

Mar. 10.

GOVERNMENT ASKED TO CONTINUE FIGHT ON CATTLE DISEASE

Resolution of Legislature
Committee Protests
Ending Work

FOUNDATION IS ACTIVE

Reported instructions of the Ontario Government to the Ontario Research Foundation to drop its work in connection with controlling the grave farm problem of contagious abortion in cattle were so viewed with alarm yesterday by the Agriculture Committee of the Legislature that a resolution urging the Government seriously to reconsider their attitude was moved by William Newman (Liberal, North Victoria), seconded by H. J. Davis (Conservative, East Elgin), and unanimously endorsed by the committee.

Discontinuance of the work is said to have been ordered as an economy measure, and is effective from the end of August next. The committee's protest against it followed their hearing of a comprehensive survey of the Foundation's experiments, particularly in the Schomberg area, from Dr. H. B. Speakman, foundation director; the story of the Schomberg area organization, from Dr. A. H. McLeod; an account of the increase in undulant fever in Ontario during the past four years, due to contagious abortion in cattle, from Dr. A. L. MacNabb, Provincial Laboratories head; and two earnest pleas for a continuation of the control measures from J. Cooper and C. McCabe, prominent members of the Schomberg Committee of farmers.

No More Serious Disease.

"No more serious disease exists than contagious abortion," said Mr. McCabe. "If the Government ever intends to do something for the cause of the farmers let them do something to handle this contagious abortion."

Speaking of the Schomberg program, Professor Speakman said, in part: "The first stage in our program was to draw up an agreement governing the testing and removal of animals and the control of new animals entering the area. It speaks well for the farmers when I say that it is the most comprehensive agreement of this kind that I know of, and does not include any provision for State compensation. Every farmer and small holder in the district has signed the agreement. There are now 58 clean farms out of the 70. At present, 32 out of the 70 farms are free from tuberculosis also."

In summing up what he termed as "the significant points" in the foundation's contagious abortion work, Dr. Speakman said:

"We have, at any rate, reduced the atmosphere of suspicion and despair. We have shown that a small group of scientific workers can co-operate with groups of farmers and stockbreeders in the control and eradication of this

dreadful disease. According to my instructions from the Minister of Agriculture our work in this field must cease at the end of August. It has been a source of pride and satisfaction to the foundation that we have been able to assist in a small measure in what in my judgment has been a national undertaking, at least in its importance.

"If we are again called upon by the Minister to take a part in the continuation or enlargement of the investigation and control of this disease I can only assure you that we will continue to give the best service we possibly can. In the West, in parts of our own Province, and in other countries they will sooner or later be looking for a supply of good grade dairy animals free from tuberculosis and contagious abortion, and I see no reason why our farmers in Ontario should not be encouraged to assist in satisfying this demand."

Hon. T. L. Kennedy, Minister of Agriculture, stated last night that the Government's arrangement with the Ontario Research Foundation in regard to control of contagious abortion in cattle was for three years, and would expire at the end of August next. Following that, any future policy of the Government would be based on the foundation's reports on their control measures.