

THE SENATE

Wednesday, October 3, 1945.

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

Prayers and routine proceedings.

EMERGENCY SITTINGS OF THE SENATE

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. WISHART McL. ROBERTSON rose to give notice of the following motion:

That for the duration of the present session of Parliament, should an emergency arise during any adjournment of the Senate, which would in the opinion of the Honourable the Speaker warrant that the Senate meet prior to the time set forth in the motion for such adjournment, the Honourable the Speaker be authorized to notify honourable senators at their addresses as registered with the Clerk of the Senate to meet at a time earlier than that set out in the motion for such adjournment, and non-receipt by any one or more honourable senators of such call shall not have any effect upon the sufficiency and validity thereof.

He said: I am a little in doubt as to the need for this particular resolution which, if I am not mistaken, was associated particularly with war measures. However, I thought that to present it would do no harm, since in the event of some unforeseen contingency it might facilitate the business of the House and meet the convenience of those members who live at a great distance from the capital.

Hon. JOHN T. HAIG: Honourable senators, I am agreeable to the resolution being set down on the clear understanding that it be not treated as a precedent. As the honourable senator has very properly said, we passed a similar motion in order to meet any contingency arising during the war. The Minister of Justice in the other place has said that the war is not yet over, but I doubt the correctness of his statement. I would suggest that in future sessions a motion of this kind be not presented.

Hon. Mr. LEGER: This is simply a notice of motion.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: Yes, it is a notice of motion.

MEAT RATIONING

STATEMENT BY GOVERNMENT LEADER

On the Notices of Inquiries and Motions:

Hon. WISHART McL. ROBERTSON: Honourable senators will recall that at our last sitting I stated that, if satisfied of the

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON.

necessity of meat rationing, rentals control and other similar measures, we should do everything in our power to facilitate them. In response to my remarks the honourable senator from South Bruce (Hon. Mr. Donnelly) referred to meat rationing and offered some specific suggestions for providing a ready market for our cattle. He added that this was a very live issue, and requested that the Government give it consideration during the adjournment of the Senate.

His suggestions apparently were based on the assumption that Canadian stock raisers and meat producers have had difficulty in finding a ready market for their cattle, and he proposed that a government agency should be set up to buy the cattle, process them and send the beef to Europe. He presumably felt that this would create a more satisfactory situation with respect to price, delivery and shipment, and would encourage the buying and feeding of stocker and feeder cattle.

I am advised that the buying and selling of cattle during recent weeks has been carried on at unprecedented levels. The published reports of the Department of Agriculture indicate that during the four weeks ending September 15, slaughter of cattle under federal inspection in Canada amounted to 162,661 head. This compares with a figure of 107,629 in the corresponding four weeks in 1944. The slaughter for 1944 established a record for that particular period of the year. The slaughter during this particular period of 1945 not only greatly exceeded that of 1944, but also created a record for any consecutive four weeks.

The honourable senator referred to a carry-over of 2,500 cattle in the Toronto stockyards on September 12. I am advised that this is not an abnormal number of cattle to be carried over from one day to the next, particularly in midweek. Normally, cattle arrive at the stockyards in large numbers on the first two or three days of the week. When packing plants are working to near capacity the cattle cannot all be killed on the day on which they arrive. However, it is worth noting that by the end of the week the stockyards had been practically cleared of slaughter cattle, so that packing plants had to depend upon early arrivals in the following week to continue full-scale slaughtering operations on Monday.

As to cattle prices, all market reports indicate that for some weeks past slaughter cattle have brought prices equal to or better than those prevailing one year earlier, when meat rationing was not in effect and was not even under discussion. It is true that the prices