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HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. It is a privilege for me to exercise the prerogative of Her Majesty The Queen and open this first session of the 43rd Parliament.

1990 has been a momentous year. The 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi has given us an opportunity to explore what this treaty means to us today.

We have come to an important turning point in our history when we are required to call on all the peoples of New Zealand to draw on their rich and varied cultures and traditions to advance the interests of our nation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the people of New Zealand are united in their need for growth and jobs. My Government's programme for this Parliament is shaped to meet those needs.

It is appropriate to the spirit of this special year that my Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition will soon travel to Europe together and join the international effort to achieve a successful conclusion to the current Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations.

Improved access to world markets and the development of an internationally competitive economy are equally essential to New Zealand's progress and prosperity.

Within New Zealand, my Government will be initiating an economic programme to foster competitive enterprise, secure growth, increase employment, and achieve fairness on a tight budget.

Three fundamental reforms are the cornerstone of my Government's economic strategy. Steps will be taken to control, reduce and eliminate the fiscal deficit in the term of this Parliament. The Government will reform the labour market to achieve greater productivity and more jobs. It will maintain a consistent monetary policy which will focus on achieving and maintaining price stability.

These measures will be taken to enable New Zealand to experience lower interest rates, better and more flexible work practices, strong employment growth, and a greater degree of international competitiveness.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, a number of elements of the tax system which discourage investment and, consequently, business development and employment will be removed progressively during the term of Parliament. Concerns about the complexity of the tax system will be addressed, and my Government will introduce measures to reduce compliance costs for taxpayers.

My Government will remove one disincentive to saving by abolishing the surcharge on national superannuation. It will also introduce a new tax incentive to encourage long term savings for the purpose of providing extra income in retirement.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, legislation will be introduced to remove disincentives to invest in important primary industries by amendment to the taxation regimes for forestry, agriculture, and petroleum mining.

The Fisheries Quota Management System will be examined to ensure that it is working efficiently. Existing legislation on aquaculture will be changed so that the industry's potential can be realised.

New policies will be implemented to promote New Zealand as an attractive destination for international tourist travel.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, immigration also contributes to the economic prosperity and social development of our nation. My Government will encourage more skilled migrants from a wider variety of countries to come to New Zealand.

The Government will promote scientific and technological development by completing the process of restructuring its own science

agencies, and by measures to encourage more investment in research and development in the private sector.

Energy policies will be introduced to provide consumers with the benefits of competition in supply, a responsible approach to the development of energy resources, and an active programme to conserve and improve efficiency in the use of energy.

Steps will be taken to revive confidence in New Zealand enterprise by the development and introduction of effective and fair commercial laws to protect both investors and borrowers.

To stimulate improvements in the quality of goods and services and ensure fair treatment of consumers, the Government will give high priority to reviews of the Sale of Goods Act 1908 and consumer credit legislation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, in order to promote improved productivity, income and employment, my Government will introduce legislation before Christmas to provide more flexible industrial relations processes.

The industrial relations reform will enable employers and employees to decide for themselves how they wish to negotiate wages and conditions of employment and resolve disputes. Membership of unions will be voluntary. Employees will be able to choose who bargains on their behalf and who represents them in disputes.

My Government recognises the need to help people develop the appropriate skills required by a growing, changing economy. Training, retraining and work experience in projects providing positive service to the community will become a more substantial component of employment programmes.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, my Government's goals for education include a new programme, "Parents as First Teachers", which will help parents to fulfil their role in nurturing the intellectual and physical development of their children through the vital years from birth to age three.

In schools, the Government will affirm the importance of the core subjects and take initiatives to improve achievement levels.

All school leavers will be guaranteed access to tertiary education through the "Study Right" programme, and my Government will, in 1992, abolish the tertiary tuition fee.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, maintaining and improving the health of all members of the community must be the goal of any civilised society.

To reduce the number of New Zealanders on waiting lists for treatment in public hospitals, my Government will encourage competition between the public and private sector to provide publicly-funded hospital services. A White Paper will be produced on the reform of the Accident Compensation Corporation during the next 12 months.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the Government will implement reforms in the area of social welfare. Benefit assistance will be adjusted to recognise that people in different circumstances require different treatment from the welfare system.

