

C. S. O. (Formerly)
C.S.O.

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6
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8

(Formerly)

SUBJECT :

RABBITS.

CONNECTED FILES.

NUMBER AND YEAR.

0437

Hares

H.C.S.

H/s notes on
"Myxomatosis" - which
I would like to place
before Ex-Co.

Edward T. Ferr.

A/o.

29/6/55.

MESSAGE FORM

**CALL
AND
INSTRUC-
TIONS**

IN

OUT

No. of Groups.

GR.

Serial No.

OFFICE DATE STAMP

(ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

TO

FROM

Originator's Number

Date

In Reply to Number

(G. V. 124) Wt. 4629/151. 400M Pads. 2/42. B. & S. Ltd. 51-4364.

THIS MESSAGE MAY BE SENT AS WRITTEN BY ANY MEANS EXCEPT WIRELESS.

THIS MESSAGE MUST BE SENT IN CIPHER IF LIABLE TO INTERCEPTION OR TO FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS.

ORIGINATOR'S INSTRUCTIONS DEGREE OF PRIORITY

TIME OF ORIGIN

SIGNED

SIGNED

(BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)

T.H.I.

SYSTEM IN	TIME IN	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER	SYSTEM OUT	TIME OUT	READER	SENDER

T.O.R.

* Originator may delete "except" and insert "including."

Now rabbits are living **ABOVE** the ground

BRITAIN'S wild rabbits have quit their underground burrows and are now living and breeding in "nests" above the ground, the National Farmers' Union said yesterday.

The rabbits have changed their living habits, the N.F.U. added, because of the killer-disease myxomatosis, which nearly wiped them out.

Still Exists

The N.F.U. added that myxomatosis still exists in some areas, but it is unlikely to spread now that the rabbits are no longer living in crowded underground warrens.

As a result, the number of wild rabbits is increasing. An N.F.U. spokesman said: "Although the increase is only slight at present, there should be no let-up in the campaign to exterminate this pest.

"Nine rabbits eat as much as two sheep."

MYXOMATOSIS.History.

The disease was first reported in 1898 from Montevideo in Uruguay. Outbreaks occurred subsequently, in Argentina, Brazil and Southern California. It is transmitted by mosquitoes, lice, fleas and a species of mite. There is no apparent risk to man, birds or other animals, except possibly to the hare.

In Australia, following experimental work in 1926, extensive field trials were undertaken from 1936 to 1943. The results varied from "very limited success" to "favourable results". The virus was used again in 1950, and the disease smouldered on and on until 1953, with a sudden flare up, which killed "tens of millions of rabbits". Reports indicate however, that some survivors have acquired immunity, and it is possible that from these, the rabbit population will build up, again. More recent attempts to introduce the disease into Western Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand have not been very successful.

In 1936-38, three attempts were made to introduce the disease into a heavy rabbit population, on the island of Skokholm, off the coast of Pembrokeshire. The disease spread a little at first, but had no controlling effect on the rabbit, and soon died out. During the same period experiments had been carried out on an estate in Sweden, and on a Danish island, without much success.

Since 1952, experiments have been going on, in uninhabited islands in the Hebrides, but so far the results have been inconclusive.

NO ATTEMPT HAS EVER BEEN MADE TO INTRODUCE MYXOMATOSIS ON TO THE MAINLAND OF GREAT BRITAIN.

In June 1952, a French Doctor, released two wild rabbits, previously inoculated with the virus, within his walled-in property. Within a month 90 to 95 per cent of the wild rabbits on his estate had died, and the disease had started to spread to the surrounding countryside. By 1953 it had spread all over France, except to Brittany.

By 1954 it had spread to Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain.

The first outbreaks in England occurred in October 1953, in Kent and East Sussex. There is no evidence to show how the disease was introduced into England, nor is the source known. On the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, every effort was made to contain the original centres of infection, with the object of eradicating the disease. These measures were unsuccessful, and the disease has now become established in all parts of the country in the United Kingdom.

Economics of the Wild Rabbit.

It is claimed that nine rabbits will eat as much as two sheep, and in Great Britain it is estimated that the income from Rabbits, (from meat, fur, felt and hat trades) is about £15 million per annum. The loss, or potential loss caused by the depredations of the rabbit to agriculture and forestry is three or four times as great, (i.e. up to £60 million per annum.)

REVIEW of Evidence.

- Evidence was submitted to the Advisory Committee by :-
- (a). the animal welfare societies;
 - (b). the agricultural and forestry interests;
 - (c). the rabbit, meat, fur, felt and hat trades, and
 - (d) the domestic rabbit interests.

It was clear that there was a general concern regarding the humanitarian aspects of the disease, amongst all who submitted

of a nation-wide campaign to exterminate the wild rabbit by every humane method available, as a means of reducing or preventing further suffering, both from the spread of the disease and inhuman methods of rabbit-catching.

The Agricultural and Forestry interests, while regarding the wild rabbit as an unmitigated pest, were not generally in favour of the deliberate spread of the disease.

The rabbit meat, fur, felt and hat industries were understandably concerned with the effect of the disease on their not inconsiderable trade.

The main concern of the domestic rabbit industry was that adequate measures should be taken to protect domestic rabbits from myxomatosis.

Conclusions and recommendations.

The main argument in favour of the deliberate spread of the disease is that a concerted and widespread on the rabbit might reduce it to a point of near extermination, to the great benefit of both agriculture and forestry. On the other hand a myxomatous rabbit is unsightly, and is plainly in distress, and strong representations were made to the committee, on humanitarian grounds, against a policy of spreading the disease. The committee was satisfied that there are clear and obvious objections, on humanitarian grounds, to infecting an animal deliberately with an unpleasant disease to reduce its numbers.

There are also legal reasons for not recommending deliberate spreading of the disease. Whatever may be the position in law of a person who transports a diseased rabbit from one place to another, the committee was advised that it is likely that a person who ~~deliberately~~ deliberately takes a rabbit and inoculates with the virus would be committing one or both of the offences of "doing an act causing unnecessary suffering to an animal", and "administering a poison to an animal without reasonable cause or excuse". (Protection of animal Act, 1911, Section 1., and Protection of Animals (Scotland) Act 1912, Section 1.).

Furthermore the committee was advised that, under civil law, a person who deliberately spreads such a disease on his own land, might be held liable for damage caused to a neighbour as a result of the disease spreading to his land or to his stock of domestic rabbits. Moreover, no disease has within human knowledge completely exterminated an animal population.

THE COMMITTEE THEREFORE REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT NO ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO ASSIST THE SPREAD OF MYXOMATOSIS, OR TO INTRODUCE IT INTO UNAFFECTED AREAS OF THE COUNTRY.

BY DECISION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM PARLIAMENT IT IS NOW AN OFFENCE

TO SPREAD THE DISEASE OF MYXOMATOSIS DELIBERATELY.

Apart from the above information, my views remain the same. I feel that it would be most undesirable on humanitarian grounds, to introduce Myxomatosis into a country where the disease does not exist. In the United Kingdom this point did not arise because the disease was not introduced by deliberate official action. In my opinion to introduce the disease deliberately would constitute an act of "Cruelty to Animals".

Frank J. Fern.
N.R.C.V.S.
28/6/55.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MYXOMATOSIS.

The committee was appointed on the 3rd November 1953 "to advise on the problems arising in connection with myxomatosis in rabbits and the action that should be taken by the Government".

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE.

The Lord Carrington. M.C. (Chairman).	Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.
The Earl of Dundee	Landowner and Farmer. Former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland.
The Lord Merthyr	Chairman, R. S. P. C. A.
C.H. Andrewes Esq. M.D. F.R.C.P. F.R.S.	Deputy Director of the National Inst. for Medical Research.
H. Collison Esq.	General Secy. National Union of Agricultural Workers.
J.W? Evans Esq. M.A. Sc.D. D.Sc. ...	Deputy Chief Scientific Officer Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.
H. Gardner Esq. C.B.E.	Under Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.
Profssor. R.E.Glover. M.A. B.Sc. F.R.C.V.S. ...	President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
J.Scott Henderson Esq. Q.C.	Recorder of Portsmouth. Chairman of the Committee on cruelty to Wild Animals.
The Hon. Mrs George Lane	An eminent parasitologist.
C.T. Plumb Esq.	Assistant Secretary, Board of Trade.
J.N. Ritchie Esq. B.Sc. M.R.C.V.S. D.V.S.M.	Chief Veterinary Officer. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.
J.C.Sandford Esq. B.A.	Secretary. The British Rabbit Council.
W.H. Senior Esq. F.R.S.E.	Assistant Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture for Scotland.
Major. R.B.Verney	A landowner in Buckinghamshire.
H. Woolley Esq.	A leading Cheshire farmer.

Secretary.
L.R. Sankey Esq.
Minsitry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MYXOMATOSIS.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCIENTIFIC SUB-COMMITTEE.

Dr. C.H. Andrewes (Chairman).
Dr. J.W. Evans.
Prof. R.E. Glover.
The Hon. Mrs George Lane.
Mr. J.N. Ritchie.
Mr L.R. Sankey (Secretary).

The undermentioned also attended meetings
by invitation :-

Dr W.H. Bradley (Ministry of Health).
MR. J.R. Hudson (Veterinary Laboratory, Weybridge).
Dr. A.S. Thomas (The Nature Conservancy).
Mr H.V. Thompson (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries).

Membership of the Research Group.

Mr J.N. Ritchie (Chairman).
Dr. J.W. Evans,
Mr J.R. Hudson.
Mr. P.G. Shute (Malaria Reference Laboratory, Horton).
Mr H.V. Thompson (Technical Secretary).

The undermentioned also attended meetings
by invitation :-

Mr P.L. Shanks (North of Scotland College of Agriculture)

~~Box 23/12~~

1912

PIONEER

FINE

No. 1671.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,

STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

(It is requested that, in any reference to this letter, the above Number and the date may be quoted.)

28th April, 1955.

Sir,

I am directed to state that following representations to the effect that rabbits are becoming a menace to the sheep farming industry it was decided to approach the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation of Australia for advice on the eradication of the pest. It will be seen from their reply (copy attached) that they recommend the use of myxomatosis.

