

Foot-and-mouth disease

they were going to receive. At that time I indicated that I could not, and I did not think anyone else could, make a fair statement in the matter at that time. I said also, however—and I might add that they were happy to accept this—that I felt the government would recognize this, not only as a problem under the Animal Contagious Diseases Act, but that they would deal with it under separate legislation. That legislation is now to be presented to the house. I said the government would deal with it in the proper manner.

In replying to some of the observations made, the minister answered a question I had intended to ask. One of those questions was as to what was going to become of cows that were in calf, if they were purebred calves. I was asked that question by these men, and at that time I said, "Well, in the first place, how can we pay you for something you have not got? The calves have not yet been born." They said, "That is true, but they are there." I said, "I do not know they are there; no one knows." I pointed out that I assumed some sort of board, or some body of that kind, would be set up. This has now been indicated. We have been told that the board will ascertain whether there were calves, and the board will evaluate those calves in accordance with their proper commercial value, plus an overriding value. Those things cannot be spelled out individually.

In the discussion I had with these men they said they were quite happy to sacrifice their calves in that area, and they hoped the government would give proper compensation. In my opinion the bill contains all that is necessary to do that. No two herds will be the same in dollars-and-cents value. Mine may be heavier, while another person's may be lighter. But in the final analysis I believe it will be found that the most satisfactory way to establish price is the way the minister has suggested, namely, by setting up a board before which these men may present their cases.

I feel that in this instance the government will do the right and proper thing, as it did in connection with the Winnipeg flood and the disaster at Rimouski. It is a disaster—and all this political ammunition that is being stirred up by some of you fellows over there is not helping the situation a blooming bit.

Mr. Gardiner: Mr. Chairman, before the hon. member for Brant-Wentworth proceeds to speak, may I place on record the answers to the questions to which reference was made earlier. These answers are now placed in

[Mr. Dewar.]

my hands. With the permission of the committee, I shall read these questions and answers. The first question is:

When was the health of animals branch in Saskatchewan first notified of a vesicular disease in cattle?

The answer is: December 2, 1951. The next question is:

When was Ottawa notified?

The answer to that is: December 7, 1951. Then, the next question is:

When did officials from Ottawa first visit the infected area?

I point out that the question uses the expression "from Ottawa". There may have been some of our officials from Regina who visited earlier. However, the answer to the question as asked is as follows:

January 15, 1952. Doctor Childs to est. 23E, Burns and Company, Regina, Saskatchewan. No report made at that time as disease considered to be common vesicular stomatitis.

Then the next question:

What did they report, and when was the first infected material delivered to the animal diseases research institute in Hull?

It would seem that I have read two questions together. The answer to the question as to when officials from Ottawa first visited the infected area is as follows:

January 15, 1952.

Then the next answer is:

February 17, 1952. Doctor Childs. At this time found sufficient clinical evidence to warrant quarantine of area in which infected herds were located and ordered immediate quarantine.

And then the last question is as follows:

What did they report, and when was the first infected material delivered to the animal diseases research institute in Hull?

The answer is:

Infected material delivered to animal diseases research institute, Hull, Quebec, February 16, 1952.

The Deputy Chairman: Is it the pleasure of the committee to accept this answer now?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Charlton: I thank the minister for having answered the questions. However, I can assure him, when he advises us that he received them only an hour and a half before he came to the house, that they were supposed to be in his office, by hand messenger, at 11.30 this morning.

I am sorry to say that I can describe this situation properly only by saying that it is pitiful—most pitiful. It is pitiful for the farmers who have placed their trust in the Department of Agriculture. It is pitiful for the farmers who have looked to that department to look after their interests and to protect them against occurrences of this kind—which it has done very well in the past.