

Employment and prosperity remain at a high level in Canada. The prospects are good for continued private investment in construction and capital development throughout the present year. The demand for consumer goods of all kinds continues to be strong. However, seasonal and local factors have given rise to a significant amount of temporary regional unemployment during the past few months, and the security provisions established under unemployment insurance legislation have been called upon to meet the first important test since they were brought into effect.

Although a high proportion of persons temporarily unemployed are actually in receipt of unemployment insurance benefits, you will be asked to give consideration to a bill to widen the scope and extend the benefits of unemployment insurance.

Circumstances outside Canada have been responsible for some downward adjustment in the price of farm products. Measures have already been taken to reduce the impact of these adjustments. In order to provide authority for continuing price support to that end for the primary products of our farms and fisheries, you will be asked to amend the Agricultural Products Act, the Agricultural Prices Support Act and the Fisheries Prices Support Act.

Within the past year, the International Wheat Agreement has been brought into operation. In view of Canada's participation in that agreement and the recent decision to market coarse grains through the Canadian Wheat Board, you will also be asked to consider a measure to renew the existing powers of the board.

During the past year Canadian exports were maintained at close to record levels, but continued difficulties arising out of the world-wide dollar shortage have resulted recently in reduced purchases of a number of our export products.

Canadian representatives continue to participate actively in co-ordinated international efforts to bring about improvement in the underlying conditions of world trade. The government is also pursuing policies designed to develop new markets for our products and to assist overseas customers to increase Canadian earnings. My ministers will continue their efforts to secure reductions in trade barriers. To this end preparations are actively under way for further multilateral trade negotiations later in the present year.

While prevailing exchange difficulties will require continued readjustments, we have reason to expect that our export trade as a whole will remain at a high level during the present year.

You will be asked to give consideration to the legislation required to implement the policy concerning the control and the orderly decontrol of rents announced by the government during your last session.

A measure will be introduced to amend the Canada Shipping Act to incorporate changes suggested by the Safety of Life at Sea Convention of 1948 and to define duties of Canadian consuls and conditions of registration in Canada of Canadian ships.

You will be asked to consider a bill for the revision of the Indian Act.

A bill will be submitted to substitute a uniform and systematic procedure for existing legislation concerning publication and tabling in parliament of regulations and orders made by the Governor in Council or Ministers or other agents of the Crown in the exercise of powers conferred by statute.

Bills will be introduced to implement the policies announced at the last session respecting prize money; the inclusion of veterans of British and allied forces within the scope of the War Veterans Allowance Act; and grants to municipalities in which there is an exceptional concentration of federal property.

Other measures requiring your consideration will include bills to amend the Militia Pension Act; the Criminal Code; the Government Annuities Act; the Post Office Act; the Consolidated Revenue and Audit Act; the Currency Act; the Trust Companies Act; the Canadian and British Insurance Companies Act, 1932; the Foreign Insurance Companies Act, 1932; the Customs Act; the Maritime Marshland Rehabilitation Act; and the Northwest Territories Power Commission Act.

Members of the House of Commons:

You will be asked to make provision for all essential services for the next fiscal year.

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I pray that Divine Providence may bless your deliberations.

The House of Commons withdrew.

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire.

The sitting of the Senate was resumed.

RAILWAY BILL

FIRST READING

Hon. Mr. Hugessen (for Hon. Mr. Robertson) presented Bill A, an Act relating to railways.

The bill was read the first time.

CONSIDERATION OF SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

MOTION

Hon. Mr. Hugessen (for Hon. Mr. Robertson) moved that the Speech of His Excellency the Governor General be taken into consideration on Tuesday next.

The motion was agreed to.

COMMITTEE ON ORDERS AND PRIVILEGES

MOTION

Hon. Mr. Hugessen (for Hon. Mr. Robertson) moved:

That all the senators present during the session be appointed a committee to consider the orders and customs of the Senate and privileges of Parliament, and that the said committee have leave to meet in the Senate Chamber when and as often as they please.

The motion was agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday, February 21, at 3 p.m.