

Foot-and-mouth disease

the blood check. The blood check was made, I believe, a week ago Saturday, and it was determined on Sunday that it was foot-and-mouth disease. As soon as that fact was determined, the United States authorities closed the boundary line against Canadian livestock.

Mr. Coldwell: Dr. Childs went out twice, did he?

Mr. Gardiner: I understand so, yes.

Mr. Coldwell: During this time were any samples of blood taken from the animals affected? If so, was any use made of the facilities at the university of Saskatchewan in order to see if this was a virus that was not of the kind suggested earlier?

Mr. Gardiner: First I must correct something that I said the other day and stated was subject to correction. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr, the leader of the C.C.F. group, asked me who was the person connected with the department. In order to be exact, may I read from *Hansard* at page 14:

Mr. Coldwell: Who is the chief authority in Saskatchewan?

I had made the statement that right up until last week the chief authority in Saskatchewan was maintaining that the disease was stomatitis. If in reply to that question I had just said "Dr. Fulton", I think I would have been right. But there are other officials there besides Dr. Fulton. The statement which was in my mind was one which appeared in the press, and I read it in Vancouver. It was in the Vancouver *Daily Province* of February 21, 1952, and it is headed "Disease not fatal". It is a Canadian Press report, dated at Saskatoon, and reads as follows:

Dr. J. L. Millar, of the University of Saskatchewan animal disease laboratory, said Wednesday infectious stomatitis, as reported in cattle in the Regina area, is not considered serious by veterinarians, although symptoms are similar to those of hoof-and-mouth disease.

He said the disease is rarely fatal and animals generally recover without treatment—and without after effects—after about ten days with sore, slobbering mouths.

That is the opinion I referred to on Friday. It describes the disease and describes the difference between the two. By whatever means he arrived at that conclusion, he was apparently of the opinion that the disease was stomatitis.

Mr. Coldwell: Up to that time had any use been made of the facilities at the university of Saskatchewan, by testing of blood, saliva or other samples, in order to find out if this virus actually was stomatitis, as it was apparently believed to be by practically everybody who was in contact with it?

[Mr. Gardiner.]

Mr. Gardiner: I would not be aware of that fact, because where diseases of any kind, whether more or less serious, are prevalent in a province, it is the general practice that someone reports the matter and it is taken up and examined into at some centre. In Saskatchewan the centre is Saskatoon. Whether that is actually what was done in this case I do not know. As I understand it, however, the further fact is that even at Saskatoon the officials would not be able to determine finally whether or not it was foot-and-mouth disease. That fact could be determined only at the Hull plant, and it can be determined only after getting proper serum from Great Britain—which is the only place that it is made—and utilizing it in animals into which you first inject the virus and then the serum; the two, brought together in the same animal, constitute the proof as to whether the malady is foot-and-mouth disease or not. I may say that, at the time everyone seems to have agreed that it was not foot-and-mouth disease, this latter process had not been gone through. But as soon as Dr. Childs went back and was convinced—I suppose by what he saw and by those to whom he talked—that it might be foot-and-mouth disease, he had the government quarantine the whole area. Then he obtained the serum, made the investigations a week ago Friday and Saturday, and declared it to be foot-and-mouth disease.

Mr. Diefenbaker: All I intend to do, Mr. Chairman, is to make a few general observations, particularly in view of the fact that the area affected adjoins or is included within the confines of my own constituency.

Parliament must show itself effective to act in emergency. Today, once again, it has done so. One thing parliament must maintain is the assurance that when national action is required it will be taken, regardless of rules of procedure, which, after all, effective and necessary as they are, are often difficult to apply under extraordinary conditions.

Having listened to the minister the other day, having then raised the question of compensation, which vexes the minds and the hearts of the farmers of Saskatchewan, and having listened to him today as he replied to the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr, knowing, as he knew, and as we all know, the terrible catastrophe to our trade that follows the undetermined nature of this disease, may I say that if ever a department of government showed dilatoriness and negligence, I think it is this one. The discovery in November last should have demanded immediate attention. If it is not negligent, then the government has