2. The matter has been discussed in Executive Council and it was agreed, as an experiment, to infect rabbits on an isolated island and High Island in Salvador Waters was suggested as a suitable place.

3. It is understood that you would be willing to carry out the experiment and six ampoules of myxomatosis virus are being forwarded under separate cover.

4. You will no doubt appreciate the need for caution in the use of the virus and the desirability of ensuring that in the experimental stages of the project the possible (albeit remote) risk of infecting stock with the disease is reduced to a minimum.

5. Should you be willing to carry out this experiment I am to ask you to be good enough to forward a report of results in due course.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

A. G. Thwaites
Colonial Secretary.

J.D. Barton, Esq.,
Manager,
Teal Inlet.

JB/LJH.

Commonwealth of Australia
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
Wild Life Survey Section

3rd February, 1955.

The Colonial Secretary,
STANLEY
Falkland Islands.

Dear Sir,

I have your airletter of the 6th January seeking advice about ways and means for dealing with the rabbits which have multiplied and are seriously affecting your sheep grazing land.

2. I am afraid I cannot be very optimistic or encouraging. Australian experience has shown that in dealing with an animal with the rabbit's rapid power of increase effective control can only be brought about by well organized labour. The alternative to total eradication of rabbits from a grazing property, inside netted boundaries that have to be regularly patrolled, is a repeated - probably annual - attack on the animals by fumigation, poisoning etc. The effectiveness of such methods depends on having men available with experience, and a knowledge of the local habits of the rabbits, who will learn how to get the best results from the methods and how to modify them to suit local conditions. In parts of Australia this periodic "knocking back" of the pest has given satisfactory and economically justified results. Where it is practicable, however, there is no doubt that total eradication on a block is much more satisfactory, and pays handsome dividends.

3. As regards myxomatosis, I think it would be well worth trying. You may or may not have heard that it was recently introduced into Tierra del Fuego, without any great hopes (on my part, at any rate) that it would prove successful, because there seemed to be an almost total absence of biting insects that could transmit the disease. A quite surprising degree of success has been obtained. As I would think that your conditions are not very different from those found in Tierra del Fuego, I think it would be well worth while giving the disease a trial.

4. To save time I am forwarding to you, under separate cover, half-a-dozen ampoules of dried myxomatosis virus. Instructions as to how to infect rabbits with it are enclosed with each ampoule. All that would be necessary, for a preliminary trial, would be to catch a number of rabbits alive (in Australia this is usually done by digging out the burrows), infecting them according to the instructions, and liberating them at the point where they were captured.

5. If the disease "takes", there will be no mistake or doubt about it at all for the infected rabbits are very obvious, as is the effect of a high mortality. Sometimes, however, the disease may fail to become established once or twice, and then get away for no apparent reason; so that it pays to be a bit persistent in attempts at establishing it.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd) (F.N. Ratcliffe)

OFFICER-IN-CHARGE.

1671.

26th April,

55.

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I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) A.G. Denton-Thompson.

Colonial Secretary.

J.D. Barton, Esq.,
Manager,
Teal Inlet.

JB/LJH.

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Colonial Secretary.

J.D. Barton, Esq.,
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Teal Inlet.

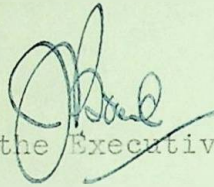
JB/LJH.

Extract from the minutes of a meeting of the Executive Council
held on the 7th January, 1954.

13. Rabbits.

The Honourable Mr. Barton asked if the importation and inter-island transfer of rabbits could be prohibited by law as they were a serious menace to the sheep farming industry.

His Excellency undertook to have the matter investigated.



Clerk of the Executive Council.

AO
 Can you please give me your
 considered opinion on Mr. Barbons
 suggestion that the importation
 & internal movement of rabbits
 should be prohibited.

Q
 71

M.C.S.

There are rabbits on both East & West Falkland.
 They have not so far become a pest possibly because of the lack
 of protective vegetational cover coupled with depredations from
 sea birds. And because of dampness & cold in the burrows
 causing death of young.

Rabbits are also incident on many islands for instance
 New Island, Saunders, Keppel, Tyson etc. here they become
 pests & increase to very large numbers & then die off due to
 epidemics of coxciidiosis.

There are other islands, Caerans, West Point, Sea Lion etc.
 where there are no rabbits.

It would therefore seem that there is room for restriction on
 the movement of rabbits & their importation.
 However this has been done for the past 100 or so years by the
 people on these islands, which are free from rabbits.

Foxes on islands are a much more potential danger
 to the sheep farming industry; but there is no specific law
 against their importation or transfer from island to island.
 However there are foxes on Weddell, Beare & adjacent islands &
 on Pine Island & Sedge.

They have been prevented being put on other islands such as
 New Island, by advice in the past; & by common sense today when
 the results of their being on Weddell for instance are fully
 apparent.

There is no statutory prohibition of movement of foxes
 or rabbits in the United Kingdom; where foxes are less a
 menace than here. And rabbits possess an equal potential
 of increasing to virtual plague numbers in isolated areas
 as on islands here.

Thus it is my considered opinion that it would be
 wrong to consider & prohibit the importation & internal
 movements of rabbits by legislation without previously
 considering & taking similar action in respect of foxes.

John P. Blinn. 11/1/54

A.O.

Mr H. A.G. Barton

Please see ² - have you any further observations? As these words appear to be no great urgency, the subject might well be put to S.O.A. for a comprehensive opinion on the question of banning importation or movement of these or similar pests.

①
12/1

H.C.S.

I agree to refer to S.O.A. but herewith my own opinion.

Lambs (and sheep) eat grass.

Rabbits eat grass to the disadvantage of sheep.

Foxes (and other carnivorous beasts & birds) eat Geese -

Lambs & Rabbits but NOT Grass.

e. g. Foxes were put on River Island (Port Howard) years ago, also a few in-lamb ewes. The island was swarming with geese. At the end of the season no lambs survived neither did any goslings. The ewes were put there as a test, which proved that foxes should not be allowed in breeding camps. The introduction of foxes eventually reduced the numbers of geese, thereby providing more food for mares & foals, horses, cattle etc.

Rabbits in the Colony are a pest, pure and simple, and in latitudes even farther South than here have reduced the carrying capacity of pasture by 25% or more. This has not happened here - yet.

I would suggest as follows:-

- (a) The importation of rabbits be prohibited, likewise the internal manual distribution of existing stocks.
- (b) The importation of Foxes and the internal manual distribution of existing stocks be permitted subject to the strictest control.

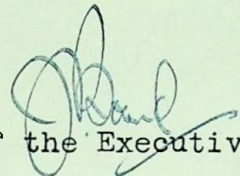
A.G. Barton.
17-2-54

Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of Executive Council
held on the 23rd February, 1954.

2. ARISING OUT OF PREVIOUS MINUTES.

(iii) Rabbits.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary stated that this matter would be referred to the Sheepowners' Association together with the question of the control of foxes.



Clerk of the Executive Council.

Draft to S.O.A. p.

B
10/3.

16th March,

54.

Sir,

It has been suggested that in the interests of Sheep farming the importation and internal distribution of rabbits should be prohibited in the Colony. It has further been suggested that the importation and internal distribution of foxes should be strictly controlled and I am to invite your Association's views and recommendations on the subject.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) J.E. Briscoe
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Reply at 8

The Secretary,
Sheepowners' Association,
STANLEY.

*No there won't be until 28/3
after this annual meeting in ?
BU away. C 214 BU 1/7/54*

6.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM HON. MR. T.A. GILRUTH
of 21. 5. 54.

(Original filed in 1576 - Joint Meeting of Councils).

.....

b. I propose that Legislative action be taken to
Prohibit the Importation of Rabbits into the Colony.

I have been told that at Rincon Grande these
pests are on the increase. Could our Agricultural
Dept. look into the matter and perhaps take steps to
exterminate them?

.....

Reply at 7

29th May,

54.

Sir,

6. I am directed to refer to your letter of the 21st of May, 1954, on the subject of legislation to prohibit the importation of rabbits and to state that this question has already come under consideration and has been referred, together with a similar problem concerning foxes, to the Sheep Owners' Association for their recommendations.

See 5.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) - C. Campbell

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

B4 ~~8/15/54~~
10/8

The Honourable

Mr. T.A. Gilputh, J.P.,
DARWIN.

8

The Falkland Islands Sheepowners Association,
(LOCAL COMMITTEE)
STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.



28th July, 19 54.

5

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 0437 dated 16th March, 1954 on the subject of the importation and internal distribution of rabbits and foxes, I have to advise you that the matter was discussed at the Annual General Meeting of this Association held last week.

It was unanimously agreed to request Government to prohibit the importation of both animals and that manual distribution likewise be prohibited.

I am,
Sir,
your obedient servant,

Angus Green

Secretary.

*buf. v send to
use for first draft.
29/7*

The Honourable
The Colonial Secretary,
Stanley.

R/S
*for preparation of final
draft pt. when
for C.S.
30/7/54*

4A
v.

See from ①.

9

A final decision in Ex Co. is required but when considering the draft R.O. v. J could find no existing Ordinance into which these restrictions could properly be fitted. What it really amounts to is that foxes and rabbits are to be deemed pests and in which case a separate ordinance to deal with the pests should be enacted.

2) Arising out of that I feel that ~~some~~ if these animals are pests and endanger the livelihood of the country repressive methods should be taken either by Govt or by the land owner or both and possibly we should be able to compel a farm owner to maintain an exterminator or exterminators.

3) I note that no mention is made of hares which ~~are~~ at the Farmers request we deem vermin by not specifying a close season. These would be more difficult to deal with — if we want to — as they are all over the East Island.

4) I suggest these points be raised at the next Ex Co. meeting.

1968

Go to X's please.

(When should X's meet again?)

MA 10

M.S. at b.c. pt. 1981-2018

ACB Please pp. 20 & 21 minute
past meeting 2 up
items listed for next
agenda.
10/8

Reverse

2/1

Apart from a few points for mention arising out of previous minutes we only have

- a) Future of the Museum Museum.
- b) Protection of birds & eggs
- c) Prohibition of flabbs & bones.

