

SECOND DISTINCT SITTING

2:30 p.m.

The Honourable WISHART McLEA ROBERTSON, P.C., Speaker.

The Members convened were:—

The Honourable Senators

Aseltine,	Crerar,	Howden,	Pirie,
Baird,	Croll,	Hugessen,	Pouliot,
Barbour,	Davies,	Inman,	Power,
Basha,	Dessureault,	Isnor,	Pratt,
Beaubien,	Dupuis,	Jodoin,	Robertson,
Bishop,	Euler,	Kinley,	Roebuck,
Blais,	Fergusson,	Lambert,	Savoie,
Bouchard,	Fournier,	Léger,	Smith,
Bouffard,	Gershaw,	Leonard,	Taylor,
Bradette,	Golding,	Macdonald,	Tremblay,
Bradley,	Gouin,	MacKinnon,	Turgeon,
Burchill,	Grant,	Marcotte,	Vaillancourt,
Cameron,	Hackett,	McGrand,	Veniot,
Campbell,	Haig,	McIntyre,	Vien,
Connolly	Hawkins,	McKeen,	Wall,
(Halifax North),	Hodges,	McLean,	Wilson,
Connolly	Horner,	Molson,	Woodrow.
(Ottawa West),	Howard,	Paterson,	

The Senate adjourned during pleasure.

After a while, His Excellency the Governor General having come, and being seated upon 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,

His Excellency the Governor General was then 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:

It is with pleasure that I greet you as you resume your Parliamentary duties at the beginning of this New Year.

Since you last met there have been significant international developments. Some of them have been welcome as releasing tensions in certain parts of the world while others unfortunately have had the contrary effect. My Ministers remain convinced of the need to maintain the defences of the free nations as a deterrent to war. A strong North Atlantic Treaty Organization and adequate protection for this continent are in their view fundamental to the preservation of peace and the security of Canada.

Security, however, cannot rest on arms alone. The government, therefore, is continuing its constant efforts, through diplomacy and negotiation and through the United Nations and other international agencies, to bring about better understanding between nations.

A meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers will be held in London in June to consider matters of mutual interest. My Prime Minister has accepted the invitation to attend.

Meanwhile my Ministers are looking forward to the visit to Ottawa in February of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom.

The annual meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan agreed that this constructive work should be continued for a further period and you will be asked to authorize Canada's continued participation in the Plan, as well as in the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme.

A Royal Commission has been appointed to consider and report upon the development and financing of television and sound broadcasting in Canada.

The Royal Commission to examine and report upon our economic prospects is proceeding with its enquiry.

The year just ended has been the most productive in our nation's history. More men and women have been employed than ever before. Our harvests have been abundant. Our trade has exceeded all earlier levels. A record number of houses has been built.

Canada has enjoyed, on the whole, a high level of prosperity. Some sectors of the economy have not fully participated in this increased well-being. In particular, although sales of wheat in the past five years have been at record levels, an unprecedented series of bumper harvests has made necessary the storage of abnormal stocks of grain both in elevators and on farms. Lack of space in elevators has limited the ability of producers to deliver grain as early as usual in the marketing year. In order to provide an immediate source of funds where they may be needed, my Ministers will ask you to authorize guarantees for bank loans to producers secured by their grain.

You will also be asked to authorize the Treasury to bear the cost from August 1, 1955 of storage and interest charges on wheat held by the Wheat Board over and above its normal carryover levels. As a consequence of this arrangement, returns to producers will not be depressed by carrying costs on abnormal carryover.

A higher level of employment this winter than last seems to be assured and the improvements you made to the Unemployment Insurance Act last year will provide a better coverage for those who are temporarily without work, particularly in the winter season. Various departments and agencies of government have sought to arrange their construction programmes to provide more employment during the winter season. It is gratifying to note that many other employers are endeavouring to follow the same policy.

In October my Ministers held a conference in Ottawa with the Premiers and other Ministers of all the provinces to consider financial and other relations between the federal and provincial governments. Following this useful discussion and some further correspondence, my Ministers have placed before all provincial governments a specific proposal for federal-provincial fiscal arrangements to commence next year.

The conference established a committee of Ministers from all governments to consider health insurance programmes and the work of this committee is now under way.

My Ministers have also conferred with provincial Ministers to consider and develop an arrangement for sharing the costs of assistance to unemployed persons not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits, and in need. Detailed agreements have been submitted to the provinces. You will be asked to approve the legislation necessary to implement this programme.

You will be asked to provide for the construction, jointly with the government of Ontario, of a gas pipeline across northern Ontario from the Manitoba boundary to Kapuskasing, to be leased to Trans-Canada Pipe Lines Limited, which is to build connecting lines in western and eastern Canada. My Ministers consider this government participation is necessary to make this important national project possible at this time.

You will also have laid before you amendments to the Trans-Canada Highway Act to accelerate the completion of essential links in the Trans-Canada Highway and to continue, in co-operation with provincial governments, the work of constructing that highway up to the agreed standards.

Amendments to the National Housing Act will be laid before you. The rapid growth of our centres of population has been a spectacular feature of our national development since the last war, and in that growth wide use has been made of the National Housing Act by our citizens, particularly in suburban areas. One amendment now to be proposed is designed to increase assistance to encourage re-development of older sections of our cities to their best use.

Early last year the home improvement section of the Act was proclaimed. It has contributed greatly toward the betterment of many existing houses. An amendment will be laid before you to increase the amounts of loans available for this purpose.

A joint committee of both Houses will be proposed to review the progress and programmes of the Federal District Commission in developing the national capital.

In the field of industrial development you will be asked to extend the scope of the Industrial Development Bank. You will also be asked to increase the size of loans which may be made by the Canadian Farm Loan Board and to amend the Farm Improvement Loans Act.

My Ministers also plan to introduce a bill to provide that women receive equal pay with men for equal work in industries which are under federal jurisdiction.

You will be asked to revise the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act and the Dominion Succession Duty Act. You will be requested to consider amendments to the Canadian Wheat Board Act, the Supreme Court Act, the Excise Act, The Canada Shipping Act, the Small Loans Act, the Navigable Waters Protection Act, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, the Canadian Citizenship Act and the Indian Act.

Members of the House of Commons:

You will be asked to make provision for all essential services.

Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

May Divine Providence bless your deliberations.

The Commons withdrew.

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire.

The Senate was resumed.

The Honourable Senator Beaubien, for the Honourable Senator Macdonald, P.C., 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 said Speech was read by the Honourable the Speaker.

On motion, it was—

Ordered, That the Speech of His Excellency the Governor General be taken into consideration on Tuesday next, 17th January, 1956.

With leave of the Senate, and—

On motion of the Honourable Senator Beaubien, for the Honourable Senator Macdonald, P.C., 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.