

A NEW SHAPE WILL BE GIVEN TO THE WORLD

Says Professor Harold Laski in this recent talk in the BBC series, "Calling New Zealand"

THE treacherous infamy of Japan has brought the whole world into the area of conflict. It knocks now at the very gate of New Zealand. Your fate has become doubly linked with ours: in the tremendous drama of the Pacific Ocean, a new shape will be given to the contours of civilisation. It is now indeed total war, but because we can now look to the immense resources of the United States, we must be careful not to relax our vigilance. If we have a new ally, we have also a new enemy—powerful, relentless, well prepared. On any showing, it will take many months before Americans are really equipped in trained men, in arms, in munitions. Japan will never be so powerful as now, so that the next period is bound to be critical for us all. It is going to exact more sacrifice, it will demand even more efficiency. None of us in Britain—no, none of you in New Zealand—can hope to live his or her nor-

mal life. We have to adapt ourselves to the call for increased effort on an unprecedented scale.

Why Labour Joined

You will remember that the Churchill Government came into being for exactly this purpose. The Labour Party did not enter it to secure Socialism; it entered it to see that no form of sacrifice was ruled out, no method of efficiency excluded, on party grounds, if it could be shown that they were necessary to victory—swift victory, complete victory, the kind of victory that enables us to feel that this time the foundations of enduring peace are unbreakably laid. That is why Parliament has just given new and immense powers over our lives to this Government: given them unanimously. It is not that we are satisfied that the Cabinet has not made mistakes. Clearly it has. It is not that we do not think it cannot do better. Clearly it can. It is not even that we think it has cut through the tangle of vested inter-

ests and red tape which still hamper full production. We are certain it has not.

But when the last criticism is made against the Churchill Government, three things can be put to its credit. It has built among the people an unbreakable will to victory. It has made the transition from those grim months from Dunkirk, when the Commonwealth stood alone, to the majestic combination of all the free peoples of the world in a way that has renovated the spiritual foundations of our age, and it has built bridges from the old order to the new by the relations it is creating with the Soviet Union, which have in them a path to new hopes. For if we learn from this friendship the power to blend what is creative in each of our systems, we may hope to combine the driving energy of the old individualism with the massed power of collective effort.

New Horizons

That union would open new and immense horizons. We need those hori-

zons. The more fully the habits of our enemies are explored, the more clearly the nature of their purpose is revealed. They represent quite unmistakably the principles of the counter-revolution. Beneath the mask of modern technology, the features we can discern constitute above all a denial of everything for which the modern world has come to stand—national freedom, individual self respect, democratic government—and of the method by which these are fulfilled, international co-operation by consent and not by coercion. These, I think, are the ends we seek to realise, and each of them is deliberately and consciously rejected by our enemies. Not only do they reject them; their method of rejection refuses to rely upon the power of reason to persuade. It organises brute force to destroy. It lives by the fears it can evoke, the poison it can spread, the terror it can impose. Those over whom its authority extends cease to be men in any sense in which humanity has had

(Continued on next page)

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