2) I suggest we recess at end of the month & if there is nothing more hold a meeting early September. I feel sure however that something will crop up ~~to~~ after the next mail in connection with Royal Woots or Camp tracks.

[Signature]
20/5

Very well
 JMA
 20

MEMORANDUM.

11

It is requested that, in any reference to this memorandum the above number and date should be quoted.

23rd August, 1954.

CONFIDENTIAL

To: All Members of Executive Council

To: The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

SUBJECT :- Rabbits and Foxes.

Minute 2(-) of

4
See 8

Arising out of the Executive Council meeting of the 23rd of February, 1954, the Sheep Owners' Association have requested the prohibition of the importation and the internal manual distribution of both foxes and rabbits.

2. When considering legislation to effect this control no suitable Ordinance suggested itself and it is probable that new legislation dealing with the control of pests will have to be enacted.

3. Arising from this it is for consideration, if these animals are to be deemed pests, whether the owner of the land which harbours them should be required by law to take active steps to exterminate those already in the Colony and whether some form of Government financial assistance in the campaign would be appropriate.

4. Two other points also require consideration:-

- (a) Whether any proviso should be inserted to enable persons to breed foxes and rabbits for domestic purposes, and
- (b) Whether any further action should be taken against hares which might be classed as vermin by virtue of the fact that they are not subject to seasonal protection.

5. The written views of members would be appreciated.

C Campbell
COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Bu. 288.
2/9
1 reply in

CC/VP

Replies at 12,

Stanley.

12.



26th August, 1954.

Sir,

With reference your circular letter dated 23rd August addressed to All members of Executive Council and referring to legislation concerning the control of rabbits and foxes.

2. I think legislation should be introduced to prohibit the importation and the internal manual distribution of both rabbits and foxes.

3. Of these two animals, the control of foxes is the most important as they are a danger to stock, especially young lambs. The owners of the two islands on which foxes are prevalent, namely the Weddell Group and River Island, (Port Howard) imported them at their own risk, and I consider it is their business to destroy them if they are becoming a pest, and that Government financial assistance is not necessary. Rabbits are prevalent on some islands and in odd places on the mainland, but in the latter instance do not appear to be increasing in numbers, nevertheless any action that might cause them to increase and spread over other parts of the mainland should be discouraged.

4. (a) Persons should not be allowed to breed rabbits and foxes for domestic purposes without special permission from Government.

(b) At the present time, I do not think it necessary to take any action against hares.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

H C Harding

The Honourable,
The Colonial Secretary,
Stanley.

B Buzby

23rd August, 54. 13

CONFIDENTIAL

To: All Members of Executive Council

To: The Colonial Secretary,

Rabbits and Foxes.

Minute 26/10/54

Arising out of the Executive Council meeting of the 23rd of February, 1954, the Sheep Owners' Association have requested the prohibition of the importation and the internal manual distribution of both foxes and rabbits.

2. When considering legislation to effect this control no suitable Ordinance suggested itself and it is probable that new legislation dealing with the control of pests will have to be enacted.
3. Arising from this it is for consideration, if these animals are to be deemed pests, whether the owner of the land which harbours them should be required by law to take active steps to exterminate those already in the Colony and whether some form of Government financial assistance in the campaign would be appropriate.
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 - (a) whether any proviso should be inserted to enable persons to breed foxes and rabbits for domestic purposes, and
 - (b) whether any further action should be taken against hares which might be classed as vermin by virtue of the fact that they are not subject to seasonal protection.
5. The written views of members would be appreciated.

(Sgd) C. Campbell

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

CC/VP

H.C.S.

I do not think that legislation compelling persons to take active steps to exterminate the vermin on their lands could be enforced - shortage of man-power would be the difficulty, I think.

Part 4. a) I think not.

b) No.

M 19/9/54

13/9

14

Port San Carlos,
Falkland Islands, S.A.

TELEPHONIC ADDRESS:
"CARLOS, PORTSTANLEY"

September 7th 1954

The Hon. The Colonial Secretary,

STANLEY.

Sir,

RABBITS, FOXES ETC.

In view of their record in other parts of the world rabbits must be regarded as a menace to this Colony and their total extermination from within it would be desirable. It would however be difficult and perhaps unnecessary to clear them from some of the smaller islands where they may be found but wherever they are established on either of the two main islands it would seem reasonable to call on the owners of the land to get rid of them and for the Government to assist them financially or in other ways.

I would be in favour of prohibiting the breeding of either foxes or rabbits for domestic purposes. Hares I do not regard as a menace.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

M. Anita Cameron

The Colonial Secretary,
Colonial Secretary's Office.

STANLEY.

DARWIN HARBOUR.
FALKLAND ISLANDS.
3rd. September. 1954.

RABBITS AND FOXES.

Dear Sir,

Reference your Executive Council note 0437 dated 23rd. August last.

2. It may well be that new legislation to deal with the control of Pests will have to be enacted.
3. (a) Rabbits and Foxes should certainly be regarded as Pests.
(b) The question of how best to combat these Pests should be under the direction of the Agricultural Officer.
(c) The owners of Land which harbours these Pests should be required by Law to take active steps to exterminate them.
(d) The Land owners shall take such steps as the Government Agricultural Officer deems fit.
(e) The Agricultural Officer should be provided at Government expense with such equipment as he thinks necessary to exterminate the Pests - notably 'myxomatosis.' (The annual cost of such equipment should be very small - Land Owners would supply the necessary labour.)
4. (a) No proviso should be inserted to enable persons to breed Rabbits and/or Foxes for domestic purposes.
(b) For the time being, no further action need be taken against Hares.
Hares have certainly increased since the writer first came to the Colony 24 years ago but it is considered that these animals will never reach the stage of being regarded as serious Pests. Hares spend their entire lives on the surface of the land and in consequence are subjected to adverse weather conditions. During a particularly cold and wet spring we note that there are fewer leverets - this is no doubt due to their contracting pneumonia.
(c) That Hares are not subject to seasonal protection does not mean that they must in consequence be regarded as Pests.
In Scotland, England and Wales there is no 'close season' for Hares - yet they are regarded as 'Game' .

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

L. G. Giblin

14 SEP 1954
FALKLAND ISLANDS

13

42

PA

Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of Executive Council
held 14th September, 1954.

0437.

12. Control of foxes and rabbits.

Council decided that legislation should be enacted empowering the Governor in Council

- (a) to declare any animal or bird a pest and the area in the Colony within which it was a pest
- (b) to control the importation, internal manual distribution and domestic breeding of pests; and
- (c) to require the destruction of pests in any specified area in the Colony.

W. H. H. H.

Acting Clerk of the Executive Council.

0437

22nd September 54.

Sir,

I am directed to state that some years ago rabbits and foxes were imported into the Colony and established on some small islands where they have multiplied excessively. Rabbits are also found on one farm on the main West Falkland Island but not to a troublesome extent.

2. As both these animals are ^apotential menace to the sheep industry it is desired to prohibit their importation and internal manual distribution in order to limit the chances of their becoming established on the main islands.

3. There appears to be no existing legislation suitable for this purpose and it is thought that a form of pest control ordinance should be enacted giving the Governor-in-Council power

- (a) To declare any animal or bird a pest (is it possible to define an "animal" so as to include any living creature as at some future date it may be desirable to control blue-bottles?).
- (b) To limit the areas in which such animals are deemed pests (e.g. to declare rabbits pests on West Falkland Island only).
- (c) To control the domestic breeding of animals which have been deemed pests, and
- (d) To require the owner of the land harbouring pests to take active measures (which may or may not be specified) to reduce or exterminate such pests.

4. Subject to any views you may have or queries you may wish to raise I am to request that you will be good enough to furnish a draft.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) C. Campbell

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Bu 15/10

Sir Henry Webb, Kt.,
c/o The Crown Agents for Oversea Governments & Administrations,
4, Millbank,

F. I. ref: 2437.

C. O. ref:

18.

SAVING TELEGRAM.

From: The Officer Administering the Government of the Falkland Islands.

To: The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Date: 7th October, 1954.

No. 173. SAVING. COLONY.

Rabbits. Cases have occurred here of rabbits being introduced on to small uninhabited islands used for winter grazing and then multiplying to the extent of ruining the grazing. Grateful for guidance on possible methods of extermination with particular reference to myxomatosis.

Reply at 19

GOVERNOR'S DEPUTY.

B.V. 2 months
B.M. 8/12

1671
~~0437~~

MED 69/2/01

19
~~22~~

Saving

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the Officer Administering the Government of..... FALKLAND ISLANDS

(COLONY)

Date 30 October, 1954.....

No. 144 Saving



18 Your savingram No. 173 of 7th October.

Pest Control

If you consider that the rabbit menace is so severe that drastic measures must be taken, then possibly myxomatosis is the most efficient method of extermination.

2. Certain factors, however, need to be considered, the major being whether the vector or vectors (the species of mosquito responsible for carrying the disease) exist in the Falkland Islands.

3. It is suggested therefore that you should approach the Australian Research Authorities who have been intimately concerned with how to ensure the quickest and most efficient spread of the disease. The address to which to write is:-

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial
Research Organization,
Wildlife Survey Section,
P. O. Box 109 City,
Canberra.

4. This organization will be much better able to advise than any similar organization in the United Kingdom, and can also supply the standardized and tested virus.

BUF

SECEP

sec. 18

(18)

See sec (19) Have you any idea what species of mosquito we carry? Dr Hamilton would probably know the answer but I thought we were contemplating negotiations I doubt if he would cooperate.

2) If we have it got any vectors I suppose they could be introduced but again I imagine they could in turn be carried by the wind or in ships from the small uninhabited islands & could spread all over the colony. Thus the disease would spread too.

3) Also it means we must introduce a possible pest. Can you please let me have your views we can mention in Ex Co.

Ans. I do not know the type of mosquito we have here. I have never seen bitten by one (and I am very liable to be attacked) and have concluded that our mosquito is not the biting kind. It would therefore be no use in a corner.

