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THE Third Session of the Thirtieth 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 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

I welcome this, my first opportunity of addressing you in Parliament assembled and of acknowledging at the same time the honour conferred on me by the Queen in appointing me to the high and responsible office as Her Majesty's representative in New Zealand. My wife and I, with our family, look forward with great pleasure to the privilege of living and working amongst the people of this loyal outpost of our great British family of Nations. Since our arrival we have had the opportunity of meeting large numbers of people, including many members of the Maori race, and we have been deeply moved by the warmth and cordiality of the welcome extended to us. It is a source of special pleasure to me that I am able to renew my earlier association with members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force formed during the course of the North African campaign. It is my earnest hope that I may, by God's will, be able to assist in promoting the welfare of this country and its people.

On 25 March we learned, with profound sorrow, of the death of Queen Mary, for whom we all had the strongest feelings of affection and admiration. Throughout her long life she was unflinching in her devotion to the British people, and she will always be revered for the highest example of service which she set before us all.

The people of New Zealand and of its island territories look forward with joyous expectation to the historic event, now less than two months away, when our beloved Queen Elizabeth the Second will be crowned in Westminster Abbey. This will be a time when the ties that bind our family of nations together will be renewed and strengthened. We pray that Divine Providence will ever guide the Queen in the discharge of the manifold duties and responsibilities which, as head of the Commonwealth, Her Majesty has been called upon to bear so early in life.

On this great occasion New Zealand will be officially represented by my Prime Minister, the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Maori Affairs and Lands, the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, and Members of both Parties in Parliament. They will be able to express to Her Majesty in person the loyal devotion and affection of her subjects in New Zealand and its island territories.

A Military Contingent, drawn from all branches of our armed forces, including a detachment from Korea and ex-servicemen from both world wars, is being sent to take part in the Coronation ceremonies. At the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead the Royal New Zealand Navy will be represented by H.M.N.Z.S. "Black Prince".

Throughout New Zealand Coronation Day will be marked by local celebrations and festivities appropriate to so great an occasion.

At the London Conference of Prime Ministers last December further discussions took place concerning changes in the Royal Style and Titles made necessary by constitutional developments in the Commonwealth. Each member Government will in future use its own form of title, and a Bill approving the form to be used in respect of New Zealand will be introduced during the present session.

A further joyful event eagerly awaited by the New Zealand people is the visit of Her Majesty the Queen, and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. It would be a memorable event under any circumstances, but it will be especially so on this occasion as it will be the first time in the history of New Zealand that the reigning Sovereign has visited these shores. The Royal visitors are assured of a warm and loyal welcome when they arrive here shortly before Christmas.

The itinerary for Her Majesty's visit is a comprehensive one and, in order to reduce the physical strain involved, my Government, in co-operation with the representatives of the various local authorities, is reducing to a minimum the number and duration of official indoor engagements and receptions. This will permit the Queen to spend as much as possible of the time available out of doors amongst the people, especially the children.

A special and short session of Parliament to be held in January next will be opened by Her Majesty in person in this very Council Chamber, when she will read the Speech from the Throne. This historic and unique ceremony will be broadcast not only to New Zealand, but to the rest of the world.

Following the Coronation a special Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers will be held in London at which my Prime Minister will attend. These meetings of Her Majesty's principal Ministers provide an important and welcome opportunity for exchanging views, and for formulating and co-ordinating plans designed to promote the advancement of the Commonwealth, and to strengthen its influence in world affairs.

In the field of international affairs the Government continues to pursue a policy of firm support for the United Nations. At the Seventh Regular Session of the General Assembly held in New York towards the end of last year the New Zealand Delegation, led by the Minister of External Affairs, participated fully in the consideration of the many vital issues with which the Assembly is confronted. This applies particularly to the negotiations in connection with the attempt to remove the one outstanding issue, namely, the repatriation of prisoners of war, which bars the way to the conclusion of an armistice in Korea.

Latest developments encourage the hope that wiser counsels may yet prevail to bring an end to hostilities and pave the way for the unification and rehabilitation of Korea.

My Government bases its foreign policy upon the strength of the British Commonwealth, the principles of the United Nations Charter, and the maintenance of a firm alliance with the United

States of America. Relations with the Government of the United States are intimate and friendly, and the first meeting of the ANZUS Council in Honolulu last year, attended by my Minister of External Affairs, has served to strengthen this association. It is the firm view of my Advisers that the Treaty establishing this Council will be a source of strength not only to the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, but also to the British Commonwealth generally.

