

THE SENATE

Tuesday, February 7, 1967

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

DOCUMENTS TABLED

Hon. John J. Connolly tabled:

Copies of letters, dated January 26 and February 1, 1967, exchanged between the Prime Minister of Canada and the Premier of the Province of Ontario concerning a proposed conference on the future of Confederation. (English text).

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION BILL

AUTHORITY TO PRINT COMMITTEE
PROCEEDINGS

Hon. Salter A. Hayden, Acting Chairman of the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, presented the following report of the committee on Bill C-231, to define and implement a national transportation policy for Canada, to amend the Railway Act and other acts in consequence thereof and to enact other consequential provisions:

Your committee recommends that authority be granted for the printing of 800 copies in English and 300 copies in French of its proceedings on the said bill.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, when shall this report be taken into consideration?

Hon. Mr. Hayden: I move, with leave of the Senate, that the report be adopted now.

Report adopted.

LA FÉDÉRATION DES CAISSES POPULAIRES DU QUÉBEC

ASSEMBLÉE À HULL, QUÉBEC

Hon. Cyrille Vaillancourt: Monsieur le président, before the Orders of the Day are called, I have a few words to say. It is a big day for me.

[Translation]

Today is a big day for me, because I spent the whole morning with the representatives of the Federation of Credit Unions of Quebec

who are meeting in Hull. In addition, tonight I will entertain those people who are, as you say in English, the cream of the crop, the best people from the co-operative movement in Quebec, the Caisses Populaires and the credit unions. As I said, the cream of that movement of social salvation is here today.

They represent almost two million members. They are the leaders of what we call at home the Desjardins movement which includes not only caisses populaires but also general insurance, and life insurance companies, adult education institutions, trust companies, whatever will help our fellow citizens.

Those people work all year round without pay. That reminds me of an idea I had a little earlier. Many people are now asking the government to tax these co-operatives. But keep in mind that all those directors, those 18,000 directors, are volunteers; they are working without pay. Members of the credit boards meet at least once a week; the members and the directors of the supervising boards meet at least once a month, to help their fellow citizens. I said this once to a former colleague, who was at one time Minister of National Revenue, the Honourable Senator Euler, and he asked me: "Are there still among us people who work for nothing?" I replied: "No. They are not working for nothing. They are working for something much bigger because the reward these people are expecting is one that cannot be taken away from them; whatever wealth we may have, death will take away, but whatever good we do, God will pay us back for it."

That is why these people truly apply to our modern world the Golden Rule which is to help one another while loving one another. These people have yet another motivation: They are Canadians. They are working for the greatness of their whole country from Halifax to Vancouver. They are not separatists. But they want to be considered on the same footing either in Quebec, in Ontario or in British Columbia. And with this practical spirit, this lively state of mind, they want to contribute to the happiness and the prosperity of our great country. Frequently at our meetings, when we raise our voice in song, we proudly sing these words written long ago by one of our poets:

Ô Canada, mon pays, mes amours.

This is the frame of mind in which those people have come today to hold their meeting within a stone's throw of the federal capital; indeed in a few minutes they will be within the Houses of Parliament. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your courtesy.