A national boycott of puppies originating from six puppy-mill states, announced by HSUS President John A. Hoyt in May, set off an emotionally charged round of media coverage unprecedented in ten years. Frustrated over years of little or no action on the part of state officials in puppy-mill states, The HSUS called for the boycott at two press conferences on May 3 in Los Angeles and in Sacramento, California.

Puppy mills are mass producers of dogs—where puppies are regarded as a cash crop. Most are in six midwestern states—Iowa, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. Puppy-mill animals are kept in filthy, substandard conditions, where they are “ill-conceived, ill-bred, and just plain ill,” according to Mr. Hoyt.

Mr. Hoyt joined California State Assemblyman Sam Farr at the press conferences. Assemblyman Farr called for California consumers to boycott puppy-mill dogs. He released a report from the California Assembly Office of Research that showed, among other things, that a dog purchased in a pet store was three times more likely to be ill if it came from an out-of-state puppy-mill breeder than if it originated from a local California breeder.

The news conference, part of a presentation beamed by satellite throughout the nation, was covered by Cable News Network, as well as by local stations across the country. The “Today Show” on NBC announced the boycott the morning of the news conference, and local TV stations were able to pick up HSUS footage of puppy mills from the satellite.

“During investigations of these puppy mills, we’ve found dogs living in horrendous conditions—dogs with no protection from the freezing cold or burning sun,” Mr. Hoyt said during the news conference. “Dogs are forced to have litter after litter until they are killed because they are bred out and useless to their owners.”

The goal of the HSUS boycott is to pressure states to enforce whatever animal-welfare regulations they have and to pass legislation where none exists. We also hope to force the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which, through its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, is in charge of overseeing the puppy mills, to enforce its regulations more vigorously.

News coverage of the boycott was complemented by puppy-mill segments prepared by national television talk and news series. Many featured HSUS staff and the documentation we provided. ABC’s “20/20” broadcast a hard-hitting segment on puppy mills, reported by Roger Caras. HSUS investigators Gail Eisnitz and Bob Baker were major sources for the show’s producers. We took the film crew to puppy mills to see conditions firsthand and even led crew members to a USDA inspector who had a puppy mill in her backyard! (The inspector was forced to resign as a result of the negative attention.) In the most moving scenes, HSUS investigators Bob Baker and Lisa Landres rescued a breeding dog from a puppy mill.
"We worked with ‘20/20’ for months to expose the wretched conditions these animals endure in puppy mills," Mr. Baker explained. Along with puppy-mill breeders and brokers, Mr. Baker appeared on the “Geraldo” show in May, where he delivered powerful on-camera rebuttals to their claims that our concerns about animal treatment were exaggerated. When one person tried to wriggle out of responsibility by blaming puppy-mill conditions on USDA’s poor enforcement, Mr. Baker responded that the USDA is like a police force: even if a policeman doesn’t catch you breaking the law, you’re still responsible for your actions.

Still in the works in June was a segment on puppy mills to be shown on CBS’s "Saturday Night with Connie Chung." John Hoyt was interviewed for the show, and Investigator Lisa Landres took camera crews to puppy mills. KPIX-TV, San Francisco’s CBS affiliate, broadcast a three-part series on puppy mills in May, sending crews along with Bob Baker to investigate several midwestern puppy mills.

The print media also jumped on the boycott bandwagon: the wire services picked it up immediately, and the upscale New York magazine 7 Days ran an article including quotes from Bob Baker and photographs provided by The HSUS. A Gannett News Service puppy-mill story featuring Bob Baker went nationwide and resulted in an editorial in USA Today blasting puppy mills.

As pleased as we were with the snowballing publicity, not all of it had positive results. Immediately after the “20/20” segment, the governor of Kansas signed legislation making it a felony to photograph any animal facility, including puppy mills, without the permission of the owner. Ironically, someone investigating cruelty could be charged with a felony, while the person abusing an animal would be charged only with a misdemeanor in Kansas, one of the worst puppy-mill states. The new law, which was to go into effect July 1, would hamstring the television camera crews that have done such a good job in the past few months exposing puppy-mill misery.

HSUS Midwest Regional Director Wendell Maddox, whose region includes Kansas, said the law would make investigations more dependent on law-enforcement agencies, which traditionally have put animal-cruelty cases at a low priority and left them to humane societies. "The legislature should be concentrating on cleaning up conditions in these puppy mills, not covering them up," he said.

