Are We Right in Demanding An End to Animal Cruelty?

By Roger Caras

O discussion has been titled "Cruelty—So What?" What kind of a question is that? Do we need an explanation for what we do, what we believe in, what we fight for? Surprisingly enough, we do. We should pause, and we should determine if we are right. Perhaps, and mind you only say perhaps, we take too much for granted, for who here has really questioned our cause in a very long time?

If we are right, we would see an end to the fur trade. What would an end to the fur trade mean? Many highly skilled and creative people would have to rechannel their talents. Marginal income people on the wilderness fringes would lose a source of income and retail and wholesale operations simply shrivel up and die. Do we have a right to work toward these ends? Are we right in even wanting them to continue in the fur trade? Yes, all right, that is the question, and here is my answer. You're darn tootin' we are right. Jobs will be lost—they would be lost if the drug trade shriveled up tomorrow, too. Narcotics officers would be freed. U.S. -trained birds could be cut back on labor, the courts would be under less pressure, and so would the public prosecutor, therefore he would work in those quarters. Well, if it is right to ignore those imaginary glass and work and pray for an end to drug addiction, it is right to say "enough" to the fur trade. Enough agony! Leghold traps, be gone! Furriers, close down your salons. Leave our wildlife alone and close your mink and fox torture farms, whatever the momentary cost (and it will only be momentary as these things go).

I say we are right. I say the fur industry must die, every last shred of it. And every last shred of it must die, every last shred of it. We can forget that one. Wild-caught furs, we can forget that one. What would an end to the fur trade mean? Many highly skilled and creative people would have to rechannel their efforts—marginal income people on the wilderness fringes would lose a source of income and retail and wholesale operations simply shrivel up and die. Do we have a right to work toward these ends? Are we right in even wanting them to continue in the fur trade? Yes, all right, that is the question, and here is my answer. You're darn tootin' we are right. Jobs will be lost—they would be lost if the drug trade shriveled up tomorrow, too. Narcotics officers would be freed. U.S. -trained birds could be cut back on labor, the courts would be under less pressure, and so would the public prosecutor, therefore he would work in those quarters. Well, if it is right to ignore those imaginary glass and work and pray for an end to drug addiction, it is right to say "enough" to the fur trade. Enough agony! Leghold traps, be gone! Furriers, close down your salons. Leave our wildlife alone and close your mink and fox torture farms, whatever the momentary cost (and it will only be momentary as these things go).

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Wyeth instead of a Paul Klee.

There were no scenes in the morgue—no picture of hunting as it is in America. The hero-in-the-field-type book is found in all public libraries by the hundreds. Our newstands are covered with American Rifleman, Guns and Ammo, Guns Magazine, Sports Afield, Field and Stream, Outdoor Life, and all of the other magazines that are filled with nothing but articles about how great the hunting is and how brave and how durable, how the hunter is the only real sportsman and the only real animal lover. No misuse or abuse of off-road vehicles—no hunting from snowmobiles, dune buggies, 4-wheel drive vehicles, or swamp buggies.

No drunk or careless hunters.

No hunting out of season.

No hunters shooting endangered species or non-game species like songbirds.

No hunters jackin' deer at night with spotlight.

No hunter turning a living animal into a pincushion with his bow and arrow.

No animals being bled to death.

No trophy hunting for cats or dogs.

The only real conservationist and the only real animal lover.

Most newspapers today have hunting columns—sometimes more than one. "The American Sportsman" was on ABC for years featuring every imaginable kind of supercelebrity doing everything that moved and always made to look the cool hero. Manufacturers would advertise their shoes or cigarettes, from hunting boots to cigarettes, from shoes to cigarettes, from suntan lotion to cigarettes, from cigars to cigarettes, from golf clubs to cigarettes, from car radios to cigarettes, from hunting jackets to cigarettes, from hunting sticks to cigarettes, from hunting rifles to cigarettes, from hunting licenses to cigarettes.

We have the digestive system of the carnivore, and many of us still eat meat—most of us, in fact. That does not mean that we cannot decide not to eat meat. There is no sense to it at all. It is mankind we seek to elevate, not just our own egos.

We have the guns. Our voices send them into panic, theirs borse. We like the side of the battle, much the better, of the two.

Now, wait just a moment at this point. Has the humane community asked that those books come off the library shelves? Why are the hunters afraid?

"Why are the hunters afraid?"

The stickers read "Register Communists or die," "Register Communists do die," "Register Communists do not get off cars, trucks, jeeps, and hunting rigs.

Why do you and I frighten the hunters? They have his magazines, books, catalogs, circulars, day ads, television shows, the American Rifleman, Guns and Ammo, the National Rifle Assn. and other interested groups print brochures telling hunters how to reply if challenged by a non-hunter. Imagine you and me need a guide to tell someone why it is not wrong to spay a cat or why it is bad to play Monopoly.

I think it is very germane, very important for us to understand why we in still such fear in hunters' hearts. I think it is and how brave and how durable, how the hunter is the only real sportsman and the only real animal lover. No misuse or abuse of off-road vehicles.

We all know you can photograph wild-life and not shoot it—or that you can always look at it. We all know these things, so what we are trying to do is get rid of something that is sick in society and something that retards the growth of all men and all mankind. It is a poison for our children. It is a shame on us who have failed for yet another generation to clean it up.

