most beautiful and historic city, the warmest appreciation for the hospitable and manifold arrangements which have been made for the delegations attending this Conference.

I represent the country farthest removed in distance from the conflict in Europe, but one which did not hesitate for an instant to join the resistance to aggression in September, 1939. Twice in one generation our men have poured forth their blood in heavy measure; without stint New Zealanders have devoted their whole productive effort to the needs of war.

I cite this fact of the remoteness of New Zealand from the European theatres of war to stress the importance we attach to the well-known observation that peace, like war, is indivisible. An act of aggression in Abyssinia, or in Danzig, or in China is but the stone cast into the world's waters causing the ripples which touch with fatal impact the shores of every country of the world.

We knew that remoteness provided no safeguard, and that failure to resist aggression would mean the loss of the liberties and principles of justice upon which we had built our way of life. We are no less determined to preserve those principles in this making of the peace.

For six years our men fought continuously, proud to fight alongside those armies of free men whose representatives are seated here to-day in this hall of victory. They fought in Greece and Crete, then in North Africa, and later through the whole length of Italy. They fought against the Japanese in the Pacific when our own homeland was threatened. Our sailors fought on every sea, and our airmen brought war to every enemy of the United Nations.

I recall the heavy sacrifices of my country in the cause of democratic freedom, to emphasize our direct interest in the peace, in the settlement and in the maintenance of which we are willing to take as full a share of responsibility as we did in the conduct of the war.

In view of the wide scope of previous speeches, I have no desire to repeat the sound and excellent principles ably expressed by the most distinguished speakers who have preceded me. I should like, however, to express appreciation of the speech by Mr. Byrnes, the first I heard, having arrived late at this Conference. It was worthy of the greatness of America, and it must give encouragement and hope to all peoples to hear such truths and ideals set forth as the practical basis of the policy of a nation of such strength and power as the United States. I warmly uphold, also, the principles of peace-making enunciated with such vigour by my colleague from Australia, Dr Evatt, and also those of his proposals regarding the economic aspects of the peace settlement, proposals which mean so much to the ordinary men and women we represent.