

experiments in connection with peat fuel. To my personal knowledge two or three companies have spent a lot of money and failed in attempts to discover this process, and it seems to me time the government called a halt on the experimental stage of this peat fuel business.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I do not agree with my hon. friend. I may be a protagonist of peat fuel, but I am convinced that the process will work. I have watched it for two years and I am convinced that fuel can be made and sold in competition with other fuels at a price which will leave a profit. For the information of my hon. friend I may say that a million dollars was spent in Saskatchewan in an endeavour to briquet the lignite coals there, and after spending that amount we did not have a process that would work satisfactorily. But we kept at it, and through information received from the university of Dakota we eventually did evolve a process of briquetting these coals successfully. One might very well say that the million dollars was a total loss so far as our experiments were concerned, but that is not so. It seems to me that it is the business of the government to endeavour to bring into use these latent natural resources, to spend some money on them and if necessary take some losses. I am very keen about this thing because I may tell you that I was very much opposed to it when I came here, and wanted to stop the whole thing. To-day, however, I have changed my mind, after very careful investigation, and I am satisfied that these experiments at the Alfred bog can be made a success. If that is the case then public or private enterprise will open up other bogs in Ontario and manufacture this fuel.

Mr. CANTLEY: I am very glad to observe the minister's recent conversion. I have gone to most of the meetings of the mining society for more than twenty years, and during all that time various reports have been brought in regarding the Alfred bog. It has been a failure from beginning to end. I think the minister has forgotten some early history, or he would have remembered that efforts were made to dry the peat by the use of steam, and in other ways, and all those efforts were unsuccessful. These bogs have a value but it is only a local value. In Ireland and Scotland and other places where the people immediately adjoining these bogs spade the material out and dry it in the sun, it has a certain value, but it has no value when you have to employ machinery of the kind now used. The history of this enterprise for the last twenty years proves that fact

beyond question. The minister can spend his \$70,000 but I do not believe he can come here next year and tell us that this is a commercial success.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): I would like to ask the minister if he has information as to the output of the present machinery and as to how many years that output will continue with the present machinery in operation?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I do not understand my hon. friend's question.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): There are several questions in this connection. First, what would be the possible output of peat with the machinery now in operation or about to be put in operation, and for how many years could that output be continued?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I estimate that within the season, which in Ontario is necessarily short, because it must be air dried, the capacity of this plant would be about 30,000 tons, but I cannot give my hon. friend an estimate of how many years the Alfred bog would last. I assume however, that it would last a great many years with that output.

Mr. PRICE: I am very glad indeed to see anything done in connection with the development of our natural resources, but in regard to one of our resources, gas and oil, outside capital has been spent in Canada which would like a little easement from the duties that are exacted on casings, for instance, and other machinery used in the development of this field. Last year I think some encouragement was given to the development of the oil shale industry, in regard to the bringing in of crushing plants for the extraction of oil from shale, but at the same time the government exacts a very high duty on casings used in drilling wells which are not manufactured in this country satisfactorily. In the maritime provinces the success we have had in connection with gas and oil has resulted from wells varying in depth from 1,500 to 3,000 feet. The casings used are from eight inches to fifteen inches in diameter; they are required to be of great strength and properly milled and there is no dependable material of that kind manufactured in Canada. Therefore I would like to take this occasion to draw to the attention of the minister the fact that these companies which have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in the last ten or fifteen years without a single dividend, require at present a little easement.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): There is no duty on that piping.