

AGENDA

A JOURNAL OF ANIMAL LIBERATION

NUMBER 6

MAY 1981

CONTENTS

NOTES

LETTERS

ARTICLES

- Primate Research-Top Priority for Target Issue

by Doug Moss

- Walking the Walk

by Andrew Dagilis

- Letter to A Game Manager
by Ron Baker

“That’s Speciesism”

Reading for Revolution

Comment

- Animal Welfare/Rights/Liberation:
What’s the Difference
by Jim Mason

NOTES

AGENDA, a quarterly journal of animal liberation, is devoted to fostering greater cooperation and unity within the animal liberation/rights/welfare movement. We provide a forum in which the movement can exchange ideas and discuss the problems and issues before it. We strive to activate and facilitate two processes vital to the building of a more effective, progressive movement: (1) the refinement and filling of our theoretical base, and (2) the evolution of strategies and tactics for political change. *Agenda* is independent of any animal welfare or animal rights organization. Our publishing costs are borne by Animal Rights Network, Inc. as one of its movement-building activities. It should not be assumed, however that Animal Rights Network, Inc. endorses any of the ideas, reports, or other material published in *Agenda*. Nor, for that matter, should it be assumed that everything published herein reflects the views of the editor and staff of *Agenda*; we provide space for discussion, that’s all.

First off, this is our last issue of *Agenda*. Before you cheer or groan, as the case may be, we should tell you that we’re not quitting; we’re growing. Our next issue will expand the *Agenda* format somewhat and it will include news and material formerly published in the Animal Rights Network *Newsletter*. We are making these changes to economize on costs of printing, collating and mailing. And we think the new magazine format will carry more information to more people; we plan to make it attractive enough to draw greater attention to the animal rights/liberation perspective. Let’s hope you like it. If you do, you

can help us by sending materials for our departments and by persuading friends and acquaintances to join our list of subscribers. We’ll see you in July.

Action for Life, a national planning and mobilization conference for animal protection and vegetarian activists, will be held 3-6 July 1981 at a college in the New York City area. The program will consist primarily of lecturers and workshops on various techniques for effecting social change. Task forces focusing on narrow objectives of interest to the participants will be formed to carry on the work beyond the bounds of the conference. For further information, contact: Action for Life, P.O. Box 5888, Washington, D.C. 20014; telephone (301) 530-1737.

Mobilization for Animal Rights: Conference ‘81. The third in a series of planning meetings for this conference (reported in last *AGENDA*) scheduled for October 10-12 took place Saturday, April 11, in New York City. Approximately 20 people attended and heard reports from four committees (program, promotion, finance and logistics). Work has proceeded slowly, but a deadline of May 1 has been set for all committees to complete a plan of activity for carrying out their task. The possibility of moving the conference to Spring ‘82 was discussed and is being considered in the event committees do not meet their May 1 deadlines.

Money (as usual) has been the main hold-up in the planning process, restricting other committees from making final determinations on location, program and promotion until a financial picture can be established. We have no major animal welfare groups supporting this endeavor as yet, and no wealthy

backers. Grants are being investigated but it is unlikely that we would have a decision on a grant in time for an October event. Approximately \$250.00 has been collected by passing the hat and Animal Rights Network has been designated to hold and disburse these monies. Anyone wishing to help us along? Mail donations to A R N, Box 5234, Westport, CT 06881 and indicate they be used for conference expenses.

For more information or to volunteer your services, contact Jo Shoemnith, general coordinator, at PETA, Box 56272, Washington, DC 20011.

The January/February 1981 issue of *Lab Animal*, the magazine of "information, ideas, methods and materials for the animal research professional", ran as its cover story an interview with Henry Spira, leader of the Coalition to Stop the Draize Test. Although the entire interview bears repeating for the information and points raised by Spira, we think the following interchange should not be missed by *Agenda* readers:

(Interviewer) "What about lab animal testing that has to do with cancer and other truly devastating diseases? What does cancer testing have to do with justice? Are you against research using animals when human lives are at stake?"

(Henry Spira) "That point of all this testing is survival-the survival of our species. I think our survival will be served a lot better if we show a concern for others, in this day and age when we can obliterate the whole planet. Taking into account the feelings and interests of others, having policies based on the idea of not harming others, will stand us a lot better now. The philosophy behind the animal rights movement is broader than not hurting cats and dogs. Many of us would feel more comfortable if we felt others weren't being pushed around, regardless of their species, human or non-human."

LETTERS

Man or Animal: Which will you save?

This question often arises when speaking to individuals about Animal rights issues. There is a gross misconception that by supporting the rights of animals we are denying or neglecting human rights.

