



THE NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY

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THE Second Session of the 41st Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by Her Majesty the Queen, when Her Majesty was pleased to make the following statement of the causes of the calling of this session of Parliament together.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, I am pleased once again to exercise my prerogative to open, in person, the second session of this 41st Parliament. To take my place here, as part of the New Zealand Parliament, underlines the firm hold of the constitutional monarchy in New Zealand.

During my reign this country has been well served by distinguished Governors-General. Those holding that office in recent years have been New Zealanders by birth. They have ably reflected those enduring values and standards which unite us as a nation. The Maori people have contributed much to these values and standards, and I gratefully acknowledge their apt address of welcome, and their waiata on coming to this place today.

This is my seventh visit to these islands, and the Duke of Edinburgh's ninth. Although such visits are usually brief, and taken up largely with official duties, we always feel at home here. Since my husband and I last visited you in 1981, other members of our family have been among you: the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1983, and my youngest son, Prince Edward, had the memorable experience of working among you for some months. These visits reinforce the links between the monarchy and the nation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, 1986 has been designated by the United Nations as the International Year of Peace. New Zealand is among the most fortunate nations on earth. It is not threatened by, nor is it a threat to, any other nation. However, the price of peace is continued effort. This most especially applies to the threat of nuclear war.

In the foreign affairs and defence fields, the Government will maintain its opposition to nuclear weapons. It will engage in international efforts to end the nuclear arms race. At the regional level, the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty will be ratified as soon as possible and New Zealand has been prominent in the diplomatic efforts being conducted by governments of the South Pacific Forum, to persuade the nuclear powers to endorse the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone.

The New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone Disarmament and Arms Control Bill was introduced into Parliament last year. The Bill is not intended in any way to weaken New Zealand's security alliance with the United States of America or with Australia.

Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that the operational character of the ANZUS alliance is the subject of dispute with the United States. New Zealand wishes to retain and to extend the long-standing friendship existing between the two countries. When differences arise, the soundness of any friendship is revealed by the efforts made to seek a resolution of those differences. The Government will adopt every diplomatic initiative possible to reach a satisfactory settlement.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, New Zealand's defence interests, with particular emphasis on our role in the South Pacific region, will be re-examined in the coming year. The recently established Committee of Inquiry on the future of New Zealand's strategic and security policies will assess public opinion on the choices available to New Zealand in its defence and strategic thinking. In the light of the Committee's report, which will be completed later this year, further decisions will be made on defence, including international security arrangements, as well as expenditure levels in the armed forces.

At the heart of the Government's foreign policy is a concern for the stability and peaceful development of the South Pacific. That will be reflected in the decisions that will be taken on defence, and in the emphasis which the official development assistance programme gives to the region.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, such efforts must be underpinned by the internal stability of New Zealand and a sound, growing domestic economy.

The Government will resolutely pursue management policies which will improve economic performance. A lasting improvement in living standards depends on the restoration of sustainable and non-inflationary growth.

Much has already been done.

Consistent medium-term policies have been introduced to increase the efficiency and flexibility of the economy. The Government has set in place a firm monetary policy. Significant progress has been made towards comprehensive tax reform, reform of the financial sector, the phasing out of import licensing, and a lower tariff regime. All these will help to create a more outward-looking, competitive and resilient economy. The aim is to achieve better use of labour, land and capital.

There is still much to do.

Recent developments in the farming sector have highlighted the kind of production and marketing changes needed if that industry is to be viable, without relying unduly on taxpayer support. The Government's response has been to facilitate the adjustment, not to slow it down. Other sectors, too, will need to change, and again the Government's task is that of a facilitator.

This more competitive approach underlines Government policies in the energy field, where competition between State-owned and private energy suppliers will be encouraged.

With trade strategies the Government's efforts will be directed towards maintaining and developing satisfactory access for New Zealand products in traditional as well as in new markets, and to combat unfair trading practices, especially where the export subsidies of other countries provide unfair advantages. The Government will continue its programme to improve New Zealand's opportunities to trade with the European Community.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, this consistent, firm economic purpose is the key to achievements in the area of social policy. The Government is committed to the highest possible level of employment. The emphasis in labour market assistance policies is being shifted from a passive reliance on temporary work, to active training and development of skills so that people can adapt to rapid changes in industrial technology. The Government will shortly be publishing a Green Paper on vocational training and institutional arrangements which will enable the employment and education community to play a greater role in labour market policy and programmes.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the restructuring of the economy, and the promotion of full employment will be complemented by a wide-ranging review of social policies.

