

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

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SECRETARY
CANADA

OTTAWA, 23rd December, 1925.

Sir,—

I have the honour to inform you that His Excellency the Governor General will proceed to the Senate Chamber to formally open the Session of the Dominion Parliament on Friday, 8th January, 1926, 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.

Ordered, That the same do lie on the Table.

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 Chamber.

The House of Commons being come,

Their Speaker, the Honourable Rodolphe Lemieux, said:—

May it please Your Excellency,—

The House of Commons has elected me 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, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their King and Country, humbly claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to Your Excellency's person at all seasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from Your Excellency the most favourable interpretation.

The Honourable the Speaker of the Senate answered:—

Mr. SPEAKER,—I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor General to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of the House of Commons to His Majesty's Person and Government, and not doubting that their proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temper and prudence he

grants and upon all occasions will recognize and allow their constitutional privileges. I am commanded also to assure you that the Commons shall have ready access to His Excellency upon all seasonable occasions, and that their proceedings as well as your words and actions, will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

His Excellency the Governor General was then pleased to open the Session by a Gracious Speech to both Houses, as follows:—

Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

It gives me pleasure to welcome you to your important duties in this first session of the fifteenth Parliament of Canada.

Since our last meeting, the Empire has been called on to lament the demise of Queen Alexandra. In our Dominion the memory of the late Queen will ever be held in affectionate remembrance. At the earliest opportunity a resolution will be submitted to you expressing the deep sympathy of the Parliament and people of Canada with His Majesty the King and other members of the Royal Family in their bereavement.

Canada has been signally honoured by the selection of a member of its Government as President of the sixth assembly of the League of Nations.

I congratulate you on the growing prosperity of this favoured land. The products of our agricultural and other basic industries have greatly increased. Our export trade shows remarkable expansion. Our manufacturing and related industries throughout the Dominion have experienced a development not enjoyed in many years. Further evidence of industrial progress is reflected in the greatly improved earnings of the railways.

This increased prosperity and advancement have been aided by the policies of the Government and the reductions in expenditures and taxation made from time to time. In the opinion of my Ministers the improved conditions warrant further substantial reductions in taxation.

Every effort will be made further to reduce expenditures. To aid in the reduction of expenditures in administration certain of the departments of the public service will be consolidated with others and government services more effectively co-ordinated.

Our revenue is derived partly from taxes made necessary by the war and partly from other sources. In order that the people of the Dominion may have an exact knowledge of the sources of their revenue and the objects of its expenditure simplified forms of account will be issued periodically.

With the improvement of conditions throughout the country the Government have formulated and put into operation a comprehensive immigration plan. My Ministers desire it to be known that the Dominion welcomes settlers of the classes which can be absorbed into our population. Regulations have been simplified, transportation rates greatly reduced, and the care of settlers to destination and during early settlement given every attention. Measures will be taken to further the retention on the land of our existing agricultural population to encourage the return to rural parts of urban dwellers possessed of agricultural experience, and the repatriation of Canadians now living in other countries. Special arrangements will be proposed for settlement on Crown Lands.

An agreement has been made between the Government and the railroad companies providing a larger measure of co-operation in immigration activities in the British Isles and on the continent of Europe. An agreement entered into with the British Government has already been instrumental in stimulating immigration from Great Britain.

While it is of importance to attract new settlers it is equally, if not more important, to assist those who are already established on the land by reducing the cost of agricultural production. To this end a measure will be introduced offering wide facilities for rural credits.

My Ministers are of the opinion that a general increase in the Customs Tariff would prove detrimental to the country's continued prosperity and prejudicial to national unity. In their view the incidence of this form of taxation should bear as lightly as possible upon the necessaries of life and on agriculture and other primary industries. They believe that in the interest of industrial development every effort should be made to eliminate the element of uncertainty with respect to tariff changes; that changes in the tariff should be made only after the fullest examination of their bearing upon both primary and manufacturing industries and that representations requesting increase or decrease of duties should be made the subject of the most careful investigation and report by a body possessing the necessary qualifications to advise the Ministry with respect thereto. A Tariff Advisory Board will accordingly be appointed forthwith. This Board will be expected to make a careful study of the Customs Tariff, the revenue to be derived therefrom and the effect of the tariff and allied factors on industry and agriculture.

While recognizing the importance of the Canadian home market, the great value of markets in other countries for our natural and manufactured products must also be considered. In particular our trade within the Empire should be encouraged by all means consistent with our national welfare. In this connection a trade agreement entered into with the British West Indies, Bermuda, British Guiana and British Honduras will be submitted for your approval.

In pursuance of the fixed policy of the Government to encourage the movement of grain and other Canadian products through Canadian ports, the Board of Railway Commissioners has been instructed to include in the General Rate investigation now in progress, a special inquiry into the causes of diversion of Canadian grain and other products through other than Canadian ports, and to take such action under the Railway Act as it may deem efficient to ensure as far as possible the utilization of Canadian ports for Canadian traffic.

My Government propose to submit provisions for the completion forthwith of the Hudson Bay Railway.

With a view to affording such remedies as may appear to be practical and appropriate, the Government also propose to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire fully into the claims that the rights of the Maritime Provinces in regard to the operation of the Intercolonial Railway have not been observed, and that in regard to transportation, immigration, and other economic factors these provinces have suffered prejudicially, in their position under Confederation.

Your attention will be invited, among other measures, to a Bill to provide for the transfer to the Province of Alberta of its natural resources, and to a Bill amending the Dominion Elections Act.

Members of the House of Commons:

The accounts of the last fiscal year and the estimates for the coming year will be submitted for your consideration.

Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

In the policies and measures I have outlined, a sincere effort has been made to take into account the diversified conditions and interests of our Dominion in a manner which will promote mutual understanding and closer co-operation between all parts. It is believed that these measures which, taken together,

form a co-ordinated plan of national progress, will ensure our common aim of a prosperous and united Canada.

In their consideration and in other of your public duties 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.

The Honourable the Speaker presented to the Senate the following communication from the Clerk with respect to the vacancies in the positions of First Clerk Assistant and Second Clerk Assistant:—

OTTAWA, 8th January, 1926.

Sir,—

Owing to death of Mr. J. C. Young, and Mr. Siméon Lelièvre, First Clerk Assistant and Second Clerk Assistant, vacancies have occurred on the Senate Staff.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

A. E. BLOUNT,

Clerk of the Senate.

The Honourable,
The Speaker of the Senate,
The Senate, Ottawa.

Ordered, That the same do lie on the Table.

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.

With leave of the Senate, and—

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

Ordered, That pursuant to Rule 77 the following Senators, to wit: The Honourable Messieurs Belcourt, Daniel, Prowse, Robertson, Ross (Middleton), Sharpe, Tanner, Watson, Willoughby and the mover, be appointed a Committee of Selection to nominate Senators to serve on the several Standing Committees during the present Session; and to report with all convenient speed the names of the Senators so nominated.