

The high expectations which countries largely dependent on the sale of agricultural products carried into the initial phases of the Kennedy Round Tariff Negotiations have not been fulfilled. My Ministers are now considering the extent to which New Zealand should participate in the final exchange of concessions in these complex negotiations.

A revised Trade Agreement has been negotiated with Britain providing for the extension until at least 1972 of New Zealand's rights of access to the British market for meat and dairy products. The implications of Britain's possible entry into the European Economic Community are being kept under close scrutiny.

In his visits to the capitals of the six Member countries last year my Minister of Overseas Trade outlined the need for special arrangements to safeguard New Zealand's position in the enlarged Community if Britain should join. It has been made clear that the special needs of New Zealand cannot be met by measures of a transitional character but will require more permanent and enduring provisions. My Ministers are gratified to know that the British Government have recognised the special requirements of New Zealand's position and have emphasised them in their recent discussions with the Governments of the European Economic Community.

The rate of increase in the demand for electricity for New Zealand's expanding economy remains at a high level, though somewhat below that of the previous five years. Development work and the investigation of new types of generation and transmission will be maintained to ensure that the needs of consumers are met. The preparations for the use of nuclear power are continuing and already some staff involved in the initial planning are receiving specialised training overseas. During the session you will be asked to consider a consolidation and revision of the main legislation under which the Electricity Department operates.

My Ministers recognise that full use must be made of technological advances in the different fields of transportation, in so far as they can be applied to New Zealand conditions. The policy of re-equipping the railways has been maintained and increasing use is being made of specialised wagons for handling specific commodities. A Railways Amendment Bill and a Transport Amendment Bill will be introduced for your consideration.

A Carriage by Air Bill, proposing substantial increases in the compensation payable by internal airlines to accident victims, will be submitted to you.

The previous Parliament gave very earnest consideration to the tragic loss of life in road accidents in New Zealand. The findings of a Select Committee formed the basis of measures which are now law.

Methods of ensuring that these measures will achieve their full impact and the possible need for additional provisions will continue to receive the constant attention of my Ministers. They believe, however, that in the final event a reversal of the ominous rise in the toll of life on New Zealand roads rests with the individual driver and that this in turn depends on the extent to which his actions can be influenced by public opinion.

In the field of industrial safety my Ministers will propose a revision of the Bush Workers Act and an amendment to the Construction Act to increase penalties for offences where the safety of employees is involved. You will also be asked to consider legislation giving effect to certain of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry into Vocational Training.

A White Paper on school and university population projections up to the year 1980 will shortly be submitted to you. My Government believes that this will assist in forward planning and will lead to a wider recognition of the magnitude of the demand for buildings and other educational facilities at all levels in the years ahead. An Education Amendment Bill and a Bill to amend the Education Lands Act will be introduced during the session.