

great public measures, and I thank him for keeping that thought in mind and offering to support us to the extent of his power on measures which merit general approval.

The right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) referred to the fact that the coronation ceremonies, which come in the month of May, to be followed by an imperial conference, have contributed to the obligations of the administration, and will necessitate, if we are not to have a continuation of the present session in the summer or fall months, a degree of cooperative action on the part of all parties in the house. May I say that the government have in mind the desire of hon. members to conclude this session before the coronation ceremonies if possible, and we will endeavour to bring forward our measures, particularly those likely to be of most concern to hon. members, at as early a date in the session as possible. We will do everything we can to expedite the business of parliament, but I should like hon. members to understand that our desire to expedite the business of parliament must not be considered in any way as a willingness to give to the business of the country other than the fullest attention which necessity may require. If as I said we cannot get through with the work of the session in a satisfactory way by the end of April, parliament will adjourn, to meet later in the year after the coronation of King George VI and the imperial conference; not another session of parliament; but a continuation of the present session. I believe, however, that with the cooperation of all it should be possible to carry through the work of the present session satisfactorily and in time to enable us to prorogue before that historic event.

May I say to my right hon. friend that the government desire to extend to him an invitation to be a member of the delegation of this parliament which will attend the coronation ceremonies. I hope that the right hon. leader of the opposition may find it possible to accept this invitation and so honour parliament by becoming a member of the delegation which will represent Canada at His Majesty's coronation.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My right hon. friend has spoken of the abdication of his former majesty King Edward VIII. He said that he felt that the matter was closed and should not be reopened. In those remarks my right hon. friend, I am happy to say, reechoed what I myself expressed in this house last week. However, I did give to parliament an

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

assurance that I would make a statement at an early opportunity with reference to the abdication, and perhaps it might avoid further references during the course of this debate and later in the session were I to take advantage of this occasion, which is an appropriate one, seeing that the address refers to the abdication, to make the statement I have in mind.

With respect to the abdication of the former king, there are two issues which it is well to keep separate and distinct. The first issue has to do with the events which led up to the king's decision to abdicate, including the question of such advice, if any, as may have been tendered to His Majesty. The other issue is the constitutional and legal propriety of the course followed by the government of Canada to give effect to the king's decision and with respect to the matter of the succession.

As to the first of these issues, may I say at once that Mr. Baldwin, Prime Minister of Great Britain, made a very full and very moving statement to the parliament at Westminster on December 10 with reference to the events, as known to himself more than to any other person, which occasioned the action taken by His former Majesty King Edward VIII. I hope it will not be necessary for me to do more than direct the attention of hon. members of this house to the fact that no one in the British parliament, of any party in either house, questioned the absolute sincerity and integrity of Mr. Baldwin's utterances.

Mr. BENNETT: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I, moreover, add that His former Majesty, on the first occasion that he had, as he himself said, of speaking on his own behalf without any constitutional restraint, stated in a broadcast which he made to the entire world, that he had always been treated with full consideration by the ministers of the crown and in particular by Mr. Baldwin, the prime minister, and that at no time had there been anything in the nature of a constitutional difference between him and them, or between him and parliament; that the decision he had made was entirely his and his alone. He emphasized that at no time had there been any conflict between himself and his ministers.

I think the matter might well be left at that point. I confess I would leave it there immediately were it not for the fact that some remarks made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) may have given rise to some misunderstanding in the public mind or may have created some