The system will be designed to ensure that people in temporary difficulty look to their own resources for support before they look for social welfare. Those in need of short term support will be provided with temporary income and social services to assist them back to independence. New Zealanders who suffer from long term disadvantage due to disability will be entitled to security and certainty of welfare support.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, it is fitting that as New Zealand celebrates the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, my Government will be launching a fresh effort to address and resolve quickly all major outstanding Maori claims relating to that Treaty before another decade passes.

The Government is committed to measures that will promote greater educational and training development amongst Maori and foster the growth of a stronger economic base for Maori.

The Government will be consulting with the Pacific island communities in New Zealand on the future role and development of the new Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

My Government will pursue a constructive and supportive relationship with the island countries of the Pacific, recognising our place in the region and our special constitutional links with the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, my Government is committed to protecting and enhancing the special interests of women, of youth, and of senior citizens.

Policy initiatives will be taken to provide women with more choice and opportunity to improve their employment prospects, increase their independence, and develop their potential.

The interests of young New Zealanders will be advanced by measures to establish an integrated education, training, and vocation link from school to the workplace.

My Government will give increased attention to the special needs of senior citizens, particularly in regard to health services and other community services.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the standards put forward in such apparently diverse areas as censorship, broadcasting, our use of resources and the way we care for our land are all part of the fabric of our society.

The Government will consider the recently released White Paper on censorship and pornography to determine whether it is a satisfactory base for changes in the law to control pornographic material. In broadcasting, the Government will secure the provision of adequate safeguards against violence and pornography on television.

There will also be changes in the roles of the television networks and in the nature of the competition between them.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, my Government will also concern itself with the natural environment at both global and national levels.

Environmental issues will occupy an important place on the Government's international agenda, with specific focus on the South Pacific and the protection of Antarctica.

The Government will aim for a speedy passage of the Driftnet Prohibition Bill.

The Resource Management Bill which was before the House in the last session will return to the Order Paper of this Parliament. The Government supports its purpose of sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

The first stage of "Taskforce Green" will be established by the Government in December. This project, designed to assist in protecting New Zealand's natural and historic heritage, will provide conservation work opportunities for the unemployed, and for those who wish to make a voluntary contribution in their own communities.

Related initiatives include an Historic Places Bill, to be introduced early in the session, and the establishment of further marine reserves.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, local government legislation will be amended to ensure that electors and ratepayers can determine the type and nature of local authorities in their district, to enable non-resident ratepayers to participate in local authority elections and polls, and to provide a fully accountable system of local government.

Legislation will also be introduced to modify the requirement for Local Authorities to form trading enterprises for roading works.

A new Ministry of Cultural Affairs will be established on the 1st of January 1991. Although primarily a policy unit, it will also have some funding responsibilities for major cultural bodies.

The Government will address the lack of funding continuity which has inhibited planning for sport generally. The Gaming and Lotteries Act will be amended to guarantee a level of funding to enhance the skills and further the reputation of our sports people.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, it is of concern to my Government that New Zealand be a safe and secure country, where citizens may carry out their lawful activities free from fear.

The Government is determined that the nation continues to have an effective police and criminal justice system. An additional 900 frontline police officers will be recruited over the next three years.

Significant law reform measures are planned in the criminal justice area. These include amendments to legislation on bail, and also to legislation concerning parole for life sentence inmates.

My Government will also take action to address the underlying causes of crime. Unemployment, education standards and the lack of parental and individual responsibility are issues that will receive urgent attention.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, New Zealand's defence capability is, of necessity, limited. For this reason, my Government will seek to develop collective security and alliance arrangements.

To this end, my Government will develop further the close relationship with Australia. The Government will also seek to restore a fuller measure of understanding and cooperation with the United States and the United Kingdom in a form that is consistent with its commitment

to keep New Zealand free of nuclear weapons and nuclear powered vessels.

The Defence Force also will be structured to enable New Zealand to contribute to disaster relief operations, particularly in the South Pacific region, and to international peacemaking or peacekeeping operations, when called to do so.

In the area of international relations, the Government will support a greater role for the United Nations in resolving regional and local conflict and its causes.

The appropriateness of the recent separation of the Ministry of Defence from the New Zealand Defence Force will be reviewed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, Lady Reeves and I leave Government House tomorrow.

It has been a privilege to serve the country we love. Certainly, we look forward to taking up residence here again, after I have completed a 3-year appointment in New York.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, in the meantime Parliament has the considerable task of building the final staging for the 21st century.

I therefore commend all these matters to you and I pray that Divine Guidance will attend your considerations.