Our New Age Journal insert on ‘The Caring Consumer’ features this motif.

CAMPAIGNS

"‘New Age’ for The HSUS National magazine spotlights animal protection

There’s an exciting new movement out there. It’s a growing movement that links consumers throughout this country and around the world, and it’s based on the premise that what we choose to buy and use can literally affect the entire world and all who share it. Particularly in this twentieth anniversary year of Earth Day, there has been an abundance of information on how to shop to save the environment. But, as HSUS President John A. Hoyt points out in the “President’s Perspective,” most of the information has addressed the issue from the perspective of human needs and interests. In the area of consumerism, as always, The HSUS is committed to representing the interests of the animals.

We were recently offered a unique forum for our messages by New Age Journal. The magazine, in conjunction with The HSUS, created a special advertising supplement. With the cheerful visage of the dollar bill’s George Washington, surrounded by ani-
mals, as a cover motif, the supplement offers a wealth of HSUS editorial copy.

The supplement, which will appear in the July/August issue of New Age Journal, will also be reprinted for distribution by natural food stores and The HSUS.

Our articles in the “Caring Consumer” supplement address a wide range of consumer choices that have an impact upon the welfare of the world and the animals that share it. We talk about the importance of eating with conscience, avoiding fashions produced inhumanely, consumer issues involving companion animals, and how to “shop green” in order to sustain a humane life-style.

We also introduce our new campaign, “The Beautiful Choice,” designed to help consumers identify cosmetics and personal-care products not tested on animals. The campaign will be launched in October with the help of actress Ana-Alicia, who will appear in public-service announcements and a print ad promoting “The Beautiful Choice.”

New Age Journal is an ideal medium for “The Caring Consumer.” With a circulation of 180,000, the magazine is sold by subscription, in book stores, and in natural food stores. For more than fifteen years, it has been a guide to alternative ways of living, presenting such diverse issues as holistic health, chemical-free farming, ethical investing, and environmental problems. Many of the same natural food stores that distribute New Age Journal also sell the products promoted through our “Beautiful Choice” campaign.

We hope you’ll support our efforts by picking up the July/August issue of New Age Journal with the “Caring Consumer” supplement. For additional copies, write to “The Caring Consumer,” The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

To subscribe to New Age Journal, write to Department 9027, 342 Western Ave., Brighton, MA 02135. A one-year subscription, bimonthly, is $15.

Ultimately, the success of all of our efforts will be measured in an increasing demand for, and supply of, products that are not tested on animals. You can help by selecting products that contribute to a more compassionate world.

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM KERBER

The Humane Society of the United States recently lost a dear friend and champion of animal protection with the death of William Kerber. Mr. Kerber was a very active member of the HSUS board of directors, commencing in 1966, for the better part of a quarter of a century. He was also the treasurer of our organization for many years prior to his resignation from that post in 1978. His term as our chief financial officer covered many of the lean years of The HSUS, when his fiscal conservatism and financial acumen were particularly meaningful.

Mr. Kerber had a long and very successful business career. He served as a top official on the U.S. War Production Board during World War II and returned to assist the federal government in the Office of Price Stabilization during the Korean War.

Mr. Kerber will be especially remembered for his keen interest in our facility at Waterford, Virginia (the National Humane Education Center), where, for a time, we owned an historic home.

Mr. Kerber and his wife, Sarah Oliver Kerber, who died in 1981, were devoted supporters of The HSUS in every way and will be sorely missed.

WINIFRED HALL

Winifred Hall, former director of The Humane Society of the United States, died on April 11 after a brief illness. She was born in England and married a Texan, G. Martel Hall, in 1925. They lived in China with their young children until 1938. A person of compassion and concern, Mrs. Hall developed the broader interest in the protection of all animals that would lead to her becoming a cofounder of the Humane Society of Nacogdoches County, Texas. Shortly thereafter, she was elected to The HSUS board, serving from 1965 to 1972. After leaving the national board, she was for several years a member of the advisory board of the HSUS Gulf States Regional Office. Throughout many years of personal efforts on behalf of animals, both in her community and at the national level, she maintained a lively interest in animal-protection activities abroad. Last year, Mrs. Hall was recognized by the American Association of University Women as an outstanding advocate for animal rights and welfare. She will be remembered for her dedication to the humane treatment of all animals.