

Discussion

Led By H. Harold Hume, Glen St. Mary

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The matter of quarantine has been very ably presented to you, and it is not my purpose to touch at any length upon that phase in my discussion. I must say, for the Plant Board, and I think I would be remiss if I did not say this, that the work has been very ably, and may I add, Dr. Newell, very fortunately handled in the last thirteen or fourteen years. Florida finds itself in not a worse position than it is by reason of a combination of things—good luck—Providence—call it what you will, and the work of the State Plant Board, but after all, it is my feeling after these years have gone by since the year 1915, that the most fortunate thing for the State of Florida was when Dr. Wilmon Newell came to it.

I am going to tell just one story on him. He can settle with me afterwards. Now, he has no chance. At one time, let me say at many times, the funds for carrying on the work which he has headed were very inadequate. Always they are inadequate, but sometimes they have been in worse shape than at others. At one time he kept a force of about 450 Plant Board inspectors in the field for three months without pay, and with no prospect of pay. Now, let me tell you, in my opinion, at least a man who can do that sort of thing has something in him.

The speakers, Dr. Newell and his co-workers, who have discussed these questions for you have emphasized the insects and troubles which we have. They have stressed and emphasized certain ones that they know of, but have said nothing about those things which they know not of, and in the words of Shakespeare, "Perhaps we are at a greater advantage in dealing with the joys that we know of, than to fly to those which we know naught of."

Citrus canker came to us an unknown disease. There are many more of exactly the same kind in the tropics, because the tropics and adjoining territories have not been served. They are short on the men who do that sort of work, and there are many more kinds of diseases in areas that we know nothing about that may come to us at any time, and our only safeguard against those things is a wide-awake, thoroughly manned and thoroughly backed-up quarantine.

Now there are several things wrong with the Plant Board and its work. There is nothing, in my opinion, wrong with its personnel, but it is not covering the ground as it ought to cover it. First, the Plant Board lacks police power. There are too many things you can do and get away with, simply because nobody objects. I have reason to know, that for

years past, and over certain periods of time the Board has done things, and got away with them, simply because nobody raised a question.

Recently, in the last session of the Legislature, a new Plant Act was passed, and the main reason for passing it was that the Plant Board of Florida for months had been without any power or authority to maintain its domestic quarantines. Many of you don't know that, but they got by because nobody raised the question.

Suppose that somebody comes across the Florida line from Georgia or Alabama in an automobile, loaded with plants. What authority has the State Plant Board to stop that car and examine it? If it comes right down to the question, and I am driving the car, and am so minded, I can tell the State Plant Board Inspector to—just that.

Now a very peculiar position with regard to that same automobile is that automobile is my house, some courts have held, if you enter it, you must have a search warrant. Those are the things that interfere with the work of the State Plant Board. Certainly the State Plant Board should have police powers. I am not an attorney, Mr. President. Sometimes it is difficult for me even to follow the meanderings of the legal mind, but by some means or other we should have that authority placed in the hands of the Plant Board, and inspectors be permitted to stop that automobile or that other carrier, as the case may be, and examine it.

Now there is no correction for that situation at the present time except through

legislation. There is another thing that I am going to refer to, and it is leading up to something I shall say a moment later. If the State Plant Board of Florida in the handling of its work has been remiss, in any way, it has been in not keeping its work as carefully and as fully before the people of Florida as it should. I will guarantee that those of you who are listening to me have had more information in regard to the Plant Board and its workings, and its work in the last two or three hours than you ever had before.

Now we know that those men over at Gainesville who are handling this work have rather scientific viewpoints; they are not good propagandists; they are doing their job and looking after it, but somebody has got to keep this work of the State Plant Board eternally before the people of Florida, and if that somebody isn't the State Plant Board, itself, I don't know who it is.

