

Speech from the Throne

The house resumed at three o'clock.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr. Speaker read a communication from the assistant secretary to the Governor General, announcing that His Excellency the Administrator would proceed to the Senate chamber at three p.m. on this day, for the purpose of formally opening the session of the dominion parliament.

A message was delivered by Major A. R. Thompson, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, His Excellency the Administrator desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly the house went up to the Senate chamber. Then the Hon. James Allison Glen, Speaker-elect, said:

May it please your Excellency,

The House of Commons have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me. If in the performance of those duties I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Commons whose servant I am.

The Honourable the Speaker of the Senate, addressing the Honourable the Speaker of the House, then said:

Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Excellency the Administrator to assure you that your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

Then His Excellency the Administrator was pleased to open parliament by a speech from the throne.

And the house being returned to the Commons chamber:

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to state that the house having attended on His Excellency the Administrator in the Senate Chamber, I informed his excellency that the choice of Speaker had fallen upon me, and in your names and on your behalf I made the usual claim for your privileges, which his excellency was pleased to confirm to you.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 1, respecting the administration of oaths of office.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the house that when the house did attend His Excellency the Administrator this day in the Senate chamber, his excellency was pleased to make a speech to both houses of parliament. To prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy, which is as follows:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

You have been summoned to the first session of a new parliament at a time of the greatest conflict in the history of mankind. Upon the outcome of the struggle will depend the maintenance of civilized society and the inheritance of human freedom for our own and future generations.

Since parliament last met, the nature of the conflict, the character of the enemy, and the perils which menace all free nations, have become only too clear. In that short space of time, the world has seen the peaceful and peace-loving peoples of Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg made the victims of the treachery and barbarism which have marked the successive outrages of nazi Germany. It has also witnessed the invasion of Finland, and, despite the epic resistance of its heroic population, the partition of that unoffending country. At any time, the lust of conquest may vastly enlarge the theatre of war. These tragic events have but served to intensify our determination to share in the war effort of the allied powers to the utmost of our strength. In this resolution the government has been fortified by the direct and unquestioned mandate of the Canadian people.

The organization and prosecution of Canada's war effort have commanded the unremitting attention of my ministers. The constant consultation and complete cooperation maintained with the governments of the United Kingdom and France have been materially strengthened by the recent visit to those countries of my Minister of National Defence.

You will be fully informed of Canada's action both in the military and economic fields. You will be asked to consider measures deemed essential for the prosecution of the war, and for the social and economic requirements of the country.

While the present session of parliament will necessarily be mainly concerned with Canada's war effort, and the measures essential to the achievement of ultimate victory, my ministers are of opinion that, despite what to-day is being witnessed of concentrated warfare, it is desirable, as far as may be possible, to plan for the days that will follow the cessation of hostilities.

As a contribution to industrial stability in time of war, and to social security and justice in time of peace, resolutions will be introduced for an amendment to the British North America Act which would empower the parliament of Canada to enact at the present session legislation to establish unemployment insurance on a national scale.

The report of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, which has just been received, will be tabled immediately.