

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I find myself very much in sympathy with my hon. friend's representations, but I think he and I could make better progress if we did not say so much about it to the house.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I would like to ask the minister if his department is responsible for the health of the animals imported into Canada?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes, certainly.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): And I understand there is quite an expensive quarantine establishment maintained?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): With very efficient officers?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I hope so.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): The point I want to get at is that the minister is taking all possible precautions to prevent diseased animals and animals likely to be diseased from coming into contact with our own animals?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Then I would like to know why this department has seen fit to deduct \$10 per head from the remuneration or damage paid the farmers who have had imported hogs slaughtered for hog cholera. Perhaps I had better put it this way: It has been brought to my attention that at least in the province of Alberta several farmers were induced to import some Chester white hogs. An active campaign was carried on by the importers and by the federal and provincial Departments of Agriculture to prevent the farmers from importing those hogs, but in spite of the information they received they did import them. This importation could be made only through the quarantine station and after the officers undertook to see, as far as they could, that the farmer and the country were protected from any possible contact with hog cholera. The Chester whites came in; they were in quarantine; they passed quarantine and they went out to the farmers. Possibly as a result of the importation of those hogs, and possibly because of some other reasons, hog cholera broke out and many herds were slaughtered. The farmers were to be paid a certain amount of money, about 75 per cent of the value of the animals, but in the case of the Chester whites the department saw fit to deduct \$10 per head in addition, so that instead of the farmers

[Mr. Rowe.]

receiving 75 per cent of the value of the hogs they received 75 per cent less \$10 per head.

The shocking thing about it is that when I wrote the department protesting against this deduction of \$10, the reply from the department under date of May 8 advises me that it is true that the Department of Agriculture is responsible for letting these hogs into Canada; they admit responsibility, but say that the hogs were permitted entry only after the quarantine period. That is all the more damaging to the department. The officers of the department examined these hogs thoroughly, or at least they had every opportunity to do so; at all events these hogs spread hog cholera and now the farmers concerned are penalized in this way; they are stung twice, first on the Chester whites as breeding stock and then by the fact that they were disease carriers. The department comes along and deducts \$10 per head from their remuneration. I cannot understand that, and I want the minister to let the committee know just why the department has taken this unfair advantage of these farmers.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Both the Department of Agriculture at Edmonton and the federal department did everything the law allowed them to do to exclude these animals altogether. They were quarantined at the point of entry, as my hon. friend indicated, but evidently the signs of the disease were not distinguishable at the time of the quarantine. We have a working arrangement with the United States under which they recognize our certificates of cleanliness and we recognize their certificates on all animals, but apparently in this instance some of these certificates have not been absolutely reliable. I can assure my hon. friend that if I had had any kind of weapon with which to keep out these hogs they never would have entered Canada, but my hon. friend must remember that once a minister begins to exclude animals from the United States there is always the suspicion that he is doing so to protect the home market.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I am not protesting against the minister's action in quarantining the hogs or trying to keep them out; I think he acted wisely, but why penalize the farmers \$10 per head extra?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: This matter has not been brought to my attention until now, to my recollection; the outbreak occurred when I was absent from Canada, and since then we have been fairly busy. I will make inquiries into the matter.