

Putting Out "Brush Fires" of Dog Racing

The truth behind greyhound racing's exploitation and sacrifice of animals for profit is spreading rapidly throughout the United States. Dog track promoters are finding it increasingly difficult to counter factual presentations of the blatant cruelties that occur in the so-called "sport of queens."

Recently, a promoter tried to establish a track in New Milford, Conn., citing the promise of huge increases in tax revenue and employment for the picturesque New England town. Community interest in the proposal quickly soured with the help of many local humanitarians, including Mrs. Charles Lucas of Brookfield, Conn., who hand delivered 15 copies of the spring 1975 issue of *The Humane Society News*, containing an article on the cruelties of greyhound racing to 15 community leaders. A local country club owner, L. A. Renzulli, who is associated with a national firm that

operates several other dog tracks, subsequently withdrew the proposal. Mrs. Lucas speculated that Renzulli withdrew the proposal prematurely because he feared a public denouncement of it by city officials would have ruined any chances of the plan succeeding in the near future.

On Aug. 18, HSUS Executive Vice President Patrick B. Parkes, told *New Yorkers* the truth about dog racing cruelty in a *New York Times* editorial comment. Among the cruelties Parkes detailed were the tearing apart of live rabbit lures by dogs being trained for the track and the premature killing of greyhounds who fail to win races.

Parkes wrote the comment after the newspaper reported that a proposal to establish greyhound racing in New York City was being supported by several local city council leaders. New York City Council President Paul O'Dwyer

thanked Parkes for reminding him of some "facts" that he had forgotten about greyhound racing. He said he would consider Parkes' comments if the proposal reached the legislative stage.

Last July HSUS Vice President/General Counsel Murdaugh Stuart Madden traveled only a few blocks from HSUS headquarters to head off another attempt to establish greyhound racing in the District of Columbia. Madden told D.C. City Council members that HSUS was opposed to introducing dog racing into the District because the industry inevitably involves frightful and atrocious cruelties to animals. "It has been well established in expert testimony by dog racing trainers in Florida state courts that greyhounds cannot be trained for racing without maiming and killing live rabbits in the normal course of that training," he said. Council members have taken no action on the proposal. □

"Echoes of the Guns of Autumn"

Charles Collingwood's Interview of John Hoyt on CBS

Collingwood: Among the viewers that praised the broadcast was John Hoyt, president of The Humane Society of the United States.

Hoyt: I was very pleased with the production "The Guns of Autumn." I think the story about the killing of wildlife in this country needs to be told. It was an honest and fair picture of much of what is going on in the hunting fraternity today.

Collingwood: One frequently expressed reaction to the broadcast was that the hunting incidents CBS News filmed were not typical of the whole spectrum of hunting in the United States. From your own research, is that true?

Hoyt: Well, I think they are all too typical. I think they are typical enough that they represent a kind of obscenity that we would like to see eradicated in this country. I certainly would say that I think there are hunters who are much more responsible than many of those who were shown, but I think it is typical enough that this is why we as a humane organization in this country are trying to improve and correct the abuses associated with hunting.

Collingwood: The essence of the argu-

ment is this, that game management improves habitat for wildlife and thus improves its numbers. We asked John Hoyt if management has really been beneficial to wildlife.

Hoyt: I think there's no question that it has been. I think that we live in a society where we have simply pushed back the natural habitat for animals in such a way that we have created a necessity to have management programs, so called, in order to provide habitat and to control populations within the confines of those habitats. But I also feel that the management industry in this country, whether it be at the federal level, which is essentially the Dept. of the Interior, or at the state level, which is essentially the state and game commissions of each state, has been captivated by the hunting fraternity. Much of what the management programs do in this country are directed toward the benefit of the hunting fraternity—that is to say, they manipulate the management of animals to guarantee that every new hunting season there is going to be a proper quantity of animals to hunt. They create surpluses very deliberately so that hunters will

have animals to kill.

Collingwood: If it were not for the hunters' support of game management sometimes in the form of license fees and taxes on their weapons and ammunition, is it realistic to expect that you could do it out of taxpayers' money, that governments would do it?

Hoyt: Well, to a large extent, that's already happening. A lot of the money for habitat management comes from the general funds both in the federal treasury and the state treasury. I do concede that the hunting fraternity, the arms manufacturers, the taxes on hunting equipment—all these have done very much toward providing habitats, swamps, and various conducive elements for wildlife to be sustained in this country. They are to be commended for that, even though I don't ultimately agree with some of their objectives for having done that. I think the people of this country are going to have to accept a greater sense of responsibility toward that, and I think the general public is only now becoming aware that wildlife belongs to all of us and that we're going to have to pay our part in this, too. I don't think we have sufficiently. □