The next thing is, the State Plant Board needs greater backing up in the way of funds, and it is the office of the State Horticultural Society to undertake to see that it gets it. Don't think for a moment it's an easy undertaking. The getting of the additional funds for the State Plant Board, or the getting of additional funds for any really worth while thing is always difficult. Perhaps if it were less worth while, it would be easier to do. Having had some experience with the doing of these things, I know whereof I speak.

Florida must always depend upon its agriculture. I can see no sure future for the State of Florida, except through its

agriculture, and if we are not to look after the insects and the diseases that may come into the state to infest our products and to reduce our production, and to increase the cost of production, then we are short-sighted.

In procuring the funds, one of the first things you have to do is to go before a Budget Committee. The affairs of the State Plant Board are controlled by the State Board of Control, which also looks after a good many other things in the state, along educational lines. Usually when it comes to a certain amount of money that the State Board of Control gets, the State Plant Board's amount is also put into that as a part of the whole amount.

I can remember one time when we offered to go and get the case presented at Tallahassee. We failed, because all of the time was taken up on the other work, and at one time a Governor of the State of Florida told those who were interested in the advancement of the very things I am talking to you about, to keep their hands off, and I for one have definitely made up my mind that when the next Governor tells me that, or when that word is passed out to those who are interested in it, there is going to be something doing.

I know of no piece of work that this Society can do which will be more worth while than to see that the State Plant Board and all of its workers get the proper support from the next Legislature. I remarked to your President a moment ago that it is exceedingly difficult to get this sort of work done for an indefinite

proposition. Back in 1911 and 1913, this State Horticultural Society itself was warned of what was coming; I think you will find it in some of the reports back there, if you will go into them, and in 1913, we had Citrus Canker, and then when Citrus Canker came, when the trouble was with us, it was easier to do those things than it would have been. I verily believe the State Plant Board of Florida would never have come into existence in 1915 if it hadn't been for Citrus Canker, and bad as Citrus Canker has been, and difficult as the situation has been, Citrus Canker has been worth while to the State of Florida. That's a strange statement to make, yet if any of you care to debate with me, I will take you up on it. We have just as many difficulties staring us in the face in the future, as we have had in the past.

Dr. Newell emphasized the fact that our crops were exotics. Practically everything we cultivate that is worth while comes from somewhere else. They have the things that prey upon them, and there are a good many more knocking at our doors. We must safe-guard ourselves against these things. By all manner of means, I hope that this Society will put itself solidly back of the movement to see that the Plant Board gets the support it needs to do the work that must be done for our state.

I think I don't need to go further, Mr. President, and I would like to hear from some others.

Mr. J. E. Graff: Mr. Chairman, it is certainly pleasing to one who is interested in plant quarantines to see this Society

devote an entire session to the discussion of horticulture quarantine. I have felt for some time that the rational and official administration of quarantines was one of our most useful measures of conservation in this country, and if they are useful to the country at large, they are doubly useful to Florida. In the first place, you have more border line to protect than any state in the Union. In the second place, you have a climate that ranges from the tropical to the temperate. Insects from both zones can come in here, and make their homes, and in the course of time if you let the bars down you are going to have an all-year performance of insects. I realize it's a difficult thing to interest anyone in insects that grow outside of their own state, or own country.

In connection with the Federal Plant Board appropriation, it was organized in 1912. For sixteen years they have been asking for money for foreign plant quarantine. For next year they will have half a million dollars. That includes extension of the Boards, Mexican border inspection, fumigation of cars from Mexico, and a large extension station in Washington. That looks like a lot of money, but it isn't when you think about it. This last year for the corn borer Congress appropriated ten million dollars to try to slow up that insect. They weren't doing any permanent good, and knew it. That's the proposition you are up against. Maybe if I would put it this way, you will realize the importance of it—that plant quarantine is nothing more than horticulture insurance, and you

know you have got to pay your premiums every year on insurance or your policies are going to lapse. You know when your property becomes more valuable, and your location more hazardous, your rate is going up. Your agriculture is becoming more valuable every year. Your situation is becoming more dangerous every year, with increasing commerce and traffic. I think you have an efficient quarantine organization, but unless you keep after it, it is going to be very bad ten years hence. I think your mission is to see that funds are made available for a proper police organization, and unless you do that you will be paying very little for defense and millions for tribute.

