



THE NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY

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THE Second Session of the Thirty-seventh Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by Her Majesty the Queen, when Her Majesty 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 am pleased to be able to exercise my prerogative in opening the second session of this thirty-seventh Parliament.

I have been much moved by the welcome which New Zealanders have given to me, and to my husband, since our arrival. We are particularly glad that The Prince of Wales, and The Princess Anne and her husband, have been with us to share the pleasures of that welcome and of this visit.

As Queen of New Zealand—and Head of the Commonwealth—I rejoice at being here at this particular time. The great Commonwealth gathering at Christchurch for the Games was an unforgettable experience, and on Wednesday I shall attend the celebration of the first New Zealand Day at Waitangi. It was on the sixth day of February 134 years ago that the link was established between the British Crown and my Maori people, and the first step in New Zealand's nationhood was taken.

It is also significant that our visit coincides with the passage of a Bill to revise the Royal Style and Titles. Before we leave these shores, I hope that my Style and Title will lay primary emphasis on the realm of New Zealand.

The objectives of my Government, in establishing its programme of action over the last year and for the coming session, stem from a concern to give all New Zealanders social justice and freedom, and law and order. Young and old should have a healthy environment to live in, with opportunities for satisfying work and leisure activities, a good and decent standard of living, with adequate housing.

Further, the Government accepts an obligation to help extend these rights to people throughout the world.

My Government, in accepting its obligation to work toward these objectives, recognises that they depend on the achievement of a satisfactory rate of economic progress.

Despite reduced tension among the Great Powers, there has been a major clash of arms in the Middle East and continuing conflict in other regions. The limitations of military power in a nuclear age are clear.

New Zealand has stressed that in this situation smaller nations have an important role to play. New Zealand will continue to speak out for what it believes to be right and will act on the basis of its independent judgment.

My Government will continue to promote a more effective role for the United Nations and will remain active in the search for genuine measures of arms limitation, including a comprehensive nuclear weapons test ban and the control and eventual elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

As far as New Zealand's own forces are concerned, the Government does not propose to make any major structural changes in the Armed Services. It will, however, ensure an ability to contribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations, a continuing and expanding capability to provide aid to the civil community and greater co-operation with the defence services of Australia.

New Zealand has agreed to continue to co-operate with Singapore and Malaysia in the Five Power Defence Arrangements.

All forms of racial discrimination will be vigorously opposed. My Government will continue to support international endeavours to secure full human rights for all peoples.

Particular attention will be paid to the requirements and aspirations of the island peoples of the South Pacific and special emphasis will continue to be placed on the needs of the Cook, Niue, and Tokelau Islands whose inhabitants are New Zealand citizens. It is proposed that the people of Niue may become self-governing later this year. The enactment of a Niue Constitution Bill will depend on a referendum to be held in the island.

The Government favours closer regional association and co-operation among Pacific and Asian nations and will also promote New Zealand's relations with individual countries in the region. In the conduct of its international relations, my Government appreciates the need for consultation and discussion with other countries.

The Government will vigorously build on the initiatives of the past year which have been aimed at diversifying export markets and products. The new embassies in Moscow, Vienna, and Peking will enable trade promotion in eastern and central Europe and the People's Republic of China to be pursued on a continuing basis. New Zealand will take new initiatives aimed at strengthening trading ties with Australia and with the developing countries of the Pacific Basin. Access for New Zealand's primary products will also be at the forefront of my Government's approach to the new round of GATT negotiations.

Ministers are very concerned at the uncertainties now surrounding the supply of a number of raw materials, particularly oil and products derived from it. A decline in the rate of the economic growth of

some of New Zealand's major trading partners is likely and could limit the expansion of world trade. The Government has, therefore, been actively seeking alternative trading opportunities.

One of the most important Bills to be considered this session will be that establishing the New Zealand Export-Import Corporation. New Zealand exporters and industry will, as a matter of choice, be able to use the corporation's facilities in the promotion of their activities.

The past year has seen a substantial increase in the flow of migrants, particularly from the United Kingdom. Ministers are concerned to see that immigration policy is better designed in future so that it will support stable growth rates, but at the same time avoid economic or social strain. A complete review of the Government's immigration policy is being undertaken at present. Special immigration schemes will be implemented to alleviate specific labour shortages.

New Zealand has enjoyed a year of buoyant economic conditions. Employment and productivity have risen sharply under the encouragement of the Government's policies.

