



THE
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EXTRAORDINARY

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THE Third Session of the Thirty-ninth 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

It is a great privilege for me to exercise for the first time as The Queen's representative in New Zealand, Her Majesty's prerogative in opening this third session of the thirty-ninth Parliament. Already on two occasions—within the first few months of office—my wife and I have been hosts to members of the Royal Family, and this has been a source of great pleasure to us.

The Duke and Duchess of Kent honoured us with their presence at my Swearing-in as Governor-General. More recently, we welcomed to this country His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. During his visit I extended to His Royal Highness warm congratulations on his engagement to Lady Diana Spencer, and I am sure Members of this House and all the people of New Zealand will join with me in extending to them best wishes for the wedding in July and for their future happiness.

Her Majesty The Queen is to visit New Zealand in mid-October, following the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference in

Melbourne. I am certain Members of this House would wish to join me in assuring Her Majesty that she may expect a very warm welcome from her New Zealand people.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, over the past year most of the major industrialised countries have experienced an economic recession. The effect of this recession on New Zealand has been serious. The Government's response has been to support a reasonable level of domestic activity and to encourage changes which will enable a higher rate of economic growth to be achieved as the international economy starts to improve.

Inflation remains an area of major concern to the Government. It is essential therefore that all groups in the economy—salary and wage earners, the self employed, companies, and the Government—exercise restraint in their claims on resources. The Government for its part is determined to maintain a tight rein on its expenditure.

The Government's economic strategy is to encourage efficient sections of the economy by removing constraints and cost disadvantages which may impede their development. It believes that the benefits of a more competitive economy and a more logical system of protection will be considerable—but structural changes take time. A determined but deliberate approach has been adopted which will ensure that possible difficulties are minimised.

These structural changes, coupled with speedier development of our natural resources, will provide the potential for substantial increases in our living standards. The expansion of the export trade remains a central element of the Government's economic policies. To this end the Government has fought successfully, and will continue to fight strongly, against restrictions limiting access for our exports into overseas markets and will seek out ways of improving opportunities for freer trade.

The Government is continuing to explore with the Australian Government the question of a closer economic relationship. Careful consideration is being given to the outstanding issues in these discussions.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, while its economic policies are designed to bring about growth and new employment opportunities, the Government is also conscious of the problems faced now by those in our community who are experiencing difficulty in obtaining employment. To help overcome this a wide range of measures has been introduced to assist employers to create new jobs. Training programmes attuned to the needs of those who require additional skills to enter or re-enter employment have also been established. Later this year the Government will publish a document setting out in detail its views on the future of apprenticeship training.

The major industrial legislation affecting safety, health, and welfare of the work force has been reviewed and incorporated in the Factories and Commercial Premises Bill which is to be considered by the House this session after the Select Committee has reported.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, agriculture continues to be the most important factor in New Zealand's economy. Government policies will continue to maintain the progress of farm development and will foster the further diversification of both products and markets.

This year you will be asked to approve a Bill to revise the 1964 Meat Act. This will provide for the dissolution of the Meat Industry Authority and the repeal of the provisions governing abattoir districts and Ministerial control over slaughtering and processing charges.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, increasing oil prices and the uncertainty of future supplies have made it imperative to plan for a ready supply of energy from indigenous resources. It is the intention to achieve a 50 percent self sufficiency in transport fuels by 1987 by means of a synthetic petrol plant using gas from the Maui field, a nationwide liquefied petroleum gas distribution system, and incentives to encourage the wider use of compressed natural gas.

With the increasing use of these forms of energy it has become necessary to revise and consolidate into one measure the Gas Supply Act 1908, the Gas Industry Act 1958 and various private Acts, which give rights to gas companies, and to extend the scope of the legislation to include LPG, CNG and the requirements of the natural gas industry. You will also be asked to give consideration to a revision of the Mining Act 1971 in which social and environmental issues resulting from mining activities will find a place.

The Government is aware that programmes of development will need to be managed carefully if the unique qualities of our country are to be preserved. We can learn much from other nations which have had to deal with the effects of industry on the environment; the OECD report on New Zealand's policies in this area was a timely document. An amendment to the Water and Soil Conservation Act 1967 will be introduced to protect further the natural state of our rivers and streams where appropriate.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, an essential component of national and regional development is an efficient transport system. To this end the Railways Department is to be re-established as a corporation and legislation will be introduced this year to effect this change.

A Bill will also be submitted for your consideration to amend the Transport Act 1962 to provide for more effective enforcement of the 150 kilometre rail restriction. The Shipping and Seamen Act 1952 will be revised.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, 1981 is the International Year of Disabled Persons. One issue of major concern to disabled people is that of their legal rights. The Government is currently giving consideration to introducing legislation which will define the legal rights of the disabled.

In the general field of community health a Bill will be introduced to replace the Chiropractors Act 1960 with comprehensive legislation defining clear qualifications for the registration of chiropractors and an improved structure for disciplinary proceedings. The Government also intends to submit for your consideration a Hospitals Amendment Bill which will clarify certain staffing matters.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the Government's housing policies are designed to give a greater freedom of choice for low-income, first-home seekers and to encourage a shift in lending from the Housing Corporation to the private sector.

In recognition of the need to foster the savings scheme for home ownership, legislation will be introduced to amend the Home Ownership Savings Act 1974 to improve the benefits of the scheme and to make them available earlier than at present. Substantial funds will continue to be made available to the Housing Corporation to support its role as the provider of finance for low-income first-home purchasers.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the Government recognises the public disquiet over the effectiveness of our penal policies in combating our social problems. A committee, chaired by Mr Justice Casey, has been established to conduct a comprehensive review of these policies.

In the broader area of justice, legislation will be introduced to implement the proposals of the Industries Development Commission for promoting competition in the wholesaling of wine. Bills consolidating the law relating to law practitioners and summary offences are to be introduced. You will also be asked to consider a Bill to consolidate and modernise the Friendly Societies Act 1909 which will also include a new code for the establishment and operation of Credit Unions.

The Government will continue to give attention to the special needs of the Maori people and will intensify the tu tangata policies, particularly the kokiri approach which will give priority to the achievement of educational and traditional skills. The New Zealand Maori Council is preparing a draft Maori Affairs Bill which will be given wide circulation to test it against Maori opinion. It is the intention to have the Bill ready for your consideration in 1982.

Mindful of the need to be prepared for natural disasters, a Bill will be introduced to consolidate and modernise the Civil Defence Act 1962 and to set out the powers and responsibilities of regional and united councils.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the outlook for international peace has deteriorated in the past 12 months and the Government is accordingly determined to strengthen existing relationships with our allies and with other like-minded countries. The ANZUS Treaty, therefore, remains a cornerstone of our foreign policy. The Government welcomes assurances by the new administration of the United States of America that there will be full co-operation and close consultation on all matters affecting its allies.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the quality of Government decisions is enhanced by the participation of a well-informed public. Following the report of the Committee on Official Information, chaired by Sir Alan Danks, a Bill will be introduced to make official information more freely available, to give citizens proper access to official information

relating to them, to protect official information to the extent required by the public interest and the need to preserve individual privacy, to establish procedures for the achievement of those purposes, and to repeal the Official Secrets Act 1951.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, I commend all these matters to your careful consideration and I pray that divine guidance will attend your deliberations.

