



THE
NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE
 EXTRAORDINARY

Published by Authority

WELLINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 1949

THE Third Session of the Twenty-eighth Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by the Governor-General, when His Excellency was pleased to make the following statement of the causes of the calling of this Session of Parliament together:—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND MEMBERS OF
 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

Since last I addressed you in Parliament assembled His Majesty's New Zealand subjects learned with great distress and disappointment of the disability suffered by the King. The progress made by His Majesty toward restored health has been watched with heart-felt relief, and the day when renewed plans may be considered for Their Majesties to visit New Zealand is eagerly awaited.

It was with great pleasure that I was able, during the past year, to visit the islands of the Southern Cook and the Tokelau Groups. I was deeply impressed by the affectionate welcome accorded to my wife and me, by the loyalty of the people, and by their vigour and progress. It is my intention in the coming year to go to the Northern Cook Group.

My visit to Western Samoa enabled me to observe with deep satisfaction the spirit of co-operation and friendliness exhibited towards New Zealand, and the commendable and effective way in which the Samoan leaders and people have taken up their new responsibilities.

I also welcomed the opportunity of visiting Australia, and of seeing the life and progress of that sister nation, to whom we are bound by so many ties of kinship and common interest.

New Zealand was represented by my Prime Minister at the meetings of British Commonwealth Prime Ministers held in London in October last year and April this year, when important constitutional, political, economic, and defence questions were discussed.

My Government were also associated with the agreement reached at further Commonwealth meetings held in October and November, 1948, under which, in regard to matters of citizenship and trade, the Republic of Ireland is not to be treated as a foreign country.

My Government have affirmed that no alteration in the position of New Zealand in the British Commonwealth or in its firm allegiance to the Crown resulted from the decisions of these meetings. While regretting that the Government of India could no longer accept a common allegiance to the Crown as the basis of the Commonwealth, my Government welcomed the agreement that India continue in full membership of the Commonwealth and her acceptance of the King as the head. They regard this agreement as evidence both of the capacity of the Commonwealth for adjustment to changing circumstances and of the desire of peoples of different races to conserve within their political life the principles and traditions inherent in the Commonwealth association.

It is the intention of my Ministers to co-operate in any action which may be taken by the powers principally concerned with a view to the conclusion of peace treaties with Germany and Japan and the consequent termination of an abnormal and unsatisfactory situation.

In the furtherance of their policy of supporting the purposes and principles of the United Nations, my Government continues to participate in the work of the various United Nations organs and specialized agencies. On the Economic and Social Council the New Zealand representative, Mr. James Thorn, has been elected President. At the meeting of the United Nations Assembly held in Paris my Prime Minister led the New Zealand delegation. Of the matters dealt with on that occasion, the adoption by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is considered by my Ministers as being of outstanding importance.

The North Atlantic Treaty appears to my Advisers greatly to reinforce the security of the most important group of democratic States. They also welcome the Treaty as helping to consolidate the framework of Western Union which I commended in the name of New Zealand at the opening of the last Session of Parliament.

My Government fully recognize the close affinity, arising from common traditions of democratic government, and from shared experiences in the defence of liberty, that exists between the people of New Zealand and the peoples associated in the North Atlantic Treaty. They are confident that this community of interests would provide a basis for the conclusion of similar arrangements in the Pacific region involving both self-help and the pledge of mutual support.

My Government, which, in common with the Government of Australia, promoted the establishment of the South Pacific Commission, continue to lend their whole-hearted support to its activities for the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the peoples of the South Pacific area.

During the past year the political situation in East Asia has engaged the particular attention of my Ministers. They are devoting careful consideration to the developments which have recently occurred and to the implications which they may have for the security of New Zealand and of the British Commonwealth as a whole.

In accordance with their normal responsibilities, and particularly in the light of the deeply-disturbed international situation, my Government are concerned to ensure that essential provision is made for the adequate protection of New Zealand's vital interests in the Pacific area, and for the maximum contribution to the protection of those of the British Commonwealth, with which New Zealand's life and destiny are inseparably linked.

While in London last year and earlier this year, my Prime Minister was able to discuss problems of defence with United Kingdom Ministers and Service authorities.

These discussions have enabled my Advisers to appreciate the position in detail and assisted them in their consideration of the measures that must be taken to ensure that the defences of this country are so organized as to enable New Zealand to meet her obligations immediately in the event of any emergency. My Ministers do not take the view that conflict is inevitable, and they will on every

occasion strive for the preservation of peace. They are bound, however, to recognize the necessity for adequate defence preparations, the existence of which, under existing circumstances, they regard as an indispensable safeguard of peace.

Effect is already being given to plans for the development of the New Zealand Naval and Air Forces and, within the last few months, some of the frigates for the New Zealand Naval Forces have arrived on the New Zealand Station. Consideration has been given to the necessity for a system of compulsory military training to enable New Zealand to provide the land forces for the defence of her interests in the event of emergency. The detailed review of the position that has been made by my Government discloses that compulsory military training is the only effective means of producing the land forces which will be required immediately should an emergency arise. Legislation to provide for the taking of a referendum on the introduction of this form of training will be placed before you.

