

*The Address—Mr. Lesage*

Vancouver island, who served during the first world war, and is now an active member of our branch of the Legion.

I mention that only to show that these Canadian-born East Indians have inherited the qualities of courage and valour and loyalty which made their sires so famous in the annals of the military history of the British empire.

In closing, I should like to say one word with regard to the veterans of this land, the old soldiers. Since the opening of the session we have heard that the pound has been devalued. I was pleased to hear the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Gregg) say that those veterans who are drawing an imperial pension, and at the same time have that pension brought up to Canadian standards by a supplementary Canadian pension, will have that supplementary pension increased so that they will not suffer from the devaluation of the pound.

Of course there are still hundreds, perhaps thousands, of imperial ex-servicemen in this land who are not qualified for that supplementary Canadian pension. If they are drawing a pension from the British ministry of pensions, that pension is pitifully small now. I believe I am correct in saying that a widow's pension is 45 shillings a week, which, before devaluation of the pound, would have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$9 a week. Now it is less than \$7. It is pretty hard for a hundred per cent disabled pensioner, or the widow of a service man, to exist with a reasonable standard of living on that small pension. I do hope that something will be worked out, either by an extension of the War Veterans Allowance Act or by agreement between this government and the government of Great Britain, whereby our comrades who served with forces other than Canadian forces will be able to maintain themselves and their families in a position which is not infinitely inferior to that in which this government permits Canadian ex-servicemen to maintain themselves. Of course I am referring only to those veterans of the imperial forces who have lived for a long period in this country.

**Mr. Jean Lesage (Montmagny-L'Islet):** Mr. Speaker, may I first of all congratulate you upon your election as Speaker. Your knowledge of parliamentary law, your distinction and your dignity designate you for the high office to which you have been elected. The applause which marked your acceptance of your position demonstrated the unanimity of satisfaction which existed in the hearts of all of us.

(Translation):

I wish also to pay tribute to the mover (Mr. Boisvert) and the seconder (Mr. Laing) of the address in reply. Their reputation had preceded them in the house. Living up, from the very start, to such a reputation, which was quite definitely to their credit, is always a risky job.

They have discharged to the general satisfaction the responsibility devolved upon them by the government. I am sure those two very eloquent speeches are but a foretaste of their active and intelligent participation in the debates of the house.

I am well acquainted with the member for Nicolet-Yamaska (Mr. Boisvert). After hearing him, I felt proud and happy to be a fellow citizen of his and his colleague at the Quebec bar.

I also wish to pay tribute to the head of the government who undoubtedly has won the most brilliant personal victory any head of government has ever won in this country.

The right hon. Prime Minister outlined his platform in the remotest areas of the country. He made himself known to all Canadians and advocated a doctrine of Canadian patriotism and national unity.

I also wish to pay my respects to his charming and gracious wife, a charming and distinguished first lady, who accompanied him. He won the heart of every Canadian and rallied nearly everyone to his policies. He can now vigorously lead the Canadian people to an even brighter future.

May I be allowed at this point to raise a question which I would have preferred to bring up in the absence of the Prime Minister, but which I wish nevertheless to discuss. If heretofore, because of special circumstances, an official residence for the Prime Minister was considered unessential, surely the situation is now such that this lack should be remedied without further delay.

When Canada receives distinguished visitors, the Prime Minister as such has no home in which to welcome them, while ambassadors have all they need to honour not only foreign visitors but Canadians also. Abroad, in every capital city of the world, Canada is in an excellent position to entertain these guests. We should therefore provide our first citizen and his distinguished lady with what is needed to enhance the prestige of the name Canada and of the Canadian capital. It would, of course, be easy to appeal to the generosity of the public; I have no doubt that the funds required for the purchase of a suitable residence would immediately be