

While the Atlantic and the Pacific retain their traditional importance for Canada, the Arctic Ocean and its coastal regions may soon enter a period of rapid economic development. Much of this development will undoubtedly occur on the islands of the Canadian archipelago, or in the adjoining continental shelf whose resources, under international law, we have the exclusive right to explore and exploit. With resource development, and the benefits it entails, may come grave danger to the balance of plant and animal life on land and in the sea, which is particularly precarious in the harsh polar regions. While encouraging such development, we must fulfil our responsibility to preserve these areas, as yet undespoiled and essentially in a state of nature. The Government will introduce legislation setting out the measures necessary to prevent pollution in the Arctic Seas. It is also considering other methods of protecting Canada's ocean coasts.

Through the United Nations and its agencies Canada is seeking to establish a system to combat the pollution of international waters which threatens so many forms of life on this planet.

Our aim is a strong and productive country soundly equipped to face the future; but we are equally concerned with the individual Canadian, his rights and his interests. The Government regards national progress and individual fulfilment as indivisible components of its mandate.

The size, complexity and fallibility of the structures that technology imposes on modern societies are often in conflict with the protection and development of individual values. The workings of both private and public institutions may endanger the individual's free expression of his unique personality. He must therefore be protected from anything that jeopardizes his rights or limits his personal development.

To this end, Criminal Code amendments will be submitted to you that would regulate wire-tapping and other invasions of the individual's privacy, and reform the present law governing detention before trial. Bills will be submitted to make federal tribunals more accessible and responsive, and to ensure fair treatment in expropriation cases. There will also be a bill to create a national law reform commission whose task will be the improvement and modernization of the law and its administration at the federal level.

You will also be asked to review the large body of legislation applying to companies and financial institutions. To enhance the position of the consumer in the market place, the Government will ask you to augment our body of consumer protection law. There will be proposals dealing with consumer credit, packaging and labelling, identification of the fibre content of textile products and motor vehicle safety.

In the field of housing, despite the difficulties of inflation, the objective is to construct one million new housing units in five years. The Government will play its part in achieving that objective while emphasizing measures to satisfy the needs of low income families. This and related programs will stimulate social progress, employment, economic growth and urban improvement. They are a recognition of the need for every citizen to live in healthy and pleasant surroundings.

I have mentioned some of the important subjects of legislation which you will be asked to consider at this session. You will also be invited to discuss a number of aspects of long range national policy.