

## SECOND SITTING

1:30 p.m.

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

The Members convened were:—

## The Honourable Senators

|           |              |            |               |
|-----------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| Aseltine, | Daigle,      | Gouin,     | McGuire,      |
| Baird,    | Davies,      | Grant,     | McIntyre,     |
| Barbour,  | Dessureault, | Hawkins,   | Paterson,     |
| Basha,    | Duffus,      | Horner,    | Pratt,        |
| Beaubien, | Dupuis,      | Howard,    | Robertson,    |
| Bishop,   | DuTremblay,  | Isnor,     | Roebuck,      |
| Blais,    | Euler,       | Jodoin,    | Stevenson,    |
| Bouchard, | Farquhar,    | King,      | Taylor,       |
| Bradette, | Fergusson,   | Kinley,    | Tremblay,     |
| Bradley,  | Fournier,    | Léger,     | Vaillancourt, |
| Burchill, | Gershaw,     | Macdonald, | Veniot,       |
| Comeau,   | Godbout,     | MacKinnon, | Vien,         |
| Connolly, | Golding,     | McDonald,  | Wilson,       |
|           |              |            | Woodrow.      |

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 affords me great pleasure to greet you as you resume your Parliamentary duties at the beginning of this New Year.

---

Since you last met, the people of Canada have been given an opportunity of extending once more an affectionate welcome to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. They have also had the pleasure of greeting again the consort of our Sovereign, the Duke of Edinburgh, who came to attend the British Empire and Commonwealth Games held in Vancouver during the summer and to visit northern parts of Canada.

While there is hopeful evidence that the increasing strength of the free world has lessened the likelihood of aggression, the terrible destruction that war would bring to North America and indeed to all mankind has been magnified by the increase in the number and effectiveness of atomic and thermonuclear weapons and the means of delivering them.

My Ministers are convinced that, while the resources of diplomacy must never be neglected in the search for peace, the efforts of the free nations in building their deterrent forces must be maintained. To this end, Canada was represented at the London and Paris Conferences which formulated an alternative to the European Defence Community and provided for the entry of the Federal Republic of Germany into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. You will be asked to approve the agreements reached at those meetings.

Our country continues to give full support to the United Nations. The Canadian delegation took an important part in the deliberations of the recent meeting of the General Assembly in New York. It is earnestly hoped that the adoption of the resolution on disarmament introduced in the political committee by the Canadian delegation may lead to agreement on an effective system of international safeguards.

While no final settlement has been reached in Korea, the lessening of the threat of renewed aggression in that area has made possible the withdrawal of a substantial portion of the Canadian forces.

At the invitation of the Geneva conference Canada has accepted the heavy responsibility of serving on the Armistice Commissions which have been formed to supervise the restoration of peace in the Associated States of Indo-China.

Last autumn our nation was the host at the annual meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan. You will be asked to approve Canada's continued participation in the Plan as well as in the United Nations' Technical Assistance Programme.

A meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers will be held in London at the end of this month to consider a number of problems affecting the peoples of this great association of nations. My Prime Minister plans to attend this conference.

During the summer arrangements were completed to permit the navigational facilities of the St. Lawrence River to be enlarged and a hydro electric project to be undertaken in the International Rapids section.

Work on these two projects has already begun and my Ministers are convinced the stimulus to the national economy resulting from their construction will be shared in all parts of the country.

Since you last met, Cape Breton Island has been linked with the mainland by the new causeway which will be ready for service as soon as the ship canal has been bridged.

It is expected that, in the course of the coming season, the new ferry between North Sydney and Port aux Basques will be in operation and the ferry service between Yarmouth and Bar Harbour started. Construction of a new ferry to operate between Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will be undertaken early in the present year.

To improve navigation on the Pacific Coast, you will be asked to make provision at this session for the removal of Ripple Rock.

Canadians learned with deep regret of the loss of life and damage to property caused by two severe storms felt heavily in the Province of Ontario and the Province of Nova Scotia. An agreement has been reached with the Province of Ontario to assist those persons whose homes were damaged or destroyed and assistance has been given under the Agricultural Prices Support Act to the producers of apples in Nova Scotia. You will be asked to make the necessary financial provision for these arrangements.

