

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

THE SENATE,

WEDNESDAY, March 14, 1934.

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry met this day, in room 258, at 10.30 a.m.

Hon. Mr. Donnelly in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, acting on your suggestion, after our last meeting, I interviewed the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Barton, and he kindly arranged to attend here this day. I intimated to him that, judging by our discussion in committee, he would be expected to give us some information with regard to the restrictions to be placed on the number of cattle that may be exported to Great Britain; also information dealing with the wheat quota, and any other subjects that we may decide to investigate. No doubt members of the Committee will have questions to ask on various subjects. Is it the wish of the Committee that we now hear Dr. Barton?

Some Hon. MEMBERS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: We will leave it to you to begin in any way you prefer, Dr. Barton.

Dr. G. S. H. BARTON: Mr. Chairman, the first subject that you had on your memorandum was the disposal of the wheat surplus. Now, the problem there is one that I suppose no one can answer. Perhaps I should remind you that the Department of Agriculture does not deal with the actual marketing of wheat. It is considered, of course, in connection with the production of wheat and its uses in this country, particularly with reference to feeding. I think that copies of this pamphlet which I have here (referring to pamphlet entitled "The Agricultural Situation") have been sent to you.

Hon. Mr. RILEY: Yes.

Dr. BARTON: I would direct your attention to the statement there, which while brief is, I think, a very good summary of the wheat situation. The surplus in 1933 was 700 million bushels, for the four countries, of which Canada had 211.7 million bushels. This surplus was accounted for, of course, by the increase in production in all the important countries, including Europe. The statement is set out here in detail, and shows the requirements of this country to be 118 million bushels. There has been some revision of these figures since this statement was compiled, because the situation of course changes. Instead of 118 million bushels, the consumption in Canada last year was 107,676,155 bushels. Of this amount the human consumption was 43,095,155 bushels; seed, 32,277,000 bushels; feed—and this is, I think, an important item—22,996,000 bushels; and a couple of smaller items, loss in cleaning, and unmerchantable, making up the 107 million bushels.

As far as the prospect for this year is concerned, of course, we have a number of factors, including the big one of last year, drought, and one with which I am going to deal particularly, the second on your program, loss through grasshoppers. Also there is the possibility of some curtailment in production that may result from measures taken for control through seeding practice and so on.

Hon. Mr. SHARPE: Control of what?