

A National Policy for New Zealand.

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SINCE the recent course of events has directed public attention to the consideration of the best means of developing the resources and extending the commerce of this favoured land, it will surely not be out of place to outline a scheme by which this undertaking might be accomplished.

Though the following remarks are necessarily imperfect, yet they will have served a useful purpose if they arouse an interest in this subject, so that others more capable of dealing with it may be induced to take the matter in hand with a greater chance of success. No more important subject than the one dealt with in this paper could claim the attention of every section of the community. Therefore no apology is needed for bringing this question before the notice of the public in a magazine which deals with matters of special interest to New Zealand.

But in order that a national policy should have a fair chance of succeeding, it is first necessary that two preliminary conditions should be understood and accepted. If these are rejected, the whole scheme will fall to the ground when an attempt is made to formulate it.

If a national policy is to become possible it must be outside the range of party politics. It takes for granted that there are certain problems to be solved for the advantage of the whole community, and that this solution may be best accomplished by the united effort of politicians of every shade of opinion. It does not imply that these politicians will be forced to surrender other opinions that more strictly belong to party, but that they will

be reserved for occasions more suitable for their exposition and propagation.

Again, it must be distinctly understood that personal ambition is to become subordinate to the higher interests of the country. The temptation to advance mere party interests must be suppressed in order to promote a cause superior to the gains and triumphs of political ascendancy. The disunion of faction should be replaced by the united effort of all classes to discover a secure path for the further development of the country.

If these two conditions cannot be accepted in their integrity, then it is useless to attempt to construct a policy that may be regarded as national. The following remarks are, therefore, based upon the assumption that a national policy is both possible and expedient.

Before examining the scope and purport of such questions it would be well to first suggest the means by which they might be brought within the range of practical legislation.

The Government of the day might introduce some such measure when the time was ripe for its discussion. If the House of Representatives on the voices approved of the principles and aim of the measure, it might be proceeded with in the usual way. If it was evident that this view of the matter was not unanimous, then the measure would be dropped for that session. In the next session, provided the interest in the measure had been maintained or even increased during the recess, it would be again introduced into the House of Representatives, and if not approved on the voices might be