

going to suggest for one moment that perhaps the municipalities of this country have gone too far in connection with the debt they have undertaken—in some cases they have gone to a little extravagance, perhaps, but it was the signs of the times, and it was forced upon the councils by the people who elected them. For that action, they could not be blamed, because the people themselves carried the by-laws which made it possible to incur these large debts of the municipalities of the Province.

Now, I do not wish to speak on any other questions suggested in the King's Speech, because I hope to make a statement soon as to what part of our legislative programme will be carried out in its entirety. There are some questions in relation to the returned soldiers, the aid they should receive, that the Government is giving earnest attention to. We are endeavoring to get the views of the other provinces and the Federal Government in connection with the returned soldiers, to see if we cannot work out some common purpose; it is a programme which cannot be worked out hurriedly, but it must be worked out to the advantage of the returned soldiers when they come back. (Applause.)

I have spoken in connection with the Prohibition Bill and the Liquor Act, and I do not propose to carry on any debate on that today, because an opportunity will be given later on. When these

various features of legislation are brought down, they will be discussed individually, rather than in a prolonged speech of this nature.

#### Optimism—Not Pessimism

Now, I have shown you what the credit of the country is; that it has not been affected by what my friends opposite said, it has not been affected by the depressed times, it has not been affected by the financial conditions engendered by the war. I have shown you what our net debt is as compared with the large cities of the Province, and also of the municipalities. And it seems to me that at this stage of the history of British Columbia we should have to have optimism and not pessimism; it is a time when optimism should be shown on the part of everybody as never before. Our public assets are of such a nature that we do not need to fear about getting along, so long as we do not spend recklessly the money of the country. This is not a time for holding post mortems. "Let the dead bury its dead." Let us go on in the future with courage, and see what we can do for British Columbia. These pessimistic speeches that my friends have been making, not only on the hustings, but on the floor of this House, do not do any good to this country. We have the natural assets, and all we want is courage to face the future, and then all will be well. (Applause.)