

Supply—Agriculture

then he decided that it could not be. Now he says he does not know how much of that is spent or how much is not spent. But surely when the estimate was made there must have been a certain definite amount estimated for this particular project. Actually that is what I asked for in the first place three days ago.

Mr. Gardiner: There was \$117,000 set aside for that particular work, but the fact that the plant is just being opened today would suggest to me that as to any ordinary transactions in connection with it the contractors may not be all paid. I have not the figures here as to what is paid, but I would expect they are not all paid. Until that comes in we do not know what the exact figure is, but the estimate is \$117,000.

Mr. Harkness: Was that the estimate to complete this building or was it partly for the experimental work which is to be carried on there?

Mr. Gardiner: That was the estimate for the building itself for this year. I am not sure whether that estimate will completely cover it, or whether it more than covers it, but it is \$117,000.

Mr. Harkness: What will be the total cost of the building?

Mr. Gardiner: It will be what I have already given you plus whatever we spend this year.

Mr. Harkness: As I said before, that is somewhat loose as far as financing is concerned. Taking what the minister has already given me, the figures come roughly to \$270,000 plus \$117,000. Is that the cost of the building?

Mr. Gardiner: \$281,000 plus possibly \$117,000.

Mr. Hansell: I do not know whether I can throw any light on this particular item, but I will say that evidently a part of the money that was to be appropriated for this new venture at the Lethbridge experimental farm, or adjacent to it, was for the housing of a staff. The minister can correct me if I am not right. Additional staff was put there and they had nowhere to live. Some construction was started in order to house that staff and suddenly it stopped. The consensus among some who were there was, "We were only voted so much supply and we suppose the money has run out and building has stopped." The minister will not recall it, but I wrote a letter to him. It was during the election campaign and he was busy. I found time to write him a letter. Perhaps I was not as busy as he was. I got a reply from one of his officials—it may have been

his private secretary—to the effect that that was not the reason that any building was stopped, and as far as they knew the building program was still going ahead. I did not pursue the matter any further, but from that it would appear to me that perhaps the limited supply we voted for six months had run out. There was something mysterious about the stopping of that work.

Mr. Gardiner: The hon. member is absolutely correct. These plants are not all made up of one building. There are also there some buildings which are necessary to the operation of the plant. The whole plant consists of the laboratory plus six suites in two buildings. I presume that is for a staff. Then there are four barns and two garages. Of course, the barns will be for the housing of the stock that is being used in connection with the laboratory study of diseases. It is these buildings plus the other that necessitate the whole expenditure. I have no information before me as to why some contractor may have stopped the building of any one of those buildings and been held up for a time. It may have been on account of lack of materials; it may have been any of a dozen and one different reasons; but my understanding is that the plant is so nearly complete now that they thought this was a good day to have the official opening, and they are having the official opening today.

Mr. Knowles: I wonder if I might ask a question about the item we are supposed to be discussing, namely, item 14, the central experimental farm here at Ottawa. The last questions seem to have run over into the next item.

In the session earlier this year I asked the minister some questions with regard to employees at the central experimental farm. My questions are found in *Hansard* at pages 377 and 378. The date those questions were answered was February 9, 1949. One of my questions was:

What are the minimum and maximum wages per hour paid to labourers at the central experimental farm, Ottawa?

The answer to that question was:

Forty-five to seventy cents per hour.

Those are pretty low rates of wage under today's conditions.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): With or without board?

Mr. Knowles: I understand without board. These are people who live in Ottawa. My next question had to do with the wages paid to blacksmiths, carpenters, painters and other artisans at the central experimental farm. The answer is a long list. I will not read all of the figures, but here are some of them: