HSUS Photographic Safari

By Roger Caras

Over the years, because of my work as a naturalist and photographer, I have made a number of trips to Africa and Asia. These have been, needless to say, photographic safaris and shikars. (The Asian version of safari is shikar rather than the more usual and less exciting but more meaningful trips, but for the cameras and associates have said they dreamed of taking such a trip some day. Although they often said it half in jest, I have convinced a great many people that

In cooperation with Park East Tours of New York, experts in East African travel, I am putting together a photographic animal and bird-watching safari for February, 1976, which will travel the major wildlife areas of Kenya and Tanzania. I shall take great personal pleasure in introducing a number of people to Africa and its splendid wildlife for the first time. A first-timer on safari or raimost as much fun as the animals—wider eyes cannot be imagined.

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Gentlemen:

Please send me the brochure containing complete information regarding the HSUS photographic safari to Africa departing February, 1976.

Name
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U. S. Agency Grants Illegal Seal Permit

HSUS has uncovered information that indicates that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) granted permission to a New Jersey zoo to take a California sea lion into captivity without learning that the zoo had falsified the request.

The information contains a record of such sloppy investigational and procedural procedures that it calls into serious question the service's willingness to effectively execute and enforce the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act, for which it is responsible.

According to the information uncovered by HSUS, one of two sea lions owned by the Cohanizck Zoo of Bridgeport, N.C., was dead when the zoo applied for permission to obtain a third sea lion in December, 1973. The information indicates that the zoo may have deliberately falsified the request by stating it already maintained two healthy sea lions. Furthermore, the second sea lion died before the request was approved, without the zoo having notified NMFS of the death.

HSUS Vice President and General Counsel Murdough Stuwart Madden wrote to NMFS on Feb. 25 requesting an explanation of the "questionable and bizarre incident" and criticizing NMFS for failing to prosecute the zoo. The employees had been suspended after voicing their dissatisfaction with management procedures to members of the press. Information uncovered during interviews with employees and administrative trators convinced Mrs. Pressman that major changes needed to be made in administrative procedures to provide proper care for the animals. On an inspection tour of zoo grounds she found several major hazards to the health and welfare of the animals.

Among the discrepancies she cited were these: (a) cage and fence wire in "deplorable" condition (one animal had been killed in an enclosure under the clearest and simplest of fact situations), "he said. No reply had been received by press time.

HSUS Director of Wildlife Protection Sue Pressman expressed even more alarm over the situation. "If the Cohan­ zick Zoo gets away with this, every zoo in the country will know they don't have to provide accurate or truthful information to obtain marine mammals, " she declared. "You will see an epidemic of falsified requests."

The case is further complicated by the fact that NMFS returned all records to the zoo when it withdrew the request last November after hearing the HSUS complaint. There is no record of the agency's actions or about the accuracy of its statements. Consequently, NMFS officials now may have no evidence with which to prosecute the case.

To correct labor-management problems and physical discrepancies, Mrs. Pressman has announced she will attend a second-in-command executive be hired to handle day-to-day management requirement to show that the facility in other zoos will have been handled considerably.

The strike has since ended, but the reason for it being called—the demotion rather than the firing of the zoo director—has not yet been resolved.

Zoo Conflicts Cause Suffering for Animals

When the administrators and care­ taker staff of a zoo are locked in fierce disagreement over operating procedures, you can be sure that the animals are being deprived of adequate care and attention.

HSUS zoo expert Sue Pressman had this belief confirmed recently when she visited the San Francisco Zoo in connection with labor-management disputes. In Tulsa, Okla., she found that employees were justified in complaints that procedures were inadequate to ensure the well-being of the animals. In Al­ buquerque, N.M., she discovered that animals were becoming increasingly neglected as a strike by zoo employees continued into the fourth week.

Mrs. Pressman visited the Tulsa zoo in January to mediate a strike threat by zoo employees caused by the zoo director's suspension of three members of the caretaker staff. The employees had been suspended after voicing their dissatisfaction with management procedures to members of the press. Information uncovered during interviews with employees and administra tators convinced Mrs. Pressman that major changes needed to be made in administrative procedures to provide proper care for the animals. On an inspection tour of zoo grounds she found several major hazards to the health and welfare of the animals. In Albuquerque, the animals' keeper reported he had requested that the zoo veterinarian examine the rhinos on several occasions but that his requests had been ignored.

Animal mortality has been a major problem at the zoo for some time. In 1973, 173 animals died out of an inven­ tory of 887. "A high mortality rate is almost always symptomatic of major problems in zoo administration," Mrs. Pressman said.

"It may be that the only way for the zoo to overcome its very serious prob­ lem is for the director to step aside," Mrs. Pressman said early this spring. "It all other measures fail, the hiring of a new director may provide the only hope for this zoo to survive."

Mrs. Pressman visited the Albu­ querque zoo because she was afraid the animals were being neglected during a heated three-week strike by 15 zoo employees. Her fears were confirmed when she learned that the mortality rate had risen considerably.

"The union work stoppage has placed the entire zoo's fate in a state of stress," she wrote Mayor Harry Kinney following her visit. "Animals and staff cannot continue much longer under these circumstances."

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Speakers Announced For 1975 Conference

Two leading international authorities on animal welfare will be featured speakers at the HSUS Annual Confer­ ence Oct. 16-19 in Houston, Texas.

Victor B. Scheffer, literary naturalist and authority on the biology of marine mammals, and Ruth Harrison, the world's leading critic on the negative effects of hunting on animals, will address conference at the Houston Oaks Hotel.

Scheffer, an HSUS member, served for more than 30 years as a biologist in the National Park Service, Forest Serv­ ice, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. He retired in 1969 to write and lecture. Among the many honors he has received are the animal care's Distinguished Service Award and the John Burroughs Medal for the best book in the field of natural history in 1970, "The Year of the Whale. " Scheffer is widely known for his writings dealing with the preservation of wildlife and protection of the environ­ ment. Among his books are "The Year of the Seal," "A Voice for Wild­ life," and "The Seeing Eye."

Dr. Scheffer will address HSUS con­ ference on the "Future of Wildlife Man­ agement" on Saturday, Oct. 18.

Mrs. Harrison, author of "Animal Ma­ chines," a book exposing the cruelties of livestock reared on factory farms, will speak Friday, Oct. 17, on "Factory Farming: A Deplorable Condition."

Dr. Lloyd C. Faulkner, chairman of the Dept. of Physiology and Biophysics at Colorado State University's College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Science, will also speak on Friday, Oct. 17. Dr. Faulkner is one of the nation's leading authorities and researchers on contraceptives for cats and dogs.

HSUS zoo expert Sue Pressman will conduct two pre-conference educa­ tional symposiums at the Houston Zoo on Thursday, Oct. 16. Zoo curators will discuss special problems of captive an­ imals and the Houston Zoo's methods of dealing with them. The number of pe­ rsons who can participate in the sym­ posiums will be limited. Information on how to register for the symposiums and a complete conference agenda with registration blanks will be published in the summer issue of The Humane Society News.