

*The Address—Mr. Lapointe (Lotbinière)*

be the guiding light of every honourable member of this house during the present Parliament.

Another task devolving upon the government under present conditions is that of planning for the post-war period. There again we must draw a lesson from the last war. If our participation in the European conflict creates problems of a special nature, our eventual return to normalcy after the war may prove equally difficult.

As I have said, the presence of a large number of young members in this house ought to prove helpful in solving our national problems. They should give special attention to post-war problems.

During the dark years which may lie ahead of us, the youth of this country will be called upon to make the greatest sacrifice. Those of our young men who are already overseas and the others who will sail shortly have a right to expect that, in return for their sacrifices, their government will take appropriate measures to ensure that their lot will not be worse when they return to this country. Provision will have to be made for the civil reestablishment of those who have not hesitated to risk their future in the cause of justice and in defence of civilization.

This planning for the post-war period must also be extended to other fields. If, as a free nation, we are bound to help save civilization now in jeopardy, we must by the same token discover a formula whereby the welfare of humanity may be secured.

All nations firmly believe, for a time at least, in the possibility of a durable peace and in the effectiveness of institutions designed to bring about the peaceful solution of disputes. The failure of the League of Nations does not prevent this hope from rising anew to-day. Indeed, the human race would soon disappear if it gave way to despair. Public opinion in democratic countries is fully aware of the deadly peril with which western civilization would be faced as a result of a Nazi or Soviet triumph over the international community, and demands a better and more effective formula than that of 1919.

Of what avail would be the sacrifices made and the losses suffered if the settlement effected at the end of the present conflict were to result once again in nothing more than a twenty-year truce. For my part, I am convinced that divine Providence, having ever guided our destiny, will not fail us now and that God will inspire the nations that have taken up arms to safeguard world peace and freedom against what has been fittingly termed "the common front of barbarism."

Mr. Speaker, it is our earnest desire that Canada should exert among all other nations

[Mr. Hugues Lapointe.]

a beneficent influence toward world peace and the establishment of better relations between all countries. Such influence cannot become an important force unless we introduce at home certain reforms that would make of Canada a nation united and strong, socially, economically, and politically.

That is why I have noted with satisfaction that the report on Dominion-Provincial relations in the various spheres of activity has now been submitted to this house. This document, probably the most important since Confederation, is the work of prominent men, experts in constitutional law; may I be permitted to add that the Chairman of the Commission, Doctor Joseph Sirois, was my professor at Laval university. These men have brought to their task all of their knowledge, patriotism and experience.

In considering the recommendations contained in this report, the various governments should take into account the new conditions which have arisen in our national life.

Surely the Fathers of Confederation could not foresee the evolution which has taken place during the past 75 years, and should certain changes become necessary because of new conditions, we should not hesitate to make them.

To that end, the greatest possible degree of cooperation should exist between the Dominion and the provinces. In this sphere also there is no room for political considerations. Besides, our population will make the necessary distinctions and will not deny its support to the proper measure of reform; our people would not even lend an ear to those who, taking an easy course, set themselves up as defenders of rights and principles contested by no one and which, in fact, must remain inviolate.

I know of no greater danger for a minority in this country than to stand in the way of reforms necessitated by our social conditions and to oppose any measure deemed progressive and essential.

I could not fittingly conclude these remarks without expressing the deep satisfaction which we have felt on hearing that His Excellency Lord Athlone had been designated for the post of Governor General of Canada. Our new viceroy has had a distinguished career and his appointment is a great honour to this country.

Lord Athlone and Her Royal Highness the Princess Alice will receive in every part of Canada a most loyal and enthusiastic welcome. Their near association with Their Majesties King George and Queen Elizabeth will draw even closer the bonds which unite us to our gracious sovereigns, whose visit to Canada last year shall ever be remembered.