



Northern Ireland
Assembly

**COMMITTEE FOR
AGRICULTURE AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

OFFICIAL REPORT
(Hansard)

**Addendum to the Report on the Diseases
of Animals Bill**

10 November 2009

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr (Chairperson)
Mr Tom Elliott (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Willie Clarke
Mr Pat Doherty
Mr William Irwin
Dr William McCrea
Mr Patsy McGlone
Mr Francie Molloy
Mr George Savage

The Chairperson (Mr Paisley Jnr):

The next item on the agenda is the addendum to the report on the Diseases of Animals Bill. Page 10, paragraph 24 is the Committee's formal recommendation of the new clause 8.

Mr Savage:

Paragraph 14 says that:

"The Department believed that the remaining pockets of brucellosis were mainly as a result of bad biosecurity practice". Although some people may agree with that, a neighbour of mine had a breakout of brucellosis around a month ago, and I would not like him to see that paragraph. To me, that stinks of somebody having done something wrong. That may be the case in some areas; however, my neighbour is as good a farmer as any in Northern Ireland.

Dr W McCrea:

That is not what paragraph 14 is saying. None of us can change what the Minister is saying.

Paragraph 14 says:

“The Minister stated ... The Department believed ... The Minister stressed”.

With the greatest respect, we cannot change that.

In paragraph 24, we strongly say that:

“The Committee is resolute in its position that the objective of this clause is the eradication of brucellosis in Northern Ireland and that the Department should not be distracted from the achievement of this objective”.

We have to be very careful, because we cannot change anything that the Minister or the Department have said. That is factual.

The Chairperson:

The last sentence of paragraph 15 says that:

“On this basis, the Committee advised the Department that they did not agree with the reintroduction of the link between poor biosecurity and a reduction in compensation levels.”

And at the beginning of that paragraph it says that:

“However, they remained concerned that the Department had not presented evidence indicating that the remaining pockets of brucellosis were being caused by poor biosecurity.”

I think that we are covered by that.

Mr Savage:

I hope that that is the case. I would not like my neighbour to think that I was party to something that blamed him.

The Chairperson:

I think that we have accurately reflected the Department’s position, and, where necessary, put in our critique and an explanation of where the Committee believes things are. We have added a conclusion that spells out why the Committee recommends new clause 8 and the circumstances under which it does so. I think that the report is very clear.

Are members content to approve the report?

Members indicated assent.