

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH
ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Senate resumed from yesterday the consideration of His Excellency the Governor General's Speech at the opening of the session, and the motion of Hon. Mr. David for an Address in reply thereto.

Hon. WILLIAM DUFF: Honourable senators, a week ago to-day we assembled in this Chamber for two purposes: one, to be present at the opening of this session; the second, to welcome to this country and to this Parliament His Excellency the Earl of Athlone and his charming consort, Princess Alice. His Excellency opened the session with a Speech from the Throne, addressed both to the Senate and to the House of Commons.

Before dealing with that speech, may I say that we in Canada appreciate the fact that His Majesty King George VI and the Government of Great Britain sent to us so charming a couple as His Excellency and the Countess of Athlone, and we hope their stay in Canada will be both happy and pleasant.

The Speech from the Throne, as usual, omits what honourable members may have expected it to say; and, as usual too, there is some criticism because the speech contains so little. In my opinion that lack may of itself be a good thing. I have for some twenty-four or twenty-five sessions had the honour and privilege of sitting either in this Chamber or in another place in this building, and it seems to me that on a number of occasions more amendments were made to legislation than were necessary. Apparently officials in the different departments, in order, as they thought, to show they were doing their best, passed on to their Ministers certain amendments which, either in the next or the second session after enactment, had to be repealed. So I think that in these serious times in the history of Canada it is perhaps just as well that His Excellency, on the advice, of course, of his Ministers, dealt only with the subject which is of prime importance to all of us in this country.

I think, however, honourable senators, it may be truthfully said that there is something in the Speech of which we should take cognizance. His Excellency's Speech, of course, relates particularly to the war and the aftermath of the war. I will not read the whole Speech, but with your permission I should like to read two paragraphs. The first is the one in which His Excellency says:

The destruction of freedom throughout Europe has awakened, in the western hemisphere, a fuller consciousness of the Nazi menace. In the face of the common peril there has arisen a

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closer association and an increasing measure of co-operation between the United States of America and the nations of the British Commonwealth.

I think, honourable senators, that is a noble sentiment, no matter from whom it may come. If we are to live in peace in this world again after the war, especially those of us who are in this hemisphere, we must be on good terms with our neighbours to the south and with the other nations of the Americas. Therefore we should recognize that this clause in His Excellency's speech is a clause well worth discussing and adopting.

He goes on to say:

You have been summoned at this time that opportunity may be afforded for the fullest consideration and discussion of Canada's war effort and of national problems which the war has served to intensify or create.

There again, I think, is something with which we must deal. Not only the Government of this country, with powers that we as members of this Chamber have not, but also the members of this Chamber and of the representative body sitting in another place must give full and serious consideration to the problems of this country and Great Britain which are due to present-day conditions, and to problems which may arise in the near future.

Those two paragraphs alone are sufficient to justify me in saying that His Excellency has earned our praise for making such a contribution to the history of Canada in the first Speech from the Throne which he has delivered to the people of this country, through the Senate and the House of Commons.

I said a moment ago that there was bound to be criticism because the Speech did not go as far as it might. Knowing myself as I hope I do, and knowing my failings, especially my partisanship, I can realize that there are many people in this country who think "nothing good can come out of Nazareth." I must admit—for open confession is good for the soul—that under other circumstances and with another government in power, whether the Speech from the Throne was drafted by the Governor General himself or whether he was voicing the opinions of his advisers, I might be the first to find fault with it.

On Tuesday night we listened to two very excellent addresses, and, if I may, I should like to congratulate both the honourable senator from Sorel (Hon. Mr. David) and the honourable senator from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden), who, respectively, moved and seconded the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. The young senator from Toronto is a new member, but in the speech