

The House of Commons being come,

His Excellency the Governor General was then pleased to open the Session by a gracious Speech to both Houses, as follows:—

*Honourable Members of the Senate:*

*Members of the House of Commons:*

I greet you as you resume your Parliamentary duties.

In the course of the year I have travelled through our country from ocean to ocean and have been happy to observe everywhere the fealty and devotion of all Canadians to the Crown.

We meet in a world of continued international tension which has prompted my Government to redouble its efforts to bring about a general acceptance of peaceful means of settling disputes. It has re-affirmed its readiness to cooperate in the United Nations and elsewhere in the development of conditions that would lead to the attainment of this goal. My Prime Minister and other representatives of the Government have stated forcefully the views of Canada on these matters and they have received widespread support from the Canadian people.

The Commonwealth has continued to demonstrate its vitality. Nigeria was welcomed to full Commonwealth membership at the beginning of last month and additional new members will enter this coming year. Continuing constitutional development in the Commonwealth is likely to be considered at a Prime Ministers' Conference in 1961.

Disarmament under international control is the key to an enduring world peace. My Government has accordingly maintained its unremitting efforts to achieve progress in this field. Until such time as disarmament under effective control can be achieved, however, it is necessary to ask you to maintain well-trained and well-armed Canadian defence forces, adequate to meet Canada's defence obligations. My Ministers will re-affirm Canada's support for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a defensive alliance dedicated to maintaining the peace.

The unanimous approval given by the United Nations to a joint resolution embodying the essence of the Canadian proposal for a United Nations Food Bank is a matter for satisfaction.

Important international tariff negotiations began in September in Geneva and will last well into next year; my Ministers have made clear that these negotiations should be used as a means of finding solutions to the current European trade problems in a manner that will not harm the interests of other trading nations.

Important conferences with the Provincial Governments have taken place in recent months. In accordance with the objective expressed by the Prime Minister early in your last session, two meetings have been held at which progress has been made in discussion of means of amending the constitution of Canada in Canada and relieving the Parliament at Westminster of its residual responsibility in regard to the British North America Act. Further meetings have been arranged. Two conferences on fiscal arrangements have been held and further exchanges of views will take place. You will in due course be asked to approve legislation concerning Dominion-Provincial fiscal arrangements for the period commencing April 1962.