

are the fathers of fairly large families, and as such are in a position to speak not only as veterans on such matters as demobilization and rehabilitation of the forces, but, also as heads of families on the significance of the social legislation which is proposed in the speech from the throne. I am glad they have expressed themselves so strongly in favour of it.

There is one other point I should like to mention in regard to these two hon. gentlemen. One comes to us from the province of Quebec; he is of a race and religion different from that of the other hon. gentleman, who comes to us from the prairie provinces. In the speeches delivered by these two hon. gentlemen, however, we find that unity—unity in diversity—which is perhaps the greatest of all the outstanding features of our country. We are a united country, though we may have diverse elements; and our unity could not have been better exemplified than it was in the two admirable addresses which were delivered on Friday last.

This afternoon the leader of the opposition began his remarks, quite rightly, by emphasizing the fact that the war is continuing, and that it was or should be the most important of all considerations before us at this time. Later, however, in the course of his remarks my hon. friend said that he thought either the speech from the throne or the government itself had given evidence of a belief that the war would be over somewhat soon. May I immediately take exception to any statement of the kind. I wish I could say to this House of Commons that I believed the war was nearing an end. It is perfectly true that conditions are much better than they were a year ago. We have great reason to be thankful for the tremendous gains which have been made in the course of the past year; that the Germans have been driven out of Africa; that Italy has surrendered unconditionally; that the Italian fleet is now under the control of the allied powers; that Sicily has been successfully invaded and liberated, and that Italy has been invaded. We can be thankful that the Russians have had such great successes, and also that on the other side of the world the United States, Australian, New Zealand and British forces have had the great successes which they have achieved up to the present in their battles against the Japanese. But it remains true as far as both Germany and Japan are concerned that to-day these countries still occupy a very considerable proportion of conquered territory, and that the fighting is still taking place on that conquered territory. In Europe, while Russia is making a magnificent fight, the Germans are still on

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Russian soil. In Italy, while the British, United States and Canadian forces, and others allied with them, are making a magnificent fight, the Germans still are in possession of the greater part of that country. At the present time Germany is surrounded by a group of conquered countries which serve as outer defences to her immediate territory. Those countries which have been overrun are providing Germany at present with resources which she needs, in the way of man-power, food and raw materials. Their peoples are being made to work and to serve the interests of Germany, which itself remains a perfectly intact fortress. Similarly in the orient Japan controls the many countries and islands which she has taken from the Netherlands, the British and others, and Japan is being supplied with labour and materials in a way which helps to serve her ends and needs.

So, Mr. Speaker, while we have great reason to be thankful for the progress which has been made, it would be wrong to assume that there is like reason to believe that there will be an early conclusion to this war. I have followed the progress of the war, I think, as closely as any man in Canada, and I am sure I am only giving the experience of others who have sought to follow it closely, as well as my own, when I say that I have been surprised at how long it has taken, in the light of the expectations that have been cherished, to reach the different objectives that have been attained along the way. Let me remind hon. members here of what their views were at the time Africa was invaded by the United States armies, and at the time the British were fighting along the north coast of that continent. It was thought first that it would be a matter of only a few weeks before the Germans and Italians were driven out, then of a few months, but as it turned out a very much longer time was required. When this house adjourned last July our forces, along with British and American forces, had entered Sicily. We thought it was going to be a matter of only a short time until Sicily and then Italy were conquered. Certainly when the Italian mainland had been successfully invaded by the allied forces it was felt that it would be only a short time until Rome would be in the possession of the allied powers. Well, Rome is not yet under allied control, and no one can say how long the Italian campaign may last.

We know that in all probability Europe is to be invaded from the west as well as the east and south, but does anyone realize how difficult that invasion is going to be? I want this afternoon to leave that thought, above all others, with hon. members of this house. As I