

The date of my Accession on 6 February coincided with Waitangi Day, so named by my Government as a lasting commemoration of the Treaty on which New Zealand's multi-cultural society is founded. This is, for me, a happy reminder of the lasting links between the Crown and the Maori people.

During these last 25 years New Zealand, like so many other countries, has experienced far-reaching developments in material terms and social change. The Government will meet the challenges and opportunities offered by this rapid evolution.

My Ministers believe they must create an environment in which individuals can choose their own roles and develop their particular talents provided that in doing so they do not infringe the rights of others. To promote true equality of opportunity the Government introduced at the end of the last session of Parliament a Bill to create a Human Rights Commission. My Ministers regard this as a measure of social as well as constitutional importance.

In the present situation, my Ministers are tackling the more immediate problems of inflation, growth, and stability, and are determined to devise policies which will:

- promote greater production;
- further restore business confidence;
- minimise unemployment;
- increase the earnings of exports from farming, fishing, and manufacturing;
- develop the energy resources of the country;
- continue, as appropriate, price and income control measures as necessary counterparts of each other; and
- create harmonious industrial relations.

All these objectives will be sought within the context of providing incentives and rewards for productivity and thrift, conserving the nation's indigenous wealth, and preserving the natural environment.

My Ministers will also bring forward measures to cope with problems resulting from longer term trends such as rapid urbanisation linked with increased industrialisation, the changing population structure, the increasing diversity of ethnic and cultural groups, and the emergence of a multi-cultural society with plural values. These policies will be formulated in line with the firm belief of my Ministers that the family unit is the continuing basis of New Zealand society.