

CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

Monday, April 7, 1941

The house met at three o'clock.

## VACANCY

### DEATH OF MEMBER FOR THE ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF EDMONTON EAST

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the house that I have received a communication from two members notifying me that the following vacancy has occurred in the representation, viz:

Of Frederick Clayton Casselman, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Edmonton East.

I have accordingly issued my warrant to the chief electoral officer to make out a new writ of election for the said electoral district.

## THE WAR

### HOSTILITIES IN THE BALKANS—GERMAN ATTACK ON YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, over the week-end, as hon. members are aware, the war entered on a new phase. At dawn yesterday, the German army and air force launched an attack on both Yugoslavia and Greece. Reports from the fronts are meagre as yet. They are sufficient, however, to make clear that attacks against both countries have been of the ruthless and barbarous character witnessed during the invasion of Poland at the beginning of the war and repeated again against Norway, the low countries, and France during the course of the spring campaign of 1940. They mark, in fact, the launching in deadly earnest of the 1941 military campaign. The attack on Yugoslavia was made by German divisions operating from southern Austria, from Roumania and from Bulgaria toward the Varder valley; that on Greece, by a combined German and Bulgarian onslaught down the Struma valley, directed at the capture of the Greek seaport of Salonika.

The world is again witnessing the determination of nazi Germany to ride roughshod over all countries which dare to oppose the demands of her leaders, or to stand in the way of German domination.

It appeared as recently as the 26th of March, that nazi Germany, by a process of intimidation, was about to add Yugoslavia to her already extended list of victims, thereby achieving through deceptive diplomacy and overwhelming intimidation, another bloodless victory. On the previous day at Vienna, the government of Yugoslavia in desperation had adhered to the tripartite pact, signed at Berlin on September 27, last year, by Germany, Italy and Japan, and agreed that Germany might make use of Yugoslav roads and railways in its projected attack on Greece. The pact, however, was never ratified. The mere announcement of its terms provoked widespread resentment in Yugoslavia. Popular opinion made itself so strongly felt that the council of regents, responsible for the country's betrayal, took refuge in flight. The young king, Peter II, assumed the throne, and a new government was formed which soon gained the support of every section of the Yugoslav people. It made clear the determination of the country to maintain its independence. Because of this attempt by Yugoslavia at self-preservation, Hitler is now seeking to gain by violence what he failed to obtain by subtle means.

The courage of the Yugoslav nation in standing up to the armed might of Germany is enheartening beyond words. It is the more heroic in that Germany within the past few months has gained all the advantages of a complete occupation of Roumania and Bulgaria, and is supported in her present onslaught by Italy and by her control of Hungary, each of which countries have had designs on Yugoslav territory. Italy has, in fact, already boasted of attacking Yugoslavia.

The nazi attempt to subjugate Yugoslavia followed what has come to be the classic nazi pattern of aggression. Just as Czechoslovakia was half conquered by the occupation of Austria; just as Poland and Hungary were half conquered by the occupation of Czechoslovakia; just as France was more than half defeated by the invasion of the low countries; and just as the nazis hoped by the conquest of Norway and the occupation of France to outflank Britain; so the nazis expected that