

Animal Pedigree Act

that exports of livestock and livestock products are worth well over \$1 billion annually.

Livestock is an integral part of our agri-food system. There are solid economic reasons for the Government to ensure that the best possible livestock records are maintained. The new Animal Pedigree Act would retain the provisions of the old Act regarding animal pedigree associations authorized to keep pedigrees and to register animals of specific breeds. However, the new Act would also allow establishment of associations to keep records and to identify animals of evolving breeds. This is an important addition designed to encourage the best possible records and pedigrees of evolving breeds.

Livestock producers have been requesting these revisions for several years. The livestock industry has changed much since 1952. The new legislation is designed to meet today's requirements. The new Act will provide better protection to both buyers and sellers of livestock by strengthening Canada's livestock registration system.

I would also like to point out that the provisions of the new Animal Pedigree Act, as contained in this Bill, have met with the full concurrence of the animal industry. Consultations with all sectors of the Canadian pure-bred animal breeding industry have been going on since 1982. Therefore, I am confident that this legislation will serve the animal industry well. In turn, it will be a real service to Canadian agriculture.

I will briefly outline the major new provisions contained in the Bill now before us. First, the new Animal Pedigree Act will more clearly define the basic purpose, powers and duties of animal pedigree associations. The new Act provides for the formation of the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation. This new corporation would replace the Canadian National Livestock Records which currently has the status of an affiliation whose legal powers and status are unclear. Third, the new Canadian Livestock Records Corporation would keep pedigrees for pure-bred animals and for animals in the process of evolving into new breeds. Any interested livestock association could avail itself of this service.

The Act also defines a pure-bred animal as having at least 87.5 per cent, that is seven-eighths, of its inheritance from one breed. However, additional associations could make this more restrictive if they so desired. The Act also provides for the recognition of new breeds of animals. It makes provisions for embryo transfers and artificial insemination.

The Act provides for the amalgamation and dissolution of breed associations. It also includes an expanded offences section. It specifies time limits for transferring certificates of registration or identification after a change of ownership, and sets penalties for exceeding those time limits. In addition, the level of fines under the new offences section is to be determined by the value of the animal to which the offence relates. The maximum level of fines under the new provision would be raised to \$50,000 from the old \$500 maximum set back in 1952.

The new Act also updates provisions under the old Act in line with current federal corporate law legislation. Taken together, these revisions will provide better protection for both buyer and seller of registered or identified animals. In fact, the revisions will strengthen Canada's livestock registration system and could potentially increase world demand for Canadian livestock.

In summary, the Animal Pedigree Act will provide greater protection for the buyer of livestock, more realistic penalties for violations of the Act and more flexible rules for breed organization. This is a long awaited piece of legislation which deserves the support of this House.

Mr. Speaker: Debate.

Mr. Althouse: If there are questions, I have some.

Mr. Boudria: We cannot have questions for the first speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Humboldt—Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse), I think, is putting the question as to why are there no questions and comments. Under the procedure, the first three speeches are up to 40 minutes and there is no comment or question allowed on them. The Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) has the floor on debate.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond on Bill C-67 on behalf of the Liberal Party. This Bill, of course, has been some time in the making. Members will know that the Holstein Association has been lobbying for this legislation for some time now. In fact, it wrote to the now Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) some months ago asking for his support to ensure that this Bill would come up for discussion in the House of Commons in a short period of time.

In fact, I have a letter here that was sent by the Holstein Association of Canada dated May 13, 1987, in which it is asking my colleague, the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster), for his support in ensuring that this legislation will be discussed in the House of Commons in a short period of time. Therefore, needless to say, although a long period of time has elapsed between the time this lobbying effort was commenced and today, we do not intend to delay the Bill unnecessarily. Therefore, we will not debate this Bill in any manner that would prevent it from going to committee.

● (1200)

My wish is for the Bill to go to committee as soon as possible. I would like to take this opportunity now to indicate that my own personal preference is that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture rather than sent it in the customary way to a legislative committee. Apart from everything else, the Standing Committee on Agriculture is chaired by our distinguished colleague, the Hon. Member for Brandon—Souris (Mr. Clark), who is very knowledgeable in