

of the activities of each is included in the following pages of this chapter. New Zealand's first Embassy overseas was created in December, 1948, with the elevation of the status of the New Zealand Minister in Washington to that of Ambassador.

There has been little change in the total number of staff employed at New Zealand's overseas posts during the past year. Washington, Ottawa, and Canberra have remained at their 1948 annual report figures; the staff of the Legation in Moscow has been reduced by 1, and that of the combined office at New York increased by 1. Owing to a constant increase in the range and complexity of the duties performed by the Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand in the United Kingdom, 4 new members have been added to the staff of New Zealand House, bringing the total number to 187. The staff at the newly-established Consulate-General at San Francisco numbers 4.

As was the case in last year's annual report, it is necessary to refer to the heavy strain which representation at international conferences has imposed on New Zealand's overseas posts. The United Kingdom and North America posts, in particular, have been seriously depleted, sometimes for long periods, during the year by the need for sending members of their staffs to attend conferences both in Europe and in the United States of America.

2. OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR NEW ZEALAND, UNITED KINGDOM

A study of the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand in the United Kingdom during the year ended 31 March, 1949, indicates that the increase in the volume of work apparent since the end of the war has by no means yet reached its peak. London has been the venue of a large number of conferences and meetings, both governmental and unofficial, during the year, and consequently the volume of visitors from New Zealand has probably exceeded that of any comparable period since the cessation of hostilities.

In February negotiations were completed for the purchase by the New Zealand Government of the Carlton Hotel site, on the corner of Pall Mall and Haymarket, on which, ultimately, new headquarters for the High Commissioner's Office will be erected. As it will be some considerable time, however, before construction can be commenced, a short-term lease of additional office accommodation has been concluded and the occupation of these premises has greatly relieved the serious problem of overcrowding at New Zealand House.

The External Affairs Section has been strengthened during the year by the appointment of a second Assistant External Affairs Officer, and this has enabled the Section to assume certain functions