

*Speech from the Throne*

Then His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to open parliament by a speech from the throne.

And the house being returned to the Commons chamber:

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the honour to report that, the house having attended on His Excellency the Governor General in the Senate chamber, I informed His Excellency that the choice of Speaker had fallen upon me, and, in your names and on your behalf, I made the usual claim for your privileges, which His Excellency was pleased to confirm to you.

**OATHS OF OFFICE**

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister)** moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 1, respecting the administration of oaths of office.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the house that when this house did attend His Excellency this day in the Senate chamber, His Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both houses of parliament. To prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy, which is as follows:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this first session of the twenty-fourth parliament of Canada. We all recall with pleasure the historic events of last autumn when Her Gracious Majesty was present to open parliament herself and to receive the warm welcome and wide acclaim of her Canadian subjects. We look forward to the presence this summer of Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret to take part in the centennial ceremonies of British Columbia and to visit other parts of Canada.

As further evidence of the expanding sense of mutual interest among the countries of the commonwealth as well as the growth of the commonwealth itself, it is pleasing and significant that we will be welcoming to Canada this summer both the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Prime Minister of Ghana.

My ministers have been glad to note the widely expressed desire of the peoples of many nations that the manifold advances of science shall be devoted to the betterment of mankind rather than to the arts and engines of war. My government will continue to make unremitting efforts to assist in the peaceful solution of international problems and in the accomplishment by patient negotiation of a substantial measure of disarmament. In the meantime, my advisers will ask your support to maintain, in co-operation with our allies, armed forces adequate to deter any potential aggression.

My government believes that the condition of international economic affairs is such as to require major concerted efforts to encourage the expansion of trade. It is accordingly very gratifying that all countries of the commonwealth have accepted the proposal of Canada that a commonwealth trade and economic conference be held in September of this year in Montreal.

We look forward with pleasure to the visits to Canada this summer of the President of the United States and the President of the Federal Republic of Germany. My ministers welcome the opportunities which these visits will afford for useful conversations.

My government regrets to have to report that efforts to avert a strike of firemen on the Canadian Pacific Railway were unsuccessful. It is however encouraging to note that negotiations which my ministers arranged between the parties have succeeded in narrowing the issues in dispute to the point where further direct discussions may yet resolve the question. My government continues to maintain a constant watch over developments in this situation and will be ready in the light of events to recommend such action as the national interest demands and circumstances may require.

My government will propose to you the enactment of a bill of rights to safeguard the rights of all persons in Canada in respect of all subjects within the jurisdiction of parliament.

You will be asked to approve a number of measures and appropriations to continue and extend the program of my government in sustaining employment by the acceleration of useful public works and by encouraging the development and processing of our natural resources.

You will be asked immediately to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act in order to extend for a further six weeks, during the current year, the period during which special seasonal benefits may be paid. Already the amendments to this act made in November last and those made to the Unemployment Assistance Act have proven their value in mitigating the difficulties of Canadians who are temporarily without jobs. Further amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act will be proposed at a later stage in the session.

My government will continue to promote a vigorous program of house building, which has already proven to be a strong feature of our economy and which constitutes the best opportunity for increased work in meeting the needs of our people. My ministers are ready to co-operate fully under the authority of the National Housing Act in further projects for slum clearance and urban redevelopment to improve the cities and towns of Canada.

In order to ensure the continuation of our national housing program, you will be asked at an early date to approve an increase in the public funds made available under the National Housing Act.

You will be asked to make provision for a substantial program of public investment to be carried out by government departments and crown companies and to provide assistance to provincial governments for certain agreed types of projects. In particular, a large expansion in the construction and equipment of our system of airports and airways will be proposed and an increase in our work on harbours and rivers and public buildings.

In order to promote our national development on the frontier in the north you will be asked to authorize the construction of a railway to Great Slave lake. My ministers regard this as a major step in the establishment of productive industry on an economic basis in the Northwest Territories. You will also be asked to provide for the construction of important roads needed for development in the Yukon and Northwest Territories and in the provinces, with the co-operation of their governments. You will be asked to provide for the initiation of a program of research to assist in opening up the mineral resources of our Arctic islands.

My ministers have made progress in arrangements for the construction of the South Saskatchewan project. Proposals will be placed before you to make possible the commencement, this year,