This type of species discrimination, or "speciesism" is largely responsible for the condition of our world today. There is no reason why animals should thrive at the expense of mankind, and certainly the opposite is also true. By dividing ourselves from the rest of the animal kingdom we are denying the fundamental interdependence among all creatures living and breathing on this planet.

Anyone who has known a true animal hater has surely seen that these sentiments were not limited to animals, but were also reflected in that persons treatment of their fellow man. Is there any reason why basic moral principles such as "Love thy neighbor" or "Thou shalt not kill" should not be applied to all animals? As Hans Ruesch states in his book *Slaughter of the Innocent*;

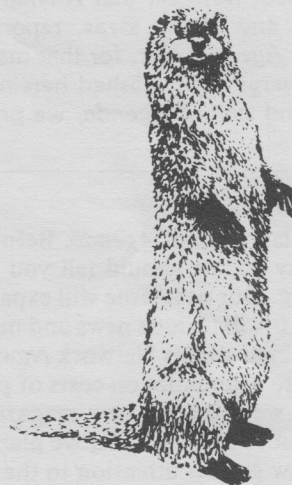
"Nobody has ever explained why pity for one's own species should be more admirable than for other species." . . . But mostly whoever advocates compassion for animals doesn't do so in the belief that this is more important than to advocate compassion for humans, but because animals have neither voice nor vote, because the foulness is too deep, the hypocrisy that hides it is too shameful for the human race. And at the end it will emerge that by helping the animals we shall also have helped mankind."

Do you read *Sports Afield*, *Lab Animal*, *National Hog Farmer* or any of the hundreds of other magazines and publications of the industries that exploit animals? If not, maybe you should from time to time because it helps to know what the other side is thinking and saying. Especially now that animal rights is in the air. Word about the renewed campaign for animal rights is reaching the desks of the editors of these publications and they are responding to the issues more and more frequently. It behooves us to know what they are saying about us because we must respond in turn at some point. We need to know how they think and what tracks they take in furthering their interests. For example on the factory farming issue, agribusiness experts are already putting forth the arguments that livestock farmers are the most concerned about animal welfare because it is an indicator of productivity and that animals are healthier, happier and safer in the new confinement systems. These are well-chosen arguments because they are so believable and seemly sensible yet so insusceptible to proof. The arguments have appeal to a gullible public eager to grasp a straw that will justify its appetite for animal products.

So, if you want to do a little easy activism, pick out one of the industries that offends you the most and determine its major publications, then subscribe to one or more of them. Monitor the publications for material that might reveal the industry's thinking and strategies on the animal welfare issue. Send copies of the material to us and we'll share it with *Agenda* readers. Be on the lookout, too, for advertising in these publications, for it indicates the businesses and economic interests we're up against. Much of the advertising is quite bizarre and it reveals with shocking honesty how animals are perceived by these people. Send examples to us for *Agenda*.

So when I am asked if there aren't more important human problems on which to spend my time and energy, my answer is that my definition of "Animal Rights" does not exclude mankind. We are undeniably linked together in our mutual struggle for survival. Everytime an animal dies in a trap, or is clubbed to death on the ice, or is cut open in the name of science, a piece of mankind dies with it. And my question to you must be: How many pieces do we have left?

Sean A. Murphy, Newton, Mass.



Many of those who have written articles and letters in AGENDA have stated their contention that the Animal Rights Movement should be viewed as part of a larger humanitarian concept which includes other humane social movements and the environmental movement. Few would doubt that it will first be necessary for people to change their attitudes and feelings toward other ethnic and racial groups, and other classes, of human beings before animal rights is likely to become a reality. Therefore, I feel that the concept of a *Humanitarian Movement* is an appropriate one. But despite this, we should not overlook an important, if obvious point: A relatively small number of people, working with limited resources, can not be expected to bring an end to all forms of oppression overnight. Most animal rights advocates are no doubt well aware that capital is controlled largely by those who have established, or who maintain, the *status quo*. Naturally, those with the most money wield the greatest amount of power.

With the exception of the Cleveland Amorys, Peter Singers, Hans Reuschs and a few other noteables, those of us who are active in animal welfare / rights / liberation do so as *avocations*, not as full or part-time *occupations*. And even the most successful Movement leaders do not receive all — or even most — of their necessary income from activities which are directly associated with curbing animal abuse. My point is that most animal rights advocates are unable to spend 40 or 50 hours a week meeting with senators and representatives; lobbying in Congress; engaging in humane education programs; planning and participating in demonstrations; or debating *professional* vivisectionists, state game officials, furriers, etc. over radio and television. And even the most ardent activists need time to themselves, for family activities, leisure, or simply to “unwind”. Since time and money are in short supply, activities must be chosen with utmost care, and a set of priorities developed. In order to be effective within a particular group an individual must be willing to concentrate upon *one* major area of animal abuse (hunting, trapping, vivisection, factory farming, etc.) while not completely neglecting the others.

