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The Humane Movement and the Survival of All Living Things

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"It has been said, for example, that the Hunt the Hunters Hunt Club is in favor of extermination of hunters. Nothing could be further from the truth. The next time a friend tells you something like that, tell him the facts. Tell him that the HHH has never once in its history to our certain knowledge favored the extermination of a single hunting species. All we have ever sought to do each fall is trim the herd and, sure as shooting, if we did not crop the surplus each year, nature would. After all, why on earth would we want to exterminate hunters? It simply makes no sense if for no other reason than the point of view of our own self interest. If we exterminated hunters, what would we have to use for game? Really, such arguments grow tiresome.

"The next time you hear some hunter lover tell you that the Hunt the Hunters Hunt Club is exterminating hunters, tell them to cool it. Tell them about their white-tailed hunters and the ring-necked hunter. The ring-necked hunter, for example, has been around so long that most people think he is a native. What they don't know, of course, is that we helped propagate him. Now we have millions of ring-necks, all as game as they come.

"Tell your city friends, too, that the Hunt the Hunters Hunt Club not only pours money into the general economy but spends countless hours planting feed and cover, and occasionally taking to it. But let's make something perfectly plain. We are not bounty hunters. Not a single cent of bounty has ever been collected by a single member of the HHH, or any of the married ones either. We are sportsmen. We love the out of doors and — this is the thing that the hunter lover never seems to realize — we love hunters. I, myself, have seen a large, red-jacketed, well-brisketed hunter etched against the sky on a cool crisp fall day and been so moved that, even before I sighted my trusty 378 Weatherby, I will be frank to admit I took a last, long appreciative look through the binoculars.

"And, yet, again, if you can believe it, the first thing I got asked by one of those bleeding-heart hunter lovers when I got home was 'Well, if you loved him so much, why did you shoot him?' A man who asks a question like that not only doesn't even deserve an answer, he obviously doesn't know the first thing about sport. Such a person should in the interest of commonsense ask himself which was more merciful: a swift, well-placed slug from my Weatherby or a long, cruel dragged-out winter in the city, where at the very best the hunter is bound to fall prey to air pollution, traffic jams, and rotten service."

The Humane Movement and the Survival of All Living Things

By Roger Caras
Author, Lecturer
Kew Gardens, New York

It is an honor to be asked to be here to make a few pertinent, perhaps incorrect, remarks.

Judging from some recent mail that has come as a result of some television appearances, I present myself to you as a 225-pound, 6' 2", 41-year-old, little old lady. Also, as a result of some recent remarks on the *Today* show about hunting, I thought you would like to know that according to some letters from Wyoming and Montana I am impotent, homosexual, communist, capitalist, out for a quick, cheap buck. All that was in one letter.

What do I say to people like you? Do I tell you that the world is a dreadful place? Should I tell you of the cruelty that I have seen in roadside zoos? Shall I tell you of idiots that buy lions and keep them until they go bad and then have to have them put down? Shall I tell you that we are the Gestapo of the animal kingdom — that all living creatures dread us? I think not; I think perhaps you know this even better than I.

I think we might look for a moment at ourselves — not suffering animals. What are we doing? Where are we going as a nation, as a species, as a planet? Are we going to heaven, or are we going to hell? I don't mean to inflict my religious belief on anyone, but I do believe that man's heaven and hell are of his own making.

Our population is insane in its rate of growth. This was pointed out to you yesterday. I'm sure you all know it. Our air is unbreathable. Lake Erie is gone. We are told that the oceans can be gone within 10 years. There will be no fish out of the sea to eat. Our soil is disappearing. The pollutants in the air are creating a greenhouse effect. I stood at the South Pole a few years ago. The snow is 9600

feet deep; there are 6 million square miles of it. If we melt it, our problems are solved because all of the ports of the world would vanish and the ocean will rise 200 feet.

Our wildlife – a pitiful situation. Of course, we always have “gods” that will help with this: the Corps of Engineers – the only military organization in the world that awards medals for stupidity above and beyond the call of duty.

