

ANIMALS TESTED FOR MAD COW ARE NOT THE ONLY NO-BRAINERS

January 20, 2004

Most of us are aware of the term “no brainer.” It’s used in situations where it is obvious to anyone what the logical move should be. Over the holidays I witnessed three instances on the news that proved to me it’s not always true that many of our leaders recognize a no brainer.

One was Director of Security Ridge’s announcement of new guidelines governing flights of foreign air carriers over our air space. It was that specified flights would be required to have armed marshals on board. Why just “specified” flights and not all? How can anyone be sure the others have not fallen through the net?

Why has it taken two years after 9/11 to reach this conclusion? It’s as if it has suddenly dawned on them that foreign airliners are just as capable of being used as deadly missiles as American planes.

This should have been a no brainer years ago. Too many people involved in our national security still have not got it. They are more concerned with political correctness and offending someone than they are in security.

Another example of a no brainer surfaced in the news shortly thereafter. The leading Democratic presidential candidate opined as how he would not rush to judgment on whether or not Osama Ben Laden was responsible for the attack on 9/11.

Hello? The guy has admitted on numerous occasions on tape that he planned the attack. He is still urging further attacks. Why would one have any doubts whatsoever of his involvement?

There was no other possible reason for that candidate’s statement other than that it differs from George Bush’s version of the situation. If that is not blind ideology I do not know what is.

And last, but far from least, is the Mad Cow debacle. As most are well aware, a cow in Washington state was diagnosed with the disease. It was tested, I believe, if my facts are right, because of its behavior prior to slaughter. It was what was referred to as a “downer”. In short, an animal that was unable to stand or walk.

Many older dairy cows end up in that condition and it is not too unusual for them to develop it. I was brought up around cows and always thought that such animals were destined for the pet food market. The same for so-called “bob veal,” which is a fully developed calf that may come from the mother’s womb after slaughter.

Well guess what? Lo and behold, some 70 years later I learn we have regularly been eating downer cows! Maybe even bob veal. We no longer have to worry about this because the government in its wisdom has announced that downer cattle will no longer be available for human consumption. Hopefully, the same can be said for bob veal.

We learn more facts about the sequence of events leading up to the discovery that the cow did, indeed, have Mad Cow disease. The animal was butchered; the brain and spinal cord were saved and tested. Why? Because this is principally where the disease is confined.

The rest of the carcass was shipped off for sale in as many as four different states before the tests were completed. After the tests were completed and confirmed, the panic set in. The barn door is locked after the horse has been stolen.

Isn't it a no brainer and wouldn't it have saved an awful lot of grief if they had not been allowed downers to be used for human food in the first place?

What do you suppose would have happened to the brain and spinal cord if it was uncontaminated? Where do you suppose the others go?

I remember as a kid riding along to the slaughterhouse with my uncle with his yearly crop of pigs. A big sign over the door read "We use everything but the squeal". Now I know it's true!

Makes one have a newfound respect for vegetarians, doesn't it?