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THE First Session of the Thirty-first Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by the Governor-General, when His Excellency was pleased to make the following statement of the causes of the calling of this session of Parliament together:

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Since I last opened Parliament the people of New Zealand have again had the opportunity of electing their representatives to this House. The same period has also seen a number of significant developments in international relations. Some of these have an immediate and vital bearing on the wellbeing and security of our people, and your early assembly on this occasion reflects the desire of my Ministers to keep Parliament promptly and fully informed on these questions.

Unhappily, the world picture remains one of tension and instability, overshadowed by the threat of new weapons of devastating power. Only the unity and strength of the nations of the free world can, in the view of my Advisers, preserve peace for their peoples. Close co-operation with other Commonwealth countries and the United States of America, together with active participation in the United Nations, continue, therefore, to be central factors in my Government's policy. The Commonwealth Conference in London which my Prime Minister attended in February has again afforded a striking demonstration of Commonwealth solidarity and strength which will give encouragement both to our own peoples and to our friends.

There is some ground for satisfaction at the cessation of active fighting in the international sphere, and the efforts of my Government in the Security Council to bring about a cease-fire in the area of Formosa will, it is hoped, be successful and pave the way for the preservation of peace in the Far East.