

Animal Treatment Study

used in experiments it establishes responsibility for their proper care and treatment. One need only open this booklet to realize that a great deal of work in this area has already been done. Under the heading "A Philosophy for the Care and Use of Experimental Animals" the three items listed are: (1) to provide humane care and treatment; (2) to minimize pain and discomfort; (3) to avoid unnecessary abuse. The book gives us a complete outline of the type of environment in which the animals should be housed and cared for, noting such factors as temperature, humidity, ventilation, light, noise, odour control, type of structure, walls, floor and windows, ceiling and corridors, which are necessary to ensure proper care and treatment of laboratory animals.

Under "General Husbandry" we read about the type of identification, record-keeping and caging which are recommended for the general wellbeing of the animals kept. Attention is paid to food and water, varmint control, waste disposal and disease control, safety procedures, anaesthesia and euthenasia. There is also a general outline of procurement and transportation procedures, together with an outline for responsibility for animal care and notes on the responsibilities of animal attendants, technicians, directors and investigators. I believe this booklet is a complete though concise outline dealing with many factors which relate to the care and control of laboratory animals.

In January of this year, assessment panels were appointed by the council and began an inspection of animal facilities and procedures at universities across Canada. Every university in Canada using animals for experiments is being visited by a team of three to five individuals experienced in animal care and experimentation. Membership of these panels includes representatives from the technical advisory committee of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. I am told that in addition to their concern with animal care facilities these panels review the safeguards attached to animal experimentation so as to ensure that humane and ethical treatment of experimental animals is enforced and that proper use is made of our animal resources.

Some of the matters which the hon. member suggests should be reviewed by a House of Commons standing committee are really the responsibility of the provinces. For instance, the province of Ontario has recently introduced a very controversial bill, number

[Mr. Foster.]

73, concerned with the procuring of laboratory animals from the municipal and S.P.C.A. dog pounds. Other provinces, namely Saskatchewan in 1953 and Alberta in 1966, have passed laws concerning pound procurement of unclaimed stray dogs. These provincial laws fulfill the recommendations of the report of the special N.R.C. committee on the care of experimental animals.

● (5:50 p.m.)

Thus, for a standing committee of the House of Commons to study this matter might draw attention to the problem in other provinces, but the committee would be spending time studying matters which are essentially of provincial concern. I would, therefore, suggest that some of the subject matter of this motion could be referred to a standing committee of the House of Commons. Some of it is within provincial jurisdiction, and some of these items have already been studied and reported on by competent investigatory groups.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to say just a few words on this motion. Like a great many hon. members, I have been interested in this matter for a number of years. One of the main features of the motion is that there should be a national study by a House of Commons committee on the general well-being of animals. Because time is short, I shall deal with only that section of the motion which has received a good deal of attention from the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster).

The hon. member for Lanark and Renfrew (Mr. McBride) referred to the fact that in his opinion this problem would be adequately covered by the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code. I do not believe this is so. The difficulty with respect to experimental animals is not that there are not very good regulations put out by the Canadian Council on Animal Care, to which the hon. member for Algoma referred, but that in spite of their having laid out all these good regulations and ideas there is no legislation in Canada to enforce such regulations and standards.

In my opinion it does not help to shelter behind the jurisdiction of the provinces. If there is a Canadian Council on Animal Care, there ought to be Canada-wide legislation to enforce its standards with regard to animal welfare, animal well-being and the care of research animals. There ought to be, as my colleague, the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Winch) pointed out, legislation to