

domestic production. It was practically all paid on importations of phosphates and potash. I just mention this point to make the picture clearer. Are there any questions?

Hon. A. L. BEAUBIEN: Do you see any solution to this problem?

Mr. PEART: The solution as I see it is that we should develop our own natural resources as soon as possible. I have full confidence in the Mines Bureau in doing that.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: That would mean that we have to find new sources of supply. From the information supplied by Mr. Timm, the available supplies of phosphate rock in Canada are of a very low grade quality, and it would therefore not be economic to develop them.

Mr. PEART: I suppose it would be a question of total supply. If we were able to get ample supply from foreign sources it might answer the question, but that supply may not be available to us.

Hon. Mr. DUFFUS: There may be agricultural impoverishment.

Mr. PEART: If it is desired to go into that angle of the question, I might say that phosphates are our most important plant-food. Without them our farms are bound to become impoverished. Every time that meat, milk or grain is taken from the farm, away go the phosphates and they cannot be replaced on the farm by anything else. There is just so much of it to start with.

Hon. Mr. CRERAR: And ordinary barn yard manure does not replenish that.

Mr. PEART: It contains very little phosphate because the phosphate goes into the meat and grain and into the hoofs of the cattle, horses, pigs and so on, sold off the farm and once it is gone it is not going to come back again.

Hon. Mr. PATERSON: What district in Canada is the heaviest consumer of phosphates?

Mr. PEART: At the present time eastern Canada is the heaviest consumer.

Hon. Mr. PATERSON: What provinces do you refer to in eastern Canada?

Mr. PEART: The five eastern provinces, those east of the Great Lakes. The prairie provinces and British Columbia did not use it at one time but it is astonishing how much of it is being used there now. The fertilizer companies have had a hard time keeping the consumers satisfied.

Hon. Mr. DUFFUS: The consumption is increasing all over.

Mr. PEART: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You spoke about the increased use of fertilizer in Canada. That has been to some extent caused by people realizing the necessity of fertilizer. I remember that thirty years ago many farmers who were considered good farmers objected to using fertilizer.

Mr. PEART: Yes, the thinking in this country regarding fertilizer has entirely changed in the last generation. The name "fertilizer" is a misnomer and more people are finding out to-day that fertilizer is really a plant food, and that you have to feed plants the same as you have to feed animals. There are certain plant foods and if they are not supplied, the plant cannot develop to best advantage.

Hon. Mr. DUFFUS: Mr. Chairman, this matter of fertilizer or plant food is one of the most important questions before agriculture in the Dominion of Canada to-day.

Mr. PEART: I can see the time coming when we are going to have to do what was first done in Europe and now is being done in the United States. We shall have to develop a nutrition program for the nation based on population and the needs of food, and the basis of the whole thing is plant foods to feed the crops which feed the livestock.