

Supply—Agriculture

the United States boundary. I am told that the United States border patrolmen informed farmers living alongside the United States boundary a few days that if any of their cattle happened to stray across the boundary the border patrolmen had orders from the United States department of agriculture to shoot them on sight. I was asked to bring the matter to the attention of the minister in order to find out whether the Canadian government has had any consultation with the United States department of agriculture with respect to this instruction issued to the United States border patrolmen; and if Canadian cattle happen to stay across the boundary and are shot, will any compensation be paid to the owners of these cattle?

It was pointed out in this letter that even though farmers may use the greatest possible care in keeping their cattle within their fences, nevertheless the fences may become broken because of a severe storm or for some other reason and cattle may happen to wander across the line. I am asking the minister now whether this matter has been brought to his attention, and if a number of cattle along that boundary should be shot whether any compensation will be paid to the farmers. As the minister well knows, this is the buffer zone. It is not the quarantine zone, and these cattle are perfectly healthy. I think Americans are unduly concerned about a few head of cattle that may stray out of their pasture into the United States for an hour or two, but in any event if United States patrolmen slaughter Canadian cattle owned by farmers along the boundary will those farmers have some claim for compensation?

Mr. Gardiner: We have had no knowledge of any such thing. No report of that kind has been made to us. All I can say is that we will check at once to find whether that is the case and have the whole matter looked into. If that were the case I think we would probably have to put on a patrol rather than give any undertaking to compensate at the present time. I am afraid if we were to give an undertaking to compensate, particularly on the same basis as we have compensated others, there might be a lot of them go across the boundary. I should like to check into the whole matter before saying anything more about it.

Mr. Argue: I thank the minister for his assurance that he will have the matter checked. If Canadian patrolmen are stationed along the boundary to see that cattle do not get into the United States I am sure that will be a perfectly satisfactory arrangement. I should also like to ask the minister whether the department has give any consideration to

building a proper game fence along the boundary to prevent livestock straying across now and in the months to come.

Mr. Gardiner: No. Up to the present time I do not think we have given any consideration to building a fence along the boundary line.

Mr. Argue: A game fence.

Mr. Gardiner: A game fence to keep animals from going across.

Mr. Argue: To keep ours at home.

Mr. Gardiner: We have not undertaken that.

Mr. Laing: I should like to say a word on the whole matter of compensation, because I am surprised to see the basis of compensation and the rates paid in Canada subjected to any criticism at all. I think they are the most generous of any country in the world concerning which I have been able to obtain information.

Mr. Argue: I did not criticize them.

Mr. Laing: I am dealing more with the remarks of the hon. member for Lambton West. I have here the amounts payable for Newcastle disease in British Columbia, and I think they are definitely generous. They went up as high as \$8.90 in the case of a pedigreed turkey. Of course those are breeding turkeys. They went up as high as \$3 for a capon. They were all of that nature. Payments were made of the nature of 17 cents for day-old unsexed chicks, 32 cents for sexed pullets, and so on. Payments were made on a pretty generous basis, and I should like to remind the committee that a number of the people whose flocks were wiped out in British Columbia received amounts in excess of \$25,000. I think that is a pretty fair indication of the way these people were treated in Canada.

Federally in the United States not a five-cent piece is paid by way of compensation for Newcastle disease. Some of the states may have certain arrangements, but federally there is no compensation at all. They tell me that they are living down there with the disease at a cost to the industry of 20 per cent. It costs 20 per cent more in the production of both meat and eggs in order to live with the disease and treat it the way it has been treated there. I believe we have been paying on tuberculosis in cattle since 1911, and the whole history of compensation under this provision for disease in Canada has been quite generous. I think it has been well administered and I should like to hear the odd word of approbation instead of constant criticism.

Mr. Charlton: I know the hon. member would want to be fair to the hon. member