

The Government has mounted a vigorous programme to ensure that a continuing supply of reasonably priced building sections will be made available for private housing and for State rental housing.

This year will see the enactment of forward-looking legislation to provide for a new approach to preventive and social work services for children and young persons. This legislation, in the form of a Children and Young Persons Act, will replace the Child Welfare Act 1925 and its numerous amendments.

It is my Government's intention to introduce a system for the regular adjustment of social security benefits. This will ensure that beneficiaries enjoy the improvements in their real standard of living to which they are entitled.

The Government is also taking steps to ensure that the aged share in the increased fruits of prosperity. At present a survey of the living costs and standards of the aged is being undertaken to establish a new base for increases in benefits.

A New Zealand Superannuation Bill has been introduced for your consideration. Ultimately, this will give New Zealanders retirement incomes which will enable them to maintain the standard of living they are accustomed to.

My Government is determined that those who need medical services are given the highest standard of care with the minimum of delay and cost. The pattern of health expenditure will reflect this determination. There will also be a comprehensive examination of current health resources and their administration.

A Bill to repeal and replace the Narcotics Act 1965 will be introduced. This is the first step in the reconstruction of the drug legislation. It will ensure a more effective attack on this grave social problem.

As foreshadowed by the White Paper tabled last year, legislation providing for a major revision of the Maori Affairs Act and the restructuring of the Department of Maori and Island Affairs to meet the changing social needs of the people will be promoted. Provision of additional housing for Maori and Polynesian families has been substantially increased and this policy will continue to receive close attention. Special attention will also be paid to meeting the needs of the elderly, particularly in their traditional areas.

My Government has noted with concern the considerable growth in trading in New Zealand antiquities. This has become so marked that, not only is precious historical material being exported, but sites are being plundered and damaged. The Government, therefore, intends to introduce legislation which will give added protection to both artifacts and sites.

You have before you the Local Government Bill which was introduced in the last session. It is my Government's intention to introduce a further Local Government Bill this session which will amend and consolidate into one Act the present Municipal Corporations Act and the Counties Act. Local bodies will be made subject to the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.

A Select Committee of Parliament has been established to review the Electoral Act; legislation will be introduced after its recommendations have been received.

There will be a complete review of the liquor legislation following the report of the Royal Commission on Liquor. There will be Bills to revise the matrimonial property law and to provide some protection of the privacy of the individual.