

*Accession of King George VI*

I was present officially when he was given the freedom of the city of London at the historic Guild Hall, where he made his first public speech of any importance. We were also at Westminster Abbey when the prince as Duke of York married the charming Scotch girl, and it was a delight to witness the popular enthusiasm on that occasion.

Since that time both the duke and the duchess have carried out the many duties that fall to the lot of members of the royal family in such a way that they have endeared themselves to everyone and have given an example of happy family life such as we all admire and respect.

With this background His Majesty comes to the throne well qualified by training and heredity to bear his heavy burden. He is endowed with wisdom and understanding, and is thoroughly conversant with the constitutional form of government of the British Empire or the British commonwealth of nations of which we are all so proud. We are a free people, and a great and very real democracy under a constitutional monarch. British subjects in every part of the world have shown conclusively that they are devoted to the crown under all circumstances. In many ways His Majesty is like his beloved father, King George V, and I believe that under his wise guidance and with the support of his charming consort the prestige of the monarchy and the proud loyalty of the people for their king will be increased as the years roll on.

To quote from the final words of the present resolution, we pray "that all endeavours of Your Majesty's reign may be directed to the well-governing of your peoples, the preservation of freedom, and the advancement of unity and peace."

We on this side join whole-heartedly in extending to His Majesty and to Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth our respectful greetings and our assurance of loyalty and support. May I add the sincere wish that their majesties may be blessed with long life, happiness and prosperity. "God save the King."

Hon. ERNEST LAPOINTE (Minister of Justice) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I highly appreciate the privilege which is mine of seconding the resolution moved by the right hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and of tendering to His Majesty King George VI, on the memorable occasion of his accession to the throne, the respect and good wishes of my French speaking fellow-citizens.

It has been said by a foreign observer that the association of the nations of the Com-

[Sir George Perley.]

monwealth has just given to the world, which has witnessed the downfall of so many empires and the disappearance of so many historic institutions, a great and comforting spectacle that of all its peoples uniting in a common sentiment of loyalty to the crown, in which they respect the symbol of their unity and of their glorious past.

Now that we have achieved the astonishing political progress of conciliating monarchy and democracy, the sovereign no longer directly exercises power, but he continues to be its living emblem.

The United Kingdom and the Dominions, conscious of the providential mission which is theirs of working for the maintenance of stability, order and peace throughout the world, have, in admirable unison, recognized in the proclamation of their new monarch a guarantee of their continuity and of the safeguard of the best British traditions. The Duke of York's striking physical and moral resemblance to his father has been noted with satisfaction in recent years. Schooled like him in the hard and wholesome discipline of a sailor's life, he is moreover endowed with the high moral qualities and absolute devotion to duty that earned for George V the loyalty and affection of his subjects.

After serving his country in the navy and in the air force during the war, our monarch has devoted himself in times of peace to the study of social and industrial questions and to the establishment of closer bonds between social classes. All those who have had the privilege of knowing his distinguished personality, of appreciating the simple and manly dignity of his character, are sure that he fully realizes his responsibilities and that he will scrupulously abide by the rules and duties of constitutional monarchy.

Indeed, in his first official statement to the privy council, the King affirmed his intention strictly to respect the principles of our form of government and his resolve to consecrate himself, before and above all else, to the welfare of his subjects.

May I be permitted to express to the King the assurance of our loyalty and of our wish to see him devote himself to the good government of his people and to the preservation of liberty and of peace.

We wish also to give expression to our respect for Her Majesty the Queen who, by her noble qualities of heart and mind, seems naturally destined to second the devotion of her royal husband.

In conclusion, I wish to recall the words of the official proclamation of His Excellency the Governor General of Canada and to repeat that we beseech "God by whom all