

position permits the United Kingdom Government will give New Zealand so far as practicable equal and coincident opportunities with other countries for resuming shipments of chilled beef. Certain details are still under discussion and I am unable at the present juncture to add anything further.

A problem of increasing magnitude in New Zealand is that of housing. **Housing** Shortly after coming into office the Government undertook to spare no effort in remedying the unsatisfactory state of affairs which then existed. The lending arrangements of the State Advances Corporation were made more generous for those who wished to build their own homes, while at the same time the Government undertook a comprehensive scheme of State housing. The outbreak of war necessarily seriously interfered with this programme; in fact, the withdrawal of men and material for war purposes, including the erection of camps, aerodromes, and defence works generally, resulted in the practical cessation of housing for a period. The position has been aggravated by the direction of man-power to the cities for war-production work and, more recently, by the repatriation of members of the Armed Forces from overseas. Every step is being and will be taken to provide homes for the men who have fought for our preservation and safety.

The Government appreciate that, in view of the magnitude which the problem of housing has now attained, the ordinary methods of building are too slow, added to which is the fact that timber-supplies are limited. Consequently, quicker alternative methods of building have been investigated, and these have taken the lines generally of (a) prefabricated wooden units, (b) prefabricated concrete units, and (c) concrete on site and block units. In considering prefabrication, the Government are keeping in mind the aesthetic aspect and are ensuring that homes and flats are not only well-appointed inside, but are well built and attractive from a community point of view.

In order that the housing programme can be rapidly accelerated as soon as the war situation permits, an active policy of purchasing suitable land has been followed, with the result that last year no less than 4,300 building sites were purchased, bringing the purchases to date to over 40,000 sections.

The total expenditure to the 31st March last on State rental houses exceeded £23,900,000, while provision is being made in the current year's Estimates for a further expenditure of £3,500,000.

Since the last Financial Statement was presented to the House four international Conferences have been held, and the reports have been prepared and examined by the Government. These Conferences are the foundation conferences to determine the relations of the United Nations in the post-war period. The first of the Conferences was held in June, 1943, at Hot Springs, in the United States. The Conference covered the subject of food and agriculture. Its main purposes are set out in the report of the Conference. These purposes are:— **International Conferences (Four)**  
**Food and Agriculture**

- (1) The first task is to complete the winning of the war and to deliver millions of people from tyranny and from hunger. During the period of critical shortage in the aftermath of war, freedom from hunger can be achieved only by urgent and concerted efforts to economize consumption, to increase supplies, and distribute them to the best advantage.
- (2) Thereafter we must equally concert our efforts to win and maintain freedom from fear and freedom from want. The one cannot be achieved without the other.
- (3) There has never been enough food for the health of all people. This is justified neither by ignorance nor by the harshness of Nature. Production of food must be greatly expanded: we now have knowledge of the means by which this can be done. It requires imagination and firm will on the part of each Government and people to make use of that knowledge.
- (4) The first cause of hunger and malnutrition is poverty. It is useless to produce more food unless men and nations provide the markets to absorb it. There must be an expansion of the whole world economy to provide the purchasing-power sufficient to maintain an adequate diet for all. With full employment in all countries, enlarged industrial production, the absence of exploitation, an increasing flow of trade within and between countries, an orderly management of domestic and international