My Ministers continue to study the strategically important Middle East situation. The transfer of No. 14 Ground Attack Fighter Squadron of the Royal New Zealand Air Force to Cyprus, where it is now serving with Royal Air Force and Australian units, emphasizes my Government's concern in the security and future of this region. In addition, Hastings long-range transport aircraft are undertaking regular flights from New Zealand to the Middle East and the United Kingdom in support of the fighter squadron. These flights also afford valuable training for the transport crews.

The efforts of the people of France and Vietnam to restore order in the Associated States of Indo-China are regarded with special interest by my Advisers. This struggle against Communist-inspired insurrection has involved great sacrifices for the Government and people of France. As an earnest of New Zealand's interest, a quantity of arms and ammunition was made available last year to the French Forces there.

The Compulsory Military Training Scheme, now in its third year, is proving successful in every way. My Ministers consider that measures to secure military preparedness for any emergency are essential and that the trained reserves now being built up will enable New Zealand to make an effective contribution in the defence of the nation's interests.

In fulfilment of the obligations which New Zealand has assumed in the United Nations Charter all possible measures are being taken to promote the advancement and welfare of the island territories under the jurisdiction of New Zealand. Following the visit of the Minister of External Affairs to Western Samoa last year, my Government has recently announced important steps which it proposes to take in the political, economic, and social spheres of Samoan administration, with the ultimate objective of establishing a system of self-government in the territory. It will no doubt be regarded as a bold step. My advisers are confident, however, that the Samoan people will, as in the past, prove worthy of the trust now being reposed in them and that the goal of their ambitions is within measurable range.

As a further mark of the goodwill towards the Samoan people, my Government is now considering ways and means of handing over to them the ownership and control of the New Zealand Reparation Estates, concurrently with the establishment of self-government in the territory.

In December last my Prime Minister attended an Economic Conference in London convened by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. A wide measure of agreement was reached there on policies designed to increase the financial and economic strength of the Commonwealth. The broad plan prepared by this meeting has already been discussed with the United States and is now the subject of consultation with the countries of Western Europe.

In accordance with the general understanding reached at the London Conference, my Advisers are pursuing policies that will enable New Zealand to make a worthwhile contribution to the overall balance-of-payments situation of the sterling area. It is of vital concern to the whole world that the sterling area should continue to recover its strength and influence in world trade.

For the year now drawing to a close the volume of production may well be a record. With prices for meat, dairy produce, and wool at satisfactory levels, the current season should be a prosperous one for New Zealand.

Though difficult for certain types of products, seasonal conditions have greatly benefited the dairy industry. Up to the end of February the volume of dairy production was 7 per cent higher than for the corresponding period of 1951-52. In each of the last three seasons previous records for the dairy industry were broken, and a new record is already in prospect.

The favourable financial situation in the Consolidated Fund enabled the Government last Christmas to arrange a special bonus payment of £5 for single persons and £10 for married couples within certain classes of age beneficiaries and war pensioners. A similar bonus payment will be made by the Government this coming Christmas, but at the rate of £10 for single persons and £20 for married couples.

Special funds have also been set aside to assist social security beneficiaries and war pensioners to meet extraordinary expenditure which cannot be regarded as coming within the usual living costs.

As a result of my Advisers' decision to refrain from raising loans for Government works, more moneys were available to meet the capital requirements of local authorities and industry. My Government proposes to pursue its policy of reducing taxation, in line with the very considerable concessions made in this field since 1949. Demands for schools, houses, roads, land development, and electric power, so essential in a young and growing country, seriously limit, however, the extent to which further reductions can be contemplated.

Estimates of expenditure will be placed before you for your consideration in due course.

The building of houses continues to be a major concern of my Government. Applications by tenants for the purchase of their State rental houses continue at a satisfactory level, and the sale of the seven-thousandth rental house was recently completed. The total value of these sales now exceeds £14,500,000.

In accordance with my advisers' policy of transferring to the various producer organizations a greater measure of responsibility for the marketing of the products of their industries, the Meat Board will conduct the price negotiations with the United Kingdom Government for the 1953-54 meat season. Discussions with the United Kingdom Ministry of Food on the long-term marketing policy for meat will, however, be conducted by the Government.

My Ministers have taken further steps towards restoring to private or producer control the marketing of primary products. From December of this year the Apple and Pear Marketing Board will be responsible for the distribution of apples and pears. The New Zealand Poultry Board will set up its own marketing organization and become responsible for the administration of the Egg Marketing Regulations. The necessary empowering legislation will be submitted to you during the current session. The remaining marketing functions, though important, do not justify administration by a separate Department of State, and have, therefore, been assumed by the Department of Agriculture.

A further advance in the development of the country's hydro-electric resources was made towards the end of last year when the first generators installed at Maraetai were brought into operation. It is anticipated that this station will be working at full capacity of 180,000 kilowatts by about a year from now. Other hydro-electric power stations are in the course of construction or extension throughout both North and South Islands, while plant has been imported for the investigation of the deeper-seated sources of geothermal steam as power for the generation of electrical energy.

