

welcome the visit which Mr. Eisenhower, President of the United States, will make to Canada in the near future.

Under these circumstances, the first step was to remedy the situation at home. The head of the Government, the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker, introduced in both houses, in October, 1957, during the first session of our new Parliament, a widespread program of social security measures, in the form of increased pensions to our senior citizens, to the sick and to the disabled, to needy mothers, as well as relief benefits to the unemployed and to our veterans.

Furthermore, he announced that plans for a large-scale public works program were being drawn up in order to relieve and check unemployment, and at the same time in order to open up our northernmost frontier and develop our immense resources. In the meantime, a significant drop in the registration of job-seekers had been noticed in employment offices.

The honourable members of both houses, conscious of their social and political duties, passed the proposed legislation and, finally, at the general election of March 31 last, the Canadian people clearly endorsed this legislation and the implementation of this far-reaching program.

The important undertakings mentioned in the Speech from the Throne are geographically distributed over our whole country, with emphasis laid on its northern section. May I point out a few:

(a) The survey and development of our mineral resources in the islands of the Arctic Ocean, in the far north;

(b) The building of a railway as far north as Great Slave lake, with the aim of promoting national development on our northern frontier and establishing manufacturing plants on a really economic basis in the Northwest Territories;

(c) The building of roads needed for development in the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and the provinces, with the co-operation of their Governments;

(d) The construction of the South Saskatchewan project, with its dams and great reservoir in the heart of the prairie, in order to further the productive development of this part of Canada;

(e) And finally, the establishment of a Harbour Commission to combine the harbours of Fort William and Port Arthur and to equip this Lakehead basin with the facilities needed to handle the larger traffic to be expected as a result of the opening of the seaway; indeed, we must not lose sight of the fact that in addition to the above, the deepening of the St. Lawrence—from its headwaters to Mont-

real and especially in the Montreal section—is proceeding rapidly in order to give our great water way the required depth to accommodate ocean-going ships.

In brief, this is a tremendous adjunct to the economic and rational opening of our country from its northernmost boundary to the sea.

Honourable senators, an important point to note is the fact that the trend of this development and of the commercial and industrial movement which will result is partly in a north-south direction as far down as the Great Lakes where it joins the St. Lawrence, and thence eastward to the Atlantic. It is hoped, therefore, that our trade will expand through wholly Canadian channels toward the ocean and to foreign countries, as well as to those of the commonwealth. We shall, therefore, enjoy a much greater independence in the economic field, and thus the hope so long cherished by our greatest statesmen, irrespective of parties, will be fulfilled.

In this connection, the announcement of the Commonwealth Economic and Trade Conference to be held in Montreal next September is most significant and promising.

The plan announced by His Excellency to increase immediately the public funds made available under the National Housing Act has already been implemented. The interesting and harmonious debate to which it gave rise in this chamber reflects the desire of honourable senators to devote to its consideration the best of their attention and experience, in order to find solutions most favourable to the national interest.

His Excellency, in the name of the Government, also announced that unremitting efforts will be made to sell our agricultural products in the markets of the world. Our farmers are thereby greatly encouraged. The passing, at the last session, of the Agricultural Stabilization Act has shown them that their Government means to remain in close contact with them in order to maintain a system of reasonable support prices. They are very gratified about it. The same is true of the act to provide cash advances on farm-stored grain. Such a policy is of great encouragement to the farmers and, as well, most helpful to the general economy.

I feel bound to make some reference to the relaxation which has taken place since the last session in the tight money policy with regards to loans in Canada. This reversal of policy awakens the hope that the financing of important public works may be undertaken by the central, provincial and municipal governments; furthermore, it seems to have removed in a large measure the danger of returning inflation.