

Supply—Agriculture

Mr. Abbott: I wonder if I might intervene. I do not know whether it is fair to ask the sense of the committee, but I have asked the other place to suspend their sitting in the hope that it might be possible for us to send them a supply bill this evening. If the general feeling is that we have to carry on here until eleven o'clock in order to get the information that is wanted, I think I had better suggest to the other place that they adjourn until tomorrow, though I would hope that would not be necessary.

Mr. Cruickshank: Can't they stay until ten o'clock at night?

Mr. Abbott: I have not taken up too much time, so perhaps my hon. friend will possess his soul in patience. I suggest this with some diffidence; I do not want to indicate that hon. members should not ask for any information they require, but it may be possible that some information could be obtained by letter or in other ways. In any case we are in the hands of the house. If it is the general feeling that there is no prospect of concluding within say the next half or three-quarters of an hour I think we had better suggest to Their Honours that they come back tomorrow, though the house is aware of what that involves.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am sure that if the Minister of Finance will use his persuasive qualities on the Minister of Agriculture to get him to answer some of these questions, it will not take very long.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. The Minister of Finance asked for the sense of the house, and the member for Lake Centre has given his own impression as to the length of the debate. Perhaps we could hear from the other parties, if they wish to express their opinion.

Mr. Abbott: There are three items after this one.

The Deputy Chairman: Does the leader of the C.C.F. party or the Social Credit party wish to make a statement on the subject?

Mr. Coldwell: If the information which has been requested by hon. members of the house is given expeditiously, we should finish in three-quarters of an hour. I think it depends upon the mood of the house, and I cannot tell what the mood of the house is going to be.

Mr. Blackmore: We have taken a great deal of care to co-operate with the government in getting these estimates through. We believe it is very important to get them through. We certainly want to see them go through. I do not know whether we can do that, but the Social Credit group will continue to co-operate.

Mr. Diefenbaker: During a general discussion on the subject the minister will recall that he stated the basis of compensation would be the compensation given to Mr. H. Beatty. The information that the house has been receiving has been in bulk rather than individualized. I think that the persons affected agreed among themselves as to the general basis of compensation. I believe a meeting was held in Regina on March 12, attended by twenty-one farmers, all of whom had had their animals slaughtered. They submitted to the minister a suggested basis of settlement, predicated on acceptance by the evaluators of the valuations determined by them at this meeting. The meeting was held at the Champs hotel in Regina, and without going into particulars as to the individuals who made the motions in question, the farmers agreed that the replacement value of a good dairy cow should be at least \$450 plus bonus; for a two-year-old dairy heifer in calf, it should be \$350 plus bonus; for a yearling dairy heifer it should be \$250 plus bonus; purebred beef breeding cows should be \$500 plus bonus; purebred beef heifers in calf should be \$375 plus bonus and that grade beef breeding cows should be \$450 plus bonus. As I understand it they placed before the minister their ideas of the prices that would be acceptable to all of those whose cattle had been destroyed in pursuance of action taken by the government to extirpate this disease.

For some reason or another the minister seems to have shrouded this whole matter in mystery, to use the expression of the member for Calgary East. We are not asking for particulars concerning the individuals in question, although the minister gave his assurance that the Beatty determination would be the basis from which other valuations would take place. I should like to ask the minister, were the valuations based in general uniformly upon the recommendations made at that meeting of the farmers on March 12? Secondly, I think there should be some particulars regarding the \$200,000 item of compensation in conformity with the act for the control and extirpation of foot-and-mouth disease. How much crop was destroyed or ordered to be destroyed? How much feed was destroyed, and what was the total amount of compensation to the farmers for the destruction of their feed, straw and infected barns as well as any granaries that were ordered to be destroyed? At the moment, Mr. Chairman, we are simply asked to vote an amount without having any conception of the measuring stick or the nature of the measure of compensation that is to be granted. It is all very well for the minister to say divide 1,061 into the amount of compensation allowed, but that reveals