

Cutlip: That's what the literature says. That experiment was done quite a few years ago, in the 1960s or early 1970s, and there was no effect on it. I don't know of any more experimental work that has been done. Anything that would destroy the BSE agent would pretty well destroy the beef.

EIR: As a researcher, are you especially interested in any particular anomalous aspect of the prion diseases? Other animal types? Ranch minks? Is what's coming out so far, falling into line with your own animal prion studies?

Cutlip: I think it is. As far as I know, it all fits in; there is just so much that is not known about it. It's hard to make any predictions at all. I feel that it all fits very nicely with the prion theory, as I understand it. What we need to do, is to finally pin down what is going on, to find ways to control it.

It's not really a slow virus; it's not a virus at all, if the prion theory is correct. It's strictly an abnormal host protein that is infectious, in some cases.

EIR: There is controversy over what rate of culling is called for. In Ireland, for example, one animal diagnosed sick, meant the whole herd was culled—even presuming the problem was a common feed factor, and not transmission between animals. Whereas, in Britain, that approach was not taken.

Cutlip: How many should be culled? If you want my true opinion, I think that the British people who saw this disease early, namely, Dr. Wells, who first diagnosed it, and Dr. Wilesmith, who is the main epidemiologist working on it, and Mike Dawson, who worked on the experimental transmission a great deal—I think they've done an excellent job in understanding, and getting things under control as quickly as they did.

It was diagnosed in 1986, and by 1988, a ban on feeding ruminant by-products back to ruminants was in effect. The whole community got it under control there rather quickly, and, now, the incidence has been dropping dramatically. [The number of BSE cases peaked in December 1992; then declined to less than one-third of the peak rate, and is still declining. Overall, from 1986 to September 1995, an estimated 156,000 head were diagnosed with BSE in Britain, in more than 32,000 herds.—ed.] That's a remarkable control of a disease which we know very little about. I think they've done a good job. I know they are being criticized: I think it's not fair.

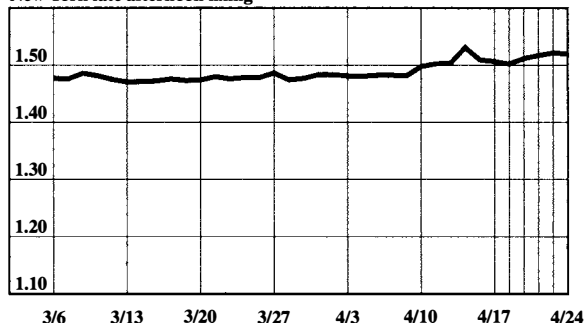
EIR: Would you differentiate between some of the epidemiologists, researchers, farmers, and others, as opposed to the ideological people in the Thatcher government from 1979-90?

Cutlip: They could have done a lot more. But in the early phases of this disease, they didn't know how devastating this was going to be. They probably looked at it, comparing it to scrapie in sheep, and it doesn't act quite the same way. I think it's been a remarkable control program effort.

Currency Rates

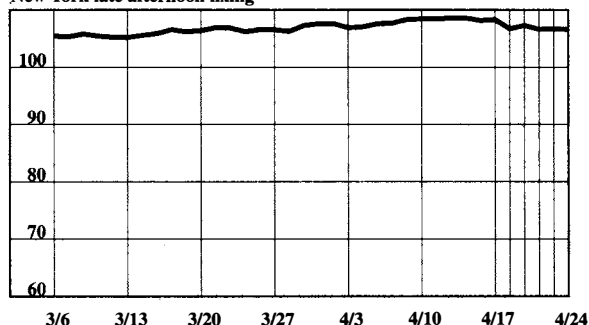
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



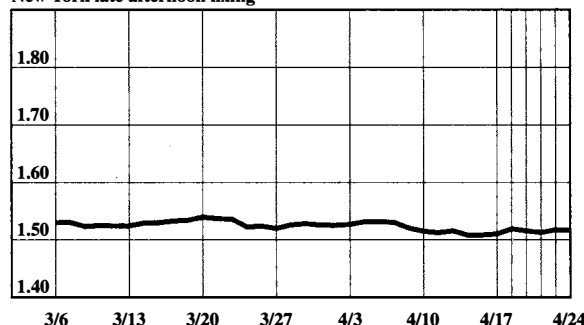
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

