

Symposium on Livestock Problems

I – By John C. Macfarlane, Vice President,
Livestock Department, Massachusetts SPCA,
Boston, Massachusetts

Of all the great shortages in the world today, animal protein is high on the list. The world's livestock population is more than twice that of the human race, and while we know how to utilize this great source of food, mankind is faced with the reality that more than half of the world's livestock are suffering from malnutrition and disease. The problems involved in feeding a burgeoning human population do not necessarily include rate of production of animals but the wise utilization of the animals we already have. In many areas of the world, certain animal proteins are not eaten because of superstition and/or age old beliefs that do not stand up, really, under our modern knowledge and dietary requirements. For instance, the pig is a great source of protein, yet its flesh is prohibited by the orthodox of the Hindu, Hebrew and Islam religions. Perhaps these sincere and religious people should review their age-old dogmas in the light of man's twentieth century dietary needs and modern standards set for nutritional food.

In some areas of the world the ingestion of eggs and poultry is prohibited. In other lands the slaughtering of cattle and the consumption of beef are taboo. In a few areas on earth there is a livestock population explosion comparable to that of the human family. Many of these animals, however, are unproductive, or they produce such a low level as to be of practically no food value whatsoever.

We will produce the protein we need only when all men come to realize the close association that exists between soil and plant, plant and animal, and animal and man, and when we learn to apply our existing knowledge to the improvement of livestock at all levels and to eliminate or control the great worldwide protein waste caused

by disease, parasites and—important to us—careless and inhumane husbandry practices. It is indeed a sad commentary that of all the nations on earth ours is by far the most wasteful and, yes, the most inhumane as well in its handling of its livestock.

The humane movement is to some degree responsible for the indifference expressed today toward livestock — an indifference that is demonstrated by entirely too many men. We have by-passed livestock in our humane programs in favor of the dog and the cat. But I can't help but feel that our reasons for walking around the large animal problems are several-fold — lack of knowledge, fear, and the misconception that only dog and cat owners like animals or would be willing to contribute to our work. Then, again, some of our people are sentimentalists who do far more harm than they realize.

Now, in the face of a worldwide crisis and pressing demands in our country for sufficient food to feed the estimated 30 million Americans who allegedly go to bed hungry day after day, we must widen the umbrella of our professional interests to include all animals, especially livestock. And, of course, in addition, the so-called wildlife that share our land with us. Too long have we basked in the light of human emotionalism and too long have we acted like spoiled children bent upon keeping our candy all to ourselves. We do not share with one another for selfish reasons. We communicate only on levels that do not involve possible sources of financial support. I have always maintained that societies that do their work effectively and efficiently and in a businesslike manner will find the money they need to carry on their services. And may I, in all modesty, point to my own organization as an object example. There is sufficient support for all of us and little need for us to act so selfishly with each other. It is time for coalition of our organizations. The dictionary tells me that a coalition can be a temporary alliance for joint action.

It is and has been for years very confusing to the general public when brochures are read indicating that there are 800-odd humane societies in the United States and that they are all affiliated with either the HSUS or the AHA. Mel Morse was kind enough to send me a brochure the other day from the AHA indicating that there are now close to a thousand societies. This was good news. From my own experience over the years, I had come to the conclusion that there were not more than about 400, but I'm glad that there are a thousand. I hope they're effective. This sort of promotion material is dishonest and does more to hurt than is realized. There can be little doubt that there is need for both national organizations—let's say two major organizations. There are, in addition, some 24 national groups set up to protect animals from coast to coast. Competition is healthy, very much worthwhile, and it helps to keep all groups on their toes. However, they and all the other groups should strive to

work together on major issues. This we have never done. I can visualize a future in which all humane organizations will have resolved their differences and come together as a powerful force within our total population, working in unison wisely and methodically, to protect all animals that are in need of help, whether domestic or wild. Believe me, I think it can be done.

One must never tear down ideas unless there are better "do's" available. Since there are many better "do's" in sight, I will try to list them in the light of their relative importance as I see them. Some of these thoughts will probably increase the adrenalin flow of a few of our friends (not in this room, I hope), but it is time for better "do's" to come to the surface. It is time for someone to tell it like it is.

The protection of pets is, of course, never ending. In this area, most humane organizations do a really good job. We should, however, blot out all of our false ideas about rabies and distemper and recognize that both of these diseases do actually exist and that preventive medical care is always in order. I've known a dozen societies in this country that have been very forceful in their thinking that there is no such thing as rabies, that this is an idea propelled by the veterinary profession in order to increase their income. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We can and we must cooperate with competent men and women who teach dog obedience and with all those men who practice the profession of veterinary medicine. Such cooperation should become part and parcel of our whole program everywhere, especially in urban areas where the pet populations are relatively high. By the same token, those veterinarians who believe in get rich quick policies must come to understand that they, too, have moral responsibilities quite similar to our own. We must encourage the highest form of mutual respect between ourselves and those who transmit news in print, voice and picture. We can do this only if our facts are honest, not weighted down with hysteria or emotion.

