

*Honourable Members of the Senate:*

*Members of the House of Commons:*

I welcome you as you resume your Parliamentary duties.

We look forward to the presence this summer of Her Majesty the Queen Mother, who for many years has endeared herself to the hearts of all Canadians. We shall also have the pleasure of receiving Their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Edinburgh and the Princess Royal.

During the past year, I have visited several Provinces and made an extensive trip to the Northwest Territories. The great North brought home to me the vastness, the far horizons and the beauty of our country. Flying over it, I thought of the wonderful heritage which Providence has entrusted to us. May we be worthy of this stewardship.

While the world outlook contains elements of continuing danger, there are some grounds for cautious optimism. Major military conflicts have been avoided and the processes of conciliation and negotiation are in progress or in prospect on many of the important international issues. The Canadian Government remains devoted to peace as its primary objective.

Recurrent Soviet pressure on Berlin makes it necessary for the Governments of the North Atlantic Alliance to reconcile the preservation of essential rights and interests with a constant readiness to discuss and enter into equitable and safeguarded engagements. My Government has consistently worked towards that end, and approves the resumption of preliminary talks with the U.S.S.R., the success of which will depend on Soviet good faith.

In other areas of tension, Canada has been prominent in international efforts to relieve political, economic and administrative strains which have sometimes accompanied the transition from dependent to independent status of new nations. International peace-keeping arrangements continue to warrant effective Canadian support.

International agreements on measures of controlled disarmament remain vitally necessary if the world is to be freed permanently from the menace of war. As a member of the expanded disarmament committee recently reconstituted, my Government supports the decision to resume disarmament negotiations in March.

The Commonwealth continues to grow as an important instrument for freedom and peace, linking five continents and people of many races. The strengthening of this association is a primary objective of my Government. During 1961, Canada joined in welcoming Cyprus, Sierra Leone and Tanganyika to full membership in the Commonwealth.

My Government derives particular satisfaction from the endorsement by the United Nations of a World Food Programme sponsored by Canada, for which you will be asked to authorize a contribution.

You will also be asked to appropriate funds to maintain Canada's external aid programme.

Canada's diplomatic representation has been expanded in the Commonwealth, in the French-speaking countries of Africa, and as well in Latin America and in Asia.

While striving to reduce international tensions and promote the peaceful settlement of international disputes, my Government still considers it necessary to provide the support required to strengthen and maintain the defence forces necessary to continue an active role in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.