

My Government in December 1959 authorised payments of £12 for married couples and £6 for unmarried beneficiaries in respect of certain war pensions and social security benefits. You will be asked to consider legislation to increase the relevant benefits by 5s. a week from 30 March 1960.

By March 1960 nearly 15,000 applications for capitalisation of family benefit had been approved under the Family Benefit Home Ownership Scheme. Through this and other schemes introduced by my Government, the great majority of citizens now have facilities for the building of homes. For those unable to accept the responsibility of home ownership, rental houses will continue to be built at the accelerated rate approved last year.

Cooperation between the Police Force and Child Welfare Officers under the Juvenile Crime Prevention Scheme has proved most beneficial in dealing with child welfare problems. Further Child Welfare District Offices have been opened. Steps will be taken to bring into force this year approved standards for private "day nurseries". You will be asked to consider legislation making provision for a right of appeal from decisions of the Children's Court.

The Commission on Education established by my Government has begun its inquiry under wide terms of reference. Measures to ensure that improved staffing schedules will be in operation by 1962 have been approved. The development of technical education has been pressed forward.

My Government, together with the universities, is actively considering the report of the Committee on New Zealand Universities and has already implemented the Committee's recommendations on the salaries of academic staff. You will be asked to consider legislation to amend the New Zealand University Act 1908 to provide for the establishment of a new University Grants Committee.

My Government is reviewing the margins for skill and responsibility in rates of pay for the State Services to provide, where circumstances warrant, increased salary margins. Provision for this objective will be made in the departmental estimates. The new margins will take account of the adjustment of university salaries and of salaries already paid and other benefits granted outside the State Services.

My Government will give early consideration to the recommendations of the Select Committee set up last year to consider the licensing laws. You will be asked to consider legislation for the regulation of unit trusts, a Cheques Bill, and a Penal Institutions Amendment Bill to help the rehabilitation of prisoners.

My Government recognises the need for improved communications to meet increasing demands from a growing population and an accelerated industrial expansion. A telephone cable and radio route linking Auckland and Wellington with intermediate centres will come into operation this year. A multi-channel system between Dunedin and Invercargill, also to be completed this year, will be the first step to improved telephone communications in the South Island. My Government is cooperating with the Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia in the construction of a trans-Pacific telephone cable to link this country with Australia and Fiji in 1962 and with Canada in 1964.

My Government has made the necessary arrangements for the earliest introduction of television in New Zealand. The service from the Auckland station is being expanded rapidly and equipment has been ordered for experimental stations in Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. A continuous supply of good quality programme material has been assured. You will be asked to consider legislation to amend the Broadcasting Act 1936 to provide for the introduction of television.