

THE SENATE

Thursday, June 12, 1958

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

Prayers.

Routine proceedings.

PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS OF SENATORS

SUPPLEMENTARY RETURN TABLED

The Hon. the Speaker tabled a supplementary return, submitted by the Clerk of the Senate in accordance with a motion passed by the Senate on June 3, listing the names of members of the Senate who have renewed their declaration of property qualifications.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: Honourable senators, I move, seconded by the Honourable Senator Brunt, that when the Senate adjourns today it stand adjourned until Tuesday, June 24, 1958, at 8 o'clock in the evening.

Motion agreed to.

LAND USE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO CONDUCT INQUIRY

Hon. W. M. Aseltine: Honourable senators, I move, seconded by the honourable the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Macdonald), the following motion standing in my name:

That a Special Committee of the Senate be appointed to consider and report on land use in Canada and what should be done to ensure that our land resources are most effectively utilized for the benefit of the Canadian economy and the Canadian people and, in particular, to increase both agricultural production and the incomes of those engaged in it;

That the committee be composed of the Honourable Senators Barbour, Basha, Boucher, Bois, Bradette, Cameron, Crerar, Emerson, Gladstone, Golding, Hawkins, Horner, Inman, Leger, Leonard, MacDonald, McDonald, McGrand, Méthot, Molson, Pearson, Power, Smith (Kamloops), Stambaugh, Taylor (Norfolk), Taylor (Westmorland), Turgeon, Vaillancourt, Wall and White.

That the committee have power to engage the services of such counsel and technical and clerical personnel as may be necessary for the purpose of the inquiry;

That the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records, to sit during sittings and adjournments of the Senate, and to report from time to time.

That the evidence taken on the subject during the two preceding sessions be referred to the committee.

I do not intend to speak on this motion today, but I see that the honourable senator from Gulf (Hon. Mr. Power), who was chairman of the committee during two sessions, is here today, and I wonder if he would be

kind enough to give us some information as to what has been done in the past, and what the prospects are for carrying on and accomplishing some good work in the future.

Hon. C. G. Power: Honourable senators, I thank the honourable Leader of the Senate for giving me an opportunity to make some observations with respect to the committee on land use. I should like to preface my remarks by saying that the study which this committee has undertaken is peculiarly a work which should be undertaken by this honourable body, the Senate. It is a long-range study, in that we have perhaps reached a stage in our Canadian economic development wherein we must begin to take some note of the natural resources which Providence has bestowed upon us and of the disappearance through our own negligence of a large portion of these resources. We have not, except in some rare instances, reached what I might call a state of emergency; but it behooves us to be on guard if we do not want to fall into the same condition as that into which a great many other nations have fallen, or if we do not even wish other regions or sections of our country to go through the experience such as has been had right here in the Ottawa Valley, where in order to swell the coffers of more or less piratical lumbermen we have felled practically all the pine forests. The same condition exists, perhaps to not quite such a large degree, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, where through ill-advised colonization we have denuded a large part of the land which should have remained under forest cover, and allowed it to become practically either marginal farmland or farmland that can grow nothing except the rocks that nature placed there.

Now this Senate is peculiarly, as I said, a body which should make the study of matters of this kind, and particularly this matter of the conservation of our natural resources. There is not much publicity value in the work, and therefore it is perhaps more fitting that those of us who have reached the stage where publicity does not have the value that it may have had when we were in active politics should occupy ourselves with this work. Also there is not much partisan advantage to be gained from the work in one way or the other, so we can study these questions with the equanimity, the serenity and the decorum which is peculiarly fitted to our body.

Further, we have also within our ranks here persons who are well fitted to undertake careful consideration of matters of this kind. I was noticing this morning in the Committee on Natural Resources, where we were discussing an agricultural problem, that two