I used to believe that some of the larger animal welfare groups made a habit of keeping too many pans on the cook stove; that in effect, they were “jack of all trades but masters of none.” I have since realized that these large organizations are able to diversify their activities (and do a good job of it) because their memberships are *large enough* that they can voluntarily break into smaller groups which concentrate on specific problems. As an example. THE FUND FOR ANIMALS may have one group active in combatting a vivisectionist practice, another dealing with coyote poisoning in the western states, another with saving African wildlife, another fighting for abolition of the leghold trap in a certain state, and yet another seeking an end to public hunting on a particular National Wildlife Refuge. To many animal rights activists who are equally concerned about *all* forms of animals abuse (and most of us *are!*) this may not sound like the best way to operate. Yet it is the most effective way to get things done. (If you don't believe me ask Henry Spiral!)

This brings us back to the subject of the diversity of animal welfare organizations, each of which “does its own thing.” Most of these groups can not afford large staffs on salaries who can devote their full time and energy to the Animal Rights cause. Naturally, in order to collect necessary revenue, these organizations must grow and find new donors. And for this to happen it is necessary that they raise the level of public consciousness and illustrate, through their accomplishments, that they deserve your support and mine. Since this takes money the business of collection becomes a rather vicious circle. Particularly in view of the fact that Americans are now more conscious than ever about how they spend their money!

Certainly there is a need for all of the animal welfare groups to work more closely with one-another and to understand that humanitarianism includes human and environmental rights as well as animal rights. But there is also a need for diversity in organizational goals. Those dedicated animal rights advocates who are now working together will continue to encounter tough sledding. But if each concerned person attacks individual problems as they arise, rather than attempting to take on the entire animal exploitation establishment, we may eventually achieve a socially-accepted Animal Rights Ethic. Let us work together *as individuals* toward a common goal and let us have confidence in the future!

Ron Baker, Paradox, New York



Regarding the criticisms of Agenda from Graham Henderson, spokesman for the Toronto Humane Society (letter - January 81), I must point out that spokespersons for this organization have defended such animal exploitation as circuses (which I have documented on tape), and rodeos (documented in a national Canadian magazine). The Toronto Humane Society is also a member of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, a group which condones the use of animals for food, clothing, recreation, research, and zoological purposes, as long as the creatures are used “humanely” of course!

The THS is contracted by the City of Toronto to impound and kill animals, and like other businesses whose existence depends on a surplus pet population, they have never promoted the establishment of municipal, low-cost, spay/neuter clinics (as documented in the Toronto Sun newspaper article “The logic of spay/neuter clinics”). The THS also approved of the Ontario Animals for Research Act (pound seizure).

I have attended, with other activist volunteers, demonstrations and activities for animals in Toronto during the past 10 years and have never encountered Mr. Henderson. Of course, he is not being paid to attend demonstrations. Perhaps he is only continuing to monitor your “radical” (his quote) publication because it is part of his job, since such “humane societies” want to impede any progress towards the liberation of non-humans because it would destroy their business which promotes the continued use of animals “humanely”.

Marlene Lakin, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Love your journal. First rate. Especially feminist angles- All hail to Andrew Dagilis.

Norma Benney, London, England

I'd like to say something about the sexist language policy as outlined in *Agenda* #4, and commented on in that issue by Dudley Giehl in a letter.

Like Giehl, I object to the use of italics to bring sexist language to the attention of the reader. A brief foreword stating your policy would do the trick, and would not confuse and startle the reader throughout the piece, as italics do.

Like Giehl, I have had to combat editors who objected to my use of the pronouns he and she in referring to animals. They wanted me to use the pronoun *it*. Writings that use the word *it* in referring to animals bother me a lot. However, if an editor were to allow the *it* to remain, but italicize it, that would bother me even more.

I think the terms *man* and *mankind* are understood by the reader and are not necessarily sexist. What's being said is the thing, and not just how one says it. Italics in this case turn the mind away from the matter at hand, and make a mountain out of a molehill.

So much for my two cents. I think *Agenda* is great. Keep it coming!

Hope Sawyer Buyukmihci, Newfield, NJ

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I put many years of hard work and traveling - to New York, London, Paris, Zurich, Rome - into the research required for the compilation of my *Slaughter of the Innocent*, by which I wanted to demonstrate convincingly not merely the uselessness but the counter-productiveness of animal experimentation as practiced by today's self-styled "medical research." I expected to find instances in which such experimentation had benefited mankind, but I was sure they would be overshadowed by the damage vivisection had caused to true medical science.

Besides studying the History of Medicine and digesting a tremendous amount of medical literature in four different languages, I also questioned medical doctors whom I knew to be competent, honest and sincere. To my own surprise, not one shred of *irrefutable* evidence came up as to any advantage animal experimentation may have brought us. So on page 145 of my book I lean over backward listing *all* the alleged "conquests" claimed by the vivisectors, and in the following chapters I dismantle them one by one, with *scientific* evidence that has never been refuted.

A great many people *who have taken the trouble to read the book from cover to cover* have come to the conclusion that a demand for Abolition is no longer unrealistic, and in fact both in Italy and in my own Switzerland A-V societies have launched a popular initiative with collection of signatures eventually leading to a referendum on Abolition, as all so-called "controls" have long proved to be a total failure in Europe.

Lately a few supposed antivivisectionists have started disputing my views, coming up with the lines and sweeping generalizations constantly used by the vivisectionist community. One woman, who hopes to defeat vivisection by reawakening the people's religiousness, had this to say lately in an A-V journal, in which she refers to the abolitionists as "animal welfare workers", as do America's "science writers" usually: "They must strive to be completely fair and just in all of their arguments. They will have to admit, for example, that what is morally wrong can, unfortunately, be scientifically correct.

They will have to admit that the suffering of laboratory animals has often led to the amelioration of human suffering..."

Not only I, but a great many medical authorities dispute these views of hers. I cite some 200 of those authorities in my book, and have collected close to a 1000 more. Is it possible that this strange antivivisectionist has never heard of them? Since I have no reason to question this woman's motives, I can only question her judgment, and assume that she has fallen for vivisectionist propaganda. Another statement of hers, in an article in which she speaks of "the wonderful benefits of medical research," seems to bear out this assumption. She writes:

"To justify all of the physical and mental distress to which animals have been subjected in research on shock by the fact that it saved 25,000 men in World War II reflects a highly understandable, yet narrow, point of view." Like all vivisectionist propaganda, this is absolute bosh, yet particularly effective because propagated by a reputed antivivisectionist, who doesn't seem to know that laboratory workers are today still smashing dogs' paws by the tens of thousand with rubber mallets or Blalock presses in their endeavor to discover what shock "is", since they know as little about it today as their colleagues did a hundred years ago. They admit it.

At a rally in Great Britain another well-known, self-styled antivivisectionist said in a speech that some animal experiments were useful. As I challenged him publicly to name them, he said he would have to study the whole medical literature first -and he didn't have the time! Now this man was known as a reformed vivisector, who had admitted in print that not one of his experiments, in which he had inflicted great pain on animals, had been of the slightest use. And which antivivisectionist would ever doubt the word of such a "sincere" member of the flock when he affirms that there *are* useful experiments indeed? And never mind that he can't name one.

Generalizations are the mainstay of vivisectionist propaganda. Narrow them down to specifics and press the vivisectors for proofs and more proofs, and watch them melt away. I like to apply to them what has been said about British politicians: "Watch their lips. If they move, they lie." As I've related in the French version of my book, in 1979, after a conference of mine in Strasbourg, Prof. Paul Mandel, who taught at the University and was a member of the National Center of Scientific Research, rose and addressed the audience thus: "Up to now you've heard brilliant rhetoric, but now I'll give you facts: two weeks ago, by working on dogs, I discovered how to cure tubercular meningitis, a deadly malady." Such a claim, coming from an academic celebrity, couldn't help deeply impressing, or at least confusing, an audience that had never heard G.B. Shaw's dictum: "Whoever doesn't hesitate to vivisect will hardly hesitate to lie about it."

In fact Prof. Mandel had spoken an untruth. The identical untruth with which other vivisectors have tried to justify their activity. I've heard this fairy-tale of tubercular meningitis being cured thanks to experiments on dogs before. Tubercular meningitis, as it occurs in man, cannot be duplicated in dogs, thus nobody can ever hope to find a cure for it, or any other human disease, by "working on dogs." On the other hand, a great many cases of crippling or fatal meningitis have been *caused* by vaccines derived from animals. And for this there is ample proof.

In March 1979 I wrote Prof. Mandel a registered letter expressing great interest in his "cure", requesting written information or any published paper describing it, as he was certainly not going to keep such an important discovery to himself. His answer never came. But how many convinced antivivisectionists are able to escape the steady brainwash we are all being subjected to from on high, with the help of the media's venality, and the politicians beholden to big industry and the medical power?

