

## PUPPY SMUGGLING

As a Patron of the Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation and as an Honorary Member of the British Veterinary Association I have been a longstanding supporter of this cause.

My son is a practising veterinary Surgeon and as a family we are more than a little aware of the considerable distress caused to both animals and purchasers as a result of the wholly illegal importing of often diseased or deformed dogs.

You may also be aware that the Dogs Trust centre in East Kent, which Suzy and I visited relatively recently, is the 'reception centre' for puppies detected and confiscated at Dover. The scale of the problem should not be under-estimated and my personal view is that penalties, up to and including imprisonment and the confiscation of vehicles used in this trade, should be increased and rigorously enforced.

While Government legislation of the kind promoted by the Dogs Trust was not included in the King's Speech I would hope that a Private Member's Bill embracing the Trust's proposals might receive Government support.