

resulted from many factors, not the least important of which were the introduction of an immigration scheme in July, 1947, and the tremendous volume of inquiries as to conditions generally in New Zealand made by prospective emigrants to this country.

No diminution has occurred in the activities of the External Affairs officer, whose sphere of action has been somewhat widened as a result of the extensive political developments in foreign affairs during the period under review. Close contact and co-operation with both the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office has been maintained by the High Commissioner and the External Affairs officer, who have also attended numerous meetings with British Commonwealth High Commissioners and with the Secretaries of State for Commonwealth Relations and Foreign Affairs.

An increase in the number of applications for permission to enter New Zealand is reported by the Secretarial Branch. This increase, most apparent in respect of nationals of the great majority of European countries, is indicative of the widespread feeling of insecurity and dissatisfaction obtaining throughout Europe. Valuable assistance has been given by this Branch in connection with the appointment of specialists in various spheres to positions in New Zealand. The appointments with which the High Commissioner's Office has been concerned during the year cover, among many others, vacancies in the Public Service, Hospital Boards, and the University of New Zealand.

At least one-half of the numerous inquiries made of the Information Section originated from persons considering emigration to New Zealand, a fact which gives evidence of the keen interest shown in this country by the people of the United Kingdom. The function of issuing passports was delegated to the Information Officer from the beginning of 1948. The activities of the Publicity Branch continue to show a steady progress, extracts from daily news cables now being circulated to 250 daily newspapers, periodicals, magazines, and journalists, in addition to Reuters. An increase is reported in the number of requests for 16 mm. sound-films, lantern slides, film strips, and photographs, while large quantities of literature and maps have been distributed for educational purposes. An important achievement of this Branch during the year was the successful preparation and showing of the "Meet New Zealand" Exhibition. The great amount of work involved in the setting-up of this exhibition, which embraces all aspects of New Zealand life, was well justified by the great enthusiasm with which it was received wherever it was shown. Window displays at New Zealand House, which have been arranged at regular intervals, continue to command a great deal of attention.