

*Government Orders*

nearest tree, or from a sick, dozy animal that cannot keep up with the rest of the herd and is not going to put up much a fight? Madam Speaker, I suggest to you that I know from which those blood samples will be taken. It would take a lot of fortitude to tackle one of those 2,600-pound bulls that is liable to chase you up the nearest tree and then shove over the tree to get to you.

There are a lot of things we have to look at in terms of infectious diseases in the country. While I support most of the provisions in this bill, I do not believe in imposing additional costs on producers who could be innocent victims of an imported animal spreading disease or an outbreak that could be carried by migrating water-fowl stopping over. It could occur as a result of bringing in some birds or animals from another continent.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, we had an outbreak of a contagious poultry disease in southwestern Ontario. I believe it was Newcastle disease. It was learned that a particular hatching operation had imported baby chicks, supposedly from Ireland, because Ireland was listed as a clean vicinity. They had been trans-shipped from another country to Ireland and then on to Canada.

The outbreak did not occur in the area immediately surrounding the area where these birds were reared, but rather some 50 miles away in the constituency of my colleague, the hon. member for Kent. It occurred there because the same feed truck that serviced farms in that area serviced the hatchery these birds came from. Consequently, two breeding flocks of turkeys in my own neighbourhood were wiped out because of this supposedly innocent act of importing from Europe by way of Ireland baby chicks that were carriers of this disease.

The farmers were not paid ample compensation for these two breeding flocks under this particular legislation because it did not provide for compensation other than for the sale of the birds for meat purposes. Those losses were very heavy and I would like to see something done to compensate for that.

My main concern about this bill is that the government is trying to proceed on a cost recovery basis. The government has a responsibility to make sure that the consumers of Canada have high quality, clean food

available to them that is not infected by these diseases from other nations. But it also has an obligation to make sure that, if the owners of the livestock are willing to test to maintain that high quality, clean food, and they volunteer to test, then they should not have to bear the costs of the veterinarians who do that. They have their own costs of round-up, handling, and equipment and, of course, always at risk of injury.

As I said, this bill has some very important provisions that we think are good, but that is one aspect that I want to make sure the government is very much aware of and prepared to deal with in committee.

There is another concern that I think I should raise here on the floor of the House today because of this outbreak in England. The United States, the EEC, and the Soviet Union are among those that are banning imports of beef from this area. I hope the government will act immediately to do the same thing. When we ban those imports, we must be very careful to catch all the shipments and not allow some that may be trans-shipped to another country to end up in Canada, the country of origin undivulged to the consumers.

• (1210)

While it does not appear that this particular disease can infect humans, it is suspected of infecting a cat. The autopsy was performed at the University of Bristol. It seems to be a comparable disease to that found in cattle. This disease had been identified only in sheep, but it is obvious that the infected cattle originally contracted it by eating a protein supplement partially composed of meat scraps and meat meal that came from some infected sheep.

I hope that the government will act very quickly to make sure that shipments of beef into the country are curtailed immediately until this outbreak is cleaned up.

The British Government is funding a \$30 million research program, but scientists say it could be several years before they understand how the disease is passed on and they perfect a fool-proof test. In the meantime, this dread disease will continue to spread throughout British cattle herds. As a result, many British consumers have simply stopped buying the product.