

Sir Eugene Fiset, Kt., for the Electoral District of Rimouski.

William Bunting Snowball, Esquire, for the Electoral District of Northumberland (N.B.).

Charles Edward Hanna, Esquire, for the Electoral District of Hastings (West Riding).

Jean Francois Pouliot, Esquire, for the Electoral District of Témiscouata.

Mr. Mackenzie King (York), by leave of the House, introduced a Bill No. 1, An Act respecting the Administration of Oaths of Office, which was read the first time.

Mr. Speaker reported, 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, and to prevent mistakes, he had obtained a copy which he read to the House as follows:—

*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 improve 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 necessaries 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.