

*Foot-and-mouth disease*

have been disposing of; but there must be no fire sale of these agricultural products. Floor prices must be established. I believe the announcement the minister made this morning regarding the grading of hogs will be very helpful; but I also believe we shall have to establish floor prices and try to dispose of much of our beef and other meat surpluses in a new market. The United States market has always been uncertain, so even if we have to finance sales ourselves for the time being we should explore every possible avenue whereby we may keep this great industry on a more or less even keel.

**Mr. Gardiner:** Might I say a word about one or two matters that have been raised. The leader of the C.C.F. party has suggested that this matter should be referred to the agriculture committee. I have no objection to that, and I am sure the government would have no objection. But the fact that it is to be referred to that committee should not be permitted to delay the passage of this legislation as it now stands. If it will speed up this legislation to have it agreed that the matter will be placed before the agriculture committee this session, there is no objection to that.

A number of points have been raised that I am a little curious about myself, such as this matter of dates and what has happened. The hon. member for Lake Centre says that the area covers part of his constituency. It also covers part of mine; and in addition I was in Saskatchewan, as a matter of fact right in the middle of this district, from I think February 4 to February 8. At that time I was in the city of Regina.

**Mr. Fraser:** Were you disinfected afterwards?

**Mr. Gardiner:** What I am going to say will probably indicate that my hon. friend is more in need of being disinfected than I am. I was in Regina right in the centre of all this talk that is supposed to have been going on. Everybody knew I was there; it was in the press every morning. Not a single farmer or anyone else came to me and mentioned even the possibility of foot-and-mouth disease in the Regina district. In addition, during the whole of the following week I was at my own farm, which is about fifty miles from the farm of Mr. Waas. In order to get there I have to drive through McLean, and I drove through McLean twice during that week. No one reported to me any fear that there was foot-and-mouth disease in that district. I venture to say that if all this concern that has been mentioned this afternoon had been felt in that area, surely someone would have come and told me about it.

[Mr. Coldwell.]

As far as I know there was no concern among the people there. Apparently they were all satisfied that whatever disease their cattle had, it was not foot-and-mouth disease.

Well, about February 16 or 17 I went further west, where I got the first report on the following Monday that someone thought there might be foot-and-mouth disease in the Regina area. From that distance I gave the officials instructions to immediately arrange for whatever quarantine was felt advisable, in spite of the fact that no one had yet declared that this was foot-and-mouth disease.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Was that in Regina?

**Mr. Gardiner:** No; I was then in Vancouver. I was reached by telephone from Ottawa, and I gave those instructions. As soon as it could possibly be done the government did put on the quarantine.

**Mr. Cardiff:** How strict was the quarantine?

**Mr. Gardiner:** The quarantine was just as strict as it is now. You could not move any animals in or out of the district; you could not move any feed around any district except from one farm to another where they were both owned by the same individual.

**Mr. Cardiff:** Were the people allowed to move around?

**Mr. Gardiner:** The people were not allowed to move around except to go in and do their ordinary shopping. The same restrictions that are imposed under any quarantine at any time have been in effect since that time and are still in effect.

The only point I wished to make is that in the first place I do not think there was all the discussion the hon. member for Lake Centre has suggested. Otherwise I am quite sure some of those people would have come to me, because I know them very well.

**Mr. Rowe:** I do not want to interrupt the minister, but on what date did he give instructions for the quarantine?

**Mr. Gardiner:** A week ago last Wednesday was the day the quarantine was put on, not last Wednesday as was suggested, I think inadvertently, by the hon. member for Lake Centre. The quarantine has been on and it has been very effective. As a matter of fact I can quite understand the inquiries that have been made by the hon. member for Lake Centre, and I can quite understand the concern of the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggan. I have had a little of the same kind of concern myself, naturally.

**Mr. Rowe:** Only for ten days, though.