

## CONCLUSION.

Honourable members will recognize by what I have placed before them that the country, entirely due to war conditions, has difficult problems to settle. It is essential that the basis upon which the future working-out of these problems is largely dependent—namely, financial stability—should receive the earnest consideration which its importance demands. Our obligations are great. That we can bear them and make proper provision for meeting them is, I am glad to say, beyond all doubt. Our financial position, as will be recognized from what I have placed before the House, is remarkably strong.

The proposed readjustment of taxation, which will be placed in a separate Bill, is such as is absolutely necessary to enable the Dominion to carry through its share of the war.

As soon as the war has ceased and the full responsibilities connected with pensions and other liabilities have been ascertained it will become necessary to readjust the country's taxation to meet its requirements in normal times. It would, in my opinion, be impossible and, indeed, unreasonable to expect the taxpayers to continue for a day longer than necessary the high taxation that war financial requirements alone justify. The continuance of this high taxation would in peacetime certainly tell against our industries and employment. Neither the industrial, commercial, agricultural, nor pastoral communities can produce the best results until a large measure of relief is afforded.

I feel that I should be wanting in my duty were I not to acknowledge here the magnificent work that the New Zealand soldiers have done in upholding the best traditions of their race. They have added a golden page to the history of the Dominion, and are entitled to all we can do for them upon their return, and the fullest assistance of the Government will be cheerfully given to enable them to obtain Government employment whenever it is possible and in cases where it is necessary to do so.

I am sure you will agree with me when I say that, whatever happens and however long the war may last, we will leave nothing undone to see it through to a complete and successful termination.

There will assuredly be world problems to solve in which New Zealand must necessarily take its part. It will, of course, be some time before they come up for settlement, as other portions of the Empire as well as ourselves are directly concerned, and we cannot in that respect move alone.

There is, however, no reason why we should wait to put our own house in order, and I sincerely hope that when the time arrives for the next meeting of Parliament it will be found possible to greatly reduce the country's taxation, after making full and proper provision for all the obligations that have been incurred in connection with the important part New Zealand has taken in the fight for freedom and the protection of the civilization of the world.

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