

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, February 26, 1974

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1410)

[English]

PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that a communication has been received, which is as follows:

Ottawa, February 21, 1974

Sir:

I have the honour to inform you that the Right Honourable Bora Laskin, P.C., Chief Justice of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, will proceed to the chamber of the Senate at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, February 26, for the purpose of proroguing the first session of the twenty-ninth parliament of Canada.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
André Garneau
Brigadier General
Administrative Secretary
to the Governor General.

A message was delivered by Major A. G. Vandellac, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, it is the desire of the Right Honourable the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General that this honourable House attend him immediately in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

Whereupon the Deputy Governor General was pleased to close the first session of the twenty-ninth parliament of Canada with the following speech.

[English text]

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

The First Session of the Twenty-ninth Parliament was opened on January 4, 1973. Since that time many events of great significance to Canada and to the world have taken place and you have responded by legislating and otherwise approving many actions of the highest importance.

Canadians were pleased during this Session that Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, twice came to Canada.

They assisted in the celebrations of the Centenary of the entry of Prince Edward Island into Confederation, the Centenary of the founding of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Tercentenary of Kingston. They were also present in Ottawa for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

Canadians were honoured to have been host to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting this summer when the contribution to world understanding of this association was once more underlined.

International affairs generally played an important rôle in this Session. When a major international effort had brought some hope of peace to Viet-Nam, Canada agreed to take part, with reservations, in a new truce supervisory exercise. Although we withdrew when it became clear that our membership in the I.C.C.S. could no longer serve a constructive purpose, our brief participation helped to stabilize a fragile cease-fire which in turn allowed for an exchange of prisoners of war and the withdrawal of American Combat forces.

Following the renewal of hostilities in the Middle East, Canada again accepted an invitation to participate in a peacekeeping mission. Canada's commitment to détente has been evident also in our active participation in the conferences on European security and cooperation and on Mutual Balanced Force Reductions.

In October the Prime Minister paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China. His visit was the first of a Canadian Prime Minister to that country and came on the second anniversary of the exchange of diplomatic recognition between Canada and China. Negotiations and discussions with Premier Chou En-lai and Chairman Mao Tse-tung led to the conclusion of several agreements and understandings, some of them of considerable importance to Canada. A trade agreement was signed, as was an agreement in the field of health services which led quickly to the selection for travel to China of a team of Canadian anaesthetists to study acupuncture analgesia. Arrangements were also concluded to facilitate the reunion in Canada of families of Chinese origin, and for exchanges and cooperation in several other areas of mutual interest.

The Government has pursued its efforts to extend and deepen international exchange in commerce, science, culture and in many other fields and, to this end, several other Ministers have made important visits to nations on all continents.

[French text]

The energy situation has revealed dramatically the inter-dependence of our global society, and while assuring Canadian needs first, the Government has made clear Canada's desire to cooperate with the United States and others to work together towards a solution.

The Canadian economy has functioned at a high level of activity. Very high rates of growth in the first part of the year carried the economy close to the physical limits of its productive capacity. Work stoppages in the late summer and early fall resulted in a slowing of output growth in that period but as we have neared the end of the Session, the production has increased rapidly. One of the fastest growing components of demand is business investment in new structures and equipment. Demand for Canadian exports has been high but is now subject to the uncertain impact upon our suppliers, our markets and our own producers of the world shortage and high prices for petroleum.

Our labour force has continued to grow more rapidly than in the previous year, and more rapidly than the labour force of other industrial countries. This growth has been led by the movement of women and younger Canadians into the labour market. But employment has grown more rapidly than the labour force, so that there has been over the year a significant and welcome reduction in the numbers of persons without jobs and seeking work.

Incomes of Canadians have grown with the expansion of the economy. Workers' incomes have grown, the receipts of governments have grown and so too have the returns to business.

The returns to business, combined with special measures which you have approved, are encouraging the expansion of investment needed to increase the productive capacity of our economy. Investment in housing has also been at a high level.

In our foreign trade, both our exports and imports have grown at a much more rapid rate than the total value of our output and we continue to have a surplus balance on merchandise trade and the