

My Advisers are particularly concerned with the provision of adequate school accommodation for the increasing numbers of pupils, and the funds allocated for this purpose during the current year are at record level. A Bill dealing with the appointment and promotion of teachers will be placed before you.

A national conference will be held this year to consider further advances in the promotion of the welfare of old people. You will be asked to consider a Bill validating increases in certain social security benefits and war pensions which my Government decided upon following the recent wage pronouncement of the Court of Arbitration.

A matter of primary concern to my Ministers is the wellbeing of the Maori people. Special attention is being paid to the development and settlement of Maori lands, particularly in the North Auckland, Waikato, and King country areas, and to the provision of housing. Proposals will be laid before you to improve the law relating to Maori Trust Boards and to revise and consolidate the law relating to Maori reserves and lands of a similar nature.

There will be placed before you an amendment of the Police Force Act to provide for control of the Police Force by a Commission. My Advisers intend to introduce at an early date a Judicature Amendment Bill, to enable the number of permanent Judges of the Supreme Court to be increased and to provide for pensions for Judges' widows. You will also be asked to consider the revision of that part of the Mental Health Act which relates to persons charged with or convicted of offences. This will complete the scheme of reform of the criminal law begun last year with the Criminal Justice and Penal Institutions Acts.

An important measure revising the law relating to adoptions will be brought down during the session. Other new legislation designed to bring the law into harmony with modern conditions includes a Family Protection Bill, a Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Amendment Bill, and a Wills Amendment Bill. An amendment to the Licensing Act will put into effect certain recommendations of the Licensing Control Commission to stop the sale of liquor by unlicensed agents.

The provisions of the Printers and Newspapers Registration Act are out of date in some respects, and you will be asked to consider a Newspapers Registration Bill, which will replace the present Act.

In the field of general administration there will be placed before you a Bill revising and consolidating the Counties Act and its amendments, a Bill dealing with certain urgent questions relating to the use of, and access to, the waters of Lake Taupo, and a Bill revising the existing law as set out in the Impounding Act 1908.

Your early assembly this year has been required mainly to consider the reports of my Prime Minister concerning the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers held last month in London, and of my Minister of External Affairs and Defence on the Bangkok meeting of Foreign Ministers of the South-east Asia Collective Defence Treaty Organization.

These two conferences were of the greatest importance to New Zealand and to the Commonwealth, and I commend to your earnest consideration the study of their deliberations and of all other matters relating to the economic stability and the lasting wellbeing of the people of our country.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God will rest upon your counsels.