Things are happening to us, things we do not understand because we do not understand ourselves or our times very well. We are confused. We are confused because we have stepped off our own planet into space. Because our cities are an archaic idea and are decaying before our eyes. We no longer know how to educate our children. Crime is at a rate that is incomprehensible. Drugs are rotting out the core of our society. There are new standards in sex that neither we nor our children understand. There are new family values, new relationships that are completely beyond us. War isn't even fun any more. No one wears feathers or red coats. The atomic threat hangs over us.

Something is triggering a change in the human race. I sense it wherever I go. I sense it in the mail. I sense it in the halls of Congress. I sense it in everyone I speak to. There is a restlessness. Man is beginning to see that there is a new consideration that must permeate every single thing he thinks and does on this earth. It is called conservation. It is no longer a dirty word. It is no longer a luxury. It is an absolute necessity or we perish.

Now, I perhaps understand the humane movement imperfectly. But I do believe that among many of you there exists a terrible prejudice. You think that conservation is a dirty word because it brings to mind the Isaak Walton League and Ducks Unlimited. You perhaps do not like hearing that it is the hunters who save the wildlife of America. Let me assure you that I am anti-hunter completely. I am just two-thirds of the way through a book called “Death is the Name of the Game,” to be published by Little, Brown. I am condemned because of my radio and television remarks about hunters. I am totally anti-hunting. I would not pretend to defend them for a moment. But, I am totally pro-conservation and I beg you to be liberal in your thinking and do not condemn conservationists as hunters because they are not necessarily that.

Hunters are here to stay. I don't know what we can do about them except condemn them in our own hearts. They are growing at a rate that is impossible to comprehend. Last year they spent a billion dollars – 64 million in fees to state conservation officers. Right across this country with the exception of about 5 states there are 100 preserves. I don't know how familiar you are with this grotesque distortion. If you want to see it, go to Salem, New Jersey where there is a hunting preserve that charges \$100 to \$150, depending on

the horn length, for the opportunity to kill domestic goats with a rifle – domestic goats.

I feel it important to belong to the enemy camps. I am a member of the National Rifle Association, the American Fur Breeders Association, and all the rest of them and get the literature. I had a pamphlet sent to me last year on how to operate a hunting preserve. Are you familiar with the process known as “dizzying?” Marvelous! You raise your birds in a pen. They are, therefore, not strong fliers. They are confused when released. But to make sure they are confused you take them out of the pen, put your thumbs up under the wings, and you snap hard against the lungs; then the bird for about half an hour is dizzy, unable to orient itself. It is known as “rocking” or “dizzying.” You then put the bird on the ground and you tell the hunter where to walk. After he has shot it, he brings it back to the club house, has a martini and you trade him a cleaned bird for the one he shot. He doesn't have to wait or clean it himself. This is what hunting has become in this country. It is deplorable.

It is deplored by the conservation organizations, but it is the fastest growing facet of gun sports and will continue to grow all out of bounds. At the present time, 80% of all cartridges and shells fired in this country are fired at living targets, only 20% at stationary targets or clay pigeons. So do not expect any support from the gun industry. Nor, for that matter, from the government. The government will oppose you right down the line on anything you attempt to do with hunting because hunting is the firearms industry and the firearms industry means a technology that continues to develop and is always ready for conversion in the event of an emergency like World War II. One that overnight could be converted to military arms. The Pentagon will never let you touch hunting. When it comes to that, the Pentagon will be in there fighting for them.

In the conservation field we face the same three evils you do. First, at one end of the spectrum, we have the psychopath, the sadist, the person who enjoys inflicting injury on living creatures or an environment. There is nothing you can do, nothing we can do, about such a person; he has to be incarcerated.

