

*The Address—Mr. Drew***SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

between this government and the provincial governments. As that correspondence is being conducted on our behalf by the Department of National Health and Welfare, perhaps the parliamentary assistant would be able to tell the hon. gentleman just what stage it has reached at this time.

Mr. E. A. McCusker (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of National Health and Welfare): I want to thank the member for Winnipeg North Centre for giving notice of this question. A similar question was answered by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin) on June 24, page 3610 of *Hansard*, and on June 27 last, page 3833 of *Hansard*. It is the intention of the government to proclaim the repeal of the Old Age Pensions Act as soon as there is agreement from the provinces which co-sponsored this act that this should be done. Not all of the provinces have yet agreed on the desirability of repeal at this time, but it is hoped that agreement will be reached shortly so that the necessary proclamation can be made.

Mr. Knowles: Would the parliamentary assistant permit a supplementary question? Can he say which of the provinces have not yet agreed to that repeal?

Mr. McCusker: No, I do not propose to say.

PRISONERS OF WAR

MALTREATMENT AWARDS TO THOSE IN
GERMAN CAMPS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Will the Prime Minister say whether consideration is being given to the granting of maltreatment awards to Canadians who endured undue suffering in German prisoner-of-war camps, similar to the awards being made to those who were in Japanese hands during world war II?

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): There was a statement handed to the press on October 10 to the effect that the government is anxious that there be no delay in the payment of what may be described as automatic awards. Those arise out of the recommendations of the Ilsley report covering Canadians who were held in Japanese-operated internment or prison camps or in the hands of certain German organizations such as the gestapo and declared by the Nuremberg tribunal to be criminal organizations.

If the hon. gentleman wishes to have a copy of the order in council on which this statement was based, I will see that one is sent to him.

The house resumed, from Friday, November 21, consideration of the motion of Mr. J. L. Deslières for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I know that the members of this house will all warmly welcome the reference in the speech from the throne to the coronation of Her Majesty the Queen on June 2 next. At a time of great uncertainty and rapidly changing conditions throughout the world, this historic event will symbolize, not only for us but for all mankind, the long continuity of this particular form of democracy which is the cherished possession of Canadians and all the nations of the commonwealth. For us and for others the crown is a symbol of stability in this very unstable world.

We all remember as well the charm, spirit and vigour with which our new queen carried out her many duties during the time that she visited Canada only a few months ago with her gallant husband. The tragic death of her father, who sacrificed his life in the service of his people, brings to the throne a young woman, trained for her great responsibilities, and expressing both in her private and her public life those traditions of decency and human understanding which have preserved our monarchy through all the storms of recent years. As we look forward to the reign of the second Elizabeth, which will likely extend well beyond the lives of most of us here today, I feel sure that there is in the heart and mind of every one of us the earnest hope that the spirit of adventure and great achievement which distinguished the reign of the first Elizabeth may be renewed and may bring glory and renown to this new Elizabethan era.

In the speech from the throne there are several statements which will meet with general approval. I would particularly mention the announcement that it is the intention of the government to insert in all government contracts a provision that there must be no discrimination in employment because of race, national origin, colour or religion. I also welcome the announcement that legislation dealing with this subject will be introduced and that it will deal with all employment under the authority of the dominion government.

I am glad that the government has seen fit to act upon the proposal put forward by the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mrs. Fairclough), when she introduced a bill