

Governor General's Speech

A message was delivered by Lieut.-Col. Ernest J. Chambers, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, His Excellency the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the Chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly the House went up to the Senate Chamber.

Then the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, Speaker-elect, said:

May it please your Excellency,

The House of Commons have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me. If in the performance of those duties I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Commons whose servant I am.

The Honourable the Speaker of the Senate addressing the Honourable the Speaker of the Commons then said:

Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor General to assure you that your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

Then His Excellency the Governor General 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 state that the House having attended on His Excellency the Governor General 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.

BILL INTRODUCED

Bill No. 1, respecting the Administration of Oaths of Office—Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King.

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that when the House did attend His Excellency the Governor General 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 desire on this occasion to assure you that it is with great satisfaction that I meet the Parliament of the Dominion for the first time since

Mr. Speaker.

my arrival in Canada, and avail myself of your assistance and advice in carrying out the important duties that His Majesty the King has entrusted to me as his Representative. It is, indeed, a great privilege to be called upon to administer the affairs of the Dominion and to associate myself with you in the work you are about to begin.

Our Dominion has not escaped the world-wide economic disturbance and industrial depression but has suffered less from it than other countries. Keen observers of the business barometer feel that the worst is about over and that at an early date we may look for a substantial revivification of activity.

In many parts of the Dominion continued depression of business naturally produced, in a much larger degree than usual, the misfortune of unemployment. Whilst of the opinion that unemployment relief is fundamentally a municipal and provincial responsibility, my Government has felt that as conditions have arisen in a measure out of the late war, they would be justified in continuing for the period of the winter months the expedient of supplementing by grants from the Federal Treasury the relief contributions of Provinces and Municipalities for the purpose of alleviating actual distress.

The decline of prices in farm products in 1921, as compared with the prices of previous years, has seriously affected agriculture in many parts of the Dominion. The ill-effects of this inevitable deflation have been emphasized by restricted markets and the absence of any corresponding reduction in the cost of production. While improved methods of culture, grading and storage of farm crops in some parts, and greater diversification in others, would materially better conditions, it is apparent that adequate markets and marketing facilities and reduced transportation and production costs lie at the root of the problem. Recognizing such to be the case, my advisers have lost no time in seeking to gain more favourable conditions of sale and marketing for the products of the farm. Communications have been opened with the authorities of other countries looking to an extension of trade and a widening of Canadian markets, and conferences have been arranged between the railway authorities with respect to the reduction of rates upon basic commodities.

You will be invited to consider the expediency of making some changes in the Customs Tariff. While there are details of revision, the consideration of which will require time and care that are not at present available, there are features of the tariff which it is felt may properly be dealt with during the present session.

In order that Government ownership and operation of our national railways now extending through every province of the Dominion may be given a fair trial under the most favourable conditions, it is intended at an early date to co-ordinate the Government-owned systems in the manner best calculated to increase efficiency, and to effect economies in administration, maintenance and operation. The whole transportation situation is one which will require your best attention. It weighs heavily upon our national finances. To assist in obtaining the information essential to an exact understanding and an adequate appreciation of the problem in its many bearings, it is proposed to supplement the work of co-ordination by a thorough enquiry.

The stream of immigration to the Dominion was much interrupted and restricted during the war. Now that the blessing of peace is with us, a renewal of efforts to bring in new settlers must be made. My Government are fully alive