

Supply—Trade and Commerce

work done under the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys. To take another example, when I attended the open house at the Montreal road establishment last year I noticed that a research project was under way in connection with the drying of wheat. What steps are taken to assure that this particular work is not being duplicated by the research facilities of the Department of Agriculture?

I mention those two examples in order to indicate the reason for asking this question and to express the hope that we may have some explanation of what co-ordination, if any, exists between the different research agencies.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): I think perhaps I can clear up that matter. The investigation of Ripple Rock was placed in the hands of a committee of which the president of the national research council was chairman and on which the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys and two or three other departments of government were represented. I think the Department of Public Works was one and I think the national harbours board was another. The money was voted in the national research council vote and the work was carried out in the name of the national research council. But as I say, the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys was represented on the committee and when the cores were sent to the national research council, they were undoubtedly delivered to the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys.

As far as agriculture is concerned, or agricultural research, there is a definite division between the work of the national research council and the work of the Department of Agriculture. Certain laboratories are established and operated by the national research council and certain problems are assigned to those laboratories. One problem assigned to the laboratory at Saskatoon is an investigation of rust in wheat. But a committee representing all the departments concerned with research meets each year. Each department presents a budget to that committee and the committee sees that the plans of each department do not overlap on the work of another department. After the committee reach that agreement, the individual appropriations are submitted to treasury board as approved by this co-ordinating committee on research.

Mr. Low: Would the minister answer this question with reference to the notice of motion which has been on the order paper for quite some time proposing to set up a

[Mr. Barnett.]

committee to examine into the role of government in the field of non-military research in Canada, and so on? Does the minister have any objection to including in that notice of motion provision for calling witnesses before the committee when it is set up? At the same time would he state whether he feels that perhaps the committee could be set up early in the next session and carry on its work perhaps at a time when the other committees are not so busy?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): My hon. friend is aware of the fact that the committees of the house are not set up until the debate on the speech from the throne is completed. Of course, including the provision for calling witnesses completely changes the character of the committee. The purposes of committees in the past have been to examine the work and progress in the department, to report on the quality of the work, and to make suggestions as to the scope of the work. Under what is proposed here we will take everyone who calls himself a scientist and some who do not and allow them to orate to the committee. I cannot imagine what conclusion the committee would reach. There would be no opportunity for government experts to assist the committee. There would not be time. I do not know how the government would view that. My hon. friend will understand that the setting up of a committee is not one minister's decision. It is a government decision. I certainly would not be too enthusiastic about a committee of that kind. I think it would be unique in any country to have an investigation of that kind where any member is entitled to bring in any man he wishes. We had a list read by the hon. member for Lambton West of those he would summon. I suppose my hon. friend has a few people he would summon. Perhaps if I were on the committee I would have quite a list myself. I would be surprised if there was any hope of getting through with a program like that in one session, and just what all the opinions of even the people named by the hon. member for Lambton West would add up to from the point of view of affecting the work of the government I cannot possibly imagine.

Mr. Low: I suggested to the hon. member for Lambton West one well qualified witness who might be called.

Mr. Murphy (Lambton West): I think I should be permitted to say in reply to the minister that I submitted a list of very prominent people and organizations that I thought would make a great contribution to the work of such a committee, and I resent the minister's suggestion that my list could be supplemented by the lists of other people