

to put his questions on the order paper or to submit them to me in detail in order that I might have such detailed answers prepared. However, I think there is a simpler way of answering the questions than by following his suggestion that the answer to all his questions would be yes.

Mr. BLACKMORE: I did not say that.

Mr. GARDINER: My hon. friend said a minute ago that in his opinion the answer to those questions would be yes.

Mr. BLACKMORE: But I was referring to only three of them.

Mr. GARDINER: He indicated that if the answer were yes it would show that there had been some—

Mr. BLACKMORE: Gross irregularities.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, gross irregularities, or something even stronger than that, in connection with the policy itself.

In my view the best way to answer a suggestion of that kind is to outline what the situation has been with regard to cattle and the marketing of cattle in Canada, not only for the period of years to which the hon. member refers, but for a considerably longer period.

This takes me back to the fact that in 1936, I believe it was, there was brought into effect an agreement between Canada and the United States respecting duties to be paid on cattle passing from Canada to that country. The effect of that agreement was that whereas the duty on live cattle weighing over 700 pounds had prior to the time of the agreement been three cents a pound, the Americans undertook to reduce the duty to 1½ cents a pound until approximately 193,000 head of cattle of beef quality had been imported into the United States. During the first year of the existence of that arrangement some difficulties developed because the farmers rushed all their cattle into the United States in the early months of the year, and thus there was quite a supply of cattle on the United States market. Later, farmers in Canada, particularly in Alberta, where they market their cattle in the fall of the year, experienced some difficulty in marketing their cattle coming on the market in the fall, and so it was decided to divide the year into four quarters. An agreement was accordingly entered into with the United States whereby some 51,000 head of cattle would be allowed under quota in the first three quarters, with a smaller quota for the last quarter until the 193,000 head had been shipped into the United States. That agreement continued down until June

of 1942. After the price control policies to which the hon. member for Lethbridge referred were brought into existence, the record from March, 1942, is pretty much as follows—and again I say that much of this record has to do with the activities of the prices board, some of it with the activities of the Department of Agriculture. The chronological sequence of events in connection with that policy from March 23 down to the present is pretty much as follows.

On March 23, 1942, the wartime prices and trade board, by order 109, established general principles of a wholesale ceiling price for beef, cattle and pork as follows:

No packer or wholesaler shall sell at a price that is higher than the highest price charged in the basic period by the same packer or wholesaler to the same buyer for the same kind, brand, quality and/or cut of meat or meat products.

That was a general statement of the policy which was put into effect by the prices board on March 23, 1942. It simply meant that any wholesaler who was selling meat to retailers had to sell it at the price at which he was selling it in the basic period, which was during part of the month of September and part of the month of October of 1941. That order was revoked on June 1, 1942, by order 134. On June 25, 1942, order 151 of the wartime prices and trade board authorized the wartime food corporation, which is an organization under the prices board, and not under the Department of Agriculture, to issue licences to beef cattle exporters, requiring exporters to obtain authorization for each shipment. That is the order to which the hon. member for Lethbridge refers when he speaks of the first action taken to restrict or control the shipment of beef into the United States.

As I stated a moment ago the original arrangement was that in any quarter we could send into the United States up to some 51,000 head of cattle over 700 pounds in weight. During the early part of 1942 we sent in the full 51,000 head a few weeks before the end of the period. Then, immediately after April 1, 1942, cattle were shipped into the United States to a total, speaking from memory, of about 10,000 a week until the total number of 51,000 had been shipped into the United States. That was around June 1, 1942, when the wartime prices and trade board took action in accordance with the order I have just read, which required anyone shipping cattle into the United States to get a permit to do so.

At the same time, I think, the wartime food corporation was set up, which was the only body licensed to ship cattle into the United States, the corporation set out to purchase cattle to be shipped into the United