

The position to-day is one of extreme tension, and there are strong reasons for believing that peace will not be long delayed, but any relaxation of effort on our part could only have the effect of endangering our satisfaction with the Dominion's war effort. Our enemies must be convinced that there will be no termination of the war until they submit to just and adequate proposals for reparation, and give sufficient guarantees against renewed attempts to ignore the law of nations and disturb the peace of the world.

The Imperial War Cabinet and the Imperial War Conference which my Prime Minister and Minister of Finance attended during the recess, together with representatives of all the Oversea Dominions and India, mark a great development in the constitutional history of the Empire. Opportunity was thus given for the views of this Dominion on many subjects to be fully considered from the standpoint of the whole Empire. My two Ministers were also enabled to advance the interests of New Zealand in many important respects.

Measures will be submitted for your consideration granting power to local bodies to initiate hydro-electric schemes for their respective districts; for the prevention of the aggregation of land; for the prevention of the acquisition of land in New Zealand by persons of enemy origin; for the better protection of soldiers, and their wives and dependants; for the prevention of traffic in military decorations, and the unauthorized use of badges assigned to soldiers' associations; for the necessary preservation of New Zealand forests; and for the limitation of export of timber.

It is intended to submit to Parliament certain necessary legislation relating to the present constitution of the Legislative Council.

You will also be asked to consider the subject of the increase in the cost of living consequent on the war, and to devise such remedies as may be possible.

In order to promote educational progress proposals will be submitted.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

I desire to congratulate you upon your removal into surroundings more in accordance with the dignity and importance of your deliberations than the rooms you have occupied since the destruction of the Parliamentary Buildings.

The public accounts and the estimates which will be laid before you will afford proof that economy has been and is being exercised in the various departments of the State. The increase in expenditure is largely due to the cost of the war and the growing interest and sinking fund on the Dominion debt.

A comprehensive scheme for demobilization and repatriation has been prepared and will be submitted during the present session.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

I trust that in your deliberations Divine Providence may guide you to the advantage of our Sovereign, of his Empire, and of this Dominion.