

Again, there is no objection to regulations for construction standards, providing the intent is for the safe and humane treatment of livestock. However, there is a risk in government circles to promote uniformity for the sake of uniformity. Of course, we will be very anxious to assess the proposed standards and determine if in fact they are in keeping with the intent of the legislation.

I have dealt in some detail with clause 32 because it is a new and extremely important feature of this bill. I have also attempted to demonstrate the difficulties experienced on this side by interested parties who will be involved in assessing such a bill without a draft form of the regulations or some indication from the government or the department as to what the regulations may include. I certainly recommend to the Standing Committee on Agriculture that there be a clause calling for the establishment of an advisory committee of appropriate groups to assist in the formation of regulations which will apply to the transportation sector.

Before turning from this new and important section on transportation, it should be noted and emphasized that the legislation allows for transportation of all animals. We will obviously be interested in the minister's proposals for the transportation of animals for research purposes, the regulations which will be required for the containing and handling of a large variety of animals, the recommendations regarding the safety and well-being of the animals, as well as the protection of aircraft from unnecessary and dangerous contamination from natural wastes and infectious and contagious micro-organisms. We will also be interested in knowing the priorities which will be established for the transportation of animals, the types of facilities at airports envisaged under this legislation, and the training of personnel associated with the care of animals in transit. I would simply say, with respect to this entire section on transportation, that there are numerous areas we will pursue in the standing committee. I am sure we will have the co-operation of the minister in pursuing these particular avenues.

I want to make a few comments on those parts of the bill that extend to surveillance and increase the mechanisms to keep reportable and non-reportable contagious or infectious diseases in check. Again, I wish to indicate my general support for these measures, but as I interpret the legislation there appear to be some inconsistencies in the penalties. I seriously question whether the desired results will be obtained with some of the restrictive features. I refer to page 8 of the bill, clause 6, which reads as follows:

"9. (1) Every owner of animals and every breeder of or dealer in animals, and everyone bringing animals into Canada shall, on perceiving the appearance of any reportable disease among the animals owned by him or under his special care, give immediate notice to the nearest veterinary inspector of the Department of Agriculture of the facts discovered by him as aforesaid.

This clause implies that the average producer should have the ability to recognize on sight all of the reportable diseases defined in the act or subsequently defined by the minister. With all due respect, I seriously doubt whether the average breeder could pronounce the 26 diseases listed in the act, let alone diagnose their presence. I suggest that the present legislation is unrealistic and the associated penalty excessively severe.

Animal Contagious Diseases

Clause 6 continues:

(2) Every veterinarian in Canada shall, immediately on ascertaining that an animal has a reportable disease, give notice of the existence of the disease to the nearest veterinary inspector.

In my view, this should be more closely interrelated with the previous subclause. During the examination of miscellaneous estimates on November 28 of last year, I asked what I considered to be a very key question as it relates to the total problem of control of contagious and infectious disease. I inquired as to the communication that exists between the veterinary inspectors and the department and the practising veterinarians. The answer clearly indicated there is no line of authority in transmitting this information to the professionals in the field, the veterinarians. At that time Dr. Wells had this to say:

We are, however, developing now and we hope to have very shortly the first issue of a publication which will go forward from the health of animals branch to all practising veterinarians in the country and this will list areas in which these diseases are found.

● (1440)

It is not my intention at this time to list instances in which reportable diseases have been present in a district and where the practising veterinarians have had no knowledge of its existence, but I wish to emphasize in the strongest terms possible that this practice is wrong and is not in the best interests of controlling infectious diseases.

I have no difficulty in accepting the principle that this is a confidential matter between the owner and the Department of Agriculture. But surely there is an overriding principle here, and that overriding principle must be the dissemination of information rapidly and accurately to the professionals responsible for the care of animals. Medical ethnics dictate that the present practice should stop and common sense makes it clear that all practising veterinarians must be involved in the control of infectious and contagious diseases. I want to tell the minister that I will actively pursue this matter when the bill is before the standing committee.

I want, now, to turn to the area of compensation which has been alluded to by other hon. members in this debate. The principle that I believe should be embodied in the legislation should be that of replacement value. Again, I suggest that the minister give consideration to establishing a mechanism whereby there is participation by those affected in developing and updating regulations to conform with changes in the industry. The section of the bill dealing with compensation is a very important one. It is an area I have discussed on many occasions with my colleague, the hon. member for Elgin (Mr. Wise), and he certainly shares the view that the market value approach is an improvement. However, I know he feels it would not be satisfactory or as equitable as compensation payments made on the basis of replacement value. If this latter approach could be adopted, particularly for dairy cattle, by using a reasonable base price figure plus an index formula dealing with breed, age, type classification and production records or potential, I know the hon. member feels there might be a much more accurate and acceptable form of compensation payment.

I know the hon. member for Elgin has met with dairy producers in Ontario and that he has in his possession proposals based on this particular theory prepared by Mr.