General Blanding: Speaking as a member of the State Plant Board, and incidentally for the Citrus Exchange, which is vitally interested in this subject, I think the ground has been very ably and fully covered by Prof. Hume, who has given a very fine brief before the Board, but possibly a little more detailed information on matters of the Legislature, and our situation in regard to it, might be of interest to you.

Touching first on the police problem, it seems to be very difficult to convince the legislators the need of any extension of police power to be given to our inspectors. As far as I am aware, the only person in the state to whom the Governor is allowed to delegate police power directly are certain special agents, and officers of the railways. If that can be done, how much more important to everyone in that state is it that provision should be made whereby such power could be dele-

gated to our inspectors to handle the matters which have been so clearly shown to you as vital and necessary today.

Now in the matter of appropriation, which is the ammunition used by the Plant Board, a few months prior to each session of the Legislature, we call on Dr. Newell to submit to us a budget of the proper requirements of the Plant Board work, in the ensuing two years. He, in co-ordination with his assistants, makes up this tentative budget. It is presented to the Board, and we go over it very carefully. We sometimes, ourselves, eliminate some letters. There are always things which we would like to do, which are not as vital as others, and we want to give all we can for the vital parts of our program. So if there is some little matter that can be set aside, we generally make some changes in that way, but always in consultation and deference to the advice given us by men who really know the vital necessity of these various departments. We then take this budget, as agreed on, and it is sent to the State Budget Commission. There it is looked on, simply and solely, on a cold-blooded, cash basis. "Now we think we will divide up the available funds, a little for so much, and so much for this and that," and the consequence was the last one, when it came back, as to what we could have, was 40 per cent less than when turned in to them. We have to take that amount, as fixed by them, have Dr. Newell make out a new budget to fit what they have, and do the best they can with that amount. However, that's not quite the end of it. It comes back again to the

commission, and quite often there is something like this done. They say "Here's a salary; a man is getting \$4,000. Let's cut that to \$3,000," apparently without any thought of the importance of that man, the work he is doing, or anything connected with it, other than "we will take off \$1,000." In one instance, in the last budget, where Dr. Newell had one of the most expert men in the United States on certain work, he was working here for Dr. Newell at a salary of approximately \$1,200 or \$1,500 less than he had been getting before he came here, but he wanted to do some work here; he was very much interested, and came here at a reduced salary. Now the Budget Committee knew nothing about that; they didn't consult him; they simply sliced his salary. Of course, it was out of the question to keep that man. There are other things of that kind that we run up against right along, and you members of this Horticultural Society can help us. We want, and greatly appreciate your assistance in disseminating a knowledge of conditions, and requirements; through the people of the state in general with whom you come in contact, and particularly advising your legislators of what is really needed for this work. I can assure you that what appropriations are received by them, large or small, will be economically and efficiently used. They won't be wasted. I don't want to take any credit for that on behalf of the members of the Plant Board. That is Dr. Newell's and his able assistants' credit.

H. Harold Hume: We are electing Governors now. It might not be a bad

plan for the State Horticultural Society to inquire of the present candidates where they stand on this question in case of election, because the Governor is the Chairman of the Budget Committee, and some of these things are more easily done before election than afterwards.

I once had a Governor of the state tell me he would not sign an appropriation bill for the State Plant Board. I was very rocky that day, and I hurried much his journey to certain regions, and told him he would sign the bill, and left his office at that. He signed it, but it would have been easier to have committed him perhaps before he was elected.

Frank Stirling started this fight on Citrus Canker back in the day before we knew much about it.

