

Canada now than in the past. At the same time, the housing projects are not slackening, and are probably on the increase. I felt this was a matter I should bring to the attention of honourable senators.

I am sure we are all happy that everyone in Canada is to be given an opportunity to own a home, by making a small initial payment, but I think a duty devolves upon us to see that in years to come those people will be given an opportunity to keep up their payments.

**Hon. G. Percival Burchill:** Honourable senators, I want to ask the honourable sponsor of the bill (Hon. Mr. Hnatyshyn) if he has any information as to how many unsold houses are available today in Canada and how the figure compares with this time last year?

**Hon. Mr. Hnatyshyn:** I gave that information during my explanation of the bill. There is a decrease of 1,000 as of August 31. Speaking from memory, there were some 3,903 unsold houses as at the end of August, and in March there were 4,913.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** In all Canada, 3,900?

**Hon. Mr. Hnatyshyn:** In all Canada.

Motion agreed to and bill read second time.

#### REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

**Hon. Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Honourable senators, I move that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce.

**Hon. Mr. Aseltine:** At this time I would like to advise honourable senators, that the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce will meet tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

Motion agreed to.

### NATIONAL CENTENNIAL BILL

#### FIRST READING

**The Hon. the Speaker** informed the Senate that a message had been received from the House of Commons with Bill C-127, respecting the observance of the centennial of Confederation in Canada.

Bill read first time.

#### SECOND READING

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Honourable senators, when shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Fred M. Blois** moved that the bill be read a second time.

He said: Honourable senators, I consider it a great honour to move second reading of this Bill C-127, entitled an Act respecting the observance of the centennial of Confederation in Canada, to be known by the short

title of National Centennial Act. The bill in itself is so clear that I feel it needs little explanation. In fact I think a reading of it by honourable senators and some little thought should be all that is necessary.

Part I deals with the constitution of administration, the objects and powers of the administration and the financial set-up of the act.

Part II deals with a national conference on the centennial between Canada and the provinces and sets out clearly the representation from each province, on the recommendation of the Government of each of the provinces. Section 19 of the bill provides:

The objects of the Conference are the consideration and discussion of plans and programs relating to the Centennial of Confederation in Canada.

This bill passed the other place with unanimous consent of all parties and I am confident it will have the wholehearted support of all the members of the Senate. I am sure we all agree that the hundredth anniversary of this great country of ours must not be allowed to pass without suitable recognition.

Honourable senators are aware that in February, 1960 the Prime Minister appointed a national committee which provided a means of consultation between the federal Government and the Governments of the provinces on matters relating to the centennial. The committee consisted of the Minister of Transport, the Minister of Fisheries, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and the Minister of Agriculture. Each province was represented by a minister and one other representative.

At the first meeting of this national committee four working committees were set up to study the historical, the cultural, the ceremonial and administration aspects of the planning, and Canadians everywhere were asked to send in their suggestions as to the best way in which the anniversary might be observed.

In addition a number of non-Governmental organizations have become interested. In May, 1960 the Canadian Centenary Council was formed by these organizations. The purpose of this latter council is to stimulate public interest in the centennial observances and to provide information and planning service to national organizations in this regard. I am informed that the council has done and continues to do a splendid job.

A great many suggestions have been received, and it will be the problem of the committee to select the most suitable ones. That, I am sure, will be no easy task for I have been given to understand that all the suggestions received have considerable merit. However, I am confident that the