

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): Is there a quantity of this seed on hand?

Mr. MacKINNON (Edmonton West): It is understood that sufficient seed is available.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### SEATING ACCOMMODATION IN GALLERY RESERVED FOR DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. JEAN-FRANÇOIS POULIOT (Témiscouata): I would ask you, sir, kindly to look straight in front of you, above the clock, where Your Honour will see a long row of empty seats. For many years it has been the privilege of members of parliament to use for their guests the accommodation offered in the members' gallery, and also the first row of what is known as the ladies' gallery. For a week or more no one has sat in that row in the ladies' gallery; it has been vacant. You will see, sir, that no one sits there now.

I have been informed that the row has been reserved for members of the diplomatic corps. I have no objection to that, provided that they are interested enough to attend our sittings. But if they are not interested in those sittings, and do not attend, then why do we reserve places for them, when that accommodation would seat the guests of many members of parliament? If the diplomatic corps snubs the House of Commons, what is the use of caring so much for them?

Mr. SPEAKER: I must reply to what has been said by the hon. member for Témiscouata. The house will realize that conditions now with regard to the diplomatic service are entirely different from what they have been in the past. We have now eighteen legations in Ottawa. It has always been the practice to have members of legations sit in the Speaker's gallery. However there are only thirty-two seats in that gallery and on some occasions it would be difficult to accommodate all members of legations. For that reason it has been thought advisable to reserve two rows in what was known as the ladies' gallery. Those two rows are now to be known as the diplomatic gallery, and are to be reserved for members of the legations.

It may be that in the course of their duties they are not able to attend sittings of the house. But I am quite sure the hon. member for Témiscouata is wrong when he referred to their snubbing the House of Commons. I am certain there is no intention on the part of a member of any legation to do that. In fact it has been my experience that they are extremely anxious to have most cordial rela-

tions between themselves and the government of this country. For that reason it has been thought advisable to extend to them the courtesy of placing these seats at their disposal, in order that they may come here, if they so desire, and be assured of seats.

Mr. POULIOT: Perhaps I should not have used the word "snub"; may I say that they ignore us.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I was going to suggest that on special occasions when members of the diplomatic corps might specially desire to be present in the House of Commons the reservations to which they are entitled should be kept for them. But when there is no special occasion I should imagine they would be the last to wish to have the seats unoccupied. No doubt an arrangement could be made which would permit of their use by the general public at other times.

### SYNTHETIC RUBBER

#### INQUIRY AS TO PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING PRODUCTION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. H. BLACKMORE (Lethbridge): In view of rumours in Canada concerning the dangerous situation in respect of our rubber supply, and in view of statements abroad that rubber can be made successfully from wheat, would the Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) at an early day give the house a detailed statement of the steps Canada is taking toward establishing a plant through which she can produce an adequate supply of synthetic rubber?

Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Munitions and Supply): A plan for producing an adequate supply of synthetic rubber in Canada is very well advanced. We hope to have a plant in operation by late summer.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): From grain alcohol?

Mr. HOWE: No.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): A petroleum product?

Mr. HOWE: Yes.

### WHEAT ACREAGE REDUCTION ACT

#### AMENDMENT AS TO PAYMENTS FOR 1942 AND 1943

Hon. J. G. GARDINER (Minister of Agriculture) moved that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution: