

CVO/BSE/1140

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SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY IN A CAPTIVE PUMA

1. Mr Taylor's minute of 6 November refers.
2. The Minister and the Minister of State were concerned to see an article in yesterday's Times (attached) which suggested that the puma concerned had never "eaten any part of a cow or sheep which, in the opinion of Government Scientists, could transmit the species to a different species".
3. You explained to me that this was incorrect. The position was as set out in the briefing for Prime Minister's questions attached to Mr Taylor's note. The puma had probably been fed low quality beef meat in the form of split carcasses. Prior to the Specified Bovine Offal ban, these carcasses would have contained spinal cord, which is one of the tissues most likely to contain the BSE agent.

P.L.

David Rossington
PPS/Minister
13 November 1992

Mr R Lowson + 1

cc Private Offices
Mr K Adams
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Mr K Meldrum
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