I think the hunters have acted an awful lot like communists. Isn't that what communists do, try to get the other side muzzled so that they can't be heard? Isn't that what the hunters did? Did they try to force "The Guns of Autumn" out of existence? I think the American hunters, that cavalcade of communist tailors, ever to wear such a bunch sticker with pride again, except perhaps in the mide of the ones ahead where it would look as silly as it really is.

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enforcement of the Endangered Species Act more difficult, if not chaotic. The bill would exempt from the act’s provisions those inventories of parts or products of endangered species lawfully within the United States by or on Dec. 28, 1973. The problem the bill would create for enforcement authorities lies in the difficulty of distinguishing legal from illegal inventories. The result would undoubtedly encourage smuggling of products derived from endangered species. Also, the dumping of existing inventories on the market would re-establish their use and encourage further smuggling.

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The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, the agency in charge of the execution and enforcement of the U.S. Animal Welfare Act, reported in July that the number of animal dealers, exhibitors, and researchers licensed and inspected under the act rose sharply in 1974.

By the end of 1974, APHIS had licensed a total of 5,133 animal dealers, a 20% increase over the total number (4,287) licensed in the previous year. There were 1,097 licensed or registered animal exhibitors, up 23% from the 890 listed a year earlier. A total of 967 research facilities were registered at the end of 1974, compared to 865 the previous year, a 12% increase. The result of the increase of licensees and registrants, plus stricter enforcement, more than doubled routine compliance inspections during 1974—22,939 compared to 10,965 in 1973. Searches to find persons evading regulations went to 11,691 in 1974, up from 6,001 the previous year. Litigation was under way in 31 cases of alleged violations, up from 11 cases the previous year.

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Last October a federal administrative law judge issued a cease and desist order against a Fayetteville, N.C., kennel operator charged with violating the Animal Welfare Act. J. L. Joyner, owner of the Twin Oaks Kennels, was charged by APHIS with shipping puppies in poor health without proper forms and identification. APHIS and Joyner reached an agreement, endorsed by the judge, to eliminate the violations.

**Sale of Monkeys Banned by HEW**

The U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) has banned the importation of monkeys for commercial sale into the U.S. because they threaten humans with a variety of infectious diseases. HEW issued the order last October to prohibit the importation of nonhuman primates except for bona fide scientific, educational, or exhibition purposes. The order also establishes a mandatory disease surveillance and control program for monkeys imported under provisions of the regulation.

Although significant, HEW’s action will reduce only slightly the massive number of exotic animals being imported into the U.S. by the pet industry. The industry continues to import many species of animals that pose a disease threat to people, domestic animals, and native American wildlife. This, coupled with a high mortality rate of wild animals caught and shipped by commercial animal dealers, as well as a high euthanasia rate for animals rejected by their owners after they have been purchased, has made the traffic in imported pets a national scandal.

For the past 2 years officials at the U.S. Dept of the Interior have been talking about issuing regulations to limit the importation of wild animals that would be injurious to people by employing the little-used Lacey Act of 1900. HSUS has encouraged Interior to proceed with the proposal, but it now appears as though the agency has reached an impasse on the issue.

Congressional opposition has been a major reason for Interior’s dilemma. Last June, Rep. Robert L. Leggett (D-Calif.), chairman of the Subcommittee on Wildlife Conservation of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, held a private, unrecorded meeting with pet industry representatives and subsequently rejected Interior’s proposed regulations. Leggett said the regulations would be burdensome to importers and nearly impossible to discharge.

In July, Nathaniel P. Reed, assistant secretary of Interior for fish, wildlife, and parks, assured Leggett that Interior would review his recommendations. But Interior has not yet submitted any new proposals to Congress.

HSUS is convinced this issue will be ignored by Interior and Congress unless the public protests the lack of government action. HSUS urges all members and supporters to write immediately to the Dept. of the Interior urging the Secretary to issue the final regulations and protesting the continued sacrifice of exotic animals by the pet industry. Write to: The Hon. Thomas Kleppe, Secretary, The Dept. of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

**CARAS Continued**

again and again, and I will say it on the day I die if I have time. It is wrong to cause pain. It is wrong to cause fear, and to allow preventable pain and preventable fear to exist is not less a culpable offense than causing it. That is my credo. I will argue it in heaven or hell. I will face any man or woman alive and argue it forever. It is wrong to cause pain and fear—to allow it is as bad as causing it. And just as long as that credo and that belief can be introduced into any specific argument, we need never fear a test or a challenge. That is a clear and positive right. I am more sure of it than I am of my private view of God and religion. I am more sure of that than I am of anything else in my experience as a man. As long as I believe that that credo is a valid view of my responsibility on earth, I, for one, will fear no argument and no man—I can live on and with it.

I hope you can find in your own heart a conviction as strong, for together we will strike fear in more than the heart of the hunter. We will one day eradicate all among us who are vestigial, all who are left over from the cave, all who have come forward into our time and threaten to contaminate the future of mankind (our children) with the stink and the rot of pain and terror glorified. They are wrong; we are right. I can state no other certainty with so much conviction. God bless you for what you stand for, and for what you do, and for where you are leading mankind.

**Regional Office Moves**

The HSUS Gulf States Regional Office has been relocated. The new address is: HSUS Gulf States Regional Office Building A, Room 209 5333 Everhart Rd. Corpus Christi, TX 78411

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