

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

THE SENATE,

OTTAWA, July 9, 1947.

The Standing Committee on Natural Resources to whom was referred the subject matter of the motion of Hon. Mr. McDonald (*Kings*) with respect to commercial fertilizers, met this day at 10.30 a.m.

Hon. Mr. DONNELLY in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I see a quorum. We are here as a result of a motion in the Senate by the Honourable Senator A. L. Beaubien: "Honourable senators, if I am in order I will move that the subject matter of the motion be referred to the Standing Committee on Natural Resources." Perhaps the senator would give us an idea of what he has in mind.

Hon. A. L. BEAUBIEN (*St. Jean Baptiste*): The only thing I had in mind was this, Mr. Chairman. Senator McDonald, from Nova Scotia, put a motion on the order paper for the purpose of discussing chemical fertilizers, and it left the impression with me, and I think with most members of the Senate, that this is a very important question, not only from the standpoint of production but from the point of nutrition. And I thought that, even at this late stage of the session, it would be advisable to have some information as to what is being done in these two fields of Quebec and Saskatchewan, in order to get the raw materials to produce fertilizers. I believe Hon. Mr. Crerar got in touch with the Department of Mines and Resources, to have present here somebody who would know something about these fields and would be able to give us that information this morning.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES: Is there any object in starting this investigation, which will probably necessitate several meetings of the committee, at this late date, or would it be better to postpone this inquiry and have a motion put on the order paper when we meet next session, and then start in and have a number of meetings dealing with it? I am just asking the question.

Hon. Mr. BEAUBIEN (*St. Jean Baptiste*): What I thought was this, that these officials are available; we might have one or two sittings; and whatever information we get could be taken down in shorthand and mimeographed, and at the next session of parliament the investigation might be proceeded with and we could then use the evidence which has been mimeographed, in order to guide us next year.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite agree that it is a very important matter and should be gone into very fully. Senator Vaillancourt made a very strong plea the other day that the subject should be inquired into. It is for the committee to decide on the suggestion of Senator Davies, and to determine whether we should go on at this late date in the session or not. Of course, representatives of the department are here and we could get a lot of information from them.

Hon. Mr. DUFFUS: I suggest we hear from the gentlemen who are here.

Hon. Mr. PATERSON: Certain statements have been made about cartels. I happen to have some knowledge of the development of fertilizer from Trail, British Columbia, and I do know that the Consolidated Smelters gave away plenty of samples in order to get their stuff introduced. I do not believe