

In the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, at the SEATO Conference, and in his recent visits to countries of Western Europe and the Soviet Union, my Prime Minister has expressed New Zealand's own viewpoint on matters of vital international concern and has sought to learn at first hand the attitudes of other countries.

Both inside and outside the United Nations my Government has continued to stress the urgent necessity for progress towards disarmament. It has joined in appealing to all states to refrain from nuclear weapon tests and has been encouraged to observe the substantial progress made towards an agreement on the permanent cessation of such tests under effective international control and supervision.

The meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers has given further indication of the strength of the Commonwealth. My Government remains dedicated to the principles of freedom and multi-racial partnership which underlie the Commonwealth association and the need to ensure good relations between all member States and peoples of the Commonwealth. My Government is confident that these principles will outlast transitory differences.

My Government has welcomed the emergence of Singapore as a self-governing State and looks forward with special pleasure to Nigeria's assumption of full Commonwealth membership later this year. It will be my Government's purpose to establish closer contacts with other Commonwealth Governments.

My Government continues to give close attention to international developments in Asia. On the borders of India, China's assertiveness has created a situation which is a cause for concern. My Ministers recognise that the progress of Asia will be profoundly affected by the actions and attitudes of a nation whose population equals one-quarter of the total world population and will number 1,000 million within 20 years.

My Prime Minister, in his visits to Malaya, Singapore, and Indonesia, has further developed contacts with the leaders of neighbouring countries. My Government was pleased to welcome the Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who made a State visit to New Zealand late in January.

Through the Colombo Plan, the United Nations, and the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation my Government has cooperated in the efforts of Asian countries to find security based on economic and social welfare. My Prime Minister represented New Zealand at the recent meeting in Washington of the SEATO Council of Foreign Ministers.

My Government welcomed with considerable satisfaction the conclusion in December 1959 of a 12-nation treaty on Antarctica and attaches particular importance to the provisions for the permanent demilitarisation of Antarctica and the prohibition of its use for warlike purposes. New Zealand, together with other signatories, will be expected to ratify this treaty by the end of the year.

My Government has continued to give close attention to the movement towards economic integration in Europe. It has been concerned that New Zealand could face growing discrimination in access to European markets. My Prime Minister, in his talks with the leaders of European Governments has urged that the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Economic Community should be in keeping with the avowed liberal trading objectives of the Community. New Zealand's interests will be consistently pressed, not only on the members of the Community but also in GATT and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

My Ministers are gratified that the improvement in the world economic situation, noticeable over the past year, is being maintained. Within New Zealand economic activity is at high levels in all sectors of the country's economy. It is the policy of my Government to cooperate with all sections of the Community to maintain this favourable trend without placing undue strain on the resources available.