9/2/54

YH

See sec (19) - This did not turn up in time for Ex Co. I feel that malaria is such an unpleasant disease that pressure for its introduction will best come from SOA. Rather than from Govt. Suggest we put to SOA a set of dry advice in view of our investigations into malaria.

We can ask for info as in d30/19 without asking for virus. PE. Do W of simultaneously consult SOA JAH

ACE from 8/22/54

No. 1671.

21
Colonial Secretary's Office,
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

6th January, 1955.

Sir,

I am directed to seek your advice on the subject of rabbit extermination in this Colony. In the past rabbits have been introduced on to some of the smaller islands and have multiplied to the extent of ruining the grazing. Since the land here is utilized almost exclusively for sheep ranching the consequences are serious.

Rabbits are also found in some parts of the main East Falkland Islands, but they do not appear to be spreading.

With a local shortage of manpower and the difficulty of tracing the warrens along the broken cliffs on the islands' shores no effective and economical method of control suggests itself and your advice on the subject would be greatly appreciated. The extent of the plague in some areas might possibly justify the use of myxomatosis but there is no indigenous mosquito in the Colony and though the climate here is not dissimilar to that of Northern Scotland, no species appears to have established itself though mosquitos must have been introduced from ships on occasions in the past.

It is appreciated that you may require further details of local conditions and these will be supplied if requested.

It is hoped that you will not mind being troubled in this way.

The problem was originally referred to the Secretary of State for the Colonies who suggested that you might be prepared to assist particularly with information concerning the spread of myxomatosis.

I am,

Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) C. Campbell

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial
Research Organisation,
Wildlife Survey Section,
P.O. Box, 109 City,
Canberra

Bu 19/3/55

See 18
319



COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

FNR/HW

WILDLIFE SURVEY SECTION

TELEGRAMS: CORESEARCH, CANBERRA
TELEPHONE: ~~X~~ 562-563P.O. BOX 109, CITY,
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

3rd February, 1955.

Ref: R3/36

AIR MAILThe Colonial Secretary,
STANLEY,
Falkland Islands.

27 FEB 1955

Dear Sir,

I have your airletter of the 6th January seeking advice about ways and means for dealing with the rabbits which have multiplied and are seriously affecting your sheep grazing land.

2 I am afraid I cannot be very optimistic or encouraging. Australian experience has shown that in dealing with an animal with the rabbit's rapid power of increase effective control can only be brought about by well organized labour. The alternative to total eradication of rabbits from a grazing property, inside netted boundaries that have to be regularly patrolled, is a repeated - probably annual - attack on the animals by fumigation, poisoning etc.. The effectiveness of such methods depends on having men available with experience, and a knowledge of the local habits of the rabbits, who will learn how to get the best results from the methods and how to modify them to suit local conditions. In parts of Australia this periodic "knocking back" of the pest has given satisfactory and economically justified results. Where it is practicable, however, there is no doubt that total eradication on a block is much more satisfactory, and pays handsome dividends.

3 As regards myxomatosis, I think it would be well worth trying. You may or may not have heard that it was recently introduced into Tierra del Fuego, without any great hopes (on my part, at any rate) that it would prove successful, because there seemed to be an almost total absence of biting insects that could transmit the disease. A quite surprising degree of success has been obtained. As I would think that your conditions are not very different from those found in Tierra del Fuego, I think it would be well worth while giving the disease a trial.

4 To save time I am forwarding to you, under separate U.s.c./ cover, half-a-dozen ampoules of dried myxomatosis virus. Instructions as to how to infect rabbits with it are enclosed with each ampoule. All that would be necessary, for a preliminary trial, would be to catch a number of rabbits alive (in Australia this is usually done by digging out the burrows), infecting them according to the instructions, and liberating them at the point where they were captured.

5 If the disease "takes", there will be no mistake or doubt about it at all for the infected rabbits are very obvious, as is the effect of a high mortality. Sometimes, however, the disease may fail to become established once or twice, and then get away for no apparent reason; so that it pays to be a bit persistent in attempts at establishing it.

Yours faithfully,

F. N. Ratcliffe
(F. N. Ratcliffe)
OFFICER-IN-CHARGE

Not
x above - these have arrived & I am
keeping in my office. It cost 26/3 air
postage to send them

Reply at 41.

2/3

22

AO. Re see (22) and previous correspondence

In view of the public opinion engendered by the use of myxomatosis we must await Ex-Co. confirmation before we take any action. Have you any general views? There are several small stands where the experiment could be made.

R3

H.C.S.

Ref. p. 22 and previous correspondence.

I am definitely opposed to the introduction of myxomatosis to get rid of rabbits. I have seen the suffering caused by this disease in Britain, where it had spread from the continent. A movement was on foot to make it a punishable offence to introduce the disease, deliberately.

Apart from this, I doubt if it is really known for certain whether it can spread to domestic & other animals.

I agree it should be referred to Ex-Co. I would go further - & submit that it should be the subject of an open debate in Reg-Co as well.

Are the rabbits really a pest? Has shooting been tried? Ferretting also? Rabbits are good food - could it not be developed a minor industry in this respect?

No - I am against the use of the Virus of myxomatosis.

E. T. S. H.P. 4/3/55.

Yost ACS - You have noted this for Ex-Co. Re
4/5
quor required to co. per ordinance
pp. in temporary file?

Office Re. incorporate temp file etc. with the
main file - a measure
D
4/3

By
 1. I saw here with Dept (Prevention) Ordinance with Dept.
 Regulations and form of licence.
 2. The making of an order declaring any animal etc. to be a "pest" will not make it an offence for a person to have it in his house if it is taken already but will prevent its importation into the Colony from outside, or into some part of the Colony, to which the order applies, from outside or from some other part to which it does not apply, as the case may be.

3. Where some 'pest' is already present in some part of the Colony and it is desired to exterminate it or reduce its numbers, an order can be made declaring it to be a 'pest' applying to that part of the Colony, and then notices under section 5 can be served upon the owners and occupiers of land adjoining upon them to set about destroying the pests; section 7 will ensure the Chief Agricultural Officer to see that the notices are complied with.
 4. I am not quite sure of my use of the terms "owner"

GRAVEL PATH.
 BERRYS.
 BERRHARSTED.
 9. 11. 1954
 Reg. No 0437 of 22.9.1954. 17.
 E DEC 17
 HERTFORDSHIRE

and "occupier" will be found appropriate to local conditions: notices should be given to, and required from, someone who is on the land, or, at all events, near it, and in a responsible position. Perhaps, as lands are farmed by companies, there should be an addition to section 2 providing that "the word 'owner' shall include ~~the~~ manager", or, "the person managing any lands on behalf of a Company", or sanctioning to that effect.

5. Section 2. I think it will be simpler to omit the words in square brackets and declare rabbits and foxes to be pests when an order under section 3 is made.

I have included "insects", though I cannot imagine anyone deliberately importing, say, a Colorado beetle or malarial mosquitos.

6. Section 3(2) Orders may declare different animals etc. to be 'pests' in different islands.

7. Section 4. 'Wilfully imports' - i.e. knowingly and deliberately. A person could hardly maintain successfully that he had brought in rabbits or foxes unknowingly, but it would be unfair to penalize a person who had unknowingly brought in some harmful insect.

8. Section 7(a) and regulations to & 8 will enable a check to be kept on the increase of animals which have been imported under licence.

9. I have not attempted to specify methods of destruction which should be prohibited; here, as you will know, there is a lot of talk about the cruelty of using "gin traps", or deliberately spreading myxomatosis, but, so far as I know, neither method has been made illegal.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Henry Wells

The Hon. Colonial Secretary,
Falkland Islands.

10. Section 11. The penalty should be pretty substantial - greater than that under section 10(2).

Pests (Prevention) Ordinance.

An Ordinance to control the introduction into the Colony of animals, birds and insects harmful to agriculture or farming and to provide for their destruction.

Short title.

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Pests (Prevention) Ordinance, 195-.

Interpretation.

2. In this Ordinance, unless the context otherwise requires, "import" means to bring into the Colony from outside, or, when an order made under the power conferred by the next following section applies only to some part or parts of the Colony, to bring into such part or parts either from outside the Colony or from some other part to which the order does not apply; "pests" means [foxes, rabbits and] such [other] animals, birds and insects as may be declared to be pests under the power conferred by this Ordinance.

Power to declare animals etc. to be pests.

3(1) The Governor in Council may, at any time, upon being satisfied that any animal, bird or insect is destructive or harmful to agriculture or farming, by order published in the Gazette declare such animal, bird or insect to be a pest, and any such order may from time to time be altered or revoked as circumstances may require.

(2) Any such order may apply either to the whole of the Colony or to some part or parts thereof.

Importation of pests prohibited.

4. Any person who, at a time when an order made under the last preceding section is in force, wilfully imports or attempts to import, except under a licence granted by [the Chief Agricultural Officer], any pest mentioned in such order shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding, in the case of a first offence, \$ —, and in the case of a second or any subsequent offence \$ —.

(Source: Destructive Imported Animals Act, 1932, s. 6.)

Destruction of pests.

5. If at any time when an order made under section 3 of this Ordinance is in force it appears to [the Chief Agricultural Officer] that in the case of any land to which the order applies steps should be taken for the destruction of all or any of the pests mentioned in the order on such land, or otherwise for keeping such land free from such pests, he may serve on the owner or occupier thereof a notice requiring him to take within such reasonable period as may be specified in the notice such steps for the purposes aforesaid as may be specified or prescribed.

(Source: Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, s. 4.)

Failure to comply with notice.

6. If any person on whom a notice under the last preceding section is served fails to take any steps required by the notice within the period mentioned therein ~~therein~~ he shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding, in the case of a first offence, \$, and in the case of a second or any subsequent offence \$.

(Source: 16. s. 5.)

Power to enter and inspect lands.

7. Any person duly authorized in writing by [the Chief Agricultural Officer] may at any reasonable time enter upon land to which an order made under section 3 of this Ordinance applies -

(Source: 16. s. 22(1).)

