



THE
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THE First Session of the Twenty-fifth Parliament of New Zealand was on the twenty-fifth day of March 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 MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The death of His late Majesty King George V cast a profound sorrow over the people of this Dominion and evoked in all quarters and from all sections of our people, both pakeha and Maori, heartfelt expressions of the deep affection in which His late Majesty was held and the universal sense of loss, both personal and national, on his passing.

His Majesty King Edward VIII is already personally and most happily known in New Zealand. His Majesty's visit to New Zealand as Prince of Wales, and his lively interest in the well-being of his peoples in the dominions and in the colonies as well as in the United Kingdom have already endeared him to the people of this Dominion.

It was one of the first duties of my Government on assuming office to consider the international situation, which has become difficult and perplexing. My Ministers are firmly attached to the principles of the League of Nations and to the collective system of maintaining the peace of the world, which they are confident is the only rational and effective means of preserving peace and facilitating general disarmament. It is for this reason that they have felt bound to associate themselves with those nations which have united in supporting the machinery for the preservation of peace that has been established at Geneva. It is greatly to their regret that this has necessitated the application of sanctions against a great and powerful nation, and they trust that this position will not long continue. It will be necessary, however, for the measures taken in this connection to be laid before you for confirmation, and legislation to that end has been prepared accordingly.

Recent developments in Europe have still further shaken the confidence of the world, and my Ministers have been anxiously considering the situation resulting from Germany's military reoccupation of the Rhineland. They have been kept fully advised of developments by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, whose policy up to the present they have, in general, endorsed, and it is their intention to use whatever influence this Dominion possesses always in the direction of peace, while at the same time maintaining the inviolability of international engagements voluntarily accepted.

On the advice of my Ministers Parliament has, on this occasion, been summoned earlier than usual in order to enable my Government to lay before you legislative provisions designed to apply, as soon as possible, the principles upon which they were elected. It is their belief that the measures that they will lay before you will lead to an early and material improvement in the well-being of all, and particularly of those upon whom the effects of the depression have fallen with greater severity. In applying their policy, however, it is my Ministers' intention to ensure that no injustice is done to any section of the community.

My Ministers regard the question of unemployment as one of pressing urgency, and they have already taken what immediate steps were possible to alleviate the position of the more unfortunate of the people. They intend, under the direct control of my Minister of Labour, to attack this problem, and in the first place they propose not only to extend the public-works system of the Dominion, but also to facilitate the provision of employment by the expansion of existing industries and the encouragement of new industries.

For this purpose my Ministers have associated with themselves a Bureau of Industry competent to advise in the consideration of proposals for new industrial projects that involve State assistance, and this bureau will also advise my Ministers in connection with plans for the co-ordination, increased efficiency, and development of existing industries. My Ministers have already adopted measures for the stabilization of the wheat-growing, flour-milling, and bread-baking industries, and have also fixed the wholesale and retail price of motor-spirits in the Wellington city and suburban area. These measures, it is anticipated, will result in an improvement of conditions for the employers, the employees, and the consumers.

My Ministers propose to lay before you legislation designed to ameliorate the working-conditions of the people by the establishment of increased wages in industry and shorter working-hours. Amendments to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1925, will also be introduced with a view to restoring the right to refer industrial disputes automatically to the Court of Arbitration in the event of failure to arrive at a settlement in Conciliation Council, and an amendment is proposed to the Workers' Compensation Act, 1922. My Ministers have as a further step arranged for the Dominion to be represented at the International Labour Conference to be held at Geneva next June.

My Advisers fully recognize the value of the application of scientific principles to industry, both primary and secondary, and are giving special attention to the closer co-ordination of the scientific services at present available in the Dominion.

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

As one step in my Ministers' co-ordinated plan to restore the standard of living of farmers and agricultural workers, legislation will be introduced to inaugurate a system of guaranteed prices for the farm products of the Dominion which will ensure a reasonable reward for the time, energy, skill, and experience involved, and at the same time steps will be taken to adjust farm indebtedness in relation to total farm income. Arrangements will also be made to market the primary products of the Dominion in the simplest and most efficient manner possible.

It is intended to introduce legislation to ensure for the State the control of the currency and credit of New Zealand, so that the social and economic welfare of the Dominion will be promoted and maintained.

My Ministers hope to improve the markets for the primary products of the Dominion by the negotiation of complete reciprocal trade agreements with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and with other Governments of the British Commonwealth.

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

My Ministers are devoting careful attention to the question of land-settlement and to the revision of the land laws of the Dominion, and legislation in this connection will be laid before you in due course. The position of those Crown tenants who are at present meeting with difficulty is also being reviewed.

In view of the fundamental importance to the welfare of the Dominion of an efficient transport system, the whole problem of the administration, operation, and control of all forms of transport is at present being investigated, and amendments to the legislation in this connection will be laid before you for your consideration. My Advisers are also determined to raise the standard of safety on the roads. It is the intention of my Government to place the control of transport directly under a responsible Minister, and similar action is proposed with respect to the railways.

Prior to the introduction of the necessary legislation, my Ministers have already undertaken detailed inquiries with reference to defence, pensions, local government, housing, national health insurance, dental hygiene, the health of the Maori, the carriage of mails by air, and the protection of British shipping.

In particular, a survey of the education system will be undertaken. The readmission to the schools of children of five years of age has already been arranged for; and the training colleges at Wellington and Dunedin have been reopened. My Ministers intend to take such steps as are still necessary to place a liberal and adequate education within the reach of all the young people of the Dominion, in the country as well as in the cities.

I trust that you may be guided by Divine Providence in your consideration of these matters for the well-being and happiness of the people of this Dominion.