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WEEK'S EVENTS IN REVIEW

PRIME MINISTER'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE: The following is the text of the New Year's message delivered by the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, on December 31:

"I welcome this opportunity to extend my best wishes to the people of Canada at the close of the year 1949.

I address these good wishes also to all those who, throughout the world, are striving to realize the promise of peace announced to men of good will on the first Christmas morning.

A year ago I said that the international situation was very grave; that war was not inevitable but we would be lacking in the most elementary realism if we considered war an impossibility. The year which is just ending has brought with it new reasons for uneasiness. Human freedom has lost still more ground in countries which ignore the advantages of genuine democracy. In many, honest people continue to be persecuted for their religious beliefs or their political affiliations. On the other hand, it is reassuring to know that the free nations of the western world have a clearer understanding than ever of their joint responsibility to safeguard the peace of the world.

1949 has been the year of the signature of the North Atlantic Pact. 1949 has been a year

in which we have witnessed great benefits from the Marshall Plan. The free democracies have had to face serious economic difficulties in 1949, but in spite of everything never before have they shown so much determination to understand one another and to help one another.

From the international point of view, when the accounts for 1949 are balanced they have not been too unfavourable to the cause of peace. But in working for peace in the world we should never forget the solemn warning of the Psalmist: "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." It is this truth of which the pilgrimages of the Holy Year will be a constant reminder of the Christians of my faith during the whole of 1950. May this truth influence the conduct of all the peoples who are still free.

From a national standpoint, 1949 has been a good year. We have had a general election, and general elections are the very foundation of our democratic system; we have added a new Province to our territory through the union with Newfoundland; we have taken certain steps of which our children will be proud toward full nationhood for Canada; we have gained a new appreciation of the wealth of our country; we have enjoyed a higher standard of living than anywhere else in the world outside the North American continent.