

CANADA

The Debates of the Senate

OFFICIAL REPORT

THE SENATE

Thursday, February 5, 1925.

The Parliament of Canada having been summoned by Proclamation of the Governor General to meet this day for the despatch of business:

The Senate met at 2.30 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The Hon. the SPEAKER informed the Senate that he had received a communication from the Governor General's Secretary informing him that His Excellency the Governor General would proceed to the Senate Chamber to open formally the Session of the Dominion Parliament this day at 3 o'clock.

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

At three o'clock His Excellency the Governor General proceeded to the Senate Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne. His Excellency was pleased to command the attendance of the House of Commons, and that House being come, with their Speaker, His Excellency was pleased to open the Fourth Session of the Fourteenth Parliament of the Dominion of Canada with the following Speech:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I have pleasure in welcoming you to the fourth session of the fourteenth Parliament.

Since prorogation, the economic situation throughout the world has notably improved. For Canada, the year 1924 was a period of substantial progress. In trade alone, the excess value of exports over imports was more than \$260,000,000. The present year opens with prospects of sound and steady development. The financial and trade situation justifies the expectation of an early return to the gold basis.

The problem of the cost of living is the most important that my ministers have in mind at the present time, and every effort is being made to im-

prove conditions with respect thereto. It is apparent that even the most rigid economy in public expenditures will not suffice to solve this pressing problem and the problem of taxation incidental thereto. Their ultimate solution lies largely in increased production and the development of new and wider markets. It is to be borne continually in mind that the existing burden of taxation is due mainly to uncontrollable expenditure in the nature of payments and obligations arising out of the War, and to the encumbered position of the National Railways.

To aid in an increase of production, through the development of our vast natural resources, every effort is being made to attract the right class of immigrants to Canada, and to secure their settlement in the undeveloped areas served by our great transportation systems. In due course steps will be taken to further colonization and settlement in other fertile regions such as those of the Peace River.

The cost of production of raw materials and the necessities of life has been lessened by the reductions in the tariff and the sales tax effected at the last session. It is becoming increasingly evident, however, that quite as important a factor as the customs tariff in their effect upon production and living costs are transportation costs and rates, by land and sea. It is the opinion of my advisers that the attention of Parliament at the present session should be directed more particularly to the desirability of effecting a freer movement of commodities through an equalization of railway freight rates as between provinces and localities, and through a lowering of carrying charges upon shipments by water of the products of the farm, the mine, the forest, the fisheries, and of our manufacturing industries.

Some measure of control of transportation by land and sea is obviously essential to the promotion of interimperial trade, the expansion of export trade generally, and the development of Canadian trade via Canadian ports.

The procedure it may be advisable to follow with respect to railway freight rates will in some measure necessarily depend upon the decision of the Supreme Court in the appeal respecting the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement. With regard to ocean freight rates, action is being taken to overcome the restraints on export trade due to the exactions of the powerful steamship combine known as the North Atlantic Steamship Conference. Your approval will be asked of a measure aimed at affording the Government of Canada a control of ocean rates.

It is the intention of the Government so to equip our important ports on the St. Lawrence route, and on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as to enable them to meet all requirements of modern navigation.

To secure greater co-operation in the administration of the laws of the two countries respecting smuggling and the prosecution and extradition of persons violating the anti-narcotic laws of either country, treaties between the Dominion of Canada and the United States have been negotiated and signed. They will be submitted for your approval prior to their ratification.