(a) for the purpose of ascertaining if any pest is present upon the land in such numbers as to render the service of a notice under section 5 of this Ordinance necessary or desirable; or

(b) for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is or has been or is in connexion with the land any failure to comply with any notice served under the provisions of this Ordinance.

Obstructing inspector.

8. Any person who wilfully obstructs a person acting in the exercise of his powers under the last preceding section shall be guilty of an offence

(Source: 16. s. 22(4).)

and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ₹ — .

Owner or occupier to give notice of presence of pests.

9.(1) If, at any time when an order made under section 3 of this Ordinance is in force the owner or occupier of any land to which the order applies becomes aware of the presence on such land of any pest mentioned in the order he shall forthwith give notice to [the Chief Agricultural Officer].

(source:

Destructive Injurious Animals Act, 1932, s.5.)

(2) Any such owner or occupier who without reasonable excuse neglects to give such notice shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ₹ — .

Power to make regulations.

10.(1) The Governor in Council may make regulations for carrying out the objects of this Ordinance and in particular, (a) for controlling the methods of destroying pests by prescribing or prohibiting the use of any particular method either generally or in any specified circumstances or locality; ~~and~~ and (b) for providing for the grant of licences to import and keep such pests as may be specified herein ^{and in} into a part of the Colony in which an order made under section 3 of this Ordinance is in force, and the terms and conditions to be attached to such licences; ~~and~~

(source:

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, s.19.)

(c) for prescribing the precautions to be taken by

(2) Any person who fails to comply with any regulation made ~~under this section~~ under this section or with the conditions attached to any licence granted thereunder, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ₹ -.

Removing
pests kept
under licence
from the premises
specified.

11. When a licence has been granted to import and keep in some part of the Colony, in which an order made under section 3 of this Ordinance is in force, any person who shall, without the permission in writing of the Senior Agricultural Officer, remove or attempt to remove any such pest from the premises specified in the licence shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ₹ -.

Service of
notices.

12. Any notice required by this Ordinance or regulations made thereunder to be given or served may be given or served by post.

Pests (Prevention) Regulations.

Short title.

1. These regulations may be cited as the Pests (Prevention) Regulations, 195-.

Interpretation.

2. In these Regulations "the Ordinance" means the Pests (Prevention) Ordinance, 195-, and the words "import" and "pests" bear respectively, the same meaning as in the Ordinance.

Licences
~~importation~~
~~of pests~~
 to import
 of pests
~~of pests~~

3. Whenever an order made under section 3 of the Ordinance is in force no pest mentioned in such order shall be imported except under a licence to import and keep granted by the Chief Agricultural Officer and subject to the conditions contained in the licence.

Licences,
 obtaining
~~of pests~~
 and
~~production of~~
 production of.

4. A licence to import and keep any pest must be obtained by the person by or on whose behalf such pest is imported before the importation thereof, and must be produced by the person taking delivery of such pest on the landing thereof for inspection by an officer of Customs and also at any time on demand for inspection by a police officer or person duly authorised by the Chief Agricultural Officer.

Keeping of
 pests kept
 under licence,

- 5(1) Any pests which have been imported under licence into any part of the Colony in which an order made under section 3 of the Ordinance is in force

must be kept in such a manner as to prevent their escape from the premises mentioned in the licence; and if any of such pests shall escape from the said premises the holder of the licence shall forthwith notify the Chief Agricultural Officer.

escape to
be notified.

Expenses of
recapture.

(2) The holder of the licence shall be liable for any expense incurred by the Chief Agricultural Officer in recapturing or killing such pests, and if the same shall be killed, whether by or on behalf of the Chief Agricultural Officer, or by some other person, the holder of the licence shall not be entitled to claim compensation.

No claim
for
compensation.

Liability
for escape.

(3) The holder of the licence shall be guilty of an offence unless he can prove that such escape was not due to any negligence by him or by any person acting on his behalf.

Records
to be kept.

6. The holder of a licence to import and keep pests shall keep a record of the number of pests imported and kept by him, including particulars of any which may be born or die or be killed.

Pests kept
under licence
not to be
disposed of.

7. The holder of a licence to import and keep pests shall not dispose of, in a live state, any of the pests imported by him or of their progeny to any other person without first obtaining the consent in writing of the Chief Agricultural Officer.

- Inspection. 8. The holder of a licence to import and keep pests shall at all reasonable times permit the Chief Agricultural Officer or any person duly authorised by him to enter and inspect the land occupied by the licence-holder.
- Form of licence. 9. The form of licence to be used under the Ordinance is set out in the Schedule hereto.

Schedule.

Pests (Prevention) Ordinance, 195- . Licence.

Notwithstanding that by an order-in-council, dated the day of and made under section 3 of the said Ordinance, which order is now in force in (the island of) (rabbits) are declared to be pests within the meaning of the said Ordinance, the Chief Agricultural Officer, by virtue and in exercise of the power conferred upon him by the said Ordinance hereby authorises A.B. of to import into (the island of) (twelve rabbits) and to keep the same and their progeny subject to the following conditions and also to those contained in the Pests (Prevention) Regulations, 195- .

Conditions.

1. The — shall be landed on or before the day of at
2. The landing of the — shall forthwith be notified in writing

to the Chief Agricultural Officer by the said AB or by someone
on his behalf.

3. Pigeons — when landed, shall be moved forthwith and by
the nearest available route, in a box or cage so constructed
and fastened as to prevent their escape, to —
(describe here the premises upon which the pests are to be kept.)

4. The — shall be kept upon the said premises in cages
or pens so constructed and fastened as to prevent their
escape.

5. The arrival of the — at the premises specified herein
shall forthwith be notified in writing to the Chief Agricultural
Officer by the said AB or by someone on his behalf.

6. This licence must be produced by the said AB or the
person receiving the — on his behalf at their
landing, for inspection by the Customs officer, and
also at any time on demand by any police officer
or by the Chief Agricultural Officer or any person duly
authorised by him.

Dated —

Signed —

Chief Agricultural Officer.

ACB
Extract my letter under ref: from
main file & app. explain. I suspect he
could have covered the internal manual
distribution question better.

9/12

Miss P.
Please.

17/12

Mr. H.

H.W. letter drawer copy of letter under ref:

17/12/54.

Miss

copy of letter as to be.

9/12.

Hon Mr A.G. Benton

17

ref: ²⁴ my letter under reference as had cover

I would be glad of your view on Sir Henry's
draft. My first reaction is that it is rather
long winded and that ^{many} of the regulations
could be kept up on sleeves until we need them.
~~or more~~ As mentioned above I am not happy
that the ban on internal manual distribution
is sufficiently stressed.

2) There would appear to be no great hurry to introduce
this legislation and we might let members of the LOR
have a look at the ^{draft} Ordinance & also get the views
of the new vet. officer who starts in January.

23/12

H.C.S. Phew!

I would have thought a short amendment
to the Live Stock Ordinance sufficient for our needs.
Let the V.O. have a go.

A.C.B.
28/1/55.

3/3/55. H.C.S. Please accept my apologies for having
mislaid this file. A.C.B.

37

A

ACP I can appreciate Dr. Santos' cooperation.
Pre recall original file & send to H.C.
for consideration, referring him to previous

MS
S/S

B

A.C.S.

Pages 24-37 have been in
T. file pl. KIV above minute.

SM
8/5.

0423/88

What Follows?

I SEE that Dr. W. R. Wooldridge, President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, warns us that, following the spread of myxomatosis, "viruses may fairly rapidly change their character" and he urges the "need for extreme caution" in this matter.

This means that we have no guarantee that this foul disease may not develop in a form which will infect human beings and animals other than rabbits.

I hear, already, of a farm worker who developed severe swellings after handling a dead rabbit and was only cured by penicillin. Is this the first of many cases?

Further, what of the risks of pus from dead rabbits being sprayed on corn by combine harvesters? Many cornfields are littered with numbers of dead and stinking rabbits.

Now, Prebendary Leland Snell, Chairman of Hereford R.S.P.C.A., reports that a cat has died with "all the symptoms of myxomatosis—swollen head and lips, blindness, deafness, puffed-up body and fur falling off in patches." Is this the

beginning of a new plague which may attack our pets and other animals?

Will any reader with actual evidence of humans or animals, other than rabbits, being infected, communicate with me, as I have been asked to collect evidence for a number of Members of both Houses of Parliament? The sooner the deliberate spreading of this revolting disease is made a criminal offence the better.

J. WENTWORTH DAY.

H.C.S.

The above letter appeared in the Farmer & Stockbreeder in Sept last year, and it speaks for itself!!

Dr. Wooldridge is not only an eminent member of the Veterinary profession, but holds medical degrees also.

Edward. J. Feen
A.O.

5th March 1955.

MA file

39

A.C.S.

Pl. see 37 B herein.

SM
8/3

a.o./

37 A.

Papers to you acct.

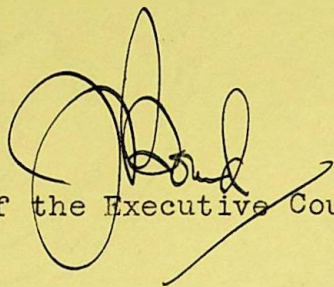
Q
9/3.

Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of Executive Council
held 7th April, 1955.

1671.

14. DESTRUCTION OF RABBITS.

Council agreed by a majority vote to the experiment of injecting the rabbits on High Island, Salvador Waters, with myxomatosis.



Clerk of the Executive Council.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Stanley, Falkland Islands.

BY AIR MAIL

5th May, 1955.

Sir,

22 I am directed by the Governor to refer to your letter R3/36 of the 3rd of February, 1955, regarding the eradication of rabbits in the Falkland Islands and to express appreciation and thanks for your co-operation in this matter.

2. It was intended to carry out an experiment with myxomatosis on an isolated island but unfortunately on opening the package it was found that the virus had expired. In the circumstances I am to request you to be good enough to forward a further six ampoules of dried myxomatosis virus with an expiry date that is not earlier than the 30th of November, 1955. This will cover the most convenient period to proceed with the experiment.

