

Mr. St. Laurent, by leave of the House, introduced a Bill, No. 1, An Act respecting the Administration of Oaths of Office, which was read the first time.

Mr. Speaker reported, that when the House did attend His Excellency the Governor General this day in the Senate Chamber, His Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament, and to prevent mistakes, he had obtained a copy, which he read to the House as follows:—

*Honourable Members of the Senate:*

*Members of the House of Commons:*

There has been deep satisfaction in all parts of the country that the steady improvement in the health of the King has enabled His Majesty to resume most of his customary activities.

The opening of the twenty-first Parliament is marked by the presence for the first time of the representatives of the new province of Newfoundland. It is a pleasure for me to welcome their participation in the national affairs of a greater Canada.

With the admission of the new province of Newfoundland the Canadian nation attained the geographical limits planned by the Fathers of Confederation. You will be asked at the present session to approve measures designed to facilitate the attainment of the constitutional limits of our nationhood. To this end, a Bill will be introduced to amend the Supreme Court Act so that the Supreme Court of Canada will become the final court of appeal for Canada.

You will also be asked to approve addresses praying the Parliament of the United Kingdom to vest in the Parliament of Canada the right to amend the constitution of Canada in relation to matters not coming within the jurisdiction of the Legislatures of the provinces nor affecting the constitutional rights and privileges of the provinces or existing rights and privileges with respect to education or the use of the English and French languages.

My Ministers will seek to arrange for early consultation with the provincial governments with a view to agreeing upon an appropriate procedure for making within Canada such other amendments to the constitution as may from time to time be required.

The hopes held four years ago for world peace and security under the aegis of the United Nations have not yet been realized. The menace of Communist totalitarianism continues to threaten the aspirations of men of good will. It is, however, gratifying that the North Atlantic Treaty has been brought into effect and is already proving its worth in lessening the risks of armed aggression.

The defence needs of Canada both as a separate nation and as a signatory of this Treaty are being kept constantly under review. Good progress has been made in the co-ordination and unification of our armed forces and conditions of service are being improved. Special attention is being given to research and development intended to provide the forces with the most modern equipment suitable for present requirements.

A measure will be introduced to consolidate the legislation respecting the defence forces and the Department of National Defence.

It is the view of my Ministers that the economic health and stability of the nations of the North Atlantic community must be the real foundation of their ability to resist and, therefore, to deter aggression.

Although the nations of Western Europe have made substantial progress towards recovery from the ravages of war, they have not yet been able to restore completely their economic strength. Their shortage of dollars continues, and international trade remains in a state of unbalance. The govern-