(No. 30) -- Are Animal Welfare Societies a "Ripoff"?

Humane Information Services, Inc.
A Member Unburdens Herself

"The whole scene for helping animals in the USA smells. I and many others are convinced the societies are just fronts for individual self serving, are paying very pretty good pay at that." This is the opinion of Mrs. Bradley E. Stafford, of West Chatham, Massachusetts, one of our valued members.

Mrs. Stafford seems to agree with a famous television personality who said that humanity is "just too good to exist among us." We are glad she doesn't include us in that category. I appreciate her frank comment, because it provides us with an excuse to reply with equal frankness, for the benefit of all our members, some of whom we hold similar views.

Humane Information Services receives quite a few obviously sincere letters asking for our opinion of various animal welfare societies which the writers have been or contemplate supporting financially. We have attempted to answer public criticism of the motives of those behind any particular society which we suspect is more concerned about feathering its own nest than about the animal's kettle. (1) An honest and unfavorable appraisal of some particular society that is raising in the money would overtly and explicitly be understood by our members as just a case of sour grapes. (2) We don't claim a position of omniscience.

ONE SOCIETY SPEAKS FRANKLY!

One California society recently carried in its attractively and expensively-printed news bulletin an article entitled, "The Great Animal Welfare Rip-off!" In the tune of a well-publicized criticism, its intention is to frankly and publicly appraise a number of specific named animal societies. It recognizes that the task of managing director of one of the named societies which included a veiled threat: "I am informed by our attorney that 'rip-off' is generally accepted as meaning a 'con game,' a 'fraudulent operation' or just plain 'street hustling.'

A more typical grant was to an already highly respected organization 'for study to develop educational program for urban managers'. The latter, being among the most highly paid of government employees, might be interpreted by our members as highly compelling evidence to support such an indictment, as well as the facts to back up the statement that 'some organizations...simply put your name on a commercial letterhead and openly request for more money.' Such accusations, it seems to me, are dangerously near the line of libel, and open to suit for more money.

Somewhere around $60 million each day, or a total of $22 billion in 1972, is contributed to charities in the United States, according to an article by Carl Bakal in Reader's Digest for February, 1973. According to Representative Ashbrook (Congressional Record, June 13, 1974, page E3875) the total for 1973 was even greater, $24.53 billion. Americans are setting an "all-time record for generosity--and gullibility," according to the Reader's Digest article, which was quoted in Congress by Senator John W. Stilson, Chairman of the Senate Congressional Record for July 11, 1974. The Record or the Digest may be found in your local library.

"A classic example of gullibility was demonstrated by a wag in Memphis, who solicited for the 'Fund for the Widow of the Unknown Soldier.' In just a few minutes he collected $11 which was promptly returned. In New Jersey a phony rabbit raised $75,000 for a nonexistent synagogue and school in Israel...In Westchester County, New York, a so-called 'blind shop' sold $2,000 worth of concert tickets for a benefit in its behalf before authorities discovered the shop to be a store that sold lottery tickets only."

"Other charities, though legitimate enough, often receive little of the money contributed. Thus, in Westchester County the $218,000 reportedly raised on a telethon...for the Foundation for Research and Education in Sickle Cell Disease has gone to...a couple of well-respected agencies. The telethon promoters claimed that their expenses had exceeded donations by $78,000."

..."the non-profit organizations' lack of answers to questions about their financial procedures should be a matter of concern. They are not bound to give us a full account of how they have spent the money of others, but they are bound to accept our right to ask and to insist on answers, where genuine charity is involved, as well as to be willing to face the consequences of any discoveries of mismanagement. Their motives, as we have repeatedly shown, are not always pure..."
appealing conditions in the "people charity" field, long ago stopped responding to most of these appeals for contributions. He simply ignores the mailed appeals, and tells telephone or door-to-door solicitors that he has his own favorite charity to which he gives generously, but to no others. Nearly all of his substantial contributions go to help the animals. 

Ye Editor was making a deposit the other day at the window of a bank teller whom he knew. "What are you going to do with all this money?" the teller jokingly asked. "Give it to my animal welfare charity," we replied. The teller shook his head. "I don't believe you. Why not to some children's society?" That is just about par for the course, as any humanitarian can tell you. People react emotionally, not logically. If there were only one hundred dollars available for charity, it certainly should go to the animal rights, not to any human charities. But (in 1973, at least) $25 billion were available for charities. The question for the reader is to consider how much can be accomplished with the last hundred dollars. It is the marginal result of the contribution that counts. We believe that this marginal result is greater for contributions to good animal societies than to those to most people societies. 

