

Animal Pedigree Act

Another concern that I have is with respect to the manner in which the amendment was brought forward. First, in view of the fact that the content was there in the original Bill, the contents of the amendment to which I am referring today, it must have been government policy. It must have been the policy of the Minister.

The Minister brought in a number of amendments to this Bill. Given that a package of amendments was brought in and in that package there was no mention of the particular amendment that was moved by the Hon. Member for Perth, I ask this: Was it the policy of the Government to have that amendment there, or was it simply an idea that came from the Hon. Member for Perth? Presumably it was a policy initiative which he was able to convey successfully to the Minister whereby the Minister's own policy should be amended to reflect the view of the Hon. Member for Perth. Or is it simply that the Government wanted to do this, but that the Minister felt that it would be politically more difficult for him or his Parliamentary Secretary to move the amendment, so he thought he would have someone else do it in order to take the heat off the Government for moving the amendment in question?

● (1520)

We have received a number of letters on this issue. I believe that we are permitted only 10 minutes to move our amendment, therefore, I cannot read all of the letters that we have received. The Parliamentary Secretary will know that we have received letters objecting to this change in Clause 59 of the Bill, or Clause 54, as the people were commenting on the first draft. There are people who would like that clause to remain.

In the true spirit of parliamentary co-operation to which we are accustomed from the opposition side, I would ask that the Government be as objective as we are on this side of the House and consider an opposition amendment to this Bill in order to restore it to what it was initially.

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, before addressing the remarks offered by the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) on behalf of the Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) who, unfortunately, cannot be present due to the weather. I wish to inform you, Mr. Speaker, and the House that there have been consultations among representatives of the Parties of the House with respect to another minor amendment which we are advised would further the purpose of the Bill. I am referring to the following amendment:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I must interrupt the Parliamentary Secretary. We must first dispose of the Government's amendment before we go on with this amendment. If there is no further discussion, I will put the question.

Mr. Clark (Brandon—Souris): I wish to speak to the amendment before the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Clark (Brandon—Souris): First, I want to address two or three of the remarks made by the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) when he raised questions as to the method by which the Bill was amended as it was during the committee stage. Perhaps I should begin by explaining that this Bill has been amended on several different occasions during the course of the hearings by the legislative committee. Quite frankly, I think that that process demonstrates the importance of the legislative committee function. The committee met on numerous occasions and there were many amendments. There is only a question about the one which is now before the House.

In my opinion, the wording in Clause 59, as it is presently reported to the House, having been amended by the legislative committee, should in fact stand. The implications of the amendment were very carefully considered. It was introduced only after considerable discussion and considerable notice. In fact, I believe there was some reference to this as early as December in our proceedings.

The amended Clause 59 as reported to the House was introduced at the request of several breed associations, including the Appaloosa Horse Club of Canada, the Canadian Charolais Association, the Canadian Beef Breeds Council, the Canadian Gelbvieh Association, and the Canadian Pinzgauer Association.

I would like to remind the House that Clause 59, as proposed by the legislative committee, will provide more choice to Canadian industry in processing its registrations. That is the reason why the amendment was adopted at the committee stage. We believe that this amendment as it now stands will promote an environment of free enterprise and competition in the area of maintaining records.

Under the current Livestock Pedigree Act, breed associations have the right to either register animals themselves, or have the Canadian national livestock records register those animals on their behalf. We felt that this policy was too restrictive. Since the wording under the legislation currently in force has made the policy too difficult to enforce, some associations are already using the services of another association to register their animals.

The Canadian Gelbvieh Association and the Canadian Pinzgauer Association are using the services of the Canadian Charolais Association to register and keep records of their animals. This working relationship between two or more breed associations has been very positive in terms of reducing the cost of record keeping and registration services.

Clause 59, as it now stands, will allow the expertise, staff, and equipment of one breed association to be made available to other associations for registration and record keeping purposes. Such arrangements will help reduce the need for so many breed associations to have their own record keeping