3. I am to add that it is appreciated that you are incurring expenditure on behalf of this Government and suggest that you should forward your account in due course.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Reply at 45A
See 47

(Sgd) A.G. Denton-Thompson
COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Officer-in-Charge,
Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial
Research Organisation,
Wildlife Survey Section,
P.O. Box 109, City,
Canberra, A.C.T.

JB/VP

Rec. 1.9.55
G.S.

Y. H.

The A.O. wishes to raise at Ex. Co. the proposed injection into rabbits of Myxomatosis virus (this was agreed at 40) & he has prepared some notes at b.c. It will be seen that it is now unlawful in the U.K. to spread the disease.

I do not like the decision at 40 and voted against it at the time. Mr Barton was strongly in favour.

The A.O. should not, of course, raise this matter without Y.H.'s approval. The point is, should the question be re-opened? We don't want to rub the farmers the wrong way in a matter which is of no great importance when there are more important items on the agenda requiring their support.

I think it would be better not to raise the question at the meeting but to ~~circulate~~ ^{circulate} the A.O.'s notes a little later for written observations of members or, perhaps, wait until the next meeting of Ex. Co. It is likely that the virus will not arrive for some time as it was not ordered until last month.

12/29/6

C.S.

Interim action as follows:-

1. The matter should not be raised at the forthcoming Ex. Co. - and if it raised again then the papers should be submitted to H.E. for consideration on his return.

2. The Registrar should consider the legal aspects of deliberate ~~by~~ introduction by :-

(1) Government or a Government official acting under the authority of the Governor in Council

(2) A private person acting under the authority of the Governor in Council

(3) A private person acting on his own

account.

When this advice has been obtained I would like to see the papers again. We must, however, bear in mind that the Advisory Committee considered and made recommendations on an already existing situation.

B.G.T.
30/6.

R.S.C.

Will you please advise on * above.

P. 36/6

Hon. Col. Sec.,

The Protection of Animals Act, 1911, has been applied to the colony, therefore it would be an offence under section 1 of the Act for any person (including those mentioned in (1), (2) and (3) of H.H.'s. minute above) to inoculate a domestic or captured rabbit with the virus with a view to spreading the disease.

2. It has been considered essential to apply the

above Act to the Colony and it would not be correct for the Governor in Council to authorise any contravention thereof. The only way by which the disease could be spread without committing an offence would be under legislation amended to meet the circumstances.

3. The limits of myxomatosis are unknown and fear has been expressed that it may even be capable of spreading to other animals. If an official spread the disease under authority the Government or the officer concerned might be held liable for damage (if any) caused thereby. Any other person spreading the disease would also be held liable.

4. I would, however, point out that the Mother Country has thought fit to enact legislation, specifically making it an offence to knowingly use or permit the use of a rabbit infected with myxomatosis to spread the disease among uninfected rabbits, punishable with a fine not exceeding £20, or £50 in the case of a subsequent conviction (Pests Act, 1954, section 12). This Act has not been applied to the Colony.

J.P.B.
Registrar
6. vii. 58.

G. H.

Submitted, It appears that the decision at 40 is ultra vires,

To B.V. for the post meeting of Ex Co after HE's return & inform A.O. accordingly?
11.7/58

45

A

C.S.

I am sorry to raise another point - but I should be grateful if Mr. Bennett would reconsider the validity of the Exco decision in the light of "experiments" that can be authorized under the provisions of the Cruelty to Animals Act 1876. (See reference in Section 1(3) of the Protection of Animals Act 1911 and under 1020 B - Spreading of Myxomatosis - p. 131 of Halsbury's Laws of England 1955 Supplement.

R.G.T.
21/7.

B

R.S.C.

Will you please comment as above.

C.

H. B.
21/7

Hon. Col. Sec.,

Under sec. 3 of the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, experiments must be performed under licence and with a view to the advancement by new discovery of physiological knowledge or of knowledge which will be useful for saving or prolonging life or alleviating suffering.

During the whole of the experiment the animal must be under an anesthetic of sufficient power to prevent its feeling pain, except in very exceptional circumstances.

Therefore the Ex Co decision is ultra vires unless made for any of the purposes mentioned above.

H. B.
Registrar
25. vii. 55.



45A

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION.

PM/MMC

WILDLIFE SURVEY SECTION.

TELEGRAMS: CORESEARCH, CANBERRA.

TELEPHONE: 42251 562-3

P.O. Box 109, CITY.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.

Ref. R3/36



3rd June, 1955

AIR MAIL

The Colonial Secretary,
Stanley,
FALKLAND ISLANDS.

Dear Sir,

41 I wish to acknowledge your letter of 5th May, ref. 1671, on the subject of dried myxomatosis virus.

I have learned with regret that the virus had expired on arrival at Falkland Islands. However, I am arranging for six ampoules of virus to be sent to you through the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories in time for you to proceed with the experiment as you have indicated.

As regards the virus, I may like to add that it has been proved by experience to remain effective for quite some considerable time beyond the expiry date shown on the packages, and the doubtful virus could be well tested on a rabbit in captivity.

H'with. 45B. I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter which I have sent to the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, for your information.

Yours faithfully,

F.N. Ratcliffe
(F.N. Ratcliffe)
OFFICER-IN-CHARGE

45B

PM/MMC

--- 562-3

Ref. R3/36

2nd June, 1955

The Officer-in-Charge,
Commonwealth Serum Labs.,
PARKVILLE, VICTORIA.

Dear Sir,

lth.

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter from the Colonial Secretary's Office, Stanley, Falkland Islands, requesting six ampoules of dried Myxoma virus, which letter I have acknowledged.

It may be noted that the virus would be required for use some time in November. Allowing for the delay in transition by mail, which incidentally is four weeks by air mail, the virus should be despatched on or about 1st October, 1955.

I should be pleased if you would arrange for the despatch of the virus as indicated and claim for any expenditure direct on the Colonial Secretary's office.

Yours faithfully,

(F.N. Ratcliffe)
OFFICER-IN-CHARGE

1 extra c.c. sent to C.S., Falkland Is., under covering letter.

A

Y.H.

C. of 45 submitted for.

H. 287

C.S.

B

1. Thank you.
2. So far as I can see the only way of doing it would be by the enactment of special legislation - and in my view such legislation would not receive the S.O.S. approval unless there could be shown that there was a grave threat to the industry from Rabbits.
3. Could a typist (there is no need) cut a straight of the White Paper. I will then draft a paper that would serve the double purpose of a memo. for H.E. on his return and a memo. for Enls.

P.G. 1/1
28/1.

A.S.

C

As in 3 above p.

H. 287

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

AHE/JO'S

47

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO
DIRECTOR
TELEGRAPHIC AND CABLE ADDRESS—
"SERUMS." MELBOURNE.

TELEPHONE NOS.—
FW 2101 (5 LINES)
DIRECTOR, FW 6403

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE
386 / 7/240

Commonwealth Serum Laboratories,

Parkville, N.2,

Vic.

Australia

15th June, 1955.

AIR MAIL

The Colonial Secretary,
Colonial Secretary's Office,
STANLEY,
FALKLAND ISLAND.



Dear Sir,

With reference to your request made to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Canberra, for a supply of 6 ampoules of Dried Myxoma Virus, I desire to advise that we will despatch this consignment by the first mail leaving after the 1st October, 1955.

The product is issued from these Laboratories carrying an expiry date of one month after the date of issue, and it is noted that the air mail to Falkland Island is 4 weeks. We consider the virus will probably be satisfactory on receipt, but would recommend injection with a syringe, and also that the inoculated rabbits be kept under observation to ensure that a "take" has been achieved.

x | Between receipt and use the product should be stored in the freezing chamber of a refrigerator.

Yours faithfully,

R O Carter
(R. O. CARTER)
Deputy Director.

See 41

49

See 46

Pamphlet removed from back cover for stencilling.

See

VP

11/8/55

Yes. Shd. we not cancel the consignment? x will not be possible
15/8

48 /

Y. H.

47.

The shipment of virus should now
be cancelled by telegram?

8/15/8

C.S.

Pending a final decision by Gule as to the next move -
we might suggest asking them to "postpone dispatch
pending further communication from us."

C.S.
15/8.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

SENT

49

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
				16.8.55
To	DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, COMMONWEALTH SERUM LABORATORIES, PARKVILLE, N.2, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.			HOA/C

47

YOUR LETTER 386/7/240 DRIED MYXOMA VIRUS STOP GRATEFUL IF YOU
 WOULD POSTPONE DESPATCH OF VIRUS PENDING FURTHER COMMUNICATION
 FROM ME.

COLONIAL SECRETARY

Original amended.

*Re note that telegraphic address
 shd. have been used - then*

*By. of Staines
 was being cut*

Time SGT/IR

BU 25/8 N 178.

50

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

SENT

A.C.S.

H.w. Stencilled copy of Cmd. on Myxomatosis.

UP

26/8/55.

~~See~~ Stencie has now been rec - re. see para. 3
of B on 46.

26/8.

T. H. Para 3 of B on 46. The stencie is
at 6c.

27/8

It is requested that, in any reference to this memorandum the above number and date should be quoted.

25th October, 1955.

To: Members of Executive Council,

From: The Colonial Secretary,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

SUBJECT :- Destruction of Rabbits.

On 7th April, 1955, Council agreed, by a majority vote, to the carrying out of an experiment of injecting rabbits on High Island, Salvador Waters, with myxomatosis.

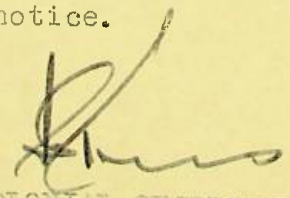
2. After this meeting of Council it was found that the effective date of the myxomatosis virus that had been obtained from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation of Australia had expired. In view of the fact that Mr. David Barton, who had agreed to carry out the experiment, was on the point of proceeding on leave and as it was considered essential that the experiments should be carried out under close supervision, arrangements were made for a fresh supply of virus to be despatched to the Falklands in time for Mr. David Barton's return from leave.

3. Further consideration, however, has been given to the legal position in the light of the introduction in the United Kingdom of legislation which makes it a specific offence to knowingly use or permit the use of a rabbit infected with myxomatosis to spread the disease among uninfected rabbits (Pests Act, 1954). In addition to this, Government is advised that under the provisions of the Protection of Animals Act, 1911, (which has been applied to the Falkland Islands), the decision of Executive Council referred to above is ultra virus.

