

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The Honourable Patrick Kerwin, a Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, Deputy Governor General, having come and being seated,

The Hon. the Speaker commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to proceed to the House of Commons and acquaint that House that: "It is the Honourable the Deputy Governor General's desire that they attend him immediately in the Senate."

Who being come,

The Hon. the Speaker said:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that His Excellency the Governor General does not see fit to declare the causes of his summoning the present Parliament of Canada, until a Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen, according to law; but this afternoon, at the hour of three o'clock, His Excellency will declare the causes of his calling this Parliament.

The House of Commons withdrew.

The Honourable the Deputy Governor General was pleased to retire.

The sitting of the Senate was resumed.

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 arrive at the Main Entrance of the Houses of Parliament at 3 p.m., and, when it had been signified that all was in readiness, would proceed to the Senate Chamber to open the First Session of the Twenty-First Parliament of Canada.

The Senate adjourned until 2.30 p.m., this day.

SECOND SITTING

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

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 First Session of the Twenty-First Parliament of Canada with the following speech:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

There has been deep satisfaction in all parts of the country that the steady improvement in the health of the King has enabled His Majesty to resume most of his customary activities.

The opening of the twenty-first parliament is marked by the presence for the first time of the representatives of the new province of Newfoundland. It is a pleasure for me to welcome their participation in the national affairs of a greater Canada.

With the admission of the new province of Newfoundland the Canadian nation attained the geographical limits planned by the Fathers of Confederation. You will be asked at the present session to approve measures designed to facilitate the attainment of the constitutional limits of our nationhood. To this end, a bill will be introduced to amend the Supreme Court Act so that the Supreme Court of Canada will become the final court of appeal for Canada.

You will also be asked to approve addresses praying the Parliament of the United Kingdom to vest in the Parliament of Canada the right to amend the constitution of Canada in relation to matters not coming within the jurisdiction of the legislatures of the provinces nor affecting the constitutional rights and privileges of the provinces or existing rights and privileges with respect to education or the use of the English and French languages.

My ministers will seek to arrange for early consultation with the provincial governments with a view to agreeing upon an appropriate procedure for making within Canada such other amendments to the constitution as may from time to time be required.

The hopes held four years ago for world peace and security under the aegis of the United Nations have not yet been realized. The menace of Communist totalitarianism continues to threaten the aspirations of men of good will. It is, however, gratifying that the North Atlantic Treaty has been brought into effect and is already proving its worth in lessening the risks of armed aggression.

The defence needs of Canada, both as a separate nation and as a signatory of this Treaty are being kept constantly under review. Good progress has been made in the co-ordination and unification of our armed forces and conditions of service are being improved. Special attention is being given to research and development intended to provide the forces with the most modern equipment suitable for present requirements.

A measure will be introduced to consolidate the legislation respecting the defence forces and the Department of National Defence.

It is the view of my ministers that the economic health and stability of the nations of the North Atlantic community must be the real foundation of their ability to resist and, therefore, to deter aggression.

Although the nations of Western Europe have made substantial progress towards recovery from the ravages of war, they have not yet been able to restore completely their economic strength. Their shortage of dollars continues, and international trade remains in a state of unbalance. The government is seeking by all appropriate means to cooperate in measures to restore economic equilibrium. The achievement of a pattern of world trade in which the trading nations can operate together within one single multilateral system continues to be the ultimate aim of my government.

Since parliament last met the International Wheat Agreement has come into operation. The agreement together with the other arrangements made to dispose of our surplus agricultural products will provide additional economic security for many of our farmers.

At home we continue to enjoy prosperity. Agricultural production generally continues to be high. Private capital investment and employment have remained at high levels. Relations between employers and employees have, with few exceptions, been satisfactory.