Sincerely, Hans Ruesch

★ ★ ★

Notes, letters, articles, comments and other written submissions are welcome and should be sent to *Agenda*, Box 5234, Westport, CT 06881. Please try to keep the length of your letters down as much as possible. If you have a lot to say, try to put it into article form or compose a piece for our "Comment" section. Our deadlines are the 15th of each December, March, June and September. We try to publish on the first of each January, April, July and October.

We cannot be responsible for the return of unaccepted material unless it is sent to us with adequate postage and a self-addressed envelope of sufficient size to hold the material.

ARTICLES

Primate Research — Top Priority for Target Issue

by Doug Moss

Within the realm of animal protection there are as many issues as there are types of animals and degrees of animal suffering. Traditionally, groups and individuals have lined up behind issues according (largely) to personalities, favorite animals and the quality of atrocity-mongering put out by leaders. This approach has an element of self-indulgence about it and it has contributed to the fragmented disarray of our movement.

Most activists who have followed the recent campaign to stop the Draize test would probably agree now that if we are to carry on the kinds of coordinated, movement-wide actions that concentrate our political power and our impact on the public consciousness, we must establish some priorities among the carloads of animal issues. But where do we begin? What are the logical first steps along the path of animal liberation? What routes should be followed? Those of least resistance? Those that connect with further victories? Those that bring in more supporters and activists to the cause? Combinations of these? Obviously.

But before we can reach *specific* priorities, we must discuss and reach some consensus on ground rules and basics. The first steps, as I see them, then, are the establishment of basic criteria *by which priorities among issues will be determined*. I suggest that these criteria be stated in the form of these questions:

- 1) How *great* is the ability of the general public to identify and empathize with the animal/victim being exploited?
- 2) How *indefensible* is the act of exploitation a) in the public's view, and b) by those doing the exploiting?
- 3) How *relevant* is the issue in the broader sense; is human society or the natural world affected by the exploitation in ways in addition to actual animal suffering?
- 4) How *many animals* / victims are involved and how great is their suffering?

(The fourth criterion needs some elaboration. I don't agree with those that merely start with the issue that involves the greatest number of animals or greatest amount of suffering when deciding upon a plan of action. If we were to take this to

its extreme, we'd be campaigning for insects, since I'm sure more bugs are stepped on, sprayed or swatted than are rats vivisected or chickens slaughtered. To make this the only criterion is to overlook the importance of the other three).

Under these criteria, then, I think the movement must assign high priority to a campaign against the use of *primates in research*, particularly those employed by the military.

First of all, primates are closer to humans in anatomy, intelligence and behavior than any other animal. This is precisely why they are used so extensively in experiments seeking knowledge of human behavior and in attempts to train non-humans to imitate human activity. Hence, although I'll concede we are presently more sympathetic to the sufferings of kittens, puppies and baby seals because of their cuteness and because of our frequent exposure to them in real life or in photos, I believe we would, once exposed to primate suffering, have an even greater feeling for their sufferings and a closer kinship to them because of their similarities to us. Their visible physical reactions to their treatment or surroundings are very much like ours. Their facial and eye expressions communicate more to humans than do those of cats, rats, or other animals further from us evolutionarily and with whom *true* empathy has more obstacles. Now this preference for primates may sound speciesist to some who may infer (wrongly) that I am saying, "let's give priority to primates because they are more like humans". My real point is that we should pay closer attention to primate issues because primates, quite possibly, can communicate more of their plight to humans.

Because of this, I feel we can arouse mass concern more easily (assuming we make a concentrated effort in this area) for primates than for any other animal. The photos that have been circulated lately depicting monkeys in war experiments show clearly and undeniably the expressions of distress on the faces of test monkeys. A picture tells a thousand words, it is said, and images such as these strike deeper into the hearts of people than can volumes of philosophical discussion, elaborate descriptions of cruelties, or statistics. It is far more moving to be exposed to images such as these which resemble human (personal) anguish so closely. Language possibilities aside, primate expressive and communicative abilities should be "exploited" more by animal rights advocates; they may be the closest we can come to organizing animal victims so that they can "speak" for themselves.

Secondly, and in response to the second criteria question above, the use of primates in military research is done for a purpose no one can sensibly defend: i.e. to perfect methods of warfare and to develop more efficient ways of killing one another and possibly all life on this planet. Is this not a contra-

diction that flies directly in the face of those who attempt to justify animal experimentation based upon "bettering human life"? The Department of Defense (or "Offense", as it should be called) will have a tough time justifying this one to an angry and frightened public.

