

which have been declared surplus and which are of any interest to these public organizations and what they would be worth at the suggested figure of 10 per cent of cost. I want to state to this committee my duty as I conceive it, that is to get these assets which have been declared surplus disposed of and into the hands of the general public while there is still a general shortage. At every meeting we have had in this committee, and continuing at the opening up of this new committee, this subject of priorities has been brought up for discussion; but, that is perhaps due to the fact that members are receiving a great deal of correspondence about it. I think it is up to this committee to decide once and for all whether or not War Assets Corporation is going to be a business institution or whether it is going to be a charitable institution; or whether it is possible to superimpose on a business corporation some kind of a charitable aspect which will not interfere with their main work. Would it be possible, for instance, to set up a committee which would review the various assets which are available for sale and say whether or not various public institutions, educational bodies, etc., were to receive this consideration. This committee would also have to decide whether such materials would be held from public sale for a period of anywhere from thirty days to forty-five days, whatever time might be necessary. But if Mr. Berry and his officers are going at one and the same time to act as sales agents for this tremendous body of assets and also decide whether John in British Columbia is going to get something and Robert in Nova Scotia is going to be entitled to something, and all the other people running in for things because prices are at a big discount—it is reasonable to ask for things under such conditions whether they want them or not. You just cannot merge business and sentiment to meet the desires, and possibly also the needs, of the vast body of institutions from one end of the country to the other who are interested. Now, then, sir, it is the decision of the steering committee that we have no right to recommend on questions of policy. I think when our next report is made to the House we should open up the whole matter of priorities. But if we are going to ask—(I was going to say poor Mr. Berry)—if we are going to ask Mr. Berry and his officers to carry on a business organization and a philanthropic institution at the same time we might as well ask them to close up shop.

Mr. PROBE: Speaking of philanthropic institutions, this was not intended as a philanthropic motion. Mr. Berry made the statement in general about the question of projectors and he mentioned specifically they were not on a commercially saleable basis.

The WITNESS: No, no.

Mr. McILRAITH: He did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. PROBE: That they were on a commercially saleable basis; shall we put it that way?

The WITNESS: They are on a commercially saleable basis.

Mr. PROBE: And we have an agency set up, it is a special sales division, which looks after normal sales of materials that have specialized use. I believe that motion projectors when surplus might be considered to have a specialized use, and it is my suggestion that they might be so considered. I am quite prepared to drop my motion if it is to come before the steering committee. Mr. Bradette's idea is sound. Mr. Reid I think has spoken along lines with which we all agree and he stated our ideas on the matter of giving hospitals and other institutions consideration. I stated ten per cent in my motion, but as I said, I am not wedded to that and would change it to make it a commercial proposition. I do feel that here is a specialized type of equipment that should have specialized use. However, I do think it is a matter of life and death.