

SYNOPSIS OF ACTS PASSED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NEW ZEALAND DURING THE SESSION ENDED ON THE 15TH DAY OF APRIL, 1918.

*Public Acts.*

1918, No. 1. The Expiring Laws Continuance Act, 1918.—This Act continues in force until the 31st August, 1919, the several enactments specified in the schedule thereto. The enactments so continued relate to matters having reference to the present war. Part I of the Monopoly Prevention Act, 1908, which expired on the 31st December, 1915, is revived as from that date, and is continued in operation until the 31st August, 1919.

1918, No. 2. The Finance Act, 1918.—This Act is divided into Parts, as follows: Part I, Public Revenues; Part II, Land-tax and Income-tax, and Amusements-tax; Part III, War-purposes Loan; Part IV, General.

Part I (Public Revenues) makes the necessary financial provision to allow the Government to carry on its business until the holding of the ordinary session of Parliament (towards the end of the year). It extends for a period of nine months the appropriations for the financial year ended on the 31st March, 1918; and expenditure in accordance with those appropriations may be incurred during the current financial year accordingly.

Part II. Land-tax and Income-tax, and Amusements-tax.—By this Part of the Act land-tax and income-tax (including a special war-tax) are imposed for the financial year commencing the 1st April, 1918, at the same rates respectively as were fixed for the preceding financial year by the Finance Act, 1917. Exemptions from the amusements-tax are granted in respect of agricultural and pastoral societies' shows, and of entertainments promoted for patriotic purposes, or by societies not established for profit.

Part III. War-purposes Loan.—By this Part of the Act the Minister of Finance is empowered to raise a loan of £2,000,000 for war purposes. The provisions of the Finance Act, 1917 (relating to the war-purposes loan of 1917), with respect to war-loan certificates, Post Office War Bonds (now, however, called Post Office War Loan Inscribed Stock), and the issue of special securities to be available in the payment of death duties are repealed.

By section 16 provision is made for enforced subscriptions by persons who may fail to contribute in accordance with their means. The maximum subscription that any person may be called upon to make is an amount equal to six times his yearly average of land-tax and income-tax (exclusive of excess-profits duty) for the three years ended the 31st March, 1918. If any person fails to contribute the amount required of him, he is liable to a penal tax equal to twice the amount of land-tax and income-tax payable by him under the Finance Act, 1917, and, in addition, the amount of the contribution required of him may be recovered by the Commissioner of Taxes by action in his own name, on behalf of the Crown.

Persons on whom a requisition to contribute to the loan is served have a right to appeal, in the first place to a special Board of Government officials of administrative rank, with a final right of appeal to a Judge of the Supreme Court in Chambers.

The provisions of section 16 are made applicable to the outstanding balance of the loan of 1917, and the corresponding provisions of section 40 of the Finance Act, 1917, are repealed.

The compulsory provisions may be exercised with respect either to the loan of 1917 or the loan of 1918, notwithstanding that the limit of the loan-authority may thereby be exceeded.

Except with respect to compulsory contributions (on which interest is payable at 3 per cent.) and Post Office War Loan Inscribed Stock (carrying interest at 5 per cent. subject to income-tax) the loan is to be raised at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. free from income-tax.

Part IV. General.—By Part IV of the Act the following miscellaneous provisions are made:—

Section 19 extends the duration of the present Parliament by one year, unless it is sooner dissolved by the Governor-General pursuant to any authority in that behalf.

Section 20 protects local authorities in respect of loans which may fall due during the period of the war or within twelve months thereafter. The term of all such loans, and of all special rates or other securities therefor, is extended until the expiration of such period of twelve months.

Section 21 authorizes local authorities to borrow moneys by way of bank overdraft for investment in the war-purposes loan.

Section 22 restricts the importation into New Zealand of unmatured spirits.

Section 23 is an "emergency" provision which enables the Minister of Finance to dispense, in favour of a company, with the provisions of the Companies Act requiring the registration of mortgages as a condition precedent to their validity. The Minister may exercise such dispensing-power if he is satisfied that owing to war conditions registration of any such mortgage would be unfair or unreasonable in the circumstances.

Section 24 restricts to "trade mortgages" the operations of section 2 of the Mortgages Extension Amendment Act, 1914 (which enables mortgagors to contract themselves out of the protection afforded by the principal Act). The effect of the amendment is that mortgagees, entitled under mortgages other than trade mortgages, must obtain the leave of the Supreme Court before exercising, pursuant to the mortgage, their powers of sale.

Section 25 enables the Governor-General by war regulations to make provision for a scheme of "national service" during the war. Such regulations may provide for—(a) "Pro-curing, exacting, enforcing, controlling, and regulating national service"; and (b) "prohibiting or restricting any service, employment, occupation, business, work or industry." Wage-earners under a scheme of national service are not to receive less than would be payable pursuant to any award or agreement under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1908.