

THE SENATE

Monday, September 11, 1950

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Acting Speaker (Hon. J. H. King, P.C.), in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

RED RIVER FLOODS

MANITOBA RELIEF FUND

On the Orders of the Day:

Hon. John T. Haig: As the senior senator from Manitoba, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Canadian parliament and the people of Canada and elsewhere for the very fine way in which they responded to the Manitoba Flood Relief Fund. The response by the people of North America, the United Kingdom, France and other countries was magnificent, and the amount raised was a little over eight and a quarter million dollars. This money is to rehabilitate the people of the Red River Valley who lost furniture and equipment in the flood disaster of last June.

Incidentally, it is rather interesting to note that all honourable gentlemen in this chamber from Manitoba come from the Red River Valley, so it must be a pretty important part of the province.

Hon. Mr. McIntyre: Perhaps that is the reason for the flood.

Hon. Mr. Haig: Well, honourable senators know the cause of the Great Flood; perhaps the cause of the Red River flood was the same.

I want to say that this relief fund is being ably administered. Perhaps there are one or two cases in which somebody is receiving a dollar too much or a dollar too little, but I have not heard a single word of complaint about the administration of the fund.

On behalf of the people of the Red River Valley, I also want to thank the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and particularly the Province of Saskatchewan, for the magnificent way in which they opened their arms and took our people into their homes and hospitals. I can say without hesitation that not one cent of the money contributed to the Manitoba Flood Relief Fund is being wasted.

I may also say that I have not heard one single word of criticism about the action taken by the federal government with regard to the flood disaster. It appointed a very able man to administer its relief fund, and, as in the case of the Fraser River flood, it has undertaken to meet 75 per cent of the cost of rehabilitating the flood victims. As one

who comes from Manitoba I am not going to say anything about what our provincial government is doing. In fact, the less said about this the better.

Let me also thank the farmers of Prince Edward Island for the fine hogs they sent to the farmers of the Red River Valley who lost their stock in the flood. And to the farmers of Scotland, who sent out a number of pure-bred cattle to help replenish the dairy herds of the Red River Valley, we also say thank you.

DEFENCE APPROPRIATION BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Wishart McL. Robertson moved the second reading of Bill 2, an Act for granting His Majesty aid for national defence and security.

He said: Honourable senators, this Appropriation Bill follows the form adopted during the last war, when over-all amounts were set out without any detail of the estimates which ordinarily accompany bills asking for the appropriation of public moneys. I propose to explain the large items, and if and when the house sees fit to give the bill second reading, I would suggest that it be referred to our Special Committee on Legislation, where detailed information will be available, if required. I have asked the Minister of External Affairs if he will be present, and he has agreed to come on very short notice. As the Minister of National Defence is away today, if the bill is sent to committee this afternoon an associate deputy minister will be on hand to answer any questions relating to facts. Of course, he will not be able to say anything as to policy.

The bill would provide the amounts of money that the government needs to finance its greatly increased defence program in the face of the present emergency. The total amount that would be voted is \$858,768,021. There are three main appropriations. The first, which is for \$142,200,200, would provide the additional sums that are needed by the services for the remainder of the current fiscal year. The second, amounting to \$409,257,821, may be used now by the services to make contractual commitments for future years. The Appropriation Act passed last session limited the contractual commitments that the services could make for future years to \$141,123,670. This bill would increase that figure by the amount I have mentioned.

The third appropriation amounts to \$300 million and is for the purpose of producing defence equipment and supplies for our own forces or for the forces of our allies under the North Atlantic Treaty. It will get under way the Canadian portion of that large