One reason for this is that many people charities seem to be getting more money than they know what to do with, whereas many deserving animal societies are starved for funds. The question, for the benefit of its promoters or managers, with animal welfare merely the comeon or inducement, is not giver, or do the animals come first? In the opinion of the directors and officers of HIS, there are some so-called animal welfare societies which come dangerously close to being outright frauds, fit candidates for the designation "ripoff." Remember, a society with a million dollar annual budget should be accomplishing one hundred times as much as one spending ten thousand. It is easy to be impressed with size. The critical question is not, "How much do they raise?" but "What does it accomplish per dollar spent?"

MORE INFORMATION NEEDED

It is far from easy for any potential contributor to judge any society on a basis of these five tests, partly because of insufficient information about the society and about others with which it is being compared. 

Humane publications are notorious for their attempts to solicit contributions by indicating the amount of money that goes into administrative and other overhead expenses, but little about their goals and how these were arrived at, or about their plans and work designed to achieve them.

Societies should have budgets and publish them, giving in some detail the sources of funds and the costs of goods and services for which they are intended to be spent, and what has been achieved in pursuing those goals. In the opinion of HIS, Humane Information Services is one of the few nation humane societies to publish an operating statement (in the March issue of this year's annual report), and as a direct result of our writing this article and especially after reading the persuasive plea for more financial information contained in this article, we plan to prepare and publish in the future detailed operating budgets should a request be made.

MORE ABOUT THE "RIPOFF" QUEST!

The editors of humane society publications tell us that the attention span of humanitarians is short, like those of children. We have found this to be true in our uttering appraisal of the devoted animal lovers who make up the humane movement. We have found that there are "tired of children" and "tired of animals." We have found that there are always some clever methods, and spend far too much on advertising and other means of soliciting from the general public, with the humane societies being compared. The critical question is not, "How large is the budget of HIS?" but "What does it accomplish per dollar spent?"

IMPORTANT!

Meanwhile, this is our issue for Christmas, and we are traditionally open our hearts and checkbook to the benefit of their favorite animal in the spirit of the season. We are therefore mindful in mind that Humane Information Services pass with flying colors every one of five tests set forth in this article. We ask that you read the tests with care and comparison to any particular animal charity, because we do meet them, you are wrong. They are based upon experience with the IRS and his laws, and are not based upon the kinds of tests discussed in the articles which have been cited. So, do not use the results of these tests as your year's Christmas contributions. We beg you, sincerely that we can do as much or as much as any other humane society to use
The greatest depths of human depravity are to be found in an "arena" where a group of "dog lovers" gathers to watch two of their pets fight to the death.

All over the country, in almost every state but especially in the South, such dogfights are in progress on any weekend.

The human participants are a mixed lot: dog breeders, farmers, filling station operators and construction workers, with a sprinkling of veterinarians, physicians, lawyers, businessmen and politicians perhaps even law enforcement officers! For them it is a big occasion, when they can indulge their propensity to gamble, "enjoy" the excitement of a real life-or-death struggle, perhaps make a convenient "buy" from a drug vendor, and possibly take advantage of an opportunity to engage in sex with one of the prostitutes said to frequent these scenes.

**BREEDING**

The fighting dogs which are the principal source of dogs used in dogfighting are generally mongrels, or stolen dogs, with occasional use of English bulldogs, pit bull terriers, or French bulldogs. They are trained to attack with extreme ferocity.

**TRAINING**

The dogs are trained in backyard matches among fellow breeders for small stakes, called "rolling." Some breeders are said to attempt to instill the blood lust in their dogs by dangling cats, kittens and possums in front of them. The dogs, like human prizefighters, are trained for several weeks before a fight, with exercise and special foods.

Congressman Bill Gunter, of Florida, who has co-sponsored a bill in the House of Representatives dealing with dogfighting, said, "I have actually been sickened to my core by breeders who take as much pride in their dogs as do any other part of "the fancy." For most, breeding these "pit bulls" is an avocation, but some make it a full-time business.

With pit bull puppies being sold for as little as $100 or as much as $1,000, it may be more remunerative than some other breeding ventures (see accompanying photographs).

**THE FIGHT**

The dogfights may be held in an open field, a barn, or in the city in a vacant warehouse. A typical setup is a pit with plywood sides and a canvas floor to keep the dogs' open wounds from becoming dirty is set up. Wooden benches may be provided for spectators.