My third criterion, social relevance, also applies to military animal exploitation. Much has been discussed in the pages of *AGENDA* regarding the kinship of animal rights to other movements for social justice, and no issue provides a better example of the relationship between causes than this one. During the past year, events in Africa, the Mid-East and Latin America, together with broadening discussions of the U.S. corporate/military complex and the emergence of progressive groups like the Citizens Party, are beginning to widen the droopy eyes of Americans to the imperialistic realities of U.S. foreign policy and to genuine world-wide fears of the American war machine. In terms of basic survival, nothing could be more relevant than putting an end to the threat of war in the nuclear age. Targeting the use of primates in military research provides an excellent opportunity for us to call attention to, and perhaps halt, both the exploitation of primates and military madness. As Jim Mason pointed out in his editorial in *AGENDA* #4, "... action against this kind of animal abuse would establish the political and ethical relevance of our movement and how it relates to other great progressive efforts for peace, non-violence, social cooperation and global justice." By selecting an issue such as this which crosses over boundaries into other fields of humanitarian activity, more people could be brought in to the cause for animals because of its relationship to other concerns. And certainly (to include criteria #4 above) no one can deny the potentially massive numbers of victims (both human and non-human) that would fall because of militaristic approaches to social conflict resolution ("war") in the nuclear age.

But perhaps what makes military uses of primates most desirable as a target issue is the public's sensitivity about *innocent* victims, evidence of which is seen in the prominence of campaigns on behalf of baby seals, kittens, hunted and trapped animals, battered women and children (both born and unborn). Using the tools of mass media, some elements of society still succeed in falsely making villains of Jews, Blacks, leftists, "promiscuous women", and Iranians (as well as most other non-white, non-Christian, or non-male members of the population) all to legitimize even the worst acts against them, and to divert public attention from the true sources of social discontent. Primates (or any animal for that matter), however, cannot be judged guilty of any crime because they could not, for reasons good or bad, take us hostage, overrun our neighborhoods, destroy our families, corrupt our sons and daughters, or organize a "communist plot".

There has been much talk about mass actions and coordinated campaigns on behalf of animals. But where do we start? What do we want and how do we tell the public? What examples can we use that best point a finger toward the roots of our culture and system which brutalize humans and animals alike? What examples of injustice can we highlight that will bring the masses over to the side of justice — ones that hit home and yet relate to overall personal, social and ecological well-being? I am convinced that the military and primate issue, if targeted by both animal rights and peace groups, can bring about a higher consciousness with which to continue the process of both human and animal liberation.

Doug Moss is a founding member of Animal Rights Network, Inc., and co-edits the Animal Rights Network News and AGENDA.

Walking the Walk

by Andrew Dagilis

The speed with which you exhaust all legal means of effecting change is directly proportional to the depth to which an injustice has its roots in a society's culture and economic system; the greater the vested interest in the status quo, the fewer the means to alter it. In the case of animal liberation, those means are few indeed. In a very short time, an activist arrives at the point where s/he must decide whether or not to employ civil disobedience.

Civil disobedience (or, as the more conservative-minded simplistically refer to it, "breaking the law") implies the right to revolution, i.e., the right to refuse allegiance and to resist government and industry when their tyranny or inefficiency are great and unbearable. It presupposes that it is more desirable to cultivate a respect for what is right rather than for what is merely legal. Too often legality depends on what is expedient for the powerful, i.e., the rich; and the rich are always sold to the institutions that make them rich.

Proponents of civil disobedience disagree with the doctrine of blind allegiance to the law, which demands that individuals serve the State as machines, with their bodies, and not as thinking persons. They instead believe that action from principle changes things and their relations. Seen in this way, civil disobedience is essentially revolutionary.

As is, of course, animal liberation.

Civil disobedience, in the popular sense, generally regroups two types of extra-legal protest activities. The first involves a

non-violent commitment to dissent on an individual scale, such as on-site occupations, voluntary tax evasion, hunger strikes, and the like. This is usually termed *passive resistance*. The second has recourse to tactical property damage; this can be called *active resistance*. In some ill-planned or ill-controlled instances, the former degenerates into the latter. To those who adhere strictly to the concepts of non-violence and pacifism, the only "legitimate" civil disobedience is passive resistance. For them there is no such thing as constructive destruction.

Either type of civil disobedience is used in two distinct situations, each requiring its own strategies: against the *local* instance of a bigger wrong (such as to halt the dumping of hazardous chemicals in a specific lake), and against the *root causes* of various specific wrongs (such as demanding a halt to all manufacturing of hazardous chemicals).

In this essay, I shall concern myself principally with active resistance since this is the more controversial method.

At the root of the opposition or reticence to employ active resistance lies the concept of *private property*. We all own a certain number of things, and for many of us these possessions have been hard-won; we therefore assume that this is true for others and treat what they own with care, hoping they will reciprocate with the same consideration.