This review will be undertaken by a Royal Commission on Social Policy. This will examine principles and philosophy over the broad range of social policy so that values and objectives can be clarified and policies designed so as to reflect them. Future policies should then be consistent, coherent and capable of having their effects tested against defined objectives. In particular all citizens, regardless of gender or ethnic background, must be able to develop their full potential. The Government is conducting several reviews in the fields of health and social welfare which will address readily identifiable problems and contribute to the process of sifting problems and ideas in preparation for the Royal Commission.

1985 was a difficult year in many social areas, as a result of the abolition of the wage-price freeze, and the consequent full wage round. The Government expects 1986 to be a year of consolidation in health, where spending has increased rapidly, in education, where class sizes are being reduced, and in housing, where some new forms of building, as well as tenure, are being introduced.

With housing, new approaches to assistance will continue. In order to provide the greatest good for the greatest number, subsidised assistance will be carefully directed and adjusted progressively as particular needs alter. The funds so released will be used for others. Legislation on residential tenancies will come into effect this year, designed to produce greater fairness and better tenancy relationships.

In the field of education, the Government will introduce an Education Bill which, among other things, will provide a scheme for the registration and discipline of teachers.

In health, efforts will continue to relieve staffing shortages in many parts of the public hospital sector. Legislation reviewing the law relating to mental health will be introduced this year. It will reflect current social attitudes to human rights for the mentally ill.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the Government will continue to implement policies which affirm Maori culture. It will introduce legislation recognising Maori as an official language.

The Government has already established a Ministry of Women's Affairs for the specific purpose of working towards equal opportunity and equal treatment for women in our society. It will work towards the ideal of women's participation on an equal basis in decision-making, as well as policy development.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the changing nature of society has placed significant stresses on our police force. The Government's swift moves to introduce the early retirement scheme resulted in a revitalisation of the service. An injection of fit, new, frontline staff has substantially benefited the police, and that benefit will be reflected in service to the public.

A parallel and equally positive development, which is fully supported by the Government, is a significant resurgence of the community's desire to help the police. Nationally, thousands of neighbourhood support groups have been established, and are already proving their effectiveness.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, peace, economic security and social justice are three vital elements in establishing a high quality of life. A fourth element is the environment in which we live.

The Government will effect wide-ranging reforms in environmental administration, which were the subject of public consultation during 1985. Legislation will be introduced to make provision for the appointment by this House of a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. The same Bill will also provide for the establishment of a Ministry for the Environment.

These changes reflect the Government's determination to see environmental factors given their proper weight. There will also be significant changes in the management of the nation's protected estate. A new Department of Conservation will take on this role, which previously has been dispersed among several agencies. This means that all waters, land, forests and wildlife, which are under reserves status, will in future be managed by one agency.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, as evidence of the Government's concern for the environment, legislation will be introduced to restructure the agencies responsible for the administration of State-owned lands, forests and waters. This will ensure more effective management, protection and conservation of New Zealand's national heritage.

Giving continued impetus to its policy of de-regulation the Government will take action to implement new policies on building controls. A Town and Country Planning Amendment Bill will be introduced to streamline and update the regional planning procedures.

As part of its policy to safeguard the interests of consumers in New Zealand's more competitive economy, the Government has decided to establish a Ministry of Consumer Affairs to initiate and to coordinate programmes of consumer law reform and education. The Fair Trading Bill which was introduced late last year is a feature of this policy.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, 1985 was an exciting year for artistic endeavour which brought New Zealand to the forefront of the literary world. It was also important for our Maori cultural heritage which is receiving widespread acclaim in North America.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the coming year will see this Government continue with its comprehensive law reform programme in the Justice area. A Constitution Bill will be introduced, bringing together in a single Act the statutory part of New Zealand's constitutional law and updating it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, at the beginning of this speech I spoke about monarchy and nationhood. Much of today's ceremony is symbolic of that relationship. Symbols, however, are only important and worth keeping when they reinforce the unity of purpose of, and reflect the compacts which have been democratically arrived at by a community. New Zealand is a mature democracy, with a faith in and respect for democratic institutions.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, I commend all these matters to your careful consideration in this Parliamentary session, and I pray that Divine Guidance will attend all your deliberations.