

territories concerned, the New Zealand Government therefore specifically recommended that Eritrea and Italian Somaliland be placed under the trusteeship of the United Nations Organization.

Despite their examination of the opinions of interested Governments, and despite the advantage of the up-to-date information provided in the Investigation Commission's reports, no agreement on disposal of the colonies could be reached either by the Deputies or by the four Foreign Ministers themselves in their final meeting on the problem held at Paris in September, 1948. Accordingly, in conformity with the terms of the peace treaty with Italy, the problem was referred for decision to the General Assembly of the United Nations. No discussion was possible at the first part of the third regular session of the General Assembly held at Paris, and the question was to be examined at the second part of the same session, to be held in New York in April of this year.

THE UNITED NATIONS

1. GENERAL

During the period reviewed in this report, New Zealand continued to participate as fully in the work of the United Nations as was compatible with its geographical isolation and the limited staff resources of the Government Departments concerned.

The difficulty of representation was aggravated by an increase in the number and length of United Nations meetings. For instance, the length of Assembly sessions, measured in days, increased by 20 per cent. over the previous twelve months; the corresponding figure for the Economic and Social Council was likewise 20 per cent., and for the Trusteeship Council 43 per cent. There was an even greater increase in the number of meetings held during sessions (44 per cent. in the case of the Assembly). The establishment of the Interim Committee, which met between Assembly sessions, and the holding of meetings away from headquarters (in particular the seventh session of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva and the first part of the third regular session of the Assembly in Paris) imposed an added strain upon the resources of the Department and its overseas posts.

Some increase in the number and length of meetings was to be expected as the organization entered into the full performance of its functions. The disproportionate length of meetings, such as the third session of the Assembly, was, however, largely caused by the tactics of the Eastern European delegations, which manoeuvred tirelessly to prevent proposals with which they disagreed from being brought to a decisive vote. New Zealand delegations, while upholding the principle of full and free discussion which is the main-spring of democratic procedure, have consistently endeavoured to