

must, surely, take the blame for this. The tragedy is that agriculture apparently has such a low priority on the legislative ladder and the order paper of the House of Commons.

Mr. Stanfield: Controls are the thing now.

Mr. Hargrave: I want to make some opening comments on the transportation aspects covered by this bill. First of all, I should like to again commend the government and the minister for transferring the authority for the transportation of livestock from section 404 of the Criminal Code to the Animal Contagious Diseases Act, under the Department of Agriculture. This is an excellent move and is long overdue.

Most of my remarks will relate to the movement of cattle, especially from western Canada, to so-called central and, occasionally, far eastern Canada. I want to refer, first of all, to a very important brief that was presented to the government back in 1973, entitled "Statement on Livestock Transportation". Even though it was presented on January 17, 1973, I think portions of it are very applicable today. Therefore, I should like to quote from it briefly.

The brief was presented to Hon. Otto Lang, then minister of justice, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan). It was put together by a joint committee of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and the Ontario Beef Improvement Association, with the assistance and co-operation of Canadian National Railways and Canadian Pacific Railway. I shall read just a short part of it as follows:

Our purpose is to seek the creation of the type of federal legislation which will permit development of a more efficient and humane system for transporting livestock and specifically feeder cattle. It is our view that the Criminal Code is not the most appropriate legislative vehicle for legislation of this kind. What is required, we submit, is legislation that will control the conditions under which livestock are transported, while at the same time providing sufficient safeguards to satisfy public concern.

Later in the statement we read the following:

Our interest, therefore, is to speed the cattle to final destination as quickly as is reasonably possible and to do so requires some progressive amendment to the Criminal Code.

The statement continues:

We were well pleased with the experience in 1972, and the non-stop run from Winnipeg to Toronto and points beyond brought with it many benefits.

The total elapsed time in transit was reduced in many cases.

Because cattle were kept moving, the rail and stockyards system was less burdened with backlogs and delays.

Rail cars were tied up with one load for a shorter period of time and availability of cars was a less crucial problem.

I think that last point represents the most practical advantage of the faster runs which started back in the fall of 1972. The statement ends with four recommendations which I think are still most important and I propose to read them:

We respectfully wish to close our statement with the following recommendations.

1. That the Minister of Agriculture be requested to establish a special committee to develop guidelines for the humane, efficient transportation of livestock.

2. That the committee be formulated to include representatives designated by the railways, the producer organizations (i.e. Canadian Cattle-

men's Association and the Ontario Beef Improvement Association) and the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies.

3. That new legislation based on these guidelines, governing the transportation of livestock, and to be administered by the Canada Department of Agriculture, be developed and introduced as soon as is practically possible.

4. That the procedures for shipping cattle employed in 1972 be repeated in 1973.

Although these recommendations are outdated, they refer to prior runs of non-stop shipments of livestock from Winnipeg through to Toronto. The report is dated January 17, 1973, and now, almost three years later, we are just getting around to making these recommendations part of the act.

I think there are special comments on rail and truck movement of calves to Ontario which need to be made at this time. I might add that these comments are based on my personal experience of well over 25 years. During that period I have been associated with cattle sales at Walsh, in southeastern Alberta. On average during those 25 years we loaded and shipped 25 to 50 carloads—sometimes more—of calves and feeder yearlings per sale to Ontario points. The hon. member for Lethbridge (Mr. Hurlburt) was the auctioneer at most of those sales, so he knows very well what I am referring to now.

The greatest concern of Ontario buyers always has been the risk of death, and sickness losses. These are sometimes very expensive. At times these deaths number from 3 to more than 20 animals in a car. This represents a considerable loss. If the animals are not dying, very often the sickness is considerable and it takes weeks and even months to get over such a loss. Our experience over the years as producers and shippers of feeder calves and yearlings would suggest the following: first, we should load only healthy animals, subject to veterinarians' visual inspection. We should watch for signs of fever, pneumonia and scours, to name only a few.

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Calves should not be shipped the day they are weaned if at all possible. As a matter of fact most of them are shipped the day after they are weaned. Second, calves should be offered water before loading on to the stock cars. I think that is most important.

Third, and of the utmost importance, is the fact that the total time in transit, which includes any rest stops, should be kept to a minimum. I think what I should like to stress more than anything else about the shipment of calves from the prairies to Ontario is that the total time in transit should be kept to a minimum.

Fourth, one feeding and water stop only in Winnipeg should be necessary. This implies that a non-stop route from Winnipeg to Ontario designation points should be a reality.

Fifth, a further implication is that the old 36-hour release regulations be changed to at least 48 hours. I hope this specific item will be discussed with the cattle producers in western Canada, with the feeders and buyers from Ontario, as well as with the railway people when that decision is formulated in the regulations. It is well known that a reduction in the total time in transit means that sickness loss can be dramatically reduced. The Winnipeg-