

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): That is not good enough. Here is a farmer who is entitled by law to 75 per cent of the value of the animals slaughtered. The department is supposed to protect him against the introduction of diseased animals, but failed to do so. I am not blaming the department; accidents will happen, but as a matter of fact the department did fail. The farmer was not only stung with these hogs as breeding stock but, after the department's failure, he is penalized another \$10 per head. That is absolutely unfair; under the law the farmer is entitled to the whole 75 per cent of the value of the animals slaughtered, and as representing the interests of these men I must insist on that 75 per cent being paid in full. The department has no legal right to deduct an additional \$10 per head; that is a clear swindle on the farmers who are concerned in this matter.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I think my hon. friend has not the right angle on this question. I understand the situation now better than I did when my hon. friend introduced it, and under the law the minister may or may not pay compensation. We may exercise our discretionary power in that matter, and if there are any peculiar or exceptional circumstances under which this contagion broke out, indicating that the farmers were responsible for it—

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): But the farmers were not responsible for it. What chance has a farmer to inspect hogs in quarantine?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: If the farmers had not bit so freely when they were exploited by the men who imported the animals there would have been no difficulty. I would have liked to stop these men from buying the animals, but there was no provision by which I could save them from themselves. This expense was loaded on the country as a result of the importations; if there had been no importation there would have been no trouble, but the farmers insisted on buying these hogs against the advice of all the officials. They brought the animals in; they were primarily responsible for the introduction of the disease, and the officers of the department considered themselves justified in withholding a portion of the compensation in order to indicate that farmers always run a risk when they import animals of that description against the advice of the provincial and federal officials.

Mr. SPENCER: It seems to me that the Department of Agriculture could have prohibited these hogs from being brought in.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: How?

Mr. SPENCER: If they are allowed to come in under proper inspection then there should be some responsibility upon the government.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: If the hon. member will agree to give the department the authority to exclude animals which are under suspicion I can assure him that I will be delighted to take the initiative in asking for that authority by way of legislation or regulation. At the present time I do not think we have the regulative powers to do it; there is no law that I know of upon which regulation could be based. I feel now and I felt then that the government of the day should have the authority to exclude suspected animals coming from a country which was filled with hog cholera. But if I had taken that action I know the attitude which would have been taken by many hon. members in this house; they would have opposed it upon the ground that there was an element of protection introduced by the exclusion of animals under the guise of trying to keep out suspected animals. Section 6, as amended, reads:

The minister may order compensation to be paid to the owners of animals slaughtered under the provisions of this act.

It is entirely optional and sometimes we exercise that option. I am open to further information on this point. I think that the officers were justified in only allowing part compensation to the farmers who were responsible for bringing in these diseased animals from the United States.

Mr. SPENCER: Were the purchasers of these hogs notified that they would be penalized, as it were, if hog cholera were found? If it was intended that an extra charge should be made, I think it would have been only fair that these farmers should have been notified.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: There is enough in my hon. friend's contention to justify my reviewing the case. My officers are very careful in deciding a matter of this kind and I am disposed to take their finding until I have further evidence placed before me that it is wrong.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I am very glad that the minister has taken this attitude. I think he realizes the hardship imposed upon