

Backgrounder

# Synthetic rubber manufacturer Polymer now international company

Announcement of the start-up of Polymer Corporation's new Building Systems Division was made last week in The Champion. From a small beginning just 30 years ago, Polymer has grown into an international corporation and the new Milton plant, which produces factory-built housing, is just a part of the company's overall operations.

The following "backgrounder" on just who Polymer is, was provided by the company:

Ask a typical businessman who Polymer is and the answer will probably be... ah, yes, that's the company that makes rubber. The answer is, of course, correct. Polymer Corporation Limited of Sarnia, Canada, does make synthetic rubber. But Polymer today is fast losing its image as a one-type-of-product company. For in addition to making rubber and rubber latex, it is now in business of modular housing and plastic packaging, and computer time-sharing. And the list grows longer every year.

What's more, Polymer is about as international as a company can be and sells its products through offices and distributors located in approximately 70 countries.

Limited market

That Polymer should be an

international company is really no surprise. Canada presents a limited market for a large corporation. As a result, Polymer has become international in scope since World War II, and for much of its 30-year history it has supplied almost 10 per cent of the world's synthetic rubber outside Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R.

The trade mark POLYSAR — a contraction of Polymer and Sarnia — is probably known in more parts around the world than that of any other Canadian export item. Last year, something like 65 per cent of total sales were made in export markets.

With a small wartime investment of around \$48 million, Polymer was established in 1942 as the first synthetic rubber plant in the British Commonwealth. Since then, the company has mushroomed into an international organization. Total investment at cost in land, buildings and equipment is now \$255 million.

Unlike the giants of the U.S. rubber industry, Polymer has no ties with oil or tire companies. This makes it the largest independent producer of synthetic rubber in the world. In the last decade alone, production rose from 370 million pounds to 856 million pounds, raising sales from \$87 million to \$175 million.

In the early post-war years the company faced a period of important changes. With a then small domestic market, success as a profitable enterprise hinged on the development of a strong export market and an assured flow of basic technical knowledge.

To meet this challenge the company enlarged its product line and promoted their use in Europe and elsewhere in the world. In fact, Polymer was the first North American synthetic rubber producer to enter the European market, and helped create a demand by providing customers with technical know-how and by showing them how synthetic rubber could be used to the best advantage.

The establishment of a worldwide distributor system the development of a strong technical service organization were essential features of Polymer's penetration of the export market. The other significant step in this period was the formation of a vitally needed research and development organization.

To France, Belgium

During these early years, virtually all synthetic rubber capacity was in North America, which consumed more than half its production and supplied the world markets with the remainder. But vigorous industrial expansion in Europe soon brought about the establishment of local synthetic rubber producers, as well as increasing interest from U.S. plants looking for export markets. In this environment, location factors became critical to remaining competitive in many markets, and Polymer built new production facilities at Strasbourg, France, in 1962 and at Antwerp, Belgium in 1963.

At the same time, the overseas organization was streamlined with a marketing subsidiary headquartered at Fribourg, Switzerland, named Polysar

International S.A. (PISA for short), responsible for the whole world outside North America.

Additionally, the company entered into joint manufacturing arrangements in Mexico, based on its own technology, and began operating plants of its own in Preston and Lindsay, Ontario and Chattanooga, Tenn.

All these manufacturing facilities, together with strategically located stocks held by distributors in more than 20 countries, bring POLYSAR products within easy reach of the world's industries.

Now 4,000 employees

Today the Polysar Group maintains sizeable offices in the U.S., Mexico, Brazil, the U.K., France, Austria, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Japan. In all, more than 4,000 employees are located in several major industrial nations of the world.

Customers include virtually every industry, from tires to automobiles, adhesives, mechanical goods, construction materials, footwear, sporting goods, medicine, agriculture, carpets, bedding, communications, computer time-sharing and plastics.

Despite the involvement in its existing business, Polymer decided in 1969 that the time had come for the organization to break out of its mould as a one-type-of-product company and to broaden its horizons.

As Polymer president, Ian C. Rush, points out: "We were still dealing primarily in one market. We were standing on one leg, as it were. So we decided to seek stability by broadening our base."

As a result, the company has committed itself to diversification on many levels, with more effective management of existing lines of business and a search for new areas in which to employ its human, technical and financial resources.

The company has, in fact,



COLD WINTER DAYS make for youthful fun as these two boys prove. The hockey player-wrestlers were fooling around on the ice at the Pond in Centennial Park. (Photo by D. O'Reilly)

## Six permits in November

It was a slow month for building construction in Nassagaweya Township during November. Only six permits were issued and the value of construction was \$56,500 reports assistant building inspector Terry Gallamore.

Permits were issued for four agricultural buildings, one residential addition and one garage.

## No property tax rebates you collect on income tax

Tenants should not expect a property tax rebate cheque from their landlords this year, Ontario Treasurer Charles MacNaughton said.

Instead, tenants and homeowners will be applying for tax credits when they file their 1972 income tax returns early in 1973. Ontario's residential property tax reduction program of the past four years is being replaced by a new property tax credit plan.

Mr. MacNaughton said the new provincial plan, designed to more equitably distribute the property

tax burden among homeowners and tenants, will work through the personal income tax system and be administered for Ontario by the Department of National Revenue.

"The property tax credit will come as an income tax refund cheque or as a reduction in income tax. However, I should advise Ontario homeowners that to qualify for the new property tax credit, 1972 municipal taxes must be paid during 1972," he said.

Mr. MacNaughton said the new system will reduce the total property tax burden by at least \$160 million. Low income groups will benefit most. The plan is also being extended to roomers and boarders.

The property tax credit plan is restricted to Ontario residents and applies to principal residences only. Residents in homes for the aged or tax-exempt institutions do not qualify.

Most get more  
Mr. MacNaughton said the benefit to individual taxpayers will very much be because we have linked property taxes to income taxes and, therefore, to the individual's ability to pay. The majority of Ontario residents will receive more money back under the new plan. Some will receive about the same as last year, while high income earners will receive less.

Homeowners, tenants and others who may be eligible—such

as roomers and students living on-campus—will receive instructions on how to apply for and calculate the property tax credit when they receive 1972 income tax return forms early next year.



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