

GOVERNMENT



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Wednesday, January 2, 1951.

Parliament Prorogued: Ottawa, December 31 (CP) -- The hectic, three-month fall session of Parliament came quietly to a close Saturday night. It was prorogued at 6.50 p.m. as Chief Justice Thibaudeau Rinfret, deputy Governor-General, read in the Senate chamber an 800-word speech from the throne reviewing the legislation adopted. The formal date for the next session was set at February 7, however, a firm date for the 1952 meeting will be announced later by the Government.

In contrast to some of the bitter debates which marked the tag-end of the session, the Commons finished its business with a harmonious discussion on a measure that everyone approved -- that endorsing the entry of Greece and Turkey into the North Atlantic Alliance.

Probably the most controversial bill was the government measure to outlaw the fixing of retail prices by manufacturers. It finally went through the Commons Friday night after seven days of debate and a series of divisions resulting from Progressive Conservative attempts to kill it. The legislation was passed by the Senate Saturday after one hour and 40 minutes debate. It was given royal assent and is now in effect.

Before rising Saturday, Parliament adopted three other bills still on the order paper -- one permitting crop-failure payments to some western farmers, another allowing the government to award contracts of less than \$15,000 without tender in cases of urgency and a third granting certain privileges to Atlantic Pact troops in this country. Another bill, raising the ceiling on government annuities to \$2,400 a year from \$1,200, was left on the order paper. Presumably it will be reintroduced next session.

The big debate of the day centered around a resolution to endorse the accession of Greece and Turkey to the North Atlantic Pact. The motion met the approval of all parties and carried unanimously. Opposition party leaders expressed their approval of the legislation while at the same time noting that it extends Canada's obligations under the Atlantic Pact to an extent not contemplated when the defence alliance was first set up.

The Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Pearson, sponsoring the resolution, told the chamber that the strength of the alliance will be increased by the inclusion of Greece and Turkey. In effect, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was putting "power behind peace." The inclusion of Greece and Turkey was "not provocative" and threatened no one "except the aggressor."

Mr. Pearson reported that he had returned from Europe with the feeling that there had been "no deterioration" in the situation there. The gap between east and west had not widened "and we are holding our own."

Mr. St. Laurent's New Year's Message: Ottawa, December 31 -- In his annual New Year's message to Canadians, The Prime Minister said that the free nations are in a better position to resist aggression than they were a year ago, but we still have a long way to go before our people can feel really secure. The nations which want peace must continue to build up their strength and to maintain their unity.

Dealing with the Korean war, he said that "we are still hoping for a successful end to the hostilities in that desolate land, where the peace-loving nations have banded together to stop aggression and enforce respect for the rule of law."

Of Canada's internal affairs, he said:

"I know there are many families where the cost of living has caused real concern and even some hardship. But we can be thankful that most Canadians are gainfully employed.