The fight itself is a test of which dog can inflict and withstand more suffering than another. This does not pretend to make either the dog or its owner more capable of performing some useful service. It does not "improve the breed's" capacity to do work, much less to kill another dog. The only purpose served, other than seeming to have a favorite target. An hour or two of this snarling, biting, tearing, bone crunching may be required to determine the winner. The defeated dog may be dead, or so badly wounded that it has no will to continue the fight. Mercifully spare our readers the distressful task of viewing photographs of these gory scenes.

**THROWBACK TO ROMAN "GAMES"**

Organized dogfights are a throwback to the Roman amphitheater, where wild animals were pitted against each other, and against human prisoners, presumably in a deliberate attempt to satisfy the aggressive instincts of the populace so they would not be vented on the ruling nobles.

Wild animals in circuses, with the trainer cracking his whip and fending off the "enraged" animal with a chair, also are descended from these ancient animal "sports." But, at least, the animals used generally live to snarl for the edification of another audience.

Bullfighters, on the other hand, do not pretend to love the bulls they kill in the ring. The horses that are gored and toppled to the ground in pain are "protected" with pads that sometimes fend off the onslaught of the bull's horns. Rodeo performers claim to be exhibiting skills in riding and handling. Bullfighting, which is at least distantly related to legitimate cowboy pursuits. Other cruel exploitations of animals generally have some product in view, such as the production of human food. Even such loathsome "sports" as "coon-on-a-log" contests have an ostensible purpose of training dogs to catch animals for food or fur.

The clandestine dogfight, however, has none of these "moral" excuses. Its purpose is to demonstrate that one animal can inflict and withstand more suffering than another. This does not pretend to make either the dog or its owner more capable of performing some useful service. It does not "improve the breed's" capacity to do work, much less to kill another dog.

The only purpose served, other than satisfaction of the blood lust of the human "sportsmen" who conduct and attend the fights, is to provide a relatively unfixable contest upon which to make bets. These dogfights could not exist without the associated gambling.

**EFFECTS ON PUBLIC MORES**

Although thousands of dogs are sacrificed annually on the altars of this cruel cult, the numbers involved are not relatively large compared to the volume of animals undergoing suffering in other ways. But the real importance of such spectacles, as of rodeos and other cruel exploitations of animals, is their effects on attitudes toward animals of the participants. Women and children attend these dogfights, and are involved in the training of the dogs. Even more important, public officials and even law enforcement officers come to accept such attitudes toward animals as a measure of the public's mores, embodying the fundamental moral views of the community.

**AN ESTABLISHED SPORT**

Dogfighting has been a part of the American "sports" scene for possibly a hundred years. Fighting dogs are advertised by some of the major dog magazines, generally in terms designed to disguise their purpose but easily understood by seasoned dogfighting innovations. In the three dogfighting magazines circulated throughout the country to secret mailing lists, the number of breeders and fight promoters and participants is very clannish, and it is extremely difficult to obtain specific information about these activities even after they have occurred.

Humane societies have known about the existence of this dogfighting industry for decades, but little or nothing has been done to stop the fights. There are several reasons for this inaction.

**LAWS PROHIBIT DOGFIGHTS**

It is not due primarily to lack of laws prohibiting such fights. The Florida law, for example, is quite lenient. It places the statute books of many other states, passed years ago, makes anyone who "unneccessarily...torments...cruelly...attacks...drags...or otherwise causes the same to be done" guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a maximum fine of $5 or one month's imprisonment.

But in the carefully-selected communities in which dogfights are held the local law enforcement officers, the prosecuting attorney, and the judge, the local "sportsmen" who conduct and attend the fights, are generally given a free hand simply to maintain the peace. Justice are quite likely to be sympathetic to any of the estimable citizens who may be caught in a raid on a dogfight. More likely some of the participants are personally known to the law enforcement officers, the prosecutors, and the judge. According to Tampa Times, a Tampa man interviewed by a reporter as saying: "It's no big deal to catch. I remember we were at (a dogfight) that was raided. We were fined $35 or so and went home. There was a lot of noise made about it for a while, the FBI even came, walked in, but nothing much ever came of it."

**EVASION OF THE LAW**

While getting caught participating in a dogfight is "no big deal," those who try and participate in the fights make every effort to avoid getting caught. Invitees are known to the promoters, and it is extremely difficult, except for an earnest effort to even learn about a fight after it is held, much less in advance. Everything connected with the fights is kept secret.

The "arena" is set up within a few hours before the fight, which is held in an isolated location, usually a different one each time.

