

health of animals branch now enjoys under the veterinary director general of Canada. The minister will possibly agree with that.

May I also say a word relative to what my hon. friend from Assiniboia mentioned about private practitioners. Why should the minister be so anxious about that? It would be nice to have a lot of private practitioners, but just now most farmers would take a chance doctoring their own animals rather than hunting up a veterinary and have him treat them and have to pay him. To employ a veterinary is undoubtedly the best practice as a general rule, but the thing is to pay for his services. But that is not the point I wanted to discuss. How in the world is the federal department going to have control over private practitioners? It is sometimes hard enough now to discipline the men in the department, but how can you control private practitioners whom you are going to employ to do this, that and the other thing? That question has always been up. It is not a question of to-day or a question of yesterday; it has been a question ever since there was a branch, and the position always taken was that the only way we can control practitioners in the health of animals branch is to have them right in the employ of the department, giving their services to the state, and being amenable to discipline. After all, private practitioners are outside the purview and prerogative of the dominion. It is entirely a provincial matter. The practitioners get their certificates and degrees from the university of the province or from the organization to which they belong. In Saskatchewan it is the university that gives the degree, and the practitioner usually, but not always, practises in the province where he got his degree. It is purely a provincial matter, and while we are all interested in it as citizens of Canada, we have no particular need to worry about it when we are discussing these federal estimates. As a matter of fact, it has always been a great incentive to private practitioners so to perfect themselves in their own business that they may qualify themselves to graduate into the federal arena and into federal employment. It is a prospect to which nearly all of them look forward, just as the average lawyer looks forward some day, as I think you will agree, Mr. Chairman, to gracing the wool-sack, and in the process he becomes a better lawyer.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I was pretty nearly through, but I want to hear more from the minister. It is almost eleven o'clock and

perhaps he prefers to defer his answer to another time. With regard to his policy, he is on safe ground if he leaves it just the way it is.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I doubt if I can make it any clearer than I did. One hon. gentleman opposite has made it very clear that the work of the health of animals branch is perfect now and that it could not be improved by any change.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Which one was that?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The hon. member for Assiniboia.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Because he misunderstood the minister.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): No, he made that definite statement regarding the health of animals branch, and the hon. member for Melville, if I remember correctly, stated that there should be some improvement along with the general advance upon scientific lines.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I agree with that.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The statement I made I think was perfectly clear, that the heads of the two branches, together with the deputy and their assistants and myself, have gone into this thing very fully with a view to seeing in what respect we can amalgamate certain branches of the work without any loss of efficiency, and whatever steps are taken will be taken with this thought in mind, not in any way to decrease the value of the health of animals branch, but if possible to make it even more efficient by an amalgamation of the services and by frank discussions between the heads of branches.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: If there is going to be any form of amalgamation it will decrease the efficiency, because the health of animals branch enjoys in a peculiar degree not only the confidence of our own people but of other countries as well. It is internationally known, and if you merge it with something else presided over by a layman it is going to lose its present standing in other countries.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): There seems to be a slight misunderstanding between some of my colleagues and myself with regard to just what the minister did say in his first statement, and he has not clarified it in the statement he has just made, particularly when he said that the health of animals branch was now under the control of a layman. Has the government in its mind the idea of putting a