

The next letter is dated July 20, 1923, addressed to Dr. George Hilton, Acting Director Veterinary General, Health of Animals branch.

July 20, 1923.

Dr. George Hilton,
Acting Veterinary Director-General,
Health of Animals Branch,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Dear Dr. HILTON,—The July summary of the Health of Animals branch of the Canadian Department of Agriculture which came to my desk this morning contains the announcement of Dr. Torrance's retirement and of your appointment of Acting Veterinary Director-General.

The farewell of Dr. Torrance to the members of the staff was read with surprise and deep regret. The official relations between this bureau and your branch have always been very cordial and it is expected that they will continue so under your administration. I want to congratulate you on being selected to fill the vacancy and to assure you that it would be pleasing to myself and your friends in this bureau to see the appointment made permanent.

Wishing you success in the position of responsibility to which you have been assigned, I remain,

Cordially yours,

J. R. MOHLER,
Chief of Bureau.

That clearly indicates that some of these statements attributed to Dr. Mohler are, to say the least, very inaccurate. They were given expression to, perhaps, without due care, and I am glad to place Dr. Mohler in a true light before the stockmen of this country. I was quite sure from the very beginning, knowing this gentleman, that he would never be guilty of making any such statements concerning a high official in a neighbouring country.

With regard to the whole situation, I think you will agree, Mr. Chairman, that the treatment of Dr. Torrance in this matter has been very unfair. I regret to make this criticism; but it seems to be forthcoming, to be deserved, and I think Dr. Torrance's dismissal will go down as one of the most cruel and harsh dismissals in the history of the Civil Service of this country.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: No one is more pleased than I am to learn that Dr. Mohler did not make those statements. What I said to the committee was that we heard he had. Furthermore, it came to us, and it was not any surprise to us that it came to us.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Who gave it to the minister?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Never mind. I did not require that as supplementary evidence; I based my justification for the retirement of Dr. Torrance on this letter of his to Dr. Mohler, and I am going to stick to that tonight. As some members of the committee

were not here the other night, at the risk of repeating myself I am going to point out once more that when two of my colleagues, as well as Dr. Grisdale and Mr. Marshall, were overseas in conference with the British authorities with respect to the lifting of the embargo, I had an interview with Dr. Torrance and I suggested to him, in the event of any changes being made in these quarantine regulations—there was a possibility of changes being made, but as a matter of fact no changes have been made since—that he should write a diplomatic, friendly letter to Dr. Mohler inquiring what effect it would have on our relations with them if the quarantine period were shortened. That was all that he was asked to do. Instead of doing that and stopping there, he writes a letter such as the one I have in my hand and begins complaining about political considerations.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: He does not say that.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: We will see what he does say:

I am strongly of the opinion that quarantine regulations should be based upon scientific knowledge of the diseases against which we desire protection, of the conditions surrounding the traffic in animals, the freedom from disease of the country from which the cattle are exported, and the time occupied in ocean travel.

Then he goes on:

If political considerations are to be introduced into the consideration of the question of quarantine it places the scientific advisers of the respective governments in a very anomalous position, and I feel that where we have to undertake the responsibility of carrying out any regulations that are made we should also have a decided influence in the planning of these regulations.

In other words, this is an officer who undertakes to dictate how these things shall be done. Although he is under instructions to write a letter of the form I have described, he goes on to formulate a policy and to make complaints. Then he goes on:

Should political pressure force me to accept a shortened period of quarantine. . . .

When I asked him to come and give me an explanation, he said it was the British government he was complaining about, not the Canadian government. I may be quite wrong; but I have handled men in a public way for nearly twenty years, and I have never before seen a letter like 9 p.m. this written to any officer, even in our own country, about a government by an officer of the government, and much less to an officer of a foreign government. That is what I base my action on. Anybody who has had any experience in asking for the retirement of an officer knows