

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.