

## U.S.D.A. REFUSES BIRDS FROM HOLLAND

by Jerry Jennings

Holland has recently joined the growing list of "closed countries", from which the U.S.D.A. will not allow U.S. quarantine station owners to import birds. Under a policy adopted in the latter half of 1975, agriculture will no longer issue import permits for birds, coming from a country, from which a bird shipment was discovered to be infected with Exotic Newcastle Disease (EVND).

Countries placed on the "closed" list are customarily given a 90 day waiting period before they can resume shipments to the U.S. During this period, they are required to provide the U.S.D.A. with some guarantee that no further shipments of birds exposed to Newcastle will be shipped. The U.S.D.A. further requests the exporting country's government to outline the steps they are taking to ensure compliance. Failure to meet the above means an indefinite suspension of imports from that country. Most countries have ignored the U.S. request.

Belgium has been closed to U.S. importation for nearly six months and will likely remain so. England, many Asian, African, and some South American countries have also been closed. The list promises to grow larger.

As the sources of supply continue to dry up, the number of birds entering the country will drop considerably. The high demand for birds will drive the price of U.S. bred birds upward beyond their recent record levels.

Increased prices will likely prove both boon and bane to American aviculture. On the one hand, breeders will obtain a good return for their successful breeding efforts. Unfortunately, these same high prices will make it difficult, if not impossible, for many, who are new to aviculture, to obtain breeding stock. Additionally, the high prices encourage smuggling of birds in from Canada and Mexico, which will add to the disease problem, i.e. Newcastle and Psittacosis, to say nothing of an unwanted increase in bird theft, which has reached epidemic proportions.

Hopefully, some middle ground will be reached, wherein breeders will do well, theft will decline, and smuggling will become less profitable ■

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