Obedience training offers a great many opportunities to enlarge our list of friends and supporters. During the last three years, we have been fortunate in New England by having one of the best dog training groups in the northeast come to the Eastern States Exposition, which is our large show here, and put on demonstrations of dog obedience. There's nothing that will ingratiate you more quickly in the hearts of your fellow countrymen than having a dog that is a good citizen. I can strongly recommend that all of you cooperate with your dog obedience people. There are some that are bad; cull them out. Most of them are good. And I think they have a lot that they can teach you; you have a lot that you can teach them.

In areas concerned with water and air pollution, humane organizations can and should participate in these local programs. However, before we offer our services to anyone, we should study

the local program and problems and know what we're talking about. There are several groups that we should be cooperating with. Almost every city in the United States today has what is known as a conservation commission. They would welcome your interest, your counsel, and your help. Sensible wildlife conservation presents tremendous possibilities for a healthy and effective program, from the raccoon and the skunk, both of which are increasing in number, to the hundreds of mammals and songbirds and marine life presently endangered by insecticides and herbicides.

State departments of fisheries and game offer many avenues of mutual interest and concern. Yet there are some humane societies in this country who still look upon fish and game officials as demons and fourth class citizens. We must unlearn many of our old witches tales because they're not true in the light of what we know today. Whether we like it or not, there is a place for the careful and conservation minded hunter. The only hunters with whom I am in complete disagreement are the careless ones and those who use bows and arrows. The method of bow and arrow hunting is far more inhumane than it is productive of food and is today a multi-million dollar industry, due largely to our refusal to work together in the very beginning as a united force. Now we're much too late, and all we can hope to do is watch for violations of local anti-cruelty laws in our various states.

Livestock, animals raised in confinement, animals in large numbers shipped to other countries, and, of course, those cattle, calves, sheep, swine, goats, poultry and horses raised for the purpose of supplying meat for human and animal consumption will present problems that will increase in importance as long as they exist.

Humane problems involving livestock are a hundred times more important and much more complex today than they were a hundred years ago. What can societies do to prevent or reduce this reservoir of potential cruelty? I think we can do many things.

It would help if we could act in unison and a like manner whenever similar programs and problems arise. For instance, many of your organizations are located in areas where there are 4-H Clubs and where there are high schools teaching vocational agriculture. Students in such high schools, known as Future Farmers of America, are working with animals constantly. These people don't even take a vacation during their four years of high school. Their vacation periods must be spent on a farm working in some area which is parallel to those things they are studying during their school years. This goes on all during their four years of high school. These people would welcome your interest in their work, and you have much in common. Together you could promote a great many things — the humane handling of animals from birth to slaughter, the equipment that is used on our farms to make sure that it is effective and not causing bruising, crippling, and pre-market deaths.

There is another very important area that I think we've overlooked completely – the fire safety methods that are not being used in our country. This is of tremendous importance. It should be to the humane field. It certainly is to the nation's economic well being. Last year, alone, we lost 800 million dollars worth of farm property, and much of that was lost in the form of living livestock that were burned to death. Our agents are constantly being called to attend fires where they can humanely dispatch animals that are subjected to the heat of a burning barn. This is to say nothing about the many race track fires that occur annually because almost all race track owners refuse to pay for sprinkling systems. It costs about \$185 today to put a sprinkling system in a barn to cover an area of a box stall. And most of them feel that this expense is much too high to pay. I recall a case in my own state a few years ago. I spent two days with the owner of a dairy farm, a good dairy farm. He had 95 milkers at that time and about 35 additional dry cows and several calves. He said, after the second day, that he was going to install a sprinkling system because it was a good barn and he had a lot of money invested, but he never got around to it. And two years later 88 of the finest Guernsey cows in New England died in a barn fire.

4-H members, Future Farmers of America, livestock agricultural students at the college level, believe me, are the salt of the earth. These young people are not busy rebelling against the establishment although they have their reasons to as well. Most of their interests lie in animals, including dogs, but in spite of this huge reservoir of potential cooperation, I have never heard of a humane society working closely with these people. And I often wonder why.

You would marvel at the attitudes of these young folks. For more than 40 years 4-H club members have worked with animals. There are today 2½ million of them. And about a million of those 2½ million are working with animals, a great many of them with dog clubs, with dairy clubs, with beef, sheep, and swine clubs. 450,000 members of the FFA are working from coast to coast and they are directly concerned with the production and marketing of animals.

