

Government Orders

As I understand the plan in this regard, it is that this legislation, the health of animals bill, is to provide a legal background for those codes of practice for these various species of domestic animals. The regulations may not actually be written under this measure for some time because so far the whole code of practice seems to be working quite well. However, at some stage it may not work well enough and there may be obvious needs for strengthening those codes and for legal powers to be put in place.

As I understand the plan by the department and the various livestock groups, it is that this clause concerning the humane treatment of animals really provides a legal back-up to those code arrangements. It seems to me that there is a danger in going into the kind of specific requirement provided for in the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Mackenzie because it gets into the whole question of infliction of pain, suffering and injury to animals. Those items are well provided for in the Criminal Code.

In this legislation we are looking at providing legal back-up to the code of practice by the various livestock groups concerning arrangements for husbandry and production of poultry, eggs, veal calves, hogs and various groups.

• (1610)

Section 446 of the Criminal Code says:

Causing unnecessary suffering—Punishment—Failure to exercise reasonable care as evidence—Presence at baiting as evidence—Order of prohibition—Breach of order.

Section 446(1) states:

Every one commits an offence who

(a) wilfully causes or, being the owner, wilfully permits to be caused unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal or a bird—

There are other sections, but that is the effective one. It seems to me that the actual detail of a criminal charge is better left under the Criminal Code itself. Here we are providing regulations which may become necessary if the code of practice for the various livestock groups which already exist require legal back-up.

I think there is a reasonable case for maintaining the more general provisions which presently exist in the legislation, rather than moving toward a more specific, detailed explanation of humane treatment or humane

care which is provided for under the existing Criminal Code of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would like to advise the House that the House will adjourn at five o'clock so that members may attend the hon. Speaker at the farm.

Members have heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

Motion (Mr. Althouse) negatived.

Hon. Charles Mayer (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that the bill be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mayer (for the Minister of Agriculture) moved that the bill be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to present to the House for third reading Bill C-66, the health of animals bill which proposes changes to the Animal Protection Act. The reputation of Canadian animal products is second to none in the world market-place.

You will probably find that Bills C-66 and C-67 are very similar, with many similar clauses. Therefore, some of my remarks might be very close to those made earlier.

The reputation of our animal products in the world market-place has been earned over the years and we are not willing to compromise it in any way.

Bill C-66 represents the corner-stone of the determination of the government and the agri-food industry to keep our standards high in animal health. Legislation covering this area was first passed in 1869 and was last