

My Ministers see New Zealand as a Pacific nation—in an increasingly interdependent world. The Government regards the South Pacific as a region of immediate New Zealand interest and will work with other independent and self-governing states of the region for mutual progress and welfare. The Government will continue to work for harmonious relations with all states and attaches particular importance to the Commonwealth and the United Nations as instruments towards this end.

The extension of trade—by diversifying products and services, attaining new markets and seeking to improve access to well-established ones—will continue to be a major aim of my Government's foreign policy. An equally important aim is the maintenance of close links for collective defence with New Zealand's traditional allies, of which the ANZUS Pact is the keystone.

The future may seem more complex or less clear than it was a generation ago, but I am sure that this will in no way inhibit the constructive spirit or impair the resolve of this young nation which believes in itself and can look forward to the future with confidence.

Honourable Members of the House of Representatives, I am grateful for the opportunity of being able to address you today as legislators who have successfully blended old and traditional forms with new institutions and practices.

A feature of the constitutional development of New Zealand has been the close identification of the Sovereign with the nation. In 1974 I gave my assent to an Act which defined the Royal Style and Titles in relation to New Zealand.

In line with this development my Ministers will introduce at this session a Bill to provide for the elevation of the Public Seal to the title of "The Seal of New Zealand" and to make amendments to the New Zealand statutes and those United Kingdom statutes in force in New Zealand which authorise the use of existing Seals.

The Seal of New Zealand will be used to execute New Zealand documents which at present pass under either the Public Seal or one of the United Kingdom seals. Thus I, as your Sovereign, will in future use The Seal of New Zealand on all such documents.