

The Honourable the Speaker informed the Senate that he had received a communication from the Governor General's Secretary, in the following words:—

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SECRETARY

OTTAWA, 12th January, 1925.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that His Excellency the Governor General will proceed to the Senate Chamber to open the Session of the Dominion Parliament on Thursday, the 5th February, at three o'clock.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

A. F. SLADEN,

Governor General's Secretary.

The Honourable
The Speaker of the Senate,
Ottawa.

The Senate was adjourned during pleasure.

After a while, His Excellency the Governor General having come, and being seated on the Throne.

The Honourable the Speaker commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to proceed to the House of Commons and acquaint that House that,—It is His Excellency the Governor General's pleasure that they attend him immediately in the Senate.

Who being come, with their Speaker,

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to open the Session by a Gracious Speech to both Houses, 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.

The procedure it may be advisable to follow with respect to railway freight rates will in some measure necessarily depend upon the decision of the Supreme Court in the appeal respecting the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement. With regard to ocean freight rates, action is being taken to overcome the restraints on export trade due to the exactions of the powerful steamship combine known as the North Atlantic Steamship Conference. Your approval will be asked of a measure aimed at affording the Government of Canada a control of ocean rates.

It is the intention of the Government so to equip our important ports on the St. Lawrence route, and on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as to enable them to meet all requirements of modern navigation.

To secure greater co-operation in the administration of the laws of the two countries respecting smuggling and the prosecution and extradition of persons violating the anti-narcotic laws of either country, treaties between the Dominion of Canada and the United States have been negotiated and signed. They will be submitted for your approval prior to their ratification.

You will be asked to sanction the calling of a conference between the federal and provincial governments to consider the advisability of amending the British North America Act with respect to the constitution and powers of the Senate, and in other important particulars.

Your attention will also be invited, during the course of the session, to certain trade agreements, to legislation respecting the handling and marketing of Canadian grain and to other important matters.

Members of the House of Commons:

The public accounts for the last fiscal year, and the estimates for the coming year, will be promptly submitted. In the preparation of the estimates, regard has been had to the need for continued economy with respect to the public services and public works.

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

May Divine Providence guide and bless your deliberations.

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire.

The Commons withdrew.

After some time the Senate was resumed.

PRAYERS.

The Honourable Mr. Dandurand presented to the Senate a Bill, intituled:—
“An Act relating to Railways.”

The said Bill was read the first time.

The Honourable the Speaker informed the Senate that a copy of the Speech of His Excellency the Governor General had been left in his hands.

The same was read by The Honourable the Speaker.

Ordered, That the Speech of His Excellency the Governor General be taken into consideration on Tuesday, next.

On motion of the Honourable Mr. Dandurand, it was—

Ordered, That all the Senators present during this Session be appointed a Committee to consider the Orders and Customs of the Senate and Privileges of Parliament, and that the said Committee have leave to meet in the Senate Chamber when and as often as they please.

The Honourable Mr. Dandurand laid upon the Table:—

Report of the Minister of Agriculture, for the year ended 31st March, 1924 (English Edition).

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 16.)

Report of the Director of Experimental Farms, for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 37.)

Orders and Regulations passed under authority of the Destructive Insect and Pest Act, for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 38.)

Orders and Regulations passed under authority of the Cold Storage Act, for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 39.)

Report of the Department of Marine and Fisheries (Marine Branch), for the fiscal year, 1923-24.

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 28.)

Report of the Department of Immigration and Colonization, for the fiscal year ended 31st March, 1924.

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 13.)

Report of the Department of National Defence (Militia Service and Air Service), for the fiscal year ended 31st March, 1924 (English and French editions).

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 17.)

Report of the Department of National Defence (Naval Service), for the fiscal year ended 31st March, 1924 (English and French editions).

(Sessional Papers, 1925, No. 17a.)