If any sheriff or state's attorney knows about the fights being held in his area, he can conscientiously try to stop them, a warrant must be obtained. Some employee of the judge issuing the warrant...
enforcement agency feels it has done its duty, and is likely to forget the whole thing. We have heard of no locality in which the fights have been repeatedly raided.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION?
Because of these difficulties with local enforcement, an attempt is being made in the Congress to draft comprehensible federal law which would serve to make a real dent in the dogfighting industry. Congressman Thomas S. Foley, of Washington state, introduced a bill on February 19, after this article is written, which was so gory that many spectators could not look at it.

Mr. President, our society is subjected to such cruel and even more brutal cruelties. This situation demands immediate national legislative attention."

As this is written, the Senate Commerce Committee is hearing and several kind of federal legislation will almost surely be passed.

TESTIMONY AT HOUSE HEARINGS?

The most effective testimony offered at the House hearings was by Charles Williams and Magnuson, of Washington state, which was so gory that many spectators could not look at it.

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A MEMBER PROTESTS OUR FAILURE TO FEATURE WHALES

Miss Marguerite A. Jones, of Baltimore, writes: "While I couldn't agree with you more sincerely than I do about the over exclusion of marine wildlife issues, I cannot agree with the idea that "Societies and Wildlife" is the title of a publication that should be without any marine content. A "Humane Society and Wildlife" title is indeed what I feel would be a more appropriate name for our publication, because I think you will agree with me that at least 50% of our members are also concerned about both wildlife, marine and terrestrial. A title change would truly open your publication up to a much wider and more diverse audience."
WILDLIFE — FROM PAGE 5

probably have engaged more humane society public relations efforts in the past month (by over two hundred million food animals suffering the tortures of the damned), the discussion is needed of the problem itself. The International Whaling Commission, and the shooting of some grizzly bears from airplanes.

Sometimes one wonders if they are humane societies or branches of the National Geographic Society.

This is a good reason for all of this. The ecology gig is harvesting a lot of nuts, and a humane society can make a pretty good living from it. Selling along beside the harvester, picking up what is wasted by the bloated ecology organizations. However, on locusts, this form of parasitism must face the hard facts of life. The humane societies cannot compete successfully with ecology societies on the latter's terrain. They cannot even sue our own human goals vigorously and successfully while devoting much of their time to study of the ecoloh system. The same applies in reverse to wildlife organizations. True, animals are part of the ecology, so we are both concerned with animals. The problems involved are far more intricate than that.

OVERLAPPING AND MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE AREAS OF INTEREST

The general purposes, specific goals and activities, and of these humane societies might be divided into three areas: (1) the area wherein the interests of these societies overlap, (2) the area in which only humane societies are particularly interested, (3) the area in which only the wildlife and environmental organizations are particularly interested.

(1) We are all interested, obviously, in the trapping of fur animals, the way in which they are raised on farms, which is not a primary concern of the ecologist any more than is the slaughter of livestock in kosher plants or in the United States. So, even in this general overlapping area there are mutually exclusive areas of concern.

(2) The humane societies are concerned with many phases of animal welfare that are of only minor or casual interest to the ecologist. For example, the fluctuating life cycles arising from changes in weather conditions, and the inter-species relationships that fit into these three mutually inclusive areas.

(3) The same basic question is probably posed by the ecologist. What is our real objective? What is our real objective? What is our real objective? What is our real objective? What is our real objective? What is our real objective? What is our real objective? What is our real objective?
ENDANGERED SPECIES

One of the greatest concerns of wildlife programs is the protection of endangered species. Wolves, bears, whooping cranes, and elephants are examples of species that have been protected under federal and state laws. However, some species, such as the Florida panther, are still in danger of extinction.

MISSIONS OF PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA:

World population controls, anti-pollution and man's war against the environment are new concerns in today's society. Man may well be one of the mammals to disappear. But we doubt these are proper subjects for humane society major programs.

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WILDLIFE — FROM PAGE 6

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Dear People Who Care,

Greetings in the Master's precious name, Jesus.

My heart's torn with compassion for God's creatures on this earth, and all are remembered when I pray for the angels' ministering care. Oh, how much they need it.

I'm a widow, soon 67 years, who rents a flat—three rooms. I'm on Social Security. My son is disabled, my daughter afflicted with various ailments. We have nine cats and several squirrels, one of which I raised and set free who comes each day for nuts and seeds. Also many wild birds in rear yard.

