

Research on Treatment of Animals

picture. We know about oil and mercury pollution and the effects of pesticides. We also know the danger of over-hunting. But we have not had the whole picture put together in order to help us plan a concerted program to save our wild life. We know that at least eight Canadian species are in great danger of being wiped out, including the timber wolf, the fisher and the polar bear. There are supposed to be about 10,000 polar bears left in the world, 6,000 of which are in Canada. The Soviet Union decided some years ago to take measures against polar bear hunting. I understand we, in Canada, cannot contemplate such action because polar bears are the only animals the Eskimos can shoot in order to survive. We are not prepared to adopt ways and means to save either the Eskimos or the polar bears. The other species in danger of extinction are the cougar, the walrus, the grizzly bear and the bald eagle. There are some other species which have been saved in the nick of time as a result of proper action, including the beaver, the bison and the whooping crane. But these are still on the very precarious edge of extinction.

We should urge the government to set up this committee to study ways and means of dealing with the whole matter of animals and their well-being. The committee should study the aspects of experimental animals and how they are being looked after. We must also look into the over-all picture. We are not only talking in terms of saving animals but also in terms of saving human beings, depend. What is the use of talking about the tourist industry, with all the beautiful parks and that sort of thing, if we are going to kill off some of the most attractive features, namely our wild life species?

Without using any more of the time of the House I should like seriously to urge that we consider the intent of this motion. It is not the intent to have the committee study the narrow aspects of experimental animals, humane trapping or penalizing people who abuse animals and that sort of thing. These are all necessary features and are included. My colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver East is making an appeal on the broad ground that we should look at animal species from every possible angle in order to determine whether we can deal with their welfare as a whole program, giving the Canadian people a chance to understand the situation. We want to get at the facts as a result of calling witnesses and asking for the presentation of documents to a parliamentary committee. If we do this, we will be taking one step in the direction of making Parliament very much more relevant in the minds of a lot of people in this country. These people are concerned not only about animals but that we shall have an increasing interest in living things. We must preserve our wild life for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. I strongly urge the Prime Minister to designate a standing committee of this House to make this the first piece of business for the fall session.

Mr. Eymard Corbin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Forestry): In rising to speak on this

I want to touch very briefly on just a couple of these aspects. The first is the matter that has just been dealt with at length, namely animals used for experimental purposes. I do not think that in the year 1971 it is sufficient for animal experimentation to be carried on by voluntary guidelines; that is just not good enough. Countries of the world that are ahead of us in restricting cruelty to animals and in seeing to their care. While I do not undervalue the work that is being done by the Canadian Committee on Animal Care, I do feel that they need the additional assistance of legislation to make sure there is proper care.

I do not think that this matter should resolve itself into a question of trying to find species of animals whose pain threshold is not as great as that of other animals that are higher up in the sphere of evolution. My colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch), referred the last time he spoke to the establishment in the United Kingdom of the first research institute that does not use animals for experiments. This is the Walter Hadwen Trust for Humane Research, located in England which employs the techniques of tissue culture, cell culture, organ culture, robotics, films and computers.

Dr. Charles Mayo, one of the founders of the famous Mayo Clinic, has made this statement:

I abhor vivisection. It should at least be curbed. Better, it should be abolished. I know of no achievement through vivisection, no scientific discovery that could not have been obtained without such barbarism and cruelty. The whole thing is evil.

Perhaps this statement is going a little too far; perhaps not. But I believe that a committee of this House designed by the Prime Minister should go fully into such questions as the experimental use of animals for research purposes. They should attempt to find out how much live experimentation is legitimate, how much legislative protection this requires, and what other means can be made available. My colleague from Vancouver East has spoken earlier about the experiments taking place to devise less cruel animal traps for trapping wild fur-bearing animals. Several versions of traps are being tested. Such a committee should call witnesses in order to find the most humane means of trapping.

• (5:20 p.m.)

What I have said relates to the part of the motion about cruelty to animals. The other part I want to deal with relates to the protection of humans. Unless we can find ways and means of protecting animals, fish and birds in our environment, we are going to bring down the whole ecology necessary to our very existence as a species. Let me refer to the *Montreal Gazette* of May 9, 1970. This article reads:

The Canadian Wild Life Federation says 65 Canadian wild life species are being endangered and face possible extinction. The article then asks why this is so. There must be reasons which could be provided the Canadian people in order that they might know the appropriate action to take. Of course we know bits and pieces of the total