



THE
NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE
 EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

WELLINGTON, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1932.

THE First Session of the Twenty-fourth Parliament of New Zealand was on the twenty-third day of February opened by Commissioners under the authority of Letters Patent, and His Excellency was this day pleased to make the following statement of the causes of the calling of this Session of Parliament together:—

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

In conformity with the advice of my Ministers, I have summoned this special session of the new Parliament owing to the abnormal financial and economic position of the Dominion.

At the general election my Government, in inviting an expression of the country's confidence, appealed for unfettered authority in the existing emergency to adopt such measures for meeting it as circumstances might from time to time appear to justify. Since then Ministers have devoted their earnest attention to the difficult and complex problems confronting the Dominion, and suitable legislation will be submitted for your consideration.

A General Disarmament Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations is now meeting at Geneva, at which this Dominion is represented by its High Commissioner. It is earnestly hoped that this Conference may lead to an effective reduction in world armaments.

My Government view with deep regret the recent disturbance of peaceful relations between China and Japan—two nations with whom New Zealand has long enjoyed friendly commercial intercourse. They trust that the efforts of Great Britain and the other Powers to effect reconciliation and peace may be fraught with success.

An Imperial Economic Conference is to meet at Ottawa in July next. My Ministers attach the utmost importance to this Conference, the deliberations of which, they are convinced, will have a profound and lasting effect upon the economic welfare of the British Empire, and they are now engaged in taking the preliminary steps necessary to ensure the adequate representation of this Dominion and the due presentment of its views on Imperial trade.

The commercial relations between the Dominions of Canada and New Zealand have for some time been receiving the earnest consideration of my Government, and with a view to reaching a satisfactory agreement my Minister of Customs has recently held a conference with the Canadian Minister of Trade and Commerce. I am happy to say that a provisional agreement has been reached which will be placed before you for ratification.

My Government have recently arrived at a trade agreement with the Belgian Government, and this also will be laid before you for endorsement.

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

The economic difficulties which still beset the whole of the civilized world continue to affect the well-being of this Dominion, and unfortunately the hopes which were freely expressed last year that an improvement might be expected have not been realized. As New Zealand is dependent, probably to a greater extent than any other country, upon her overseas trade, external conditions have a very direct effect upon local prosperity.

The low prices received for primary products continue to impose severe hardships upon the farming community, resulting in turn in a marked diminution in the general business of the country and in the reduction of personal incomes. All sections of the people are consequently being called upon to make sacrifices, and it is gratifying to note the determination and sense of public spirit with which the crisis is being met.

The decline in trade is intimately reflected in the public accounts, and it is estimated that the year will close with a deficit, which is unavoidable in the circumstances. Details of the present and prospective position of the public finances will be duly placed before you.

Steps have already been taken greatly to curtail expenditure upon public works, but the resources likely to be available for this purpose will be so seriously diminished by the existing financial stringency that my Ministers consider a further drastic reduction to be inevitable.

An Economy Commission has recently been appointed to review and report upon the public expenditure in all its aspects, and also to indicate directions in which further economies may be effected. Copies of the Commission's reports will, in due course, be placed before you.

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

With a view to the prudent and progressive development of secondary industries, a special Development of Industries Committee has been set up in pursuance of legislation passed last year, and my Ministers confidently hope that its investigations will lead to the closer application of science to industry and to the expansion upon sound lines of manufacturing enterprise.

Experience having shown that the provisions of the Mortgagees Relief Act are inadequate to cope with present conditions, it is proposed to review and extend the existing legislation on this subject.

Measures will be submitted for your consideration for improving the method of unemployment relief, for amending the present arbitration system, and, generally, for meeting the special conditions which have arisen out of the current economic crisis.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your deliberations.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.