

# REFERENCE PAPERS

WARTIME INFORMATION BOARD, OTTAWA

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No. 28

November 21, 1944.

## CANADIAN RUBBER SITUATION

The problem of ensuring adequate supplies of rubber for Canada's war needs has been approached by a program which has centred around the following points:

1. Control and conservation measures regarding existing supplies.
2. Collection of scrap rubber for reclaim purposes.
3. Conservation of rubber by the army--the largest user in war-time.
4. Production of synthetic rubber at the Plymer plant.

The program of scrap utilization, restrictions and controls over existing supplies played an important part in keeping essential needs supplied during the early stages of the war. Successful production of synthetic rubber is now assured, with the Polymer plant turning out a total of 7,000,000 pounds of buna-s and butyl each month, the equivalent of the output from 14,400,000 natural rubber trees covering 120,000 acres in the South Pacific. On the other hand, the demand for natural rubber still exceeds the supply and all available natural rubber is being directed into essential military and civilian uses.

## CONTROL AND CONSERVATION OF RUBBER

At the present time this is the rubber control situation in Canada: new, retreaded and used tires, new and used tubes are rationed. They are distributed to essential users by 120 rationing representatives throughout the country. Use of crude rubber is permitted only in the manufacture of essential articles. On the other hand the use of synthetic rubber is being rapidly extended for war and essential civilian purposes.

Fearing the possibility of Japanese intervention in the war, Canada took steps to obtain reserves of rubber early in 1940 .

A government agency, Fairmont Company Limited, established on May 16, 1940, was given the authority to purchase, stockpile and sell crude rubber in accordance with existing and subsequent war needs; later it was given the same authority over synthetic rubber. When rubber was placed under jurisdiction of the Supplies Control on August 26, 1941, the Fairmont reserve amounted to 25,000 tons.

It soon became evident that reduction in civilian consumption of rubber would be necessary in order to maintain an adequate stockpile for war necessities. A program of progressive restriction on use of natural rubber followed in co-operation with manufacturers of tires, footwear, belting and other mechanical rubber items, wire and cable and other articles.

Regulations reducing the quantity of crude rubber which Canadian manufacturers could process were made on a sliding scale as follows: during October, 1941, 90% of the average monthly consumption for civilian purposes during the 12-month period ended May 31, 1941; November, 85% December, 80%; January, 1942, 75%; February, 70%; succeeding months 70% or such amounts as fixed by the controller from time to time.