MR. SPEAKER, AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The finances of New Zealand have continued to increase in strength. As a result of the continued buoyancy in the revenue, the public accounts for the past financial year reveal a surplus of £2,631,000. Despite record disbursements of £44,400,000, the position of the Social Security Fund has been improved during the year by £1,400,000, bringing the balance of the Fund to £8,700,000, the highest since the Fund was set up in 1939. My Government propose to improve the conditions of war pensioners and of social security beneficiaries by increasing the monetary benefits of the aged, invalids, and widows.

A sum of £1,600,000 has been set aside in a special Air Force Trust Fund to provide for the re-equipment of the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

During the year New Zealand has endeavoured in all possible ways to aid the people of Great Britain in their economic difficulties. To this end, my Ministers have consistently followed policies of conserving dollar funds; of containing imports within the limits of New Zealand's current export income, while at the same time encouraging the highest proportion of imports from the United Kingdom; and of exporting to the United Kingdom the maximum amount of food. In pursuing these policies my Ministers have continued to act in the closest collaboration with the United Kingdom authorities.

It is gratifying to record that the beneficial effects of the revaluation of the New Zealand currency—by adjusting the exchange rate to parity with sterling—have been reflected in reductions in the prices of producers' and consumers' goods, depending, directly or indirectly, on imports.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The economic soundness of the country over the past year has been accompanied by high production in almost all important fields of industry, and many new records have been established. Meat and dairy production have been maintained at very high levels, and New Zealand has now become the chief supplier to Britain of meat as well as of butter and cheese.

Long-term contracts and stabilized marketing procedures have given economic security to primary producers, who have shared in the general prosperity with the rest of the community. My Advisers hold firmly to the view that the welfare of all sections of the people can only be maintained on the foundations of high production, together with economic stabilization, and they fully recognize their responsibility to promote conditions of prosperity in which all may share.

For this reason, equally with their desire to help the people of Britain, my Ministers have given close study to the measures required to achieve a still greater expansion of food exports, and plans are now being formulated to extend the area and productivity of pasture land and to encourage the increased production of fertilizer.

There has been intensified activity in the development and settlement of Maori lands, and steps are being taken to develop considerable additional areas capable of being farmed. A necessary part of this scheme is the reduction of the difficulties of Maori land titles, and my Government are engaged in the solution—by methods of consolidation—of the problems which arise from the plural ownership of such lands. The settlement of Maori land claims still outstanding continues to receive the fullest attention. The activities of the tribal executives and committees in the administration of domestic affairs are being reflected in increasing measure in the social and economic advancement of the Maori people.

During the past year there has been a great acceleration in the progress of housing the people, both Maori and pakeha. The need for housing specially suited to the comfort and convenience of old people is being met by the erection of homes, in which some community assistance will be available. My Advisers, convinced that the measures taken to concentrate building activity on housing have vitally contributed to the record number of new buildings completed, will continue to ensure that building resources are effectively directed towards most urgent needs.

My Ministers have continued their efforts to accelerate hydro-electric development to meet the ever-increasing demand for electric power. Plans are therefore being laid for a number of large projects in addition to the major schemes at present being constructed.

The success which is attending the efforts of my Government to rehabilitate ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen is a matter of particular satisfaction. Over 43,000 ex-servicemen have been directly assisted to find homes and 6,500 to establish themselves on farms. The total outlay for rehabilitation now amounts to £87,000,000.

There will also be introduced a measure designed to promote improved relations between employers and employees. This will provide for the establishment of a joint national body, including employers' and workers' representatives, to bring the two sections in industry continuously together and enable them to work out constructive advances in the fields of industrial relations and industrial welfare.

Full employment has been maintained throughout the year, while at the same time the increase in the total labour force of some ten thousand workers has resulted in easing the labour stringency in key industries. This improvement will be promoted further by the inflow of selected migrants from Britain, together with a number from Holland and the displaced persons from Europe.

My Government propose to bring down an Inspection of Machinery Bill with the object of re-allocating the functions of the Departments of Labour and Marine, and legislative authority will be sought for making more efficient use of the national coal resources.

Much progress has also been made in the past year on building new class-rooms and schools to accommodate the greatly-increased number of children who will enter the schools in the next few years. Earnest attention is being given to the training of additional teachers.

During the year an agreement has been concluded with Australia whereby reciprocity will be extended in the field of social security monetary benefits. Legislation to give effect to this will be placed before you. Further negotiations regarding a similar agreement are being conducted with the United Kingdom.

Other legislation to be introduced includes consolidations of the law relating to the management and protection of forests and forest land; fire brigades and fire defence, and co-ordinating and financing of fire services; Government railways; transport and the National Provident Fund; and amendments to the law relating to Samoa, co-operative dairy companies, workers' compensation, and, as a result of the referenda, the law relating to licensing and gaming and racing.

I commend these matters to your earnest consideration, and I pray for Divine guidance in your deliberations.