

So that the Official Opposition, to which we in Canada give formal recognition as a vital part of our democratic process, as well as the other parties in opposition, may be in a position to cope more effectively with the heavy load of action and decision each session must face, you will be asked to make new provision for the Official Opposition, and the other parties in their parliamentary role. You will also be asked to consider additional facilities for the better discharge of the functions of Parliament generally.

My Government is deeply and irrevocably committed to the objectives of a just society and a prosperous economy in a peaceful world. My Ministers believe that the unity of the country is fundamental to the attainment of these goals, as—indeed—to the enjoyment by each Canadian of the maximum possible liberty, happiness and material well-being. Constitutional reform remains the best long-term guarantee of Canadian unity and my ministers are directing officials in discussions with the provinces which are proceeding well and will, through a series of intergovernmental conferences, lead to proposals that Parliament will wish to consider. In the meantime, however, to further the objective of a united Canada, you will be asked during the current session, to enact a totally new Official Languages Act based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. You will also be asked to approve a new Publication of Statutes Act to change the way in which the law of our bilingual land is presented and made known in both the official languages of our land. You will also be asked to consider measures relating to Indians, to citizenship, to national symbols, to cultural agencies, to transportation of all kinds as well as to communications (including satellites), educational television, and the financing of the Post Office.

Some of these proposals involve the righting of wrongs and others the opening of opportunities long denied. Together they exemplify the essential connection between justice and national unity. The attainment of a just society is the cherished hope of civilized men. While perhaps more difficult to formulate for groups than for individuals, even the members of majorities—political, religious, linguistic or economic—must know what it is to suffer injustice. My Government is deeply concerned to provide and to ensure increased justice, dignity and recognition to the individual, particularly in an age which is characterized by large governments, industrial automation, social regimentation and

old-fashioned laws. A great deal has been accomplished in recent years to make the Canadian society more just in terms of income distribution and security against the vicissitudes of life. Pensions for the aged, provision for the sick and for the needy have been made more effective by legislation passed in recent Parliaments and by action of the provinces. Notwithstanding such measures, poverty continues to exist in Canada. My Government recognizes that, but it also believes that it would be deluding and cruel to pretend that there is a simple, all-encompassing or instantaneously effective remedy. Poverty can be dealt with successfully and permanently only by continued and determined action in a variety of ways by all governments. For its part, Parliament can be assured that the federal Government will contribute fully and assume leadership wherever it can properly do so. To this end, the proposals you will have for your consideration will include the establishment of a department charged with the objective of ensuring that people in all areas and regions of our country have as equal access as possible to the opportunities of Canada's economic development.

At the same time, there are other and broader elements vital to a just society, and my Ministers feel that these must receive, at this and in later sessions of Parliament, a degree of attention they have not had hitherto. Toward these ends, you will be asked to enact important changes in the Criminal Law, to provide new protections for consumers and investors, to up-date food, drug and health legislation, to revise or amend legislation relating to the machinery of justice, and to correct a number of particular injustices, including those resulting from certain provisions of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act. During the course of the present session it is anticipated that the Government will receive reports from inquiries with regard to labour legislation and veterans pensions, and it is the intention of my Ministers to bring their proposals in these matters before you as soon as possible.

My Government believes that the objective of a just society must always include the pursuit of a prosperous economy as well as the fair distribution of its proceeds. Just as we have in the past tended, perhaps, to consider justice in our society largely in material terms, so we must recognize that there has been a tendency in Parliament and to some degree in Government to concentrate on the distributive aspects of our economy. In this