**SWINE COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1954**

**Legislative Assembly, 13 October 1954, pages 982-3**

Second reading

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second it

This Bill is on all fours with the Compensation Act Amendment Bill passed recently. The Swine Compensation Act sets up a fund called the Swine Compensation Fund into which is paid the proceeds of a special stamp duty imposed on the sale of swine. At present the rate of duty is Id. for every 10s. of the purchase price of any pig with a maximum of 5s. payable on the sale of any one pig. From the fund compensation is payable to owners of pigs or carcasses of pigs which are destroyed or condemned by reason of any the diseases set out in section 4 of the Act.

If a pig which is condemned is found to be free from disease, compensation is based upon the market value of the pig. If the pig is found to be diseased, compensation is payable on the basis of seven-eighths of the market value. Compensation for diseased carcasses which are condemned is paid in accordance with a scale prescribed by regulation.

The Act provides that, for the purpose of assessing compensation the market value of any one pig is not to be deemed to exceed £30. At June 30, 1954, the credit balance in the fund was £73,884 3s. Id., and it is considered that this amount is sufficient to provide a satisfactory reserve if an outbreak of swine fever occurred. The fund has been building up steadily ever since its inception and it is thought by the Government that, in view of the balance now in the fund, the rate of swine stamp duty could be reduced to a point where the annual returns are somewhat slightly in excess of the ordinary outgoings. Yearly payments out of the fund during the last two years have been about £9,500 and only on two occasions since the inception of the fund, that is during 1947-1948 and 1951-1952, when the amounts paid were £10,111 17s. 6d. and £10,8X5 8s. l1d., respectively, have the annual outgoings exceeded £10,000.

It is accordingly proposed by clause 4 that the rate of swine stamp duty will be reduced from Id. for every 10s. of purchase price to 11/2d for every £1 of purchase price, that is, a reduction of1/2 d. in the £1. The maximum duty payable on the sale of any one pig is now 5s. and the clause reduces this, to 3s. 9d. It is expected that this new rate of duty will produce an annual return of from £10,500 to £11,000 a year, that is, something slightly in excess of the normal annual payments.

Clause 8 provides for two amendments to secton 8 of the Act. Subsection (4) of section 8 provides that compensation is not to be payable in certain circumstances. Paragraph (b) provides that one of these circumstances is where the owner of a pig visibly affected with tuberculosis has failed to give notice of that fact as required by section 19 of the Stock and Poultry Diseases Act. Clause 3 substitutes the word “disease” for tuberculosis and thus provides for the withholding of compensation where the owner fails to notify any disease with which the pig is visibly affected. The definition of “disease” in section 4 includes other infectious diseases in addition to tuberculosis and section 19 of the Stock and Poultry Diseases Act applies generally to infectious diseases. In point of fact, the clinical manifestation of tuberculosis in swine is extremely rare. Other diseases for which compensation is payable are much more obvious clinically, are more highly contagious and can have a high mortality rate, and failure by owners of swine to report promptly their occurrence could result in the fund having to meet heavy compensation payments.

Clause 3 also provides that compensation is not to be paid if the owner of any pig has failed to carry out any written instruction given by an inspector for the control or eradi­cation of any disease in the owner’s piggery and the chief inspector is satisfied that the death of the pig from the disease resulted from that failure. In such a case it is con­sidered that the owner has forfeited his right to compensation. Clause 2 makes a drafting amendment to section 6 and makes a consequential amendment to that section which was omitted to be made when the maximum market value of a pig for compensation purposes was increased from £15 to £30.

Mr. O’HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.