

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

After which the Honourable the Deputy of the Governor General was pleased to close the Second Session of the Twentieth Parliament of the Dominion of Canada with the following speech:

Honourable Members of the Senate,

Members of the House of Commons:

A year has passed since hostilities ceased with the surrender of Japan. The world is but slowly emerging from the turmoil and ravages of war. The domestic problems of individual nations have become inseparably linked with the problems of all nations.

Of international problems, the world shortage of food has caused the greatest immediate concern. It is a source of gratification to the people of Canada to know that our country has provided over one-fifth of the supply of food to relieve the greatest famine in human history. The government has continued to give practical expression to the whole-hearted desire of the Canadian people to relieve human suffering and to contribute to international tranquility.

My ministers are continuing their efforts to restore and expand peacetime markets for the surplus production of our country. In the period of transition, exports to our wartime allies have been financed in part by credits voted by parliament. In accordance with this policy, you have approved a financial agreement with the United Kingdom and made a further amendment to the Export Credit Insurance Act.

A bountiful crop, which will help in meeting the demand for food, now seems assured. An agreement has been made with the United Kingdom for the marketing of our wheat. The wheat agreement, with agreements for the marketing of other foodstuffs already in operation, will greatly assist the government in its policy of maintaining stable prices for agricultural products.

The demand, both at home and abroad, for Canadian manufactures has never been greater. Production at a high level is required both to meet this demand and to check inflationary pressure on prices.

The wartime battle against inflation has been continued with substantial success through the period of transition. Despite gradual measures of decontrol, and a shift to a selective price ceiling, the rise of prices has been held well in check. To this end, a most important step was the restoration of exchange parity with the United States dollar.

The conversion of our war industries to peacetime production has been achieved more smoothly and speedily and with less dislocation than might have been expected. Opportunities for employment have been maintained at a high level and the transfer to civilian occupations of displaced war workers and demobilized veterans is being accomplished swiftly and effectively.

In recent weeks essential production has been slowed down, and the dangers of inflation increased, by stoppages of work in cer-

tain key industries. My ministers endorse the view of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations that continued price control is only possible with a reasonable measure of wage control. The government is firmly convinced that the exercise of moderation and restraint by all parties is essential to the satisfactory adjustment of labour disputes and the maintenance of the high level of production, without which there cannot be ample opportunities for employment.

The repatriation of the armed forces is now virtually completed. It is anticipated that the wives and children of veterans will almost all have been brought to Canada by the close of the present year. The demobilization of the wartime army, navy and air force is likewise practically accomplished. Foundations have been laid for the permanent peacetime defence forces.

A series of measures relating to war veterans has been enacted, with the object of making provision for the veterans, and for the dependents of the fallen, worthy of the service and sacrifice of Canada's armed forces.

In Canada, as in other countries, the housing shortage has grown more acute since the end of the war, despite the provision of a large supply of new housing. In order to increase the efficiency of governmental action, the responsibility for housing has been largely concentrated in one minister of the crown. The National Housing Act has been amended to expand facilities for the provision of housing.

The British North America Act has been amended by the United Kingdom Parliament in accordance with the request contained in a joint address adopted by both houses of parliament. The amendment will have the effect of maintaining more effectively the historic principle of representation by population, in the representation of the people in the House of Commons.

You have enacted a measure to clarify and define Canadian citizenship and to make it the distinctive status of the people of this country. The Immigration Act has also been amended to bring it into conformity with the revised definition of Canadian citizenship.

Other bills enacted include measures respecting the armed forces, the development and control of atomic energy, the National Research Council, the Department of External Affairs, the operation of crown companies, the Exchequer Court, the remuneration of judges, the investigation of combines, foreign exchange control, unemployment insurance, war crimes and the Federal District Commission.

The Dominion-Provincial Conference resumed its meetings on April 25, and adjourned on May 3. The conference not having reached unanimous agreement, proposals in respect to taxation were subsequently made which could be accepted by the provinces individually. These proposals have been accepted in principle by three provincial governments. Preliminary discussions are under way with certain other provinces. It is hoped that ultimately general agreement embracing all the provinces may be concluded.

Your approval has been given to the membership of Canada in the World Health Organization and in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Canada