While there have been challenges in the past, my friends, the humane movement will face new and far more complex challenges in the future. The question we must ask ourselves is, will we be ready, will we be qualified to meet these challenges successfully? Some of us have not yet learned how to treat our fellow men with respect and understanding. Such people should never associate themselves in a work that is or should be predicated upon kindness, sympathy, understanding, and brotherly love.

We have the tools today to do the job. The answer to what we do with these tools is in your hands and thousands like you from coast to coast.

Let us try to change some of our out-dated and erroneous attitudes. It won't be easy, but it must be done if the humane

movement is to survive another century and continue to maintain its place among those services that benefit mankind. The one great catalyst we must have in order to change wrong attitudes where they exist, and chart new and more acceptable programs in the future, is total involvement and a greater understanding on our part of all living things – human as well as animal.

No matter how well intended a program, a drug, an opinion, a law, they all need the test of time to prove themselves. No matter how much interest we may engender in your minds today, it's going to take time for you to adapt your actions and your thinking to those ideas we put before you. We can only hope that your organization will try to apply its great influence, its wisdom, and its determination to the protection of millions of animals that have received little more than passing notice over the years. Believe me, once you do, you will find a new life in the old stereotyped programs of yesterday.

Remember that livestock constitute a major part of our total agriculture and, my friends, believe me, if it were not for agriculture, we would not be meeting here today. Certainly, a nation capable of creating a force powerful enough to thrust a rocket through space at a speed of 7 miles a second can be expected to understand your reasons for protecting livestock and be willing to support your work.

The epilog to any plea we make for you to concern yourselves with more than 20 million livestock will probably be written by humane society personnel yet unborn because change doesn't come overnight, but if our work is going to be truly effective, we must change our attitudes.

II – By Dr. F. J. Mulhern, Deputy Administrator, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in your annual meeting. I would like to acquaint you with the work we have been doing in the Agricultural Research Service in relation to animal diseases. The losses from these diseases have been substantial, amounting to billions of dollars each year. Of equal interest to you is the pain, suffering, and death which occurs as a result of them.

We are committed to the eradication of these diseases where it is feasible, both technically and financially. The record has shown that even when the ultimate goal of eradication has not been reached in some programs, the disease incidence has been dramatically reduced and, thus, the suffering.

The solution to these problems has to be through the efforts of man. Individual owners were powerless to do anything substantial about it, and so our task in this area of disease eradication was similar to yours. How do you get man to face up to a situation and put forth enough effort to do something to change it? If change is to be made, there must be constant and continuous pressure.

I believe there is a growing awareness today by man of his total environment, and I'm speaking to you today as an administrator within government. Man, in looking at his environment, is searching to comprehend its parameters, and he feels very insecure until he really recognizes those parameters. In his search to find these parameters, he has become somewhat confused. However, I believe we are causing some changes in the area that I'm deeply associated with and I'd like to share some of them with you. I believe you can help us.

Historically, the first animal disease known to be eradicated in this country was in 1892 when contagious pleuropneumonia, that came into this country from animals that had been imported, was eradicated.

When this was successful, the Department efforts were turned toward cattle fever ticks, which were plaguing all interests in developing a cattle industry in the southeastern states. A particular tick was responsible for the spread of this disease. When it became known that the disease was being spread by the tick, it was a major breakthrough because after that finding, people began to study other vectors to see if they were capable of spreading other diseases.

The cattle fever tick was eradicated in 1940 from all infested states except in an area along the United States-Mexico border in which we must keep a continuous watch for evidence of its spread.

The next program was begun against sheep scabies, an insidious disease spreading across the country. This unsightly skin condition, caused by a parasite, was widespread. The incidence was dramatically reduced at one time and, as a result, much of the support present when the condition was prevalent did not continue. It wasn't long before the incidence was again on the rise. In 1962 there was again a demand to reactivate the eradication program, and this time to carry it to its completion.

When incidence gets low, the cases become more difficult to find. I sometimes wonder if we have the manpower and the interest of the industry involved and humane societies and other groups to help us find the last remnants of the disease and once and for all eradicate it.

The present generation seldom sees the hunchback which was quite evident a few decades ago. This is because we are eradicating tuberculosis in our cattle. A few decades ago half of the children admitted to a hospital in Michigan with deformities of the spine had cattle tuberculosis. Here, again, we are looking for that needle in the

haystack—the last remnants of infection. In some counties, as high as 85 per cent of the cattle were once infected. In all counties of the United States today the incidence is less than one-tenth of one per cent.

A program on cattle brucellosis was started in 1937 and was greatly accelerated in 1952 in order to do something significant nationally against this particular situation. With this accelerated program and coordinating all our efforts, we are working vigorously to reduce the incidence below one percent in the last of the states, which is an interim goal before complete eradication.

A hog cholera eradication program was begun in 1962 against this number one killer disease of swine. We are now reaching a stage where all states have all-out eradication programs. Our challenge is to keep the momentum going until we can eliminate this killing disease of swine that has plagued us since the 1830's, when it was first reported in this country.