But there exists a fundamental difference between private property, i.e., assets earned and owned by a particular individual or

individuals; corporate property, i.e., assets owned by a large commercial conglomerate and hence belonging to the corporation, which is to say belonging to no one individual; and government property, which we theoretically *all* own.

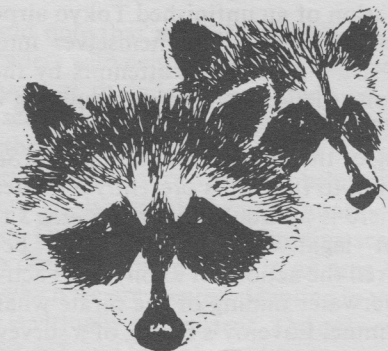
Corporate property is still seen today as somehow being equivalent to private individually-owned property; but what is a big corporation if not a fabrication of cloud and smoke, a mere name that stands as a public facade behind which lurk innumerable anonymous Clark Kents, always ready to leap into the nearest executive phonebooth to collectively become a corporate Superman, whose puerile aspirations begin and end exclusively with its won growth and well-being. Gone are the days when big companies were run by a single individual, on whom blame could be said to rest; today's corporations are run by executive boards, an assemblage of faceless individuals almost clone-like in the similarity of their objectives and their approaches to acquiring and retaining power.

A possession loses its status of untouchability by others when it is employed to the detriment of others; if your neighbour threatened you with a rifle you would be justified in removing it from his/her hands. If your neighbour persisted in trying to regain possession of the weapon in order to further threaten you, it would be justifiable to break the rifle. The same applies to corporate property; life, and the quality of life, should be held in higher esteem than the material ownership of the means which endanger them.

Of late, there appears to be an increase in the number of instances where property damage has been used, nominally to further the animal liberation movement. Very unfortunately, most of these events have abused the concept of civil disobedience.

Property destruction in these cases too often becomes little more than a retaliatory act born of frustration at the seeming immutability of the status quo. Without preliminary public education and support (or at least tolerance, if not acceptance), its net effect is only more confusion for a public constantly assaulted from all sides by more property destruction for a bewildering array of "legitimate" causes. To break furriers' windows only succeeds in harassing the merchant, causing him/her to spend money on replacing windows and possibly damaged goods on display. In time, if such harassment is repeated often enough, the merchant may have to declare bankruptcy and close his/her doors, without for all this being in the least converted to our side. More likely s/he'll harbor a deep grudge or hatred for those faceless assailants who drove him/her out of business, nurturing much venomous rage at our movement as a whole. The net result will be one or more dedicated enemies and more power to the big fur corporations, who are not so easily pushed around.

Lashing out at the furrier is nothing more than striking out at the most visible target, and the one least capable of fighting back. It is the coward's way, and the bully's way, and it is misapplied. We need not resort to such thug tactics. In situations where animals are turned into specific products, and the exploitative trade relies principally on the income derived from the purchase of these products, it is wiser (and more expeditious) not to go after each and every individual supplier, but instead to do what the military does when they are outnumbered by the enemy; cut the supply lines. Without them, all the retailers will fold. Concentrate on thwarting the suppliers and eroding the demand for their wares. Go after the king, not the pawns. That way you strike at the lifeblood of the trade. If the furriers can't read the handwriting on the wall and get out of the business while the getting's good, then they'll only have themselves to blame for their miseries when their market collapses.



Similarly, breaking into research or testing labs to free animal inmates incarcerated there, and maybe take advantage of the situation to damage equipment, accomplishes little of long-range value if there is not at least a tacit tolerance for such activities from the society at large. At the present time in North America there is no such wide-spread climate of social tolerance, and self-styled "liberators" more often than not find themselves in possession of psychotic animals who are unfit for domestic dwelling or animals so injured that they must be euthanized, a procedure which, depending on the species, most "liberators" are medically ill-trained or ill-equipped to perform adequately. Too often such acts are spur-of-the-moment decisions, insufficiently planned and too fueled by outlaw emulation.

The research institution will in most cases find itself only slightly affected by the break-in and, after filling the lab animal suppliers' coffers with a few more dollars, will endeavor to drive vivisection even more underground. Even the publicity value of the stunt is minimized by the liberators' need to remain anonymous in order to avoid legal retributions. The unenlightened mass of the public, when they stop to think of the matter at all, probably "understand" the motivation behind the act but pity its perpetrators for being so "misguided".

