

leadership we look forward to continued extension of the activities of his department for the benefit of our fishermen.

Despite our great dependence on the sea, Mr. Speaker, many of our people are engaged in extensive activities of other kinds. The fertile farms of the beautiful Musquodoboit valley and the other farming areas of the county give us a large and influential group who earn their livelihood through mixed farming, producing quantities of the finest dairy products and eggs, top-grade poultry, hogs and cattle. Throughout the length and breadth of the county the lumbering industry is active in the production of many millions of feet per year of sawn lumber, pulpwood and wood pulp in large quantities and the manufacture of a variety of wood products. In addition, gold mining is an important part in the life of many communities. Last but not least, there are the manufacturing and commercial interests of the urban centres of Halifax and Dartmouth where the number of those employed is some two and a half times the 1939 figure. The wide and healthy diversity of interests of this great constituency, not surpassed, I believe, in any other in the whole dominion, means that hardly a single matter comes before this parliament which is not of immediate interest to some section of our electorate and hardly a problem is faced by any member of this house which we do not share to an important degree. This will serve to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, not only my great pride in the constituency of which I am privileged to be one representative, but also the vast responsibilities assumed by my colleague during the last session.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if it is possible for me adequately to express to you the inspiration it has been to me to participate in the ancient ceremonials of the opening of this session of parliament. I would wish that it were possible for all the young people of this land to share intimately in this experience, to understand its significance and to learn its simple but profound lesson. The age-old practices and traditions of the opening of parliament recall the struggles through which our fathers evolved the system of British parliamentary democracy. Through the centuries of its development, by the successes and the failures, the triumphs and the disappointments, there was imparted to this system a peculiar vitality which enabled it to withstand the shock of being transplanted into the soil of the new world, so that today it affords to us a firm foundation upon which to build for the greater happiness and security of the Canadian people. In these days, when our

[Mr. Dickey.]

essential freedoms are being threatened and attacked both from without and from within, it is worth while to reflect upon the foundations of those freedoms and the struggles through which they were won for us.

In the speech from the throne there has been foreshadowed the work of this session of parliament, and the urgency of the task of meeting the difficulties which now confront this country has been re-emphasized. The government is to be congratulated on the manner in which the reconversion of our economy has, during the last two years, progressed under the influence of measures designed to promote this end. On September 30 of this year, demobilization of Canada's armed forces was completed, an event which passed almost unnoticed, in spite of the fact that this task was accomplished well in advance of other countries. The more than one million men and women who shared in the magnificent achievements of Canadian arms together with comparable numbers of industrial workers who were engaged during the war years in war production have been assimilated into peacetime activities. This country has enjoyed a period of great prosperity, unequalled productivity and high employment.

The very extent of the prosperity which we have enjoyed has contributed to the impact of the stringent measures which it has now been considered imperative to impose. Canadians had reason to hope that exchange restrictions were a thing of the past. Excise taxes and restriction of imports to limit consumption were very far from our minds. I am sure that this house will be quick to see the extent of the emergency and approve the necessary measures to meet it. The government has outlined a courageous and forthright policy which this house is asked to consider and to confirm. This house can be depended upon to support the application of necessary measures, to see that they are administered with fairness and designed to avoid unnecessary dislocation of our economy.

The emergency measures proposed fall into four categories: foreign exchange control, embargoes and restrictions on imports, a loan of three hundred millions of dollars from the United States export-import bank, and excise taxes on durable consumer goods containing a high percentage of parts and materials imported from the United States. It is sometimes difficult for individuals whose business or livelihood is immediately affected by measures of this nature to appreciate the necessity of achieving a general aim at the expense of the particular activity upon which they depend. This is especially true in constitu-