Frank Stirling: Prof. Hume, I think I can look at this matter from a different viewpoint than most of you folks can. I looked at it from the inside for ten years, and have two years since been looking at it from the outside viewpoint. One of the things that has impressed itself upon me is this, that Dr. Newell and his gang is one of the poorest bunch of politicians in the State of Florida. I say that, when I compare the work of the State Plant Board with the work of some other state organizations, and I mean just that. During the last two years, since I left Dr. Newell's organization, I have been impressed with the cheap insurance that we growers have been getting. We need more insurance. We can well afford to pay a little larger premium. If our state is one of the freest sections in the world, it's free because of the organization that

Prof. Hume has been talking about. I know this organization; I know almost every one of them. I know that men who have been in that organization, ten, twelve and fourteen years, trained along lines that you can't get anywhere else, are receiving a salary of just about on a par with what an average grove foreman gets. I know that this organization is one of the most loyal organizations in the whole world. They hang together, and that's why they have gotten results. That's why our state is clean today, as clean as it is. Almost every week there are things brought to my attention about the dangers threatening our horticulture, things pertinent, right to the point. I know about all these pests they have been talking about. I have been an understudy of Dr. Newell for many years. I have sat at the side of Dr. Montgomery; I know Mr. Graff, and Mr. Goodwin, I have worked with him.

I wonder how we can get more insurance, a bigger policy. If there is anybody knows how often these groves of yours ought to be inspected, that's me, and I will go to bat with anybody on that. They ought to be inspected about three times as often as they are now. I know that nursery inspections ought to be made fully twice as often as they are now. I know the work of Mr. Potter in Tampa; Port Inspector Warner in Key West; the man at Jacksonville and Pensacola. I know the assistance they need in order to properly protect our interests here from outside damaging influences.

We have got the organization. If we can get more insurance in the way of

money, let's do it. I have already seen practically every aspirant for legislative honors in my part of the state, and that's what I have put up to them, "Are you going to back up, and help protect our horticulture and agriculture interests in this state?" They all, of course, promise me they are. I think perhaps that might help some.

Mr. O'Byrne: I know when I was with the Plant Board for ten years that I felt sometimes as if I was suspected of howling "Wolf, wolf," in order to help get a little support, but I think if there is any section where we should know the truth of the statements that have been made this morning, it is right here. It is immediately adjacent to a section that has been almost ruined by the cotton boll weevil and denuded of chestnut trees by diseases brought in by foreign countries. We are also in a state all but ruined by a disease brought in from a foreign country, a disease which was of no importance in the foreign country—Citrus Canker—of no practical damage in Japan, but I want to assure you that as surely as you are sitting here, our citrus industry would not be worth 25c today, had not Citrus Canker been eradicated. You may hear some men (men who perhaps should know better) say "I believe that is all a bluff; it's just an excuse to give a lot of men some jobs." Now, I want to beg to differ with them, and point out the fact that Frank Stirling and others of us have been able to make up a pretty decent living after we have severed ourselves from those very lucrative jobs they talk of. I don't call around and ask you

to make up contributions, because we gave up those jobs. We felt we had to provide somewhat better for our families that were coming on than we were able to do if we stayed with those jobs.

You, as citrus growers, have your all at stake. If we do not keep up the barriers and this inspection work, we better quit, and go somewhere else, or get in some other line of business, because we are in for serious losses. We must get behind this matter, and see that the Plant Board is properly provided with funds.

H. Harold Hume: I believe I have done for you now what you want me to do. I think this whole matter has been presented to the State Horticultural Society as it is, and more than that I need not add.

L. B. Skinner: Hume has a job ahead of him.

B. F. Floyd: Two years ago at the Horticultural Meeting in Cocoa, we drew up some resolutions, providing for an organization to back up the work of the State Plant Board. Those resolutions went just like a great many other resolutions that have been passed. We went home; we went back to work, and forgot all about it. That is in a measure the truth; it's not entirely the truth, because the matter was referred to a committee, two members of which committee and the chairman, particularly, became ill, and has been ill during all the meantime, and that is really one reason why it was not carried through. I would like to read these resolutions, as I think they ought to be brought back to life again.