

The Mental Health Act 1969 will be reviewed and legislation will be introduced shortly in order to achieve a better balance between issues of civil liberties and treatment requirements.

An important aspect of social and economic policy is the achievement of equity for women and the encouragement of self-reliance and independence. Priority will be given to improved access to childcare, employment, housing and health care.

The Royal Commission on Social Policy is addressing the wider issues in the area of social policy. Its recommendations are expected to have far reaching implications.

In recognition of the growing sophistication of Arts and Culture the Government will establish a new Ministry devoted to encouraging this important dimension of our national identity. New Zealand has a unique role to play in cultural inter-action.

During this Session the Government intends to address the issue of Maori land claims and you will be asked to consider a Maori Land Bill.

Acknowledging the contribution that the Pacific Island communities have made to New Zealand's economic and cultural development the Government will continue its support of employment and development schemes for Pacific Islanders.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS, the work of the last three years to reform and strengthen local and regional government will continue. You will be asked to consider a Rating Powers Bill which will consolidate into one Act the rating powers of all local authorities.

A comprehensive review of the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 has been released for public comment. It is intended to introduce legislation more in keeping with community aspirations. A Bill will also be introduced to establish new environmental assessment procedures. The Government is also conducting a comprehensive review of the Land Act 1948 and will introduce a new Bill.

In keeping with a proper balance between the protection of the environment and the exploration of mineral resources the Government is committed to the reform of the mining legislation. However it must ensure the best use of mineral resources and the efficient allocation of mining rights to provide an effective contribution to our economy.

The nation's ports are crucial to our trade and economic well-being. New Zealand ports are inefficient, poorly managed, over capitalised and plagued by poor industrial practices. The Government is determined to reform the port industry. As part of the reform process a Bill will be introduced requiring harbour boards to establish companies to manage the commercial aspects of their port operations. The Waterfront Industry Act 1976 will be amended in tandem with the ports legislation, to remove the cross-subsidisation of labour costs among ports and the monopoly of the harbour boards in providing cargo-handling equipment.