

wish my hon. friend clearly to understand that at no time have they been used in competition with what may be termed free labour in an effort to undersell ordinary producers. That is an elementary and fundamental principle. My hon. friend can make any case he likes, but I assure him that under no circumstances is the product of prisoners of war and conscientious objectors underselling the products of free labour.

Mr. ROWE: With reference to the employment of prisoners of war, what the Minister of Labour has said is quite true. The wages which are paid prisoners of war to-day by companies do not cheapen the production of what they create, and certainly in none of the companies by whom they are employed has civilian labour in any way been prejudiced. These people are used only where civilian labour is not sufficiently plentiful. I feel, however, that the scanty proportions of this vote reflect the government's policy toward forest services generally. The minister shakes his head, but we find that from year to year during the war the expenditure in his own department on this work has been less as the years go by. From 1939 to 1942 there has been a very substantial reduction.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Golding): I do not think that upon this item we should get into a general discussion in connection with forests.

Mr. ROWE: This subject pertains to forest services generally, and the amount to be voted under this item has to do only with forest services. I submit that considerable latitude has been taken even by the minister himself; we have been in Russia and Japan and all over the Pacific. We also took in a lot of latitude in the items which preceded this.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Golding): I think too much latitude has been taken under all these items. This particular one states definitely, "Internment and prisoners of war operations"; it does not have to do with general policy in connection with forests.

Mr. ROWE: Very well, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CRERAR: I wish to make one or two remarks in reply to the hon. member who has just spoken. He is under a misapprehension or perhaps in some confusion. This vote is not intended for forest development work; it is to provide for the supervisory expense of looking after certain internees or prisoners of war.

Mr. ROWE: It is the first item under "forest service".

Mr. CRERAR: Quite true. As I have explained, that is what this vote is for, but my hon. friend is under a misapprehension if he measures by this vote what we are doing in forestry work. In our civil estimates, which in due course will be before the house, is an item of over \$300,000 for forestry work. But this has nothing to do with that; it is merely a vote for which we are asking to supervise the work of internees and prisoners of war who happen to be employed at dominion forest experimental stations.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: The vote last year under this item was \$42,445. Will the minister tell us what the actual expenditures were, and also what income accrued to the department through the sale of what these men produced?

Mr. CRERAR: I have already explained to the committee that the work of these internees and prisoners under supervision was directed to the production of cordwood, pit props, a small amount of lumber, fence posts, and pulpwood.

Mr. NOSEWORTHY: Those were sold?

Mr. CRERAR: I can give my hon. friend the figures. There were produced over 16,000 cords of wood, including 5,000 cords to heat the internment camps; 2,750,000 odd lineal feet of mine props; over 12,000 lineal feet of fence posts, including fence posts for the internment camp; over 1,100 cords of pulpwood; and over 55,000 feet board measure of sawn logs. My hon. friend asked what the receipts were. I am sorry we have not that here, but the material was sold at prices fixed by the timber fuel controller.

Item agreed to.

Forest products laboratories, \$56,400.

Mr. ROWE: Will the minister explain this item?

Mr. CRERAR: This is war work carried out by the laboratories. The purpose is to ascertain the best means of preservation and fire retardment treatment of wood for various purposes, serviceability of wooden aircraft under different climatic conditions, recovery of ethyl alcohol from wood waste for use in the manufacture of synthetic rubber, the use of paper plastics for aircraft and for other purposes, charcoal for producer gas and metallurgical purposes, the moulding of aircraft parts to double curvature, the seasoning of lumber for special war purposes, and work of that kind. That is all directly related to the war.