

Honourable Members—During this Session further legislation will be introduced in pursuance of my Government's programme of systematic law reform. A close study is being made of the question of

the age of majority and such related matters as the voting age and the legal drinking age. In the light of this study my advisers will consider whether or not amending legislation should be introduced this Session.

You will be asked to consider a Bill amending the law governing the contracts of minors.

A Legal Aid Bill introducing a system of legal aid in civil cases is proposed and you will also be asked to consider Bills revising the statutory law governing executors and administrators and amending the Summary Proceedings Act and the Criminal Injuries Act.

A Bill will be submitted constituting the Hotel Association of New Zealand and prescribing its powers and responsibilities.

You will be asked to consider an amendment to the Poisons Act to strengthen the provisions of the existing law.

A Bill to revise the Physiotherapy Act will also be submitted.

You will be asked to validate the recently announced increases in Social Security benefits and war pensions.

My Government has recently completed negotiations with the Government of the United Kingdom on a revised agreement covering reciprocity of Social Security benefits under prescribed conditions. The necessary legislation will be placed before you.

The legislation necessary to give effect to the recently announced alterations in the Health Benefits Scheme will be submitted for your consideration. Another matter which you will be asked to consider is a consolidation and revision of the Child Welfare Act.

Much interest has been shown in the radical recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Compensation for Personal Injury in New Zealand. My Government believes that because the changes recommended by the Royal Commission are fundamental and would, if implemented, affect many people, the widest possible appreciation of the issues involved is necessary. For this reason my advisers are preparing a White Paper which will set out the issues involved and assist in permitting the fullest discussion of the proposals.

My Government will continue to encourage home ownership through the provision of finance on favourable terms from the State Advances Corporation. The building of State rental flats and houses will be continued at its present rate and with re-lettings it is expected that some 6,000 families will be provided with rented homes this year.

It is intended to amend the Housing Improvement Act implementing certain recommendations of the Study Group on Urban Renewal.

You will be asked to consider an improvement to the Town and Country Planning Act establishing on a temporary basis a third Town and Country Planning Appeal Board to overcome the backlog of appeals awaiting hearing.