

contribution made by the members of the Royal New Zealand Air Force in the Pacific has been noteworthy, and its value has been attested in glowing terms by the United States and Australian Commanders. Splendid service has been rendered by our men in the Naval Forces. They are serving with the Royal Navy in all waters and in the New Zealand cruisers operating with the Royal Navy as well as in minor war vessels of the Royal New Zealand Navy throughout the chain of islands in the South Pacific. The continued success that has attended the operations of all arms of our Forces in every theatre in which they are serving has given the Dominion renewed cause to be proud of the record of courage and endurance of our servicemen, Maori as well as pakeha, and of the record of efficiency and unselfish devotion to duty of our servicewomen.

It is cause for rejoicing that the close of the war in Europe has enabled the return to freedom of our men who have been held for so long in prisoner-of-war camps in Germany and in territories occupied by the German Forces. In anticipation of their arrival complete arrangements had previously been made for their reception, care, and attention in England. General satisfaction and appreciation of what has been done have been expressed by all who have inspected the facilities and particularly by the men themselves. They look forward with keen and eager anticipation to their reunion with their families and country. Already some of them are on their way home to New Zealand, and the remainder will follow as quickly as the shipping situation permits.

In addition to maintaining our contribution to the military effort full account must be taken of the Dominion's capacity to produce food not only for the support of Forces in the Pacific, but also to help to maintain the rations of the people of the United Kingdom and to afford assistance to the people of the liberated countries in Europe. The production of meat and dairy-produce for this season already promises to exceed the objectives aimed at. The findings of the Allied Food Conference in Washington earlier this year, which revealed the gravity of the world shortage of foodstuffs, led my Government to make a reduction in the rations of meat and butter, thus augmenting the quantity of food which this Dominion can make available.

My Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs went to London in March at the invitation of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to take part in discussions between representatives of the Governments of the British Commonwealth of Nations on proposals relating to the establishment of a general international organization for the preservation of peace and security. These discussions took the form of an unrestricted and valuable exchange of views as a preliminary to the conference of representatives of the United Nations to which my Government were invited to send representatives and which was formally opened at San Francisco on the 25th April.

My Ministers have at all times attached the greatest importance to the solution of the problems of maintaining peace and security, in order that the peoples of the world may continue to make progress towards highest purposes of life, in freedom from fear, the devastation of war, and its cost in human lives. Long and earnest consideration had therefore been given to proposals for an international organization that were to be placed before the conference at San Francisco. My Prime Minister, assisted by the New Zealand Minister to the United States of America, Mr. C. A. Berendsen, approached the tasks of the Conference with the fullest determination to play their part in formulating the most effective possible proposals for a collective system of international security.

The Conference was brought to a successful conclusion on the 26th June, and my Prime Minister and the Minister to the United States gave their signatures provisionally to the Charter of the United Nations. The text of the Charter will be submitted to Parliament at the earliest possible date, and members will be given an opportunity of considering and discussing the provisions contained in it before being asked to support its ratification.

The machinery for co-operation which was developed in the agreement concluded at Canberra in 1944 between His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and my Government is working in a friendly and most useful manner. In November last a further Conference took place at Wellington between representatives of the two Governments. This provided a valuable opportunity for exchanging views on a number of matters of common interest, including subjects of world security and trusteeship for dependent peoples which have been under debate at the United Nations Conference at San Francisco.