The manufacturing sector is an essential element in New Zealand's economic growth. The Government will continue to create the climate for the confident expansion of manufacturing in general; to provide selective measures for the encouragement of desirable growth industries; and to ensure that growth is better spread throughout New Zealand. Measures taken over the past year have already contributed to these aims and industrial expansion in the regions is resulting.

Stabilisation measures, designed to bear equitably on all sectors of the community, have been introduced and my Government believes that these will enable expansion in manufacturing to proceed in a more settled climate. The revaluation of the New Zealand dollar, together with restraints on internal prices and margins will help to blunt the rising cost of imported materials, components, and other commodities. To promote stability, enhanced competition, and better information for the consumer, the Government will, during the session, introduce legislation on trade practices, monopolies, and takeovers.

My Government will ensure through its policies that the economy is insulated, as far as possible, from the oil crisis which will affect energy resources and the supply of raw materials. However, because of this situation an unprecedented rise in the prices of certain goods and services produced overseas has to be faced, and this will adversely affect costs in New Zealand. Nevertheless, some industries may have to consider using local resources which in the past have been regarded as less economic than the imported alternatives.

Ministers aim to improve the potential of the labour force. The introduction of an integrated labour market policy is under study. This will help workers develop their full capacities, and at the same time increase productivity and reduce labour shortages. To this end tax rebates for those working overtime and shift work have been introduced. A Bill designed to help employees acquire shares in the companies they work for is being considered by a Select Committee of the House. This Bill will give employees a direct stake in their industry.

To give my Government a more effective means of implementing its monetary policy, the Reserve Bank Act has been amended. The Bank now has wider powers over financial institutions and is able to exercise its control more effectively.

Turning to agriculture, my Government has accelerated the policy of developing Crown farms for the placement of able young people. Additional suitable farmland will be purchased for subdivision into economic farm units and for settlement.

A Rural Banking and Finance Corporation is being established. This corporation will engage in all types of lending on farms and to those in related industries.

A wide range of legislation is proposed for the agricultural sector. Included in this will be legislation to improve the administration of the pig industry; a revision of the noxious weeds legislation consequent on the report of the committee of inquiry; an amendment to the Apple and Pear Marketing Act to assist the industry; and the introduction of a new Pesticides Bill.

Future prospects of the forestry industry are very favourable. Inevitably there will be increasing pressure on the available forest resources. My Government will continue to ensure that both indigenous and exotic forests are managed in the best interests of the whole country. But it is imperative that more trees are planted.

The Government's policies and plans, which aim at meeting the growing demand for energy, will continue to develop to meet changing circumstances. It is clear that New Zealand should be more self-sufficient in energy resources.

The shortage of oil has confirmed the earlier decision of the Government to undertake a major programme of on-shore and off-shore drilling this year.

A major step in meeting energy needs was taken with the conclusion of negotiations with the Shell/BP/Todd Consortium for the development of the Maui natural gas field. The development of this field is now well under way and work will be pushed forward with all speed.

Exploration for natural gas and oil is being vigorously encouraged by my Government on terms which are beneficial to New Zealand. Legislation will be introduced this session to ensure that this is achieved. Priority has been accorded to research into new energy sources. An agreement has been reached with the United States which provides a basis for scientific and technological co-operation. The Government has also arranged to participate with Australia and Japan in research into the extraction of oil from coal.

Urgent consideration will be given to determine those areas in which indigenous fuels can be substituted for imported forms and a White Paper on the New Zealand coal industry will be tabled during this session. Government action last year will result in a substantial increase in the use of both natural and manufactured gas and will see coal production rise by 500,000 tons.

In the field of science, Government is strengthening the basis for an expansion of work in industrial, agricultural, fisheries, and forest research, together with greater emphasis on the environment.

Government is actively pursuing a policy of greater scientific co-operation with our Asian and Pacific neighbours.

In the transportation field Ministers will pursue a co-ordinated policy and will continue to develop railway facilities to meet increasing demand. In line with the Government's stabilisation policy, railway rates and fares will be held at existing levels this year.

My Government is concerned at the appalling road toll and is determined to make every effort to improve the situation. Speed limits will be rigidly enforced; there is no doubt that a reduction in speed decreases the severity of accidents. The recommendations of the 1973 Select Committee on Road Safety will be placed before Parliament as quickly as possible. The committee will also be asked to report on the possibility of the recent reduction in speed limits being made permanent.

Tourism is providing increasing employment opportunities. It is a valuable earner of overseas exchange. The Government will continue to place due emphasis on the simultaneous development of both domestic tourism and that from overseas. It is proposed to introduce legislation to enable the Tourist Hotel Corporation to be more effective. My Government will increase the availability of training courses for personnel employed within the industry.

