

best of relations continue in the years to come.

"This is the first time that anything of this nature has come before this House in so concrete a form. I hope it will receive support. The other day when I was speaking I mentioned the occasion in 1942 when representatives of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States met here in room 16. It was the first time representatives of the United States had been present at a meeting of the Empire Parliamentary Association, as it was then known. The honourable member for Laurier (Mr. Lionel Chevrier) will remember very well the deliberations that took place at that time and the extent to which, out of the community of counsel, agreements in principle as to courses generally beneficial to both countries and also to the Commonwealth as a whole were arrived at.

"Subsequently the honourable member for Laurier, Mr. M. J. Coldwell, Senator Vien and I went to Washington and there met with representatives of Congress for a couple of days. Those were the first occasions on which the United States had at any time had representatives of Congress meeting, as I said, with either Canadian Legislators or representatives of the Commonwealth. This course has since been followed to the manifest appreciation of those who have belonged to the several delegations, and also to the material benefit of our relations."

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FLEET SOLD

Mr. George Hees, Minister of Transport, told the House of Commons last week that an offer to purchase the eight vessel fleet of the Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited by the Banco Cubano del Comercio Exterior, Cuba's foreign trade bank, had been accepted. The purchase price was \$2,800,000.

Mr. Hees said that the ships will be operated under Cuban registry by Flota Maritima Browning De Cuba, a Havana shipping firm which already has a contract with the bank to operate six other ships now being constructed for Caribbean service. The firm plans to place the eight C.N.S.S. vessels in service as soon as possible between Canada, Cuba and the West Indies, using the ports of Halifax and Montreal.

The sale agreement will be signed by Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited and Banco Cubano del Comercio Exterior, a subsidiary of Cuba's state-owned national bank (Banco Nacional de Cuba), Mr. Hees said. The approval of the shareholders of Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited has been provided by the Governor-in-Council act-

ing in the capacity of majority shareholders of the Company.

Mr. Hees informed the House that the offer accepted was by far the best of any of the purchase offers submitted. Seven purchase offers were submitted for the entire fleet, while some nine others involved a purchase of a part only of the fleet.

The offer accepted was not only the highest offer but the only offer providing sound security for the balance of the purchase price, Mr. Hees added. The Minister stated that all of the officers of Canadian National (West Indies) Steamships Limited were offered transfer and employment in the Marine Services of the Department of Transport. A few decided to retire as they were eligible to accept retirement, and a few decided to accept other offers of employment. The others are now employed in the Department of Transport's marine operations. The pension rights of all concerned have been protected.

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NEW POSTAGE STAMP

A new postage stamp will be issued on October 2 to commemorate the beginning of democratic government in Canada. The first House of Representatives, in what is now Canada, met in the City of Halifax on October 2, 1758. This first Assembly of Elected Members became the forerunner of representative government in Canada.

Mr. William Hamilton, Postmaster General, has drawn attention to the design of the stamp which features the Mace and Speaker's Chair as the two most popular symbols of the parliamentary system of Canada. In addition the words "The First Elected Assembly of Nova Scotia marked the beginning of our Democratic Government" are an integral part of the design.

The design of the stamp is the work of Gerald Trottier of Ottawa and Typographer Carl Dair of Toronto. The stamp will be dark blue in colour and is being printed by the Canadian Bank Note Company Limited, Ottawa.

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PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

Public Works Minister Howard Green announced August 8 that contracts involving expenditures totalling \$15,086,831.31 were awarded by the Federal Department of Public Works during the month of July 1958.

The amount for new works in building construction and harbours and rivers engineering was \$6,108,285.15; for the repair and maintenance of existing structures \$975,768.70; for construction of Trans-Canada Highway, roads through National Parks and other projects, \$6,504,716.86; and for dredging \$1,498,060.60.