In 1957 we started an eradication program in the southeast to rid the area of screwworms—a larval stage of the screw worm fly. The female fly lays its eggs on any open wound of animals, after which she dies. The males live about three weeks.

We found that we could sterilize the fly with x-rays during the pupae phase of its development, and the flies that developed were sterile. If we could raise, sterilize, and release these sterile flies in quantities so that we could overwhelm the native fly population, ten to one, we could eradicate the species. This was done. There hasn't been a case of screw worm in the southeast since 1959. We have now pushed the fly all the way back to one of its breeding grounds in Mexico, and further efforts are being made in this disease eradication program.

It is interesting to note that wildlife populations also are increasing in the areas where the fly has been eliminated. One reason for this is that the eggs laid by the fly in the newborn of wildlife were killing them.

As many of you are aware, we have also been responsible for the 28-Hour Law that applies to the movement of livestock by railroads. It's been a long time since we have had a complaint registered on inhumane treatment of livestock being hauled interstate by railroads. This law is really discriminating, however, since the majority of the transportation of livestock is by truck. I agree fully that this is an area that needs concerted attention.

As you are aware, we have been involved in the implementation of P.L. 89-544, the Laboratory Animal Welfare act. We are pleased with the results even though there is still a lot to be done. Your organization is to be commended for the work it has been doing to get action on cases that are not covered by the law.

We are dissatisfied with the results to date in stopping or

reducing the alleged thefts of pets to be used for research. We felt that by now we would have prosecuted several persons for this unforgivable practice. We hope that the law and regulations are a deterrent, but we are sufficiently realistic to know that its passage and implementation does not stop all of it. There are still reports of theft, but we haven't been able to prove any cases to date and prosecute those responsible.

I know that some of you may be dissatisfied with what you might call lack of action on our part, but our personnel must follow instructions and guidance of our legal department. The only way we can take additional action, if it is to be constitutional, is to amend the Act to get the authority.

One of the reasons for my dwelling on our disease eradication programs is to highlight a record of being relentless in fulfilling our ultimate goals. With the active participation of organizations such as yours and others working in the humane areas, with state governments becoming more active, and with continuous action on our part, many of the abuses to animals will eventually be eliminated.

There is still a lot to be done in many of the areas in which you have interest. S. 2543 to stop the soring of horses is a definite step in the right direction. The endangered species bill is likewise important legislation. Also, I understand that legislation has been introduced in relation to roadside zoos.

There is another important problem confronting all of us, and that is the pollution of our environment. All of us are rather late in recognizing that something must be done about it. Better testing techniques that have become available to us in recent years have helped us to realize that some contamination was taking place that previously went undetected.

Now that we have this analytical capability, we should monitor our activities so that we not only know what we may be adding to the environment but also what happens to it afterward. If we must use something that is harmful to certain parts of the environment, then great care must be exercised to keep that harm to the very minimum. I don't think that we should arbitrarily discard certain tools that we use to grow our food and fiber on the basis that we can't handle them safely. At the same time, I'll admit if they can't be handled safely, they should not be used.

I believe that if we have more than one chemical that is equally effective and the need for its use is essential in our food production, but one is more hazardous than the other, we should not recommend the one that is more hazardous. We have been asked to ban the use of DDT. Because we have not taken such action, some have said we are trying to protect the agricultural chemical industry. Others have said we place the production of our food on a higher priority than the safety of our people and animals, including fish and wildlife, but this is not so.

We simply have to act within the framework of the law that we must administer. These products have been licensed for years as to their safety and effectiveness. When we withdraw them, we must have adequate evidence to defend our action. One of the major difficulties we are trying to resolve is whether laboratory results are comparable to that which occurs in nature. If our scientists agreed that they were, we wouldn't have any difficulty cancelling some products that are on the market today. In the meantime, we must strive to get such data.

We now have pesticide monitoring stations set up across the nation. We will be enlarging them. We will know what effect we are having on the environment. It isn't as good as the system that monitors nuclear explosions, but it at least shows that we have become aware that we must know what happens when we add a chemical to our environment. We will also know whether we can use it without having it accumulate.

We have just completed the design of a study with the Department of Interior to determine if the use of mirex bait used against the fire ant will have any harmful effects on crabs and shrimp. The laboratory tests show that they might. These enlarged field tests will show us if it occurs in nature. The difference between our approach today and in the past is that now we are conscious of what harm can be done, and we are using these chemicals much more intelligently.

Of great concern to us is that some of the persistent chemicals may be harmful to us eventually, but the alternatives can be much more harmful immediately to those who must use them.

I have covered a wide field. I have tried to show that our interests cover many areas. All of them, I'm sure, are of interest to you. If there are any questions, I will try to answer them.