

My Government is fully aware of the responsibility which rests on it to act quickly and decisively to ensure that the momentum for progressive change is maintained. It has already approved some of the Conference recommendations. Other recommendations which call for Government action will be dealt with expeditiously. There are many recommendations of the Conference which involve other sectors of the economy which will be subject to the oversight of the National Development Council which my Government will establish on the recommendation of the Conference.

The National Development Conference has rightly given attention to the expansion of the export earning capacity of sectors of the economy which until recently have made only a limited contribution to the country's reserves of overseas funds. It is significant that despite the very substantial growth in exports envisaged in these sectors over the target period, it is estimated that the agricultural sector will still be responsible for over 70 percent of the country's export earnings in 10 years' time.

My Government will continue to assist primary producers by helping them to make the best use of their land and by ensuring that the legislation which affects this vital area of the economy is relevant to their needs.

You have been asked to consider in recent years a number of measures with this objective and this Session you will have before you revisions and consolidations of the Apiaries Act and the Veterinary Surgeons Act.

Amendments to the Orchard and Garden Diseases Act, the Animals Act, and the Animals Remedies Act are also under consideration.

My Ministers have been vigilant in seeking to expand marketing opportunities for agricultural products and to combat the effects of agricultural protection where these have affected marketing prospects.

Throughout 1968 my Ministers have sought within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to bring the principal countries engaged in trade in dairy products together, with a view to negotiating an interim agreement limiting the harmful dumping at uneconomic prices which has characterised this trade in recent years. Like all international commodity negotiations this is a most difficult and complex task but my Ministers are determined to use every avenue open to this country to achieve more orderly international marketing of dairy products and to secure their greater use as food aid.

My Government takes great satisfaction from the remarkable increase in exports to Australia which has taken place within the framework of the New Zealand - Australia Free Trade Agreement. It welcomed the opportunity of the discussions held in Wellington in February with the Australian Minister of Trade and Industry, to review the progress made and to make decisions to promote further the free flow of this trade.

A vital element in the efficiency of New Zealand's export trade is an efficient and economic shipping service. The technological advances associated with containerisation promise significant efficiencies and my Ministers expect shortly to be in a position to make important decisions on the basis of recommendations made to them by the Transport Commission.