



Open Season On CBS

By John A. Hoyt

A CBS documentary, "The Guns of Autumn," broadcast nationally on Sept. 5, will go down in history as one of the most provocative programs ever aired on television. Not since 1954 has CBS News experienced so much flap over a broadcast. Such outrage was, of course, predictable, for CBS News dared to "expose" one of the most sacrosanct institutions this country has ever known—the hunting fraternity.

Admittedly, CBS featured the seamier side of hunting. But it was a view the American public deserved to see. Immediately following the broadcast I sent a telegram to CBS News which read in part:

"You have articulated for millions of Americans the outrage and revulsion they feel for this gross and inhumane exploitation of animals. Beyond that, you have given voiceless animals a voice that shall be heard far and wide for years to come. We thank you most sincerely for adding your voice to ours and theirs."

Anticipating the criticism that would follow the airing of this program, CBS scheduled in advance a broadcast on Sept. 28, "Echoes of the Guns of Autumn." It provided hunters, game managers, viewers, humanitarians, and CBS itself an opportunity to respond to the original program. It was, additionally, an exposé of the way in which wounded hunters respond to anyone who dares to look behind their blinds. In that respect, it was as frightening and chilling as the first episode.

It is clear that the hunting fraternity in this country is one of the most powerful and well organized groups in existence. And it is certain that this group will do everything in its power to protect its white hat image. Having been dealt a very severe wound, its counterattack will be ferocious and calculating.

Its new target is, of course, CBS News. But this target is formidable opposition, as has been clearly demonstrated. Although CBS News gave the hunting fraternity an occasion for response on "Echoes," be assured it will not satisfy or deter this group from further attack.

Even as this editorial is being written, a "summit meeting" of representatives of sportsmen's organizations and major wildlife management organizations is taking place at the National Rifle Assn. headquarters here in Washington, D.C., "to determine what formal course of action must be followed."

More than ever, humanitarians must continue to oppose the cruelty and inhumaneness of this so-called sport. And one way in which this can be achieved is to acknowledge to CBS News our appreciation, approval, and encouragement



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COVER: HSUS investigator Sue Pressman took this photo while working under cover on a Hollywood movie production. The trainer threatened the wolf until it became enraged enough to suit the emotion called for in the script. Design by Tom Bellucci.

for daring to enter this fray. Voices such as their's are long overdue and should not go unrecognized or unheralded. Write to: Bill Leonard, vice president, CBS News, 524 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019, expressing your appreciation for CBS's courage and daring in helping to expose the cruelty and inhumaneness of sport hunting in America.

(Mr. Hoyt appeared on the CBS broadcast "Echoes of the Guns of Autumn." Excerpts of his remarks can be found on page 17.)