My Government will continue to improve the quality of education giving proper recognition to the social as well as the economic needs of the community. The Educational Development Conference will bring forward recommendations extending from pre-school to beyond the normal years of formal schooling. Legislative reforms and appropriate resources to give effect to this major review of education will have a high priority.

Community involvement in all aspects of education will be encouraged and vigorously promoted.

In the past, the environment has suffered needlessly as a result of developments undertaken without adequate knowledge of the social and physical consequences. New procedures which will apply to Government works will be implemented from 1 March 1974. The procedures allow a comprehensive analysis of the environmental impact and will increase public participation in decisions affecting the environment.

The Government will also continue with its policy of appointing guardians to protect areas of particular environmental significance. Ministers will be taking further steps to facilitate the recycling of waste products to promote the conservation of natural resources and ensure the preservation of a wholesome environment.

Legislation will be introduced this year which rewrites much of the Town and Country Planning Act. The Act will be simplified and greater emphasis given to the protection of the environment and to the rights of the individual. An amendment to the Harbours Act will be introduced which will include provision for environmental impact reports on significant works on harbours and foreshores.

My Government has assigned a high priority to the provision of additional housing and considerable progress has been made during the last year. With the number of State houses completed in the past year increasing by over 25 percent, the total number of all houses built will be an all time record in housing construction. It is the Government's intention to achieve a substantial increase in the coming year. Commercial building construction has also continued apace.

A number of steps have been taken recently to ensure that home ownership remains an attainable objective for the majority of New Zealanders. In particular, measures have been introduced to help young people and those on lower incomes to obtain houses. The State Advances Corporation, as the main lending agency, will continue to be provided with adequate funds for the building of new homes, the purchase and improvement of existing homes and, as necessary, the refinancing of mortgages to alleviate hardship.

The Government has mounted a vigorous programme to ensure that a continuing supply of reasonably priced building sections will be made available for private housing and for State rental housing.

This year will see the enactment of forward-looking legislation to provide for a new approach to preventive and social work services for children and young persons. This legislation, in the form of a Children and Young Persons Act, will replace the Child Welfare Act 1925 and its numerous amendments.

It is my Government's intention to introduce a system for the regular adjustment of social security benefits. This will ensure that beneficiaries enjoy the improvements in their real standard of living to which they are entitled.

The Government is also taking steps to ensure that the aged share in the increased fruits of prosperity. At present a survey of the living costs and standards of the aged is being undertaken to establish a new base for increases in benefits.

A New Zealand Superannuation Bill has been introduced for your consideration. Ultimately, this will give New Zealanders retirement incomes which will enable them to maintain the standard of living they are accustomed to.

My Government is determined that those who need medical services are given the highest standard of care with the minimum of delay and cost. The pattern of health expenditure will reflect this determination. There will also be a comprehensive examination of current health resources and their administration.

A Bill to repeal and replace the Narcotics Act 1965 will be introduced. This is the first step in the reconstruction of the drug legislation. It will ensure a more effective attack on this grave social problem.

As foreshadowed by the White Paper tabled last year, legislation providing for a major revision of the Maori Affairs Act and the restructuring of the Department of Maori and Island Affairs to meet the changing social needs of the people will be promoted. Provision of additional housing for Maori and Polynesian families has been substantially increased and this policy will continue to receive close attention. Special attention will also be paid to meeting the needs of the elderly, particularly in their traditional areas.

My Government has noted with concern the considerable growth in trading in New Zealand antiquities. This has become so marked that, not only is precious historical material being exported, but sites are being plundered and damaged. The Government, therefore, intends to introduce legislation which will give added protection to both artifacts and sites.

You have before you the Local Government Bill which was introduced in the last session. It is my Government's intention to introduce a further Local Government Bill this session which will amend and consolidate into one Act the present Municipal Corporations Act and the Counties Act. Local bodies will be made subject to the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.

A Select Committee of Parliament has been established to review the Electoral Act; legislation will be introduced after its recommendations have been received.

There will be a complete review of the liquor legislation following the report of the Royal Commission on Liquor. There will be Bills to revise the matrimonial property law and to provide some protection of the privacy of the individual.

My Government is firmly resolved to combat crime with every means at its disposal. It will not tolerate violence. While it recognises that the present crime clearance rate is an excellent one—by world standards—it sees no room for complacency. It will continue to develop the effectiveness of the New Zealand Police Service.

Honourable Members, I commend all these matters to your careful consideration and I pray that divine guidance will attend your decisions.