4. Apart from the technical and other aspects (in respect of which a copy of the Report of the Advisory Committee on Myxomatosis is attached for the information and consideration of Honourable Members) it is clear that the introduction of new or amending legislation is a prerequisite to the use of myxomatosis in the Falklands.

5. Members will appreciate that in the light of the United Kingdom legislation and public opinion on the question of the use of myxomatosis, the Secretary of State would in all probability have great difficulty in approving such legislation unless it can be shown to his satisfaction that the prevalence of rabbits in the Falkland Islands represents a serious threat to the sheep industry.

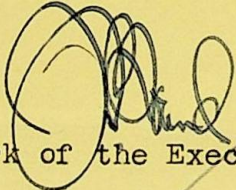
6. In these circumstances, Honourable Members are asked to advise whether the Secretary of State should be approached with regard to this matter. Pending a decision, the suppliers of the virus have been asked to withhold shipment until further notice.


COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of Executive Council
held 15th November, 1955.

16. Destruction of Rabbits.

It was agreed after discussion that the legal position with regard to the use of myxomatosis virus for the destruction of rabbits should be clarified before any further action is taken and that the Secretary of State should be approached in this respect.


Clerk of the Executive Council.

SAVING TELEGRAM.

From: The Officer Administering the Government of the Falkland Islands

To: The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Date: 14th February, 1956.

No. 39. SAVING. COLONY.

Destruction of Rabbits.

This Government has had under consideration the question of employing myxomatosis virus for the destruction of rabbits that in certain areas constitute a serious menace to grazing and pasture on a number of islands in the Falklands. In some cases the islands are small and are utilised principally for winter grazing for horses. There is, however, one island, Keppel Island, on which approximately 3,000 sheep are grazed which is seriously overrun with rabbits.

2. It would appear that there are three principal factors that affect the issue:-

- (i) The provisions of Section 1 (1) (d) of the Protection of Animals Act, 1911, which has been applied to this Colony, would seem to preclude the employment of myxomatosis for the destruction of Rabbits.
- (ii) It is noted that Section 12 of the United Kingdom Pests Act of 1954 specifically prohibits the spreading of myxomatosis.
- (iii) The recommendation made by the Advisory Committee on myxomatosis (which was set up in the United Kingdom in 1953) to the effect that no attempt should be made to assist the spread of myxomatosis or to introduce myxomatosis into unaffected areas of the country.

3. If the assumption that the deliberate introduction of the virus would be contrary to the Protection of Animals Act is correct, and the Advisory Committee on myxomatosis was apparently advised to that effect, new or amending legislation in the Falkland Islands would be required before the myxomatosis could be employed. It is not, however, clear from the information available to this Government why it was that if the use of the virus contravenes the Protection of Animals Act, specific provision prohibiting the use of myxomatosis was included in the United Kingdom Pests Act of 1954 and I should be grateful for further information on this point before proceeding further.

4. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on myxomatosis were of course made against the background of a disease that had already spread in circumstances that made it practically impossible to prevent its spreading further. In the case of the Falkland Islands, however, the problem is a different one in as much as a limited number of comparatively small islands are affected and it would be easy to infect the rabbit population and the infection would be confined to the islands into which it had been introduced. It would appear, moreover, that research and practical experiments have established the fact that there is no possibility of the disease being communicated to livestock.

Reply at 55

5. In addition to these factors there is the question of public opinion of which a substantial and vociferous section in the United Kingdom appears to be strongly opposed to any measures for the intentional introduction or spread of myxomatosis. Public opinion here is not likely to be affected and in any event the experiment, and it is the intention that in the first place the virus should be introduced as an experiment on one island, would not take place in circumstances that would/rise to any comment.

give/

6. In the circumstances, therefore, and before proceeding further I shall be grateful for confirmation that the project would not cause serious embarrassment.

GOVERNOR'S DEPUTY.

*BU for reply 29/3 W
 Mail?
 NO mail*

*BU 29/4/56
 mail >*

*do mail
 31/4/56*

BU 30/4/56.

1671



55

Saving

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

FALKLAND ISLAND

To the Officer Administering the Government of (COLONY).....

Date 25 May, 1956

No. 52 Saving



53

Your No. 39 Saving of 14th February.Destruction of rabbits.

Proposal approved but I request that I may be consulted after the results of the experiment on one island are available before myxomatosis is introduced into any other of the islands.

2. With regard to the legal point raised in your paragraph 3, I am advised that the specific prohibition against the deliberate spreading of myxomatosis in Section 12 of the Pests Act of 1954 was to clear up doubt as to whether or not the provisions of Section I (d) of the Protection of Animals' Act 1911 would apply to the case. There appear to be no grounds for holding that the spreading of disease by introducing an infected animal among uninfected animals would not constitute "the administration of any poison or injurious drug or substance" or "the causing of such a substance to be taken" within the meaning of the 1911 Act. Secondly, Section I (d) of the 1911 Act is subject to the wide qualification that the act or acts prohibited by the Section must be done "without any reasonable cause or excuse": a defendant to a myxomatosis charge might easily show a reasonable

cause

P.H.M.
19/6.

Saving

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the Officer Administering the Government of.....

Date.....

No..... Saving



cause or excuse.

3. The following points have been made by my Veterinary Adviser:-

- X (a) the disease in general possesses very limited powers of natural spread:
- (b) In many areas mosquitoes (Aedes) are responsible for the spread. In Australia it has been noted that the disease spreads only when mosquitoes are present. What is the mosquito front on Keppel ?
- (c) Carrion-eating birds, vultures, crows, have been accused of spread especially in winter over long distances when insects inactive.
- (d) This disease is not the complete answer to the rabbit problem. Some rabbits survive, develop an immunity - which might become hereditary.
- (e) There is absolutely no danger of spread of infection to human beings, stock or dogs.

X

Saving

From the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

To the Officer Administering the Government of



Date.....

No. Saving

4. Finally I should be grateful if careful records of the results of the experiment could be kept to extend knowledge of the disease in that environment.

SECEB

Mail from SS
24/6

A. A. C. S.

1. Myxomatosis appears to have got at J. 52.
Please have this paper reprinted.

2. Please then send the file down to the
H.O. under personal and confidential cover.

B. D. O.

The S. G. S.' reply is at J. 55 - he must now
proceed. I would be glad if you would go through
the papers and take whatever action is necessary to get
the virus here in working order.

Then it should be despatched to Mr. David Barton
with detailed instructions with the request (make it clear
that the S. G. S. wants to know) that careful records of the
results of the experiment should be kept and presented to
you. He is to do the actual infecting of rabbits.

E. J. F.

2.7.56.

H. C. S.

Please see my letter to Mr. J. D. Barton at p. 59.
and his reply at p. 60.

It looks as if there is a more effective way of
getting rid of rabbits, than by infecting them with
myxomatosis!

E. J. F.

H/O.

10.10.56.

(CONFIDENTIAL)

7th August 1956.

J. D. Barton Esq.
Manager,
TEAL INLET.
East Falkland.

Sir,

DESTRUCTION OF RABBITS.

I am directed to inform you that the Secretary of State has approved the carrying out of an experiment, on one island, to ascertain whether Myxomatosis Virus will destroy the rabbit population, provided :-

(a), that he be consulted after the results of the experiment are available, before myxomatosis is introduced into any other of the islands;

and (b), that careful records of the results of the experiment are forwarded to him.

2. The Veterinary Adviser to the Secretary of State, has made the following observations :-

(a), the disease in general, possesses very limited powers of natural spread;

(b), in many areas mosquitoes (Aedes) are responsible for the spread. In Australia it has been noted that the disease spreads only when mosquitoes are present;

(c), carrion-eating birds, vultures, crows have been accused of spreading the disease over long distances, in winter, when insects are inactive;

(d), the disease is not the complete answer to the rabbit problem. Some rabbits survive and develop an immunity;

(e), there is absolutely no danger of spread of infection to human beings, stock or dogs.

3. Will you please inform me if you still wish to carry out this experiment, and if you are prepared to furnish the records requested by the Secretary of State? Further consideration will then be given to the question of ordering a supply of the Virus, and full instructions for its use, to be forwarded to you.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your obedient servant.

EDWARD T. FERN

AGRICULTURAL OFFICER.

60.
E.T. Fern Esq.
Agricultural Officer,
Stanley.

Teal Inlet,
September 4th. 1956.

Your Ref. No 5/1956/C.

Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 7th. August 1956.

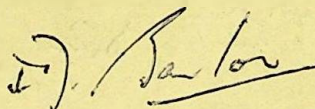
I now find that the rabbits on the island belonging to this farm are no longer doing any damage. After several visits to the island in question, I have not seen a rabbit or traces of them. (These visits to the island have been during the last four months).

I am at a loss to know why the rabbits hav^e suddenly vanished, possibly some disease has killed them off, and maybe the fact that I put several cats on the island is one of the contributing factors. The cats would certainly kill a great number of the young.

Although it is conceivable that the rabbits will breed up again with time, at the moment it is unnecessary for me to conduct any experiment with Myxomatosis.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,



Manager. Teal Inlet Ltd.

61.

G.E.

55 minutes. In view of the fact that David Bantre no longer wishes to carry out the experiment I suggest the whole matter might be referred back to Gels i.d.c. to see whether they want any further action taken?

G.G./T
19/1/56.

yes
FMA
25

1.) A.O. - Pl. note decision above.

2.) A.C.S. / Please note for next. Enclo agenda.
I will draft a short memo. i.d.c.

H.C.S. Noted for next
22 Co. D. Q. 26/1/56

G.G./T
25/1/56

H.C.S.

Noted: thank you.
S.J.G. M/O. 31/10/56.

B. 11. 15. 1. 57.

G.G./T
2/1/56

25th February 1957

Memorandum No:12 for Executive Council.

