

Consideration of a draft Treaty on the Law of the Sea will be resumed this year. The Government attaches the greatest importance to achieving international agreement on this matter which would not only protect New Zealand's rights in the Exclusive Economic Zone but also represent a major step towards world order. In granting approval for foreign fishing vessels to fish in New Zealand's 200-mile economic zone, care will be taken to ensure that our own fishing industry is given every opportunity to expand and to realise its growing export potential.

The Fisheries Act 1908 will be amended to provide for joint fishing ventures within the 200-mile economic zone. To give a practical effect to the growing international concern over the depletion of marine mammals the Government will introduce a Marine Mammals Bill to protect these animals found in New Zealand waters.

Special encouragement will be given through regional development measures, which have been extended recently to provide incentives to the primary and tourism sectors, as well as to manufacturing. Participation by local communities in the planning of their region's future will be encouraged through the resources survey work being undertaken by regional development councils in the eleven priority regions.

Major steps in rationalising energy planning, development and utilisation were taken recently with the establishment of the Ministry of Energy and the creation of a separate group of petroleum exploration and production companies. The programmes of exploration for petroleum, coal and geothermal resources will continue to be accelerated and the campaign to encourage energy conservation intensified.

The Government is determined to improve the co-ordination and full utilisation of all transport services and equipment. A number of Bills will be introduced for your consideration. They will provide for the amalgamation of the National Airways Corporation and Air New Zealand, measures relating to the maritime field, the reorganisation and financing of urban transport and a number of measures to improve safety on the roads.

The Government, in furtherance of its general policy that legislation should reflect the needs of the community, will promote a number of measures covering a wide spectrum of the law. Major Bills in commercial law will deal with credit contracts and contractual remedies. In the criminal justice system a new sentence—a sentence of community service—is proposed and the Police Offences Act will be reviewed.

There will also be reforms in the administration of deceased estates, evidence and property law including amendments to the Unit Titles Act.

Reforms in family law will include the revision of the law on divorce, separation, maintenance, and paternity. The problem of the trans-Tasman abduction of children will also receive attention.

The importance of the family unit continues to be recognised by the Government, and an expansion of existing policies in this area will be announced in the near future.