

CANADA

The Debates of the Senate

OFFICIAL REPORT

THE SENATE

Thursday, March 12, 1931.

The Parliament of Canada having been summoned by Proclamation of the Administrator of the Government of Canada to meet this day for the despatch of business:

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

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The Hon. the Speaker informed the Senate that he had received a communication from the Acting Secretary to the Administrator informing him that His Excellency the Administrator would proceed to the Senate Chamber to open the session of the Dominion Parliament this day at 3 o'clock.

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

At three o'clock His Excellency the Administrator 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 Second Session of the Seventeenth Parliament of the Dominion of Canada with the following speech:

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

I welcome you to your duties at a time when the nations of the world are passing through a period of great economic depression. Canada has not escaped it. But the Canadian people have met the trials of the moment with patience and fortitude, and are facing the future with the courage and faith which must triumph over every difficulty. In prosperity they were united. In adversity that union is made still stronger by the spirit of co-operation and mutual understanding which is the surest bulwark of the nation's welfare and happiness.

These attributes of Canadianism are national assets of real value, and, upon their possession, I do profoundly congratulate you.

It will be your privilege to consider certain measures designed by my Ministers to ameliorate existing conditions, to provide further means by which our people may go forward to achieve a prosperity heretofore unattained and to

furnish them with all possible safeguards against a recurrence of the present subordination to world forces.

The fact that in this period of universal distress Canada has been spared the same acute degree of hardship which many other nations have been called upon to bear, will not, I know, blind you to the fact that between this country as it is and as it should be, there is a gulf to be bridged by the industry and zeal of all those who have the welfare of the nation in their keeping. The problems which stand between us and ultimate prosperity are manifold and great. To be effectually met, they must first be understood. Confusion between cause and effect will but delay their solution. My Government has explored the origins of our difficulties and is firmly of the belief that many of our problems do not arise out of world-wide depression, but are antecedent to it; and that domestic factors have also largely determined the degree of economic distress from which this country is suffering.

It was this belief which impelled my Ministers at the emergency session of Parliament held in September last to remove one of the root weaknesses in our industrial system by effecting such then possible changes in the tariff as would, in their opinion, provide substantial security against harmful world competition. Although in the interval world conditions have changed but little for the better, this tariff legislation has resulted in a marked improvement in the domestic situation through the strengthening of established industries, and in addition many others, formerly exporters to Canada, have now become producers in Canada.

The operation of the Unemployment Relief Act, 1930, has proved equally beneficial. While the grant authorized by this Act could not immediately have checked unemployment arising from causes of which you have full knowledge, yet its careful administration by my Ministers, ably aided by the provincial and municipal governments and the two great railway systems, has resulted in the institution of a nation wide program of public undertakings, each one a unit in a scheme of national development, which have collectively provided work for the greatest number of men who have ever been employed through the direct efforts of the Federal Government.

Since the last session of Parliament four of my Ministers attended the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences in London. Several constitutional questions, arising largely out of the resolutions of the Imperial Conference of 1926, were fully discussed and, in principle, approved. My Ministers, however, held the view that before certain constitutional changes embodied in these resolutions should be made effective by a statute of the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Provinces of Canada should be given an opportunity of further con-