

and Egypt; to facilitating the early clearance and reopening of the Suez Canal, which is so important to the waterborne commerce of our friends in Europe and Asia; and, through Canada's participation in the United Nations Emergency Force, to establishing conditions conducive to a long-term solution of the political problems of that area.

In March, discussions were held between my Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom at Bermuda which dealt with a wide range of matters of international concern and in particular with questions of primary interest to Canada and the United Kingdom. The possibility of a meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers early this summer was also discussed.

The emergence of the former colony of the Gold Coast into full Commonwealth membership as the independent state of Ghana was welcomed by all Canadians as a further confirmation of the value and the adaptability of our free association of sovereign states linked by common interests and common loyalties. One of my ministers represented Canada at the inaugural ceremonies.

During the present session useful discussions were also held with the Prime Minister of France, who addressed a special joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament.

The brutal suppression of the Hungarian people by the armed forces of the Soviet Union served to emphasize the continued need for the greatest possible degree of unanimity of purpose among the nations of the free world and the importance of maintaining an adequate system of collective defence.

My ministers continue to believe that our position in the Commonwealth and firm support of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are essential contributions to the advancement of our aim of preserving peace and promoting prosperity throughout the world.

In the course of the present session you have approved important items of legislation of lasting benefit to the Canadian people.

You have authorized the Government to enter into agreements with the provinces for the establishment of a nation-wide system of insurance programs for hospital care and diagnostic services. This legislation constitutes an important step forward in helping to improve the standard of health for the Canadian population and in relieving individual citizens from the worrisome burdens of large hospital bills.

You have approved legislation for the establishment of a Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Undoubtedly, both the fund for scholarships and grants and the fund

for assistance to universities for capital expansion projects will accelerate the cultural and intellectual growth of the nation.

To the same end the annual federal grants for universities have been doubled.

Provision has been made to assist the transportation to Canada of Hungarian refugees. Special arrangements have also been made for the movement of large numbers of British, French and other immigrants to this country.

Canada's development is proceeding at such a pace that it continues to place a strain on our human, material and financial resources. In order to hold inflationary tendencies in check, my ministers have urged that governments and private enterprise exercise restraint in their expansion projects.

A special committee of the Senate has begun a comprehensive investigation of the use of our land resources to contribute more effectively to the improvement of agricultural production and the incomes of those engaged in it.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Economic Prospects has been laid before you. In accordance with its recommendation that special consideration be given to assisting the economies of the Atlantic Provinces, the Government has announced its intention of undertaking a detailed examination of transportation conditions in that area. In the meantime, increases in the payments under the Maritimes Freight Rates Act have been authorized. An offer has been made to construct interconnection facilities between the electricity systems of the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and to build and operate large thermo-electric plants in the Atlantic area to meet at the lowest possible cost the power requirements of growth and industrial development in that region. The recent adjustment in the tariff on potatoes should also have a favourable influence on its economy and on the economy of other farming areas.

A Royal Commission has been established to review the financial position of the province of Newfoundland in accordance with the Terms of Union of that province with Canada.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Radio and Television Broadcasting has been completed and presented for your consideration.

In furtherance of the Government's policy to maintain a high standard of social welfare in this country, increases are being made in the scale of payments to veterans under the Pension Act and the War Veterans Allowance Act, as well as payments under the Family Allowances Act, the Old Age Security Act, the Old Age Assistance Act, the Disabled Persons Act and the Blind Persons Act.