

This process of adjustment in the economy must not place unfair pressures on low-paid workers and other disadvantaged people. A comprehensive redundancy and retraining policy will be developed after consultation with the unions and employers. The review of equal pay issues begun in 1986 will be continued so that discrimination in employment based on sex will be removed. The Government believes in equal rights for all.

The Government remains committed to trade union education and the growth of industrial democracy. This growth will be assisted by the increased effectiveness and freedom of unions and employer organisations under the Labour Relations Act 1987. There will also be greater accountability of unions to their members. Policies will be introduced to encourage workers and their elected workplace representatives to participate in industry and business decisions.

The Government will review and amend the State Services Act 1962, the State Services Conditions of Employment Act 1977, and the Higher Salaries Commission Act 1977. The object is to effect fundamental reforms in the procedures for setting the conditions of employment for all Public Service staff, including permanent heads, aimed at creating a more responsive and flexible Public Service. The Government will examine departmental and public resources to create structures that serve New Zealand's needs.

Changes to the Accident Compensation Act 1982 to create a more efficient no fault regime will be introduced as a matter of urgency following the findings of the Law Commission review.

A basic goal of economic policy is to create a situation where every New Zealander able and willing to work has that opportunity. Work has both an economic and social role; people are a nation's most valuable resource. Work provides the individual with self-worth and the means to achieve a good quality of life.

An adequate level of basic education and skills is essential together with the ability to learn, and to adapt to change. The opportunity to acquire additional knowledge and skills throughout working life is vital. The association of the Education and Employment portfolios is a deliberate step in achieving this.

The vocational education and training system will be overhauled to fulfil the aspirations of individuals and to provide the skills the economy needs. This reformed system of which the Access programme is an integral part, must be responsive to the needs of both individuals and industry. It must also give everyone an equal chance to learn skills. Legislation to implement these reforms will be introduced this Session.