

Mr. SENN: Under this vote we have the animal husbandry division of the experimental farm. If we read the last report of the Minister of Agriculture we find that in the matter of dairy cattle, sheep, swine and so on, there has been a certain amount of curtailment of operations owing to the fact that the country is at war and certain other things are being done to a greater extent. This report, however, only goes up to March, 1942, and has to do really with the operations in 1941. I would ask the minister to give us a brief outline of what is being done in animal husbandry. Are the experiments previously conducted still being carried on, or have they been reduced?

Mr. GARDINER: I understand that while there has been a reduction in our expenditures generally in the Department of Agriculture since the war began, our expenditures on ordinary activities are not as high as they were when the war began but in so far as some of the live stock activities are concerned we are spending even more than we were at the beginning of the war; naturally we want more hogs, eggs, poultry, beef cattle, and so on, more dairy products and other things, and therefore there has been considerable activity along those lines. We are building up at the moment rather than cutting down on those particular activities.

Mr. KNOWLES: With regard to synthetic rubber, did the Polymer corporation, which investigated methods of producing such rubber, before it set up the plant at Sarnia, consult with the Department of Agriculture or with any of the science officials in that department?

Mr. GARDINER: I do not think there was any direct consultation, but of course all those who are dealing with matters of this kind have access to this publication, and there are representatives on the committee. Doctor Archibald, who is here with us to-day is a member of that committee and is director of experimental farms in Canada. This document is of course available and I have no doubt that anyone reading it to make a decision of that kind would have had access to all such information.

Mr. KNOWLES: That is the 1941 document?

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, and 1941 would be about the time this matter was under serious consideration by those who were getting ready to do something about a plant in 1942. It does take considerable time to get into production after you start and to establish a plant of that kind. What the minister said when discussing the matter was that he hoped to get

into production shortly, so that the subject has been under consideration by these people for some considerable time, and I have no doubt they took into account all the facts connected with it.

Mr. HATFIELD: Is it not a fact that practically all the chemists and engineers at the Sarnia plant come from the Standard Oil or the Imperial Oil company and are not interested in making rubber from agricultural products?

Mr. GARDINER: All I would say in that regard is that at the present time everyone realizes that we have to make rubber no matter what it costs; we are in the midst of a war. Everyone knows that the reason why Germany made synthetic rubber before the war started was that she could not find rubber towards the end of the last war, and it made no difference what the cost might be to her to produce it at home. She did produce it in her own country. We find ourselves in the middle of this war without available supplies of rubber, and we have to produce rubber in Canada and the United States no matter what it costs. I hope that the members of this committee, who when addressing themselves to other questions think largely in terms of the Atlantic charter, are not thinking that when the war is over we shall produce any commodity that we can possibly produce irrespective of the cost. I am not one who advocates that policy. I do not think the government advocates it, and I doubt very much if the members of this house advocate it, that after the war we should produce rubber from wheat just because we can produce it, no matter what it may cost. We might be further ahead to trade wheat for rubber where the latter can be produced at a much lower cost than it could be produced here. I would not say that with the information before us we would get very far along that line in discussions at the present time, basing our discussions upon what was done in Germany before the war or what is being done in Canada or the United States since the war started. We must look forward to the time when we shall be at peace and realize that we shall be able to get some of these commodities elsewhere, particularly if we win the war. Under those circumstances we may do things in a way different from the method we are following now.

Mr. SLAGHT: Apropos of the questions which my hon. friend has asked, and in the absence of the minister of munitions, I may say that before Canada made her decision as to the Sarnia plant, I personally took an