

and expenditures from year to year. Theoretically, it is up to the committee to review that, but I have never seen any of the Polymer accounts in any way in which questions could be asked about them, except for items in the estimates, and things like that. It simply is not practicable to give that company a blank cheque—and you have the same thing with many others.

The CHAIRMAN: If you would prefer to take Polymer ahead of National Defence, all you have to do is to make a motion in the committee. As you know, we have a big task ahead of us, but if you think that Polymer is more important, it will be up to the committee to decide which they prefer to take.

Mr. THATCHER: Mr. Chairman, you are being facetious. I understood that they would go to a select committee.

The CHAIRMAN: As I say, we have a pretty big load here right now, and if we are to attempt to do that—

Mr. THATCHER: If we were to sit twenty-four hours a day, six days a week here in this committee from now until the end of the session we could not go over all these companies.

The CHAIRMAN: That is right. My answer is not restrictive. I did not say we should not take these matters up before a select committee. All I say is that if we wanted to we could do it in this committee, if we gave preference to that heading instead of to another. I agree with you that it was suggested last year that these matters be referred to a special committee. It is up to the Government to indicate what they want to do.

By Mr. Thatcher:

Q. If one of these companies wanted to borrow money are there any restrictions? Can they go out and borrow an unlimited amount? What restriction is there on their borrowing capacity—speaking of any of the Crown corporations?—

A. The only company which has any borrowing power—you are speaking of borrowing from the bank or the public—is the Canadian Wheat Board; all the rest of them are dependent on the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Q. Suppose this Polymer Corporation decided that they needed two or three million dollars in a hurry, do you mean that they would have to go to the minister and get an order in council, or come to parliament and get a vote to borrow that money?—A. There would have to be an appropriation.

Q. They cannot borrow on their own?—A. No.

Mr. FRASER: I suppose they would not have to go to parliament.

The WITNESS: There would have to be an appropriation. The Minister of Finance only has the power to loan up to \$500,000 in the case of any company, under the provisions of the Government Companies Operations Act, that is the limit.

Mr. FULTON: Is that the total amount or the amount to each company?

The WITNESS: \$500,000 to each company.

Mr. BOISVERT: But they can borrow from the government, through the Minister of Finance, up to \$500,000?

The WITNESS: They can go to the government for up to \$500,000.

The CHAIRMAN: Are we through with questions on item one?

By Mr. Macdonnell:

Q. Have there been any occasions, to your knowledge, where any of the companies have been embarrassed by not being able to get the money they needed?—A. No.

Mr. BOISVERT: Mr. Sellar, is there any particular reason why the accounts of the custodian of enemy property are not presented to the House of Commons?