

Supply—Agriculture

able to members of the house. I believe we could supply the hon. member or any other hon. members with copies of it.

Mr. Johnston: Would the minister send us a copy? It would be appreciated.

Mr. MacNaught: In connection with tuberculosis, I understand Prince Edward Island was one of the first provinces in which experiments were carried out. Tests were made this year. Has the minister any information as to the incidence?

Mr. Gardiner: I believe there were about 100,000 cattle, or something in that neighbourhood, and only about a dozen reactors in the whole group. In other words, the island is pretty well cleared up.

When I came here about fifteen years ago the maritime provinces were entirely covered by inspectors, and I think they were the only ones. One province at that time was strongly opposed to having any inspections, and no area in that province had been inspected. Today a considerable portion of it has been covered. Farmers right across Canada today are all agreed, and all agitate strongly that we come to check their cattle. However, up until fifteen or twenty years ago there was as much opposition to it as support of it. Now everyone wants it.

Mr. Stanfield: Are all the counties of Nova Scotia tuberculosis-tested areas today?

Mr. Gardiner: They are all restricted areas. I should not like to say they are all fully tested and clear to the extent that that obtains in Prince Edward Island.

Item agreed to.

18. Production service—Compensation for animals slaughtered, \$1,042,500.

Mr. Harris (Danforth): The minister will recall that at the last session I requested that some of the moneys provided under this item be used for the purpose of research to check on swine fever, owing to the fact that, with the present large volume of soap being used, and the garbage-fed hogs being offered, the alkalinity and the acidity had had some effect on the increase in swine fever. I asked that some research be done and I ask now whether any research has been done, or shall we have to wait a little longer?

Mr. Gardiner: I understand that nothing new has been done since the discussion of last session, but that may be due partly to the fact that we were busy on other things in the meantime. As most hon. members know, I have just got back to the department within the last week. I shall see that consideration is given to the representations made.

Mr. Graydon: I do not think the minister should be denied an opportunity of answering my question.

Mr. Gardiner: As the hon. member for Peel suggested, we have had this matter up at least twice or perhaps three times in the house. This claim is being made by Mr. McIntyre and I believe one other person for compensation because of a special condition that developed. I am not enough of a specialist to know what proportion of cattle slaughtered will show definite proof of T.B. when they have been tested previously and found to be reactors. I am quite satisfied that a considerable percentage would not give any indication in the meat itself. This indication might be apparent in some of the organs that are thrown away and not utilized for meat purposes.

I imagine that the officials who were responsible for the test used exactly the same test as had been used on cattle all across Canada and it is difficult to understand how under those circumstances some forty odd cattle should be tested and then when slaughtered show no trace of the disease. I do not remember all the details and unfortunately I have not got them here, because it is so long ago. However, I do recall that our people investigated the matter on more than one occasion and came to the conclusion that there were no grounds on which special payment could be made.

If the legislation that is now being brought down had been made retroactive for a year longer, and if the cattle had gone into the tank, then there would be provision for special payment. But the opposite occurred in this case. There was no reason to send the animals into the tank and apparently the meat was all usable. That would mean that he would get the full value of the cattle at that time, but not as high a value as they would bring now.

I understand that these were breeding stock of a grade which would bring a much higher price than beef cattle. I have no doubt that Mr. McIntyre and the other gentleman feel aggrieved but I doubt very much if there is any legislation under which we could make payment. There may be a question as to whether we should have legislation and whether it should be made retroactive. I do not know the extent to which it would involve us.

This work is being carried on because the government has been pressed to carry it on. It is quite true that in the early years we had to sell the idea, but in recent years farmers all over the country have been pressing us to carry out these tests. Most of them accept the result. Some of them may feel that they