

You have made an important reform by providing that independent commissions shall undertake the redistribution of electoral districts for the House of Commons, on a basis that will rectify many disparities in the representation of the people.

Following the recommendation of a special committee representative of all parties in the House of Commons, you have expressed your approval of a distinctive Canadian Flag. By Royal Proclamation this flag, in the Canadian colours of red and white and bearing the Canadian emblem of the maple leaf, was inaugurated on February 15, 1965. My Ministers are convinced that, through the years, the flag will constitute an important contribution to Canadian unity and Canadian identity.

With Her Majesty's consent, and in accordance with your recommendation, the Royal Union Flag will be flown on appropriate occasions to symbolise Canada's membership in the Commonwealth and our devotion to the Crown.

You have enacted legislation authorizing the integration of Canada's three armed services and have approved a White Paper on the re-shaping of Canada's defence policy to improve the effectiveness of our contribution to peace-keeping and international security.

The preliminary report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism has been laid before you. My Ministers have been gratified to observe the improving understanding of problems arising from the reality and importance of the dual character of our country.

In the spirit of co-operative federalism, my Government has held important conferences with the governments of the provinces, and close consultation has greatly improved the co-ordination of federal and provincial policies.

You have enacted legislation whereby the abatement of federal tax on personal incomes, in favour of the provinces, will be increased during the next two fiscal years. You have also enacted legislation whereby my Government may make, with provinces which so wish, alternative financial arrangements respecting certain established programmes the cost of which is shared by my Government.

The federal-provincial conference has established a tax structure committee which is reviewing the fiscal needs and relationships of federal and provincial governments.

You have approved an address to the Queen as a result of which the British North America Act was amended to provide that Parliament may legislate concerning benefits, for disabled persons and for survivors, supplementary to old-age pensions.

Following this constitutional amendment, you enacted legislation to establish the Canada Pension Plan, for the comprehensive provision of retirement pensions which will be fully portable and which will be kept in line with changes in earnings and in the cost of living. In the same legislation you have provided a measure of income maintenance for contributors who become disabled and for the widows and children of contributors who die.

In the same legislation also, you have provided that the old-age-security pension will in future be paid from age 65 and that the basic amount of the pension will be increased if the cost of living rises.

You have enacted legislation whereby allowances of \$10 a month are paid in respect of children aged 16 and 17 who are not working, either because they are unable to do so or because they are receiving full-time education.

You have adopted a measure whereby my Government may guarantee bank loans to university students and pay the interest on these loans during the years of study; this programme is being administered in co-operation with the provinces.