

Governor General's Speech

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the house that when the house did attend His Excellency the Governor General this day in the Senate chamber, His Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both houses of parliament. To prevent mistakes I have obtained a copy, which is as follows:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

You are summoned for the dispatch of public business at a time when there are sound reasons for believing that the world is gradually returning to economic stability. I congratulate you that such improved world conditions are reflected in Canada by expanding trade, improving revenues, increasing employment, and a more confident outlook upon the future. Canada occupies a leading position amongst those countries where the evidence of a return to permanent prosperity is most convincing.

Since I have been associated with you as the representative of His Majesty in Canada, I have visited every province of the dominion. I have been greatly impressed by the loyalty, devotion and friendliness of the people, as well as the high courage with which men and women were meeting and overcoming abnormal difficulties in their daily lives.

The Ottawa trade agreements have now been in operation for a full year and the results indicate substantial expansion of Canadian-Empire trade over the preceding year. It is worthy of note that the agreements are proving beneficial to all empire countries. The trading position of the empire in the world has steadily improved. Canada has again resumed her place as the fifth exporting nation. Our favourable trade balances have enabled us to discharge our international obligations and have greatly lessened the difficulties of the international exchange situation.

The temporary trade arrangements made with Germany and Austria have been further extended. Canadian products are now receiving most favoured tariff treatment in those countries in exchange for the grant of our intermediate tariff on their products.

The prices of agricultural products, which have fallen in recent years to the lowest level in history, have shown substantial improvement in the last few months. My government realize, however, that further increases in price levels are necessary to ensure success to those engaged in agriculture. You will be invited to consider legislation designed to facilitate the efficient and profitable marketing of live stock and agricultural products.

Members of my government participated in the World Monetary and Economic conference convened in London in June of last year. The reports approved by the conference and the resolutions adopted by the bureau and the executive committee as well as certain agreements entered into by my government designed to mitigate fluctuations in the price of silver will be laid before you. The conference adjourned without dealing with many important subjects, but arrived at conclusions of especial interest and concern to Canada in respect to central banks, the gold standard, and the percentage of metallic coverage essential to the successful functioning of gold as a medium of

[Mr. Bennett.]

international exchange. During the conference, my ministers informally met the representatives of the United Kingdom and other countries of the British commonwealth of nations, with a view to the further development of empire cooperation; and adopted certain resolutions with respect to monetary and financial policies, which will be laid before you.

In July of last year, my government appointed a royal commission to inquire into and report upon the operation of the banking and monetary system of Canada, with particular reference to the provisions and working of the Bank Act, the Dominion Notes Act, the Finance Act and the Currency Act, and the advisability of establishing a central banking institution. You will be invited to consider legislation for the establishment of a central bank, the extension and revision of bank charters, which were extended at the last session of parliament to the first day of July, 1934, and to consider further appropriate additions and amendments to our banking and monetary legislation.

My government, acting with representatives of other wheat exporting countries, as well as representatives of wheat importing countries, have entered into an agreement for relieving the world market from the disastrous price-depressing influence of abnormal surplus wheat stocks. It is a matter of satisfaction that the parties to this agreement are co-operating with a degree of effectiveness which is already reflected in improved prices. The agreement will be laid before you.

Since prorogation, my government made a public offering of Canadian securities in the United Kingdom. This was the first time in over fifteen years that Canada had negotiated a loan in the British market. The reception of the loan was gratifying in the extreme, indicating the high standing of Canadian credit.

My government have been giving careful consideration to measures that might be adopted for the establishment of agricultural short term and intermediate credits; and have invited representatives of the provinces to study the means by which practical effect may be given to the recommendations in this respect made by the royal commission on Monetary and Banking Problems.

Since prorogation, my government, under the authority of The Relief Act, 1933, have continued to assist financially the provinces in the discharge of their constitutional obligations.

My government have recently concluded a conference with the representatives of all the provinces, when, after the fullest discussion, it was agreed that it was desirable, in the national interest, that assistance to the provinces should not be wholly discontinued until the return of more normal conditions. The extent and method of affording such assistance were left for negotiation between my government and the governments of the several provinces.

The representatives of the various provinces strongly approved of the arrangements made by my government to care for single, unemployed, homeless men in camps until such time as they could be absorbed in industry, by providing them with employment on undertakings for the national good; and of the provision made in 1932 for settlement of families on the land, which has been extended with satisfactory results. My government propose further to