At the other end, you have the ignorant. This is our most fertile field. People who don't know that they are doing something wrong. They don't know that it's terribly cruel to buy a gibbon from a pet dealer. They don't know that the gibbon is collected by a hunter who goes out and shoots the mother out of a tree and if the hunter has guessed right, the baby has been weaned and therefore it is worth taking, and that 1 out of 20 will reach this country alive. If it hasn't been weaned, he leaves it. Then there is the person who buys an ocelot, not knowing that only 1 out of 10 lives to be a year old. That's the fertile field for both of us.

But in the middle is the toughest field, and the one we must find a way of reaching somehow. These are people that suffer from the worst of all diseases of the soul — apathy. They don't get pleasure out of inflicting pain but they don't get pleasure out of *not* inflicting pain. We will reach them only through shock therapy. I call them names on television. Perhaps someone else has a better system, but we must reach them some way because this is where our biggest problem lies, I do believe.

History will tell us one day that our generation has failed — we are a failure. We shall continue to fight, but we shall end as a failure. We are leaving behind us a hideous, wicked bill to be paid for by our children and our grandchildren. The heritage our children shall receive is strontium 90, DDT, stupidity, ignorance, greed, and avarice — right across the face of the earth. We can keep it from going further than it has, perhaps, to some degree, but we must admit that the kids today have something on their side. They can look at us and say what the devil are you telling us? You tell us to cut our hair — we tell you not to cut the redwoods.

People more than ever need the wild places and the wild things — in their homes and in their midst — eternally available. And they need those symbols of wild things, the genetically engineered examples or models of them — the household pets.

Last year, more people went to zoos in this country than attended every single spectator sporting event combined. That includes rodeos, horse races, football, basketball, baseball, tennis, hockey. Put it all together and they didn't come close to the zoo attendance. Last year, believe it or not, the gate count at our national parks was 150,836,000 admissions. That seems almost impossible. Of course, there were a great many repeaters, but nearly 152 million people showed up in our national parks last year.

Conservation and the humane movement are Siamese twins. They are inseparable. I beg you to keep this in mind, to think about this, because there is an explosion coming in the conservation movement. Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, a great conservationist and humanitarian, is leading the fight now for a teach-in that is going to take place in colleges across this country early next year — early in 1970. Students and teachers are going to sit and talk about nothing but ecology and a crash program of awareness. We are heading for national and international catastrophe and it will soon be on us. These forces are bringing to the foreground the absolute necessity for conservation. The humanitarian movement can gain nothing but strength from the association. Do not be prejudiced against it.

Tell me, for instance, under which heading these cases belong — conservation movement or the humane movement?

An American businessman arrives at a sheikdom on the Gulf of Aden. He is a guest of the sheik — whose income is about a million dollars a day from oil. This is a man who orders 50 bullet proof Cadillacs at a time, who maintains 26 castles and homes and estates. The second day the sheik says we are going hunting. The third morning, they get up early and they go downstairs and have their breakfast. The American visitor is surprised because he is not handed a rifle or a shotgun. They go out and there are in line the shiny black Cadillac limousines, air-conditioned, of course. As he climbs into his Cadillac the guest sees the string of jeeps pull up and he knows why he was not given a shotgun or a rifle. He hears the radios back and forth, the planes that are now assembling overhead; and the convoy moves out. They move about 20 miles across the flat gravelly arid country and the planes from the sheik's private air force begin calling in reports. They radio to the jeeps, the jeeps pull up alongside the Cadillacs, the men transfer to jeeps that split off while the other jeeps join the airplanes in a herding operation. And a herd of rare oryx, now frightened half to death and running until their hearts are bursting, are herded by jeeps and by aircraft toward the waiting jeeps, which are equipped with 50-caliber machine guns. As the herd approaches, it is raked and destroyed. Half of the animals, of course, are no more than crippled and left to die in the sun. They go back for lunch. The oryx is a vanishing species. It's a conservation problem — is it yours?

I told you how the gibbons are collected. The mother is shot out of a tree. That's how most of the young cats are collected. The mothers are shot. You can't walk up and take the cubs away from the mother. The cats are vanishing. It's a conservation problem — is it not yours?

