

preparing to freshen. It is a settled custom to take cows which have finished their usefulness and feed them as beef. Many, many cows were fed in that way in my constituency.

I think that is enough in a general way. Now I want to read the minister one or two things and see whether he recalls that something like this actually occurred. I asked three questions to start with. Maybe I had better repeat those questions. It is a long list; but you have to get to the facts; you have to get to the basis of this thing to realize how bad it all is.

Is it a fact that the beef producers of Alberta in August, 1942, waived the right to export beef to the United States? The answer is yes.

Mr. GARDINER: Well, I would say that the answer is no, and I answered that question while I was speaking. A few Alberta ranchers and others met and passed a resolution, but I do not think anyone in Canada waived the right to market cattle in the United States. There was a regulation put out with regard to it which all of us had to live up to, but nobody waived any rights.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Well, they felt they did. They met on August 25, 1942, in Calgary, and after careful deliberation passed a resolution by which they waived this right, and they laid down the conditions under which they waived the right. The resolution was the beginning of an agreement between themselves and the wartime prices and trade board. The minister may not consider that binding, but out west we do consider a thing like that rather binding.

Mr. EVANS: Do the Lethbridge feeders govern the feeding of western Canada?

Mr. BLACKMORE: Nothing idiotic like that.

Mr. EVANS: It sounds like that.

Mr. BLACKMORE: The hon. member just makes himself foolish in the eyes of intelligent men.

Mr. EVANS: Not half so foolish as some people make themselves.

Mr. BLACKMORE: On October 7, 1942, I am informed there was a press release entitled "Press Release No. 0231," issued according to my information by the chairman, Donald Gordon, in which the following words were reported as being used:

The wartime food corporation will be prepared to buy cattle if there is at any time a surplus supply which threatens to depress cattle prices unduly, and after providing a reasonable supply for domestic consumption, will export any remaining surplus cattle.

These words can mean only one thing, that if a man had a corral full of fat cows, the like of which he had been able to sell at nine cents or nine and a half cents in February and March of 1943, and in 1944 he has to wait for weeks for a bidder, and finally sell between six and one-half and seven and one-half cents—

Mr. GARDINER: What was the date of the press release?

Mr. BLACKMORE: October 7, 1942.

Mr. GARDINER: That is a long while back.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Exactly, but it was the beginning of this. The minister went back to 1936. I will indulge in a little history too.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, but what I am pointing out is that that condition existed under an order which was passed at that time. That order was changed later, and what he announced would take place did take place down to a certain time.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Can the minister give the press release which cancelled this one?

Mr. GARDINER: I do not know whether there was one or not. I did not issue the press release.

Mr. BLACKMORE: That is just the point. The western feeders did not know either. If there ever was such an order it certainly was not widely publicized among the feeders in the west, and that is an evidence of bungling.

Mr. GARDINER: No. There was a standing order all through 1943. There was a standing order from early in the spring of 1943 right down to the present time for the purchase of surplus beef that was in frozen form in store in any of the plants—all the way through. There was no surplus there until the fall of 1943.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Then how could it be possible that the farmers were told that they were unable to sell beef in February and March, 1944, because the packing plants were full?

Mr. GARDINER: That is very simple. You had upwards of 100,000 hogs in a week coming in more than came in before, which of course filled the packing plants, and you had beef at the same time coming in. There were times when you had 30,000, 50,000 and upwards of 100,000, in that period of time, coming in during one week, in addition to the number reached in previous years, and that being the case, the packing plants were filled.