The Disabled Persons Act which you passed at the last session was proclaimed to come into force at the beginning of the present year. The governments of all the provinces have announced their intention to participate in implementing the programme to assist those who are totally unable to care for themselves; and my Ministers are now in a position to conclude the necessary federal-provincial agreements to bring this humanitarian measure into operation.

Although the national economy is in a generally healthy condition, the relatively poor wheat crop is being reflected by a small decline in the total national income. Some unemployment of a regional and seasonal nature is being experienced. To help meet this situation work on public construction projects already approved is being accelerated and you will be asked to make financial provision for construction in the programmes of various departments and agencies on a scale that will make possible a substantial increase in the total expenditures for this purpose.

The government proposes to introduce legislation immediately for the amendment of the Unemployment Insurance Act to provide for an increase in the duration and scale of supplementary winter benefits. It is also proposing to introduce, during the session, broader amendments designed to make Unemployment Insurance a more effective instrument in providing financial support to unemployed workers.

The National Housing Act, 1954, enacted early in the last session, which authorized lower down-payments and larger loans, and which enabled the chartered banks for the first time to make loans on the security of residential mortgages, has been an important factor in stimulating the construction of a record number of houses in the past year. The prospects are favourable for a high level of house building in 1955.

It is proposed to bring into general operation on the first of February the provision of the Act under which loans may be made for home improvements. In accordance with an undertaking given at the last Session, this section was proclaimed for small holders under the Veterans' Land Act with effect from the first of this year.

You will be asked to consider amendments to the Railway Act relating to the elimination of level crossings. The government also hopes to lay before you during the present session a measure to consolidate the legislation affecting the Canadian National Railways.

Amendments to the Electricity and Fluid Exportation Act and a measure to control works which affect the normal flow of rivers which cross the international boundary will be proposed for the purpose of ensuring that natural resources are developed in the best interests of the Canadian public.

You will be asked to consider a measure to implement a convention between Canada and the United States relating to fisheries research on the Great Lakes.

You will also be asked to consider legislation to provide facilities for loans to fishermen similar to those provided to farmers by the Farm Improvement Loans Act.

The government will submit amendments to the War Veterans Allowance Act to raise the basic rates as well as the ceiling on permissible incomes of recipients of allowances.

You will also be asked to consider amendments to the Blind Persons Act, to lower the age of eligibility and raise the income ceilings.

A measure which will provide for amendments to the National Defence Act and the Defence Services Pension Act will be placed before you.

Legislation will be proposed to replace the Meat and Canned Foods Act by measures to provide for the inspection of meat and for the establishment of standards for all agricultural products.

You will be asked to approve a convention signed by the members of the International Civil Aviation Organization which fixes the responsibility for damage caused to third parties by foreign aircraft.

A joint committee of both Houses will be proposed to examine, in the light of the Municipal Grants Act and possible amendments thereto, the financial and other relationships of the government and the Federal District Commission with the City of Ottawa and neighbouring municipalities.

Among other measures you will be asked to consider amendments to the Defence Production Act, the Government Employees Compensation Act, the Financial Administration Act, the Public Service Superannuation Act, the Historic Sites and Monuments Act, the Radio Act, the Territorial Lands Act, the Library of Parliament Act, the Canada Grain Act, the Northwest Territories Act, the Yukon Act, the Canada Shipping Act, the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act and to the Municipal Grants Act.

*Members of the House of Commons:*

You will be asked to make provision for the public service for the next fiscal year.

*Honourable Members of the Senate:*

*Members of the House of Commons:*

I pray that Divine Providence may guide you in the discharge of your responsibilities.

---

The Commons withdrew.

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire.

The Senate was resumed.

The Honourable Senator Godbout 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.

With leave of the Senate, and—

On motion it was—

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

With leave of the Senate, and—

On motion of the Honourable Senator Godbout, 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 Senator Godbout, it was—

Ordered, That pursuant to Rule 77, the following Senators, to wit: the Honourable Senators Aseltine, Beaubien, Gouin, Haig, Hugessen, Macdonald, McDonald, Quinn and Taylor 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.

With leave of the Senate, and—

On motion of the Honourable Senator Godbout, it was—

Ordered, That when the Senate adjourns to-day, it do stand adjourned until Tuesday next, at eight o'clock in the evening.

The Senate adjourned.