I was involved in the grizzly bear controversy. Here is a typical example of idiocy in our time. A scientist, a noted biologist from Maryland, took note of the fact that 2 young girls were tragically mauled and killed by grizzly bears in Glacier National Park on August 13, 1967. His solution was a proposal that bears be removed from our national parks. The cry went out and picked up tremendous speed in this country: The parks are for people, not for bears. The Audubon Society called me and asked me if I would use the written word and radio and television and take the fight on and I did.

These are the facts. Our parks have existed for 97 years. Almost 151 million people went to them last year alone. Sixteen of the parks have bears. Last year, 38 million people visited the parks with bears. In 97 years, 5 people have been killed. Two in Glacier, tragically, although they were guilty of at least four different infractions of commonsense and park rules. Certainly that is no excuse for their deaths. I am not suggesting that they deserved to die, but that is why

they were killed. Only 3 others in 97 years. In that same year in Glacier park, 2 people were killed while swimming by outboard motor propellers hitting them. No one called for the elimination of outboard motors. In that same year, 47 people were killed in national parks in high altitude accidents: exposure, falls, coronaries because they overexerted themselves. No one suggested keeping the park visitors to sub-alpine slopes. But because 5 people have been killed in almost a century, the call went out immediately from a scientist and a biologist to kill the bears, the grizzly bears of which there are fewer than perhaps 500 in all of the continental United States south of Canada. Is that a conservation problem or is that a humanitarian problem?

Our goals are the same, ladies and gentlemen. We seek a world where humanity prevails. Where greed, avarice, stupidity – the collective human distemper – will not vent itself on lesser creatures and seek to destroy the livability of our planet for all creatures – human and otherwise.

Animal slaughter is here to stay, but aware people can make it easier for the beast to bear.

Vivisection is here to stay, but concerned people can make it a sane program.

Hunting is here to stay but it can be regulated and made to benefit the resources of our planet, be made more humane by demanding as much of the man with a gun as we do of the man with a car – no more than that. Just proof of sobriety, sanity, some training, and some proof of skill before being given a gun and told to go and kill.

An era of conservation mindedness has been born – it is about to explode into maturity. The humane movement can only benefit from the association, only enrich its own comprehensiveness and effectiveness, only enhance its own following, increase its strength and its power by the association in fact and in image.

God bless you for what you do. Mother Nature and history already has.

Following are resolutions adopted by the conferees:

I.

WHEREAS, in the life of western man in the twentieth century there are innumerable manifestations of the lack of appreciation for the necessity for the humane approach to life, and

WHEREAS, history has provided conclusive proof of the impossibility of right conduct without a precedent of ethical, moral, and spiritual values, and

WHEREAS, many animals used in science education are cruelly treated, and

WHEREAS, prominent educators and scientists have said that such abuse of animals is psychologically harmful and educationally useless, and

WHEREAS, there is an increasing emphasis on painful uses of animals by many researchers, and

WHEREAS, these practices and attitudes lessen sensitivity to life in general, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That The HSUS do everything within its power to bring about a proper appreciation of and respect for the humane approach to life so that this approach may not only be established and maintained but brought to full fruition, and be it further

RESOLVED, That local humane societies and humanitarians be encouraged to work with school boards to adopt official formal policies to insure that no living animals are used in science education in any way that interferes with their normal health and well being and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That The National Humane Education Center and The HSUS continue with all possible speed the development of the necessary materials, procedures and techniques for the education of teachers and students and that special effort be made to secure the endorsement of leading colleges and universities, especially state teachers colleges, for implementation of this formal humane education program.

II.

WHEREAS, coon-on-a-log, coon-in-a-hole, and other versions of raccoon baiting are primitive entertainment, inhumane, barbarous and clearly degenerating, and

WHEREAS, children watching these spectacles of pain and bloodshed are not being educated for a good world, and no community with a sense of pride can countenance them, and

WHEREAS, the state of Alabama has a statute specifically exempting coon-on-a-log and other versions of raccoon baiting from the general cruelty to animals statutes, therefore be it