

Speech of the Throne

Then His Excellency the Administrator 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 Administrator 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. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-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 the house did attend His Excellency the Administrator 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:

I welcome you to the first session of the twenty sixth parliament of Canada.

I am honoured today to act for His Excellency the Governor General, whose place in the respect of the Canadian people is second only to that of Her Majesty the Queen and whose early recovery to full health is sincerely wished by us all. I know that all members of this parliament would wish to join in expressing to Her Majesty the sentiments of loyalty which were recently conveyed to her by the Prime Minister.

You are deliberating the course of our country in times of great change throughout the world. These are times that test old virtues. They are times that open up new opportunities. Familiar ways of thought and action are becoming less certain guides. Many old paths are no longer open to us. The task before us is to seek out, with wisdom and imagination, those new paths that will lead us surely forward.

As Canadians we can work with hope. Our country has a proud history. Now there are expanding opportunities open to us. But they depend on our overcoming serious problems. It is only with courage and perseverance and hard work that we will achieve the better life that is within our power, for ourselves and for our children.

Our progress is the work of all the people. In a free country, we are all responsible. The determination of my ministers is that the government through its policies will contribute the leadership, the purpose, the decision that are its responsibilities to the people.

[Mr. Speaker.]

The character and strength of our nation are drawn from the diverse cultures of people who came from many lands to create the Canada that is ours today. The greater Canada that is in our power to make will be built not on uniformity but on continuing diversity, and particularly on the basic partnership of English speaking and French speaking people. My ministers are determined that the partnership shall be truly equal. For that high purpose they are establishing, in consultation with the governments of the provinces, a commission charged to study, thoroughly but urgently, how the fundamentally bicultural character of Canada may best be assured and the contribution of other cultures recognized.

To make us a more united people, the government will in all things strive to strengthen and to give new direction to our Canadian confederation. It will foster the spirit of co-operative federalism, fully respecting the rights of the provinces while safeguarding and extending the equality of opportunity which properly belongs to all Canadians in all parts of our country. In these purposes, as in others, my ministers will seek frequent consultation with the governments of the provinces.

The principles of Canadian external policy are those of the United Nations charter, to maintain peace with justice and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to promote the welfare of all peoples by international co-operation. My ministers will seek solutions to international problems by diplomacy and negotiation. In particular, my ministers will strive to lessen international tensions and halt the arms race by seeking measures of controlled disarmament, including a treaty to end nuclear tests under reasonable safeguards.

Meantime, my ministers believe that there is no alternative to the maintenance of the defences of the free nations as a deterrent to war. In particular, a strong North Atlantic Treaty Organization, including adequate defence on the north American continent, remains essential to Canada's security. For this purpose, the armed forces of Canada should have available the modern weapons necessary to perform effectively the defensive tasks which Canada has undertaken in the alliance. Next week, we will take pleasure in welcoming to Ottawa the ministerial council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. My government is convinced that on the foundation of the present alliance a true community of the Atlantic peoples will one day be achieved.

In recent weeks the Prime Minister has had friendly and constructive discussions with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and with the President of the United States of America. By such visits and other means the government will continue to improve political and economic relationships with other countries. It is my ministers' intention to assist in enhancing the unique value of the commonwealth partnership in international relations.

Canada's economic progress is vitally dependant on vigorous economic expansion throughout the world. We must expect continuing rapid changes in international trading relationships, changes that face Canada both with problems of adjustment and with new opportunities. My ministers believe that the nations can best achieve economic progress through policies that steadily reduce the barriers limiting trade. It is equally important to pursue active policies for the economic development of the newer nations, for the expansion of trade in primary commodities at reasonably stable prices, and for the improvement of international payments.

Canada will take a constructive part in trade and other economic negotiations. In order to increase employment and production in Canada, it is the purpose of my ministers to expand Canada's export