

satisfactory rate, there is full employment, and consumer prices are reasonably stable. My advisers are confident that, although adjustments and a measure of increased effort will be necessary, the resources of the country and the skills of its people will ensure the steady growth of the economy.

My Government intends to proceed with the development of virgin Crown land suitable for farming in an endeavour, first, to complete the rehabilitation of our ex-servicemen as quickly as possible, and then to provide farms for young farmers and others seeking to be settled on the land. You will be asked to consider proposals to amend existing legislation affecting the promotion of land settlement.

During the past year the requirements of our steadily developing economy have fully taxed our building and construction industry. These demands have been intensified by the heavy flooding which so disastrously affected certain parts of the country. My Government acknowledges the invaluable effort contributed by organisations and individuals alike in meeting the urgent and serious problems that arose and will continue to give a high priority to the restoration, in association with local authorities, of public services and communications in the areas concerned.

Improved safety conditions in coal mines will be the subject of proposals to be placed before you following the inquiry into the disaster at the Renown Colliery in 1955.

The vital importance of adequate electric power resources to industry and to the general well-being is recognised by my Government's endeavours to accelerate the completion of all projects under construction and to promote the orderly development of a sound programme for the future.

In the field of commerce you will be asked to consider a Bill introducing certain measures relating to trade practices, and a Bill designed to improve certain aspects of the motor-spirits distribution industry.

A good record of industrial relations has been maintained and my Ministers are gratified with the growing awareness of a common interest in measures to increase production.

You will be asked to consider a Bill revising the requirements of the Scaffolding and Excavation Act 1922, in the light of the findings of the Royal Commission of Inquiry which submitted its report last year.

My Government's financial proposals and estimates of expenditure for the current year will in due course be placed before you. These will of course be designed to supplement measures already introduced to maintain stability and assist in the rebuilding of exchange reserves. My Ministers recognise the importance of encouraging saving by our people and are gratified at the present record level of small savings in Post Office accounts.

New Zealand is on the threshold of a new era in technical education. My Ministers hope to place before you during this session a Bill introducing improved measures for the examination and certification of technicians. My Government also intends to set up a Royal Commission to examine all phases of our education system.

Child welfare is a primary concern of my advisers and steps have been taken to increase the number of skilled staff available for work in this field. Changes in the social security scheme will be the subject of a Bill to be placed before you, including the removal of the means test on the earnings of blind beneficiaries, and provision for the payment of benefits generally on a four-weekly basis.

The well-being of the Maori people will be advanced by all practicable means available to my Government. In addition to the emphasis that will be placed on housing and land development, special encouragement and opportunity will be provided to Maori youths to train for skilled occupations. My Government gratefully acknowledges the continued help given by tribal committees and executives, and by the Maori Women's Welfare League, in social work among the Maori people.