God's creations be first, then we. Sometimes they eat better than we do. They have the run of our home. The females are neutered. We cherish each one. Our little lucky seems to be accepted that many states passed laws protecting animals better than would be likely to be accepted and proceeded with enforcement officers, prosecuting officials and if it exists or works outside of any service. They have the run of our home, to be cherished and loved.

For you who are whole family of loved ones.

I can't write much, just do not have money for stamps, but I can pray.

Mrs. Betty M. Wiley
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

News from NAHL

about National Legislation

The Second Session of the 93rd Congress is nearing its end. As this is written, several bills on which hearings have been held (dogfighting and transportation of animals) were introduced and have become law. Several bills dealing with wildlife and ecology have been passed. Local governments have been more active in seeking severe laws to protect against cruelty to animals.

It is hoped that all states passed laws protecting an animal as well as people. As a whole, however, this Congress has appropriated an anti-cruelty agent to enforce the laws. This agent is enforcement of the laws. As a whole, however, this Congress has appropriated an anti-cruelty agent to enforce the laws. Some states passed laws protecting an animal as well as people.

One of these proper functions government enforcement of the laws. This applies to laws protecting animals as well as people. But the existence of the local humane societies, and their willingness to pursue any act of cruelty thereto. The law shall convey the person so arrested before some court or magistrate having jurisdiction of the offense, within the municipal corporation or county within which the offense was committed, and there forthwith make complaint, on oath or affirmation, of the offense.

"All appointments of such agents by such societies or corporations must have the approval of the mayor of the city in which the society or association exists, and if it exists or works outside of any city, the appointment must be approved by the county judge or the judge of the circuit court of the county, and the mayor or judge shall keep a record of such appointment.

This provision, found in the laws of some states, was fine from the humane society's standpoint. It is a much more effective enforcement of the anti-cruelty statutes than would be likely to characterize the regular law enforcement officers. On the other hand, the societies' volunteers sometimes depended upon to do work frequently were unacquainted with local laws and procedures, inexperience handling difficult animals or people, and in many cases physically unable to employ paid anti-cruelty officers is beyond the financial reach of many societies, and in any event diverts humane resources from

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Local government officers and other functions of the local government animal control unit. One way in which this can be done is passage of an Animal Control Ordinance as suggested in Report to Humane Societies No. 29. This approach has some definite advantages that were pointed out in that Report. But the animal control unit may lack the manpower, funds, and personnel to provide an effective anti-cruelty service. Sometimes, also, the animal control officials are not sufficiently educated or capable to do work which is often sympathetic to this aspect of their duties.

NEW APPROACH IN MAINE

For nearly a hundred years humane societies throughout the country have been spending a good part of their resources doing things which ought to be done by local and state governments.

Pet animal control operations are as much a responsibility of local governments as refuse collection and police protection. But in so many communities this function is often conducted not or conducted otherwise than as one is suitable to be done. That is, local governments, in many cases, have been passed. As a whole, however, the Congress has appropriated an anti-cruelty agent to enforce the laws. This agent is enforcement of the laws. As a whole, however, this Congress has appropriated an anti-cruelty agent to enforce the laws.

One of these proper functions government enforcement of the laws. This applies to laws protecting animals as well as people. But the existence of the local humane societies, and their willingness to pursue any act of cruelty thereto. The law shall convey the person so arrested before some court or magistrate having jurisdiction of the offense, within the municipal corporation or county within which the offense was committed, and there forthwith make complaint, on oath or affirmation, of the offense.

"All appointments of such agents by such societies or corporations must have the approval of the mayor of the city in which the society or association exists, and if it exists or works outside of any city, the appointment must be approved by the county judge or the judge of the circuit court of the county, and the mayor or judge shall keep a record of such appointment.

This provision, found in the laws of some states, was fine from the humane society's standpoint. It is a much more effective enforcement of the anti-cruelty statutes than would be likely to characterize the regular law enforcement officers. On the other hand, the societies' volunteers sometimes depended upon to do work frequently were unacquainted with local laws and procedures, inexperience handling difficult animals or people, and in many cases physically unable to employ paid anti-cruelty officers is beyond the financial reach of many societies, and in any event diverts humane resources from

Local government officers and other functions of the local government animal control unit. One way in which this can be done is passage of an Animal Control Ordinance as suggested in Report to Humane Societies No. 29. This approach has some definite advantages that were pointed out in that Report. But the animal control unit may lack the manpower, funds, and personnel to provide an effective anti-cruelty service. Sometimes, also, the animal control officials are not sufficiently educated or capable to do work which is often sympathetic to this aspect of their duties.

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