

Foot-and-mouth disease

they were working on my farm. I would fire them and let them wait for their pay if in my opinion they were so inefficient. There is no use worrying about what has happened in the past. I hope the federal and provincial governments will take any steps that are necessary, no matter how drastic they may be, no matter how they may hurt some of us, to prevent the final ruination of the dairy industry in Canada. We had one slap a couple of years ago. A certain group almost ruined the dairy industry, and if this disease ever hits the dairy industry—let the beef cattle industry speak for itself—it will be a pretty serious day for the consumers. I hope the federal minister will take whatever steps he thinks are necessary, and that he will permit the provincial ministers to take whatever steps they deem necessary, no matter how drastic, to prevent any further spread of this disease.

Mr. Pearkes: When the information came that this disease had broken out in December great concern was felt in British Columbia for some of the reasons which have already been mentioned by the hon. member for Fraser Valley. During the summertime our cattle on the cattle ranches range all through the foothills and the lower slopes of the mountains. These forests are inhabited by large numbers of wild animals: moose, elk, deer, and on the higher ranges sheep, goats and so forth. If this disease ever gets into that wildlife it will take years and years for it to be eradicated, and there will always be the constant danger of our beef and dairy herds being infected by the disease carried by the wildlife of the province. For that reason the provincial government of British Columbia at once put a ban on the import of stock and meat and other products from the prairie provinces, which might possibly carry that infection. I am surprised to see in tonight's paper that, according to the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture this morning, the Canadian ban on the United States livestock, meat and so forth coming into Canada might force provinces to lift the barriers. I must say that we do not want the federal government to force the government of the province of British Columbia to lift the barrier so that there might be a danger of this infection coming into our herds, be they dairy or beef cattle, or be it amongst the wildlife. I cannot think of anything which would be more serious than that.

I cannot understand the attitude of the government in trying to force the province of British Columbia to raise the restriction which the provincial government saw fit to place in order to protect the dairy and beef

industries of that province. We do not raise enough beef in British Columbia to supply all the meat that is required in the great city of Vancouver and in the other cities of the province. As the hon. member for Fraser Valley has said, from that valley dairy products are exported all over British Columbia, and every section of the province would suffer if the disease entered into the Fraser valley dairy herds. Therefore I fail to understand what is behind the government's intention here which, according to a Canadian Press dispatch in an Ottawa paper, is apparently an effort to break Quebec and British Columbia restrictions on interprovincial livestock and meat shipments. I do sincerely hope that this government will take no steps whatever to limit in any way the very sound and reasonable methods which the provincial government is taking to prevent the spread of this disease into British Columbia.

There is one question I should like to ask the minister. While he was out in British Columbia last week instructions were issued—I do not say from the minister but from the health of animals branch—that an embargo had been placed on the export of fur-bearing animals and of pelts from Canada to the United States. I know that the fur breeders tried to get in touch with the minister while he was in British Columbia. I do not know whether they were successful or not. Can he say whether an embargo has been placed on the export of pelts of fur-bearing animals?

Mr. Gardiner: I am not in a position to say. I will find out before the evening sitting whether that has been done. I assume that the question relates to this same matter.

Mr. Pearkes: Yes, because of this disease.

Mr. Gardiner: On the other question I might only say that I did meet a press conference this morning and I was asked the question I think a number of times as to whether the intent was what has been stated. I said that it could have that effect; I did not say that that was the intent of it.

Mr. Wright: I do not intend to speak at any great length at this time on this question, but there are one or two things I want to say. First I want to compliment the hon. member for Brant-Wentworth on the very fine speech which he made and on the information which he gave to the committee on this disease. I myself was not aware that this disease could have been diagnosed, before it was, as simply as he described the method to us. From the information that had been given up to date in the house I was