MYXOMATOSIS

It was agreed in Council in November, 1955, that the legal position with regard to the use of myxomatosis virus for the destruction of rabbits should be clarified before any further action was taken to implement Council's decision to carry out such experiments on High Island, Salvador Waters, (decision made, on a majority vote, in April 1955).

2. The matter was referred to the Secretary of State who approved the proposal but requested that he should be consulted after the results of the experiments on one island are available before myxomatosis was introduced elsewhere. The legal difficulties that had occurred to this Government had apparently also arisen in the United Kingdom and had been settled by the specific prohibition against the deliberate spreading of myxomatosis provided for by Section 12 of the Pests Act of 1954 (which is not applied to the Falkland Islands).

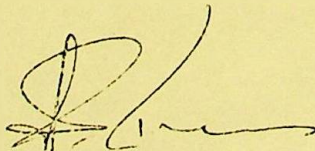
3. The Secretary of State's Veterinary Adviser made the following points:-

- (a) the disease in general possesses very limited powers of natural spread:
- (b) In many areas mosquitoes (Aedes) are responsible for the spread. In Australia it has been noted that the disease spreads only when mosquitoes are present. What is the mosquito front on Keppel?
- (c) Carrion-eating birds, vultures, crows, have been accused of spread especially in winter over long distances when insects are inactive.
- (d) This disease is not the complete answer to the rabbit problem. Some rabbits survive, develop an immunity - which might become hereditary.
- (e) There is absolutely no danger of spread of infection to human beings, stock or dogs.

4. The Secretary of State concluded by asking that careful records of the results of the experiment should be kept to extend knowledge of the disease in this environment.

5. Mr. David Barton, who was to carry out the original experiment, was informed accordingly but he replied that the rabbits and their traces had disappeared from High Island and there was no need to proceed with the experiment.

6. Honourable Members are asked to advise whether, in these circumstances, any further action should be taken.

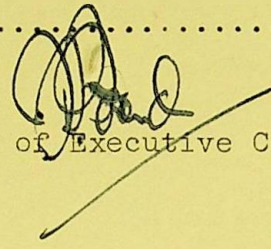


ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF MEETING OF MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HELD ON 13TH MARCH, 1957.

.....
10. DESTRUCTION OF RABBITS.

Council advised that Mr. J. J. Davis of New Island who had imported myxomatosis virus (at present held by the Agricultural Officer) should be informed that there were certain legal objections to the use of the virus and that Government considered its use to be inadvisable. In the circumstances he should be informed that the virus would be destroyed.

.....


Clerk of Executive Council.

Y. H.

Amve.

Draft letter to Mr. Davis s.f.c. re G.C. re

see 64

*8
25/3*

64

1671

3rd April

57

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the myxomatosis virus which you imported and at present held by the Agricultural Officer and to inform you that there are certain legal objections to the use of the virus and Government considers its use to be inadvisable. In the circumstances it is proposed to destroy the virus unless you wish to make any representations on the subject.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant.

ASSISTANT COLONIAL SECRETARY.

JB/PT

J. J. Davis, Esq.,
New Island,
West Falkland.

ao. / 65
A. J. P.

H.C.S.

Noted, with much satisfaction. Thank you!

S.J.F. A/O 2/4/57.

66
10/16/57
A

Note.

I saw M^{rs} Davis of New Island at her request today. 16 September.

She said that her husband had had no reply from Government about the use of the myxomatosis virus. I told her that we had written in April but she replied that the letter had never been received.

She contended that New Island was infested with rabbits throughout and that it was useless planting grass seed because of them. I explained the position to her and gave her a copy of J64. She asked whether Government would reconsider its decision. I replied that I could not commit Government to a reversal of its policy which had been laid down by the Governor's Council. I intimated, however, that if her husband cared to make representations we ~~would~~ would certainly give them serious consideration. I told her that the original virus had been destroyed.

P.A. Jones.

h.g.f.
16.9.57



New Island.
14 October 1957.

Dear Sir.

64 In answer to the copy of yours dated 3, April 1957, the original has not yet reached me.

Since my wifes recent visit to Stanley I leann that the ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Myxomatosis Virus which I imported from U.K, has been distroyed, Dr Stapleforth, of Weybridge, who I got the Virus from told me it would last for an indefinite period, but when a tube was opened it had to be used right away, Dr Stableforth also told me I could get as much more as I required from him.

Something has to be done about them, every year I import grass seed and plant in the spring only to be eaten up by *at. b. c.* Rabbits, I am incloseing a cutting (will you kindly return) which I think is of interest to see just how much grass they eat.

I would very much like you to pay me a visit for a few days, or failing that somebody on your behalf, As I should like also to raise a question about Penguins but that can wait till some later date.

But I still want to get and use Myxomatosis.

Trusting you will reply at your earlyest convenience.

I am sir your
obedient servant,

JJ Davis

To Colonial Secretary.
Port Stanley.

69
~~70~~
On file only
2/11/57

Reply at 69.

4/11/57

D/O

7/10

Thank you for your letter of the 14th October. 68
I am sorry I have been so long in replying.

The destruction of the Myxomatosis virus and the prohibition on its use is in accordance with a decision of the Governon-in-Council. From what your wife told me it seems that you certainly have a major problem on your hands and we will look into the matter again. I will certainly try and get out to see you as soon as possible but I am not quite certain when it will be.

You might be interested in the following views of the Secretary of State's Veterinary Adviser:-

- (a) the disease in general possesses very limited powers of natural spread;
- (b) in many areas mosquitoes (*Aedes*) are responsible for the spread. In Australia it has been noted that the disease spreads only when mosquitoes are present;
- (c) carrion-eating birds, vultures, crows, have been accused of spread especially in winter over long distances when insects are inactive;
- (d) this disease is not the complete answer to the rabbit problem. Some rabbits survive, develop an immunity - which might become hereditary;

/(e) there is

J. J. Davis, Esq.,
NEW ISLAND.

AGDT/MC

- (e) there is absolutely no danger of spread of infection to human beings, stock or dogs.

If it were to be agreed that the virus should be used on New Island it is very probable that we should ask you to keep detailed records of the result of the experiment. Can I take it that you would have no objection to doing this?

A.G.D.T.

Y. E.

The question of Myxomatosis has again been raised as you will see from folio 68.

2. The last decision on the subject by Executive Council is recorded at folio 63 and the relevant memorandum is at folio 62.

3. Although Mrs. Davis, who came to see me about the problem, is I believe liable to exaggerate, I understand that the rabbit population at New Island is really something of a serious threat and that numbers have grown out of all proportion and are beyond control.

4. Although I detest Myxomatosis in any form I am very much afraid that we would not be justified in withholding permission from Davis to introduce the virus, provided of course he is prepared to keep some record of what he does.

5. What I suggest is that George Stewart might go out to New Island and give us an independent opinion on the rabbit population, at the same time finding out what Davis has in mind about penguins. If George Stewart confirms that the sheep pastures on New Island are really seriously threatened then, I think, we might as well give him permission to do it as a controlled experiment.



C. G. J. T.
11.11.57.
~~8.11.57~~

AGDT/SJA

RA
11.11.57

Office in Charge - Agricultural Department.

1) f68 and subsequent minutes for information.

2) Note action proposed in last paragraph of m. 71.

Will you arrange, in conjunction with Mr. Davis, to go out and investigate the position on the spot, at some mutually convenient time, and report.

C. G. J. T.
12.11.57.

73

H. C. S.

Having visited New Island to investigate the destruction by Rabbits, of grass improvements carried out by Mr Davis at New Island.

I find that the efforts of Mr Davis to improve his grasslands, (by seeding) are being wasted owing to the destruction of seedlings by Rabbits.

H. C. S.

O. i/c Agric. Dept.

3/12/57

74

Noted. I have arranged with Mr Davis and Mr George Stewart for the latter to go out in January and start an inoculation campaign with the serum we have available.

Mr Stewart and Mr Davis will arrange a mutually convenient time.

H. C. S.
14/12/57

Recd. 15/1
12/12

75

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

RECEIVED

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
15	NEW ISLAND	37	1515	22/11/57
To				
phone Colonial Secretary		Stanley		

Very pleased with your arrangements sorry it wasn't
yourself it would be most convenient for me if George
Stewart could fly this coming week stop Hope this alright
by you please confirm regards

Davis

76.
Let George Stewart
know.

[Signature]
23/11/57

Time PMMCL/

77

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

SENT

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
				25/11/57
To				
	DAVIS NEW ISLAND			HOA/C

^u
Yar telegram 22nd stop George Stewart is booked to fly New
_n
Island on Wednesday =

SECRETARY.

Time

JB/PH

1671

78.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

FALKLAND ISLANDS

SENT

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
				3.12.57
To	DAVIS NEW ISLAND			H.O. A/C

Subject to your agreement I propose that George Stewart should fly out with equipment and virus to carry out initial inoculations Stop Please say when it would be convenient remembering you will have to catch a number of rabbits first Stop Regards

Denton-Thompson

Time

Copy to O. in C., Agricultural Department.

Rec 15/1/58 (74)

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

79

FALKLAND ISLANDS

RECEIVED

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
6	NEW ISLAND	10	0900	13.1.58.

To

COLONIAL SECRETARY STANLEY.

READY FOR GEORGE STEWART THIS WEEK REGARDS

DAVIS.

80

*P. info Col. A.C.
M. 13/1/58*

81

*'Some. But Mr. Stewart doesn't think he'll be able to make it this week.
D.M. 13/1/58.*

Time
OAS/12

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

82

FALKLAND ISLANDS

SENT

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed in at	Date
				15.1.58.
To	DAVIS NEW ISLAND.			HOA/C

Impossible release George Stewart this week stop Will Monday of next week be convenient.

Secretary.

Time JB/FH

Reply at 83.

*Hold for reply
but 20/1/58*

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH SERVICE

83

FALKLAND ISLANDS

RECEIVED

Number	Office of Origin	Words	Handed In at	Date
7	NEW ISLAND	7	0900	17.1.58.

To

COLONIAL SECRETARY STANLEY.

YES CONVENIENT FOR ME

DAVIS.

84

Phoned to Mr. Stewart.

PH.

17/1/58.

Time
OAS/

RB

RB