The availability of overseas materials and the improvement in the labour situation will permit an active programme of public works to be maintained.

Special attention has been given to questions affecting the welfare of the Maori people, and a record number of houses has been erected under the Maori Housing Scheme during the past year. Most

encouraging progress is being made in the organization of Maori Women's Welfare Leagues, the principal functions of which are to help Maori women to attain higher standards of nutrition, infant welfare, and homecraft.

The development of Maori lands is being extended, and an increasing number of settlers, having repaid advances made to them by the Government, are being given leasehold tenures. The majority of settlers on development schemes have hitherto had no regular tenure, their occupation being a matter of arrangement with the owners of the land. It is considered that a proper leasehold or freehold tenure is essential in the interests of both occupiers and owners, and efforts are being made to improve tenures as quickly as possible.

Under legislation passed in 1950 the Maori Trustee has been making progress in bringing into production Maori lands which have been lying idle through complications of title or other causes. Action is also being taken to grant leases of such land either to competent owners or to other persons.

My Government feels that the system of Maori land tenure is likely to break down completely unless determined steps are taken to reduce piece-meal succession to interests in land. Legislation consolidating the Maori Land Acts and also introducing important amendments to the law of succession to Maori lands will therefore be laid before you.

The successful re-establishment in civilian life of so many of the ex-servicemen of World War II is a source of satisfaction to my Advisers. Much effort has been expended to achieve this result, which was only attained through the voluntary co-operation of all those members of the community who so willingly made their services available both as members of various committees and individually.

The full resources of the rehabilitation service will continue to be available for men of Kayforce to assist their return to civilian life.

Progress is being made in the development of unimproved land in Crown ownership to provide farms for ex-servicemen eligible and qualified for farm settlement. This work is now so far advanced as to make it possible to embark on a civilian settlement scheme under which unimproved and partly improved properties will be made available for settlement by young farmers and others not eligible for rehabilitation finance.

The immigration programme is being carefully planned so as to avoid any adverse effects on industry or the economy generally. The Immigration Advisory Council, which is representative of all sections of the community, has contributed materially to the successful implementation of my Government's immigration policy, a cardinal feature of which is that special preference is given to migrants from the United Kingdom.

My Advisers propose to appoint a Committee to assist them in planning the development of hospital administration so as to provide the best service in the most economical manner. It will report on the various problems, including the provision of base hospital services, the administrative machinery, and the procedure for the control of expenditure.

With the considerable reorganization in the coal-mining industry, and after a decade of shortages, the production of most classes of coal is sufficient for all requirements, and no coal is at present being imported. Special attention is being given to conserving resources of bituminous coal.

My Advisers are gratified at the considerable improvement in industrial relations and the greater productive effort in certain major industries, which in some cases have increased output by as much as 25 per cent. These developments, combined with the abundance of work available, have offered real benefits to the community generally.

In the legislative programme for the current session there will be Bills dealing with taxation, loans, education, town planning, local elections and polls, merchandise marks, and wildlife. Other measures to engage your attention will include Bills to consolidate and amend the Companies Act, and to amend the Cinematograph Films Act 1928, the Municipal Corporations Act, the law relating to public domains, the Local Government Commission Act, the Forests Act, the Fire Services Act, the Impounding Act 1908, the licensing law, and the Electoral Act.

In the field of transport, legislation to reduce the hazards arising from intensified road traffic and generally to maintain a high level of safety for all classes of road users will be submitted for your consideration.

You will also be asked to consider a Bill to give effect to certain recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the waterfront industry.

The programme will also include amendments to the gaming legislation providing more effective penalties against illegal betting and dealing with gaming generally, amendments to the Coal Mines Act 1925, the Mining Act 1926, the Quarries Act 1944, the Tenancy Act, the Land Subdivision in Counties Act, and the Rabbit Nuisance Act. You will be asked to consider a Bill consolidating and amending the law relating to the powers and functions of the New Zealand Dairy Board, and also a Bill defining the functions of the Department of Agriculture.

Following the precedent of similar legislation in the United Kingdom, you will be asked to consider a Courts-martial Appeals Bill. This will establish a special Court of Appeal to hear and determine appeals by servicemen from the decision of Courts-martial. My Ministers also propose to introduce an Armed Forces Bill which will deal with matters common to the three Armed Services but not dealt with in their respective Acts.

To overcome difficulties which have confronted the Government in taking title to property, particularly property acquired overseas, my Ministers propose to submit for your consideration a Bill providing for the establishment of a corporation with power to hold and deal with New Zealand Government property both in and outside New Zealand.

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