

these men. They are not rich men and they cannot afford these losses. They have had to wait a long time for their payment, and they are asking for interest. They have had to go to the bank and borrow money, not on the \$10, but on other moneys due them; they had to borrow money to carry on their spring work instead of being able to carry on with the indemnity from the department. They have suffered a heavy string of hardships throughout this whole matter, and I hope the minister will reconsider the whole question. When the minister suggests the meaning of the word "may", I would refer him to his hon. friend the Minister of Justice from whom he will probably get the information that in most of these cases the "may" is taken as an imperative; that is, it shall be paid. It is not used in the ordinary colloquial way. I have not read the section but I presume that the "may" is not altogether discretionary; it may be, but I would like the minister to look into it. I wish to put a letter on record so that the minister will have it before him when he is considering this case. I protested to the department because of this reduction, and I received the following reply, dated May 8:

I have your letter of the 6th instant, with reference to the Chester white hogs imported and subsequently slaughtered suffering from hog cholera, and in this connection I would advise you that it is true that the Department of Agriculture is responsible for letting these pigs in, but they were permitted entry only after all the quarantine period which the law allows had been served. That is, they were kept in quarantine for thirty days after entry—

And yet the department did not find a trace of hog cholera. The letter continues:

—and were released on a certificate from United States veterinary officers stating that they had come from a herd which had not been serum treated, and they had not been in contact with any herd in which hog cholera had been present six months prior to entry. Consequently, this department did all it could to protect the health of our Canadian live stock in this particular matter.

Apparently they failed in this case. The letter continues:

The trouble is that the pigs were sold to Canadians by a bunch of sharpers—not to use any stronger term—who apparently found some way of deceiving the United States officers, and in getting certificates which apparently were quite in order. These imported hogs were sold to our Canadian farmers in face of all the information given to them about the breed of pigs that should be used in Canada to get the best results, and in face of the strongest representations of our federal officers and, I believe, of the provincial officers as well.

On that point Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest to the department and to the minister that very frequently there are others be-

sides farmers who are stung by sharpers once in a while; even the department has been stung at times. That is no legitimate reason why the farmers should be refused their fair compensation. The letter continues:

The farmers were deluded into these transactions by the hope of extraordinary gains. For instance, they were told by the agents of the United States company selling these pigs that "all their sow pigs from the first two litters would be bought at a stated price—\$25 at that time, provided they weighted 125-135 pounds at six months and met the standard of the open gilt sold the farmer." We think that this is one of the reasons why farmers were induced to act against the well-known recommendations both of the provincial and federal departments of agriculture. They were also warned of the risk of the introduction of disease.

We put the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on the track of these agents, and finally the traffic was stopped, due partly to the fact that the dealers did not live up to the promise of taking the young pigs off the hands of the farmers, and partly because we made things so hot for them that they desisted.

Under the circumstances I felt that we could not justify anything in the way of paying for these imported pigs at the expense of the country which had already suffered so much on account of the introduction of disease due to the persistence of these farmers in acting contrary to the recommendations of both departments. So far as the law is concerned, we could, of course, pay for these hogs, but I am still of the opinion that we should not do so.

Yours very truly,

J. H. Grisdale,

Deputy Minister.

While some blame may be attached to the farmers for acting as they did, we must admit that even the minister himself sometimes acts contrary to the advice of his own officers, and very properly so. For some reason or other the farmers thought that they were in for a killing; they were, but it was not the kind of killing they expected. Under all the circumstances, I hope the minister will give consideration to these men and allow the additional \$10 per head.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I wish to assure the hon. member for Bow River that I had no desire to be harsh with these farmers who were misguided, or who exercised the wrong judgment in this matter. As my hon. friend says, we are all disposed to do that; if we deprive everyone in the world of the initiative to do right or wrong we would soon have a breed of people who would not be worth their salt. While I am open to further information I am closed to importunity, but we would need a little more information before we would be justified in changing the decision. I would direct the attention of my hon. friend to the section of the regulation