

motion, then we are going to effect an economy. And I want to refer to this point again, which I will continue to stress to this committee; that the disposal of war assets is something more than a matter of dollars and cents, we have got to consider dispositions from the point of view of the benefit to the people of Canada as a whole. As I see it there is no better way to help the people of Canada than by educating the children, and supplying the facilities necessary for their education. Education is far more important than anything else, and they are certainly deserving of these special considerations asked by the motion.

Mr. McILRAITH: What about civic hospitals? They are supported by the taxpayer.

Mr. STEWART: I am in favour of limiting it specifically and entirely to educational institutions.

Mr. MARQUIS: I think this matter is one that should be referred to the steering committee for discussion. After it has been discussed there they could present a report to the main committee. It was decided by the members of this committee that the main committee would discuss only matters which have been brought to its attention through its steering committee. My own view is that the matter should be referred to the steering committee for consideration and report, before it comes up for discussion here.

Mr. PROBE: I will be quite happy to have it referred to the steering committee, and I think it should be considered by them. The reason I brought it up here was that a recommendation was made by Mr. Smith a few moments ago, and I was really following the precedence set by him. I thought this motion would be of interest and by presenting it directly we would save a lot of time.

Mr. BRADETTE: I am very much concerned that my stand in respect to this matter should not be misquoted or misunderstood. I quite appreciate that it can be used against me. And naturally I am interested in my own constituency and that is why I suggest that this committee, if it is going to open up the questions of special concessions, must do so on an equitable basis, not limit it as suggested by this proposed motion to educational institutions alone. If a special concession is going to be made to educational institutions I submit, Mr. Chairman, that a similar concession should be extended to organizations which occupy a similar place in the community.

Mr. JACKMAN: May I have the floor for a moment?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. JACKMAN: I do not suppose there is a member of this committee who has not received a sheaf of letters from the various educational and other bodies saying that they would like to get this, that and the other thing. I think that is the explanation for so many of these special requests being brought to the attention of the committee, the matter of priorities or special concessions for charitable or educational institutions; and I am a little in doubt as to whether or not these matters come within our terms of reference. I am not prepared to say one way or another whether they do or do not. It is a question of policy, and it is a matter which must be decided by the steering committee. If the steering committee has decided the question in the negative, that we should not go into matters of policy, then they cannot be gone into in this committee. But I do think this is something that comes within our terms of reference, to decide whether or not the War Assets Corporation is going to be run as a business organization or whether it is an eleemosynary institution giving consideration to each particular body applying for some gift, one applying for this and another applying for that, and also, if it is in the public interest, that one should get this and one should get that. How can it decide these various matters and still run as a business organization? I wonder if Mr. Berry could give me a fair estimate of the total amount of war assets