

Turning to agriculture, my Government has accelerated the policy of developing Crown farms for the placement of able young people. Additional suitable farmland will be purchased for subdivision into economic farm units and for settlement.

A Rural Banking and Finance Corporation is being established. This corporation will engage in all types of lending on farms and to those in related industries.

A wide range of legislation is proposed for the agricultural sector. Included in this will be legislation to improve the administration of the pig industry; a revision of the noxious weeds legislation consequent on the report of the committee of inquiry; an amendment to the Apple and Pear Marketing Act to assist the industry; and the introduction of a new Pesticides Bill.

Future prospects of the forestry industry are very favourable. Inevitably there will be increasing pressure on the available forest resources. My Government will continue to ensure that both indigenous and exotic forests are managed in the best interests of the whole country. But it is imperative that more trees are planted.

The Government's policies and plans, which aim at meeting the growing demand for energy, will continue to develop to meet changing circumstances. It is clear that New Zealand should be more self-sufficient in energy resources.

The shortage of oil has confirmed the earlier decision of the Government to undertake a major programme of on-shore and off-shore drilling this year.

A major step in meeting energy needs was taken with the conclusion of negotiations with the Shell/BP/Todd Consortium for the development of the Maui natural gas field. The development of this field is now well under way and work will be pushed forward with all speed.

Exploration for natural gas and oil is being vigorously encouraged by my Government on terms which are beneficial to New Zealand. Legislation will be introduced this session to ensure that this is achieved. Priority has been accorded to research into new energy sources. An agreement has been reached with the United States which provides a basis for scientific and technological co-operation. The Government has also arranged to participate with Australia and Japan in research into the extraction of oil from coal.

Urgent consideration will be given to determine those areas in which indigenous fuels can be substituted for imported forms and a White Paper on the New Zealand coal industry will be tabled during this session. Government action last year will result in a substantial increase in the use of both natural and manufactured gas and will see coal production rise by 500,000 tons.

In the field of science, Government is strengthening the basis for an expansion of work in industrial, agricultural, fisheries, and forest research, together with greater emphasis on the environment.

Government is actively pursuing a policy of greater scientific co-operation with our Asian and Pacific neighbours.

In the transportation field Ministers will pursue a co-ordinated policy and will continue to develop railway facilities to meet increasing demand. In line with the Government's stabilisation policy, railway rates and fares will be held at existing levels this year.