The animal liberation struggle should not be reduced to such one-to-one petty harassments. Such juvenile pranks as squirting metal glue into fur-shop doorlocks accomplish nothing of lasting value for animals or people. The most vocal advocates in our movement of such short-term violent tactics are for the most part to be found among the freshly-outraged newcomers, or among the battle-weary veterans who have grown impatient with the snail's pace progress of the movement and mistakenly think that blind terroristic ploys will accelerate change. Rather, such acts are far more liable to harden opposition. In the end it is the mature animal liberationists who pay for the impatience of the short-sighted few who think simplistic solutions can be found to the complex problem of speciesism. Our job's already hard enough as it is; we don't need any more resistance to our philosophy than we already have. We must always make sure that we don't lend ourselves to the very mentality which we condemn.

But this essay is not a call to timidity so much as to strategy. Like many other things, property damage as a tool for animal liberation can be an important and effective catalyst to action and change. Because of its controversial nature within Western-type societies, however, it will almost always backfire on its user when not employed with extreme judiciousness and backed by a strong educational program. Good examples of the strategic use of active resistance include:

- 1) the destruction by arson of an English laboratory under construction at the precise building stage when the parent firm's financial commitments exceeded its ability to rebuild the planned facility.

2) the occupation of an unfinished Tokyo airport by Japanese activists, who literally dug themselves into the airport grounds and resisted all eviction attempts by the authorities, thus delaying construction until further building was no longer financially feasible.

3) the sinking of the *Sierra*. Even though the *Sea Shepherd's* exact contribution to this act is presently a matter of debate in some circles, there is no doubt that the *Sierra's* ramming, and the subsequent legal entanglements that befell the *Sea Shepherd*, spurred the actions of anonymous activists responsible for the underwater mining of the pirate whaler.

4) the late Samuel Lovejoy's felling of a survey tower on the proposed construction site of a nuclear power facility. During his subsequent trial, Lovejoy adroitly brought forth so many convincing civil rights arguments for his defense, and used the trial so well as a public platform to raise the entire question of nuclear safety, that the presiding judge, reluctant to set a precedent, threw the case out of court. To this day, the site remains untouched by the power utilities.

On the other hand, Seabrook is an example of the overuse of the same tactic. The first few times the installation was stormed by anti-nuclear activists, the public was shocked out of its complacency and forced to re-examine its predigested opinions on nuclear power. But after repeated attempts were made to occupy the same grounds, the action became routinized, and it's all most people could do to stifle their yawns. Worse, the utilities were prepared and mounted effective counter-measures. The credibility of the anti-nuclear movement in that area suffered because it was seen as unimaginative and incompetent ("they can't even get their act together enough to scale a fence..."). Accusations of shallow publicity-seeking followed in the popular press.

Still, when all is said and done, nose-to-nose encounters are excellent in the field, where the animal exploitation actually occurs. Making the woods unenjoyable for hunters or off-limits to trappers; closing down labs for violations of city sanitation ordinances (or creating anti-cruelty laws which do not exclude experimenters from their provisions); forcing the shut-down of slaughterhouses and feedlots for non-compliance with regional environmental laws; these are all constructive confrontations that have the added benefit of allowing press conferences where the animal liberation philosophy can be effectively articulated.

Ultimately, all civil disobedience within this movement must have as one of its central consequences the further general acceptance by the public of the animal liberation philosophy. Any act that retards this process of public assimilation, no matter how many individual animals it "saves" in the short-run, must be seen as being detrimental to the long-term (and long-awaited) final liberation of all animals, and so cannot in all conscience be condoned by people genuinely motivated to ending animal oppression on a world-wide scale. Those who do indulge in such tactics must be suspected either of mere thrill-seeking at the movement's expense, or if their concern for animals is sincere, of not having the necessary maturity of outlook and patience which all ethical revolutionary reform movements require for their successful implementation. There are dangers and risks enough in the animal liberation cause without having to invent more, as people like Dexter Cate already know.

It would have been strategically unwise (not to mention almost financially impossible) to ram or sink a whaling vessel in the early sixties, when public awareness and support were virtually non-existent for this sort of activity. Still, apart from those with a monetary interest in whaling, very few people in the industrialized world actually support cetacean slaughter. The same cannot be said for the two main concerns of the animal liberation movement, i.e., animal husbandry and animal experimentation.

For this reason, the animal liberation movement must first and foremost be an *educational* movement with, as its roots, communication and thought, producing rationally-grounded changes in popular opinion which are then implemented in the everyday activities of ever more people. Constructive civil disobedience is but one tool among many to help in the enactment of this role.

Opposition to civil disobedience within this movement is especially prevalent among those who are more concerned with animal *cruelty* than with animal *equality*, those who are too often willing to negotiate with the animal exploiters in order to achieve compromise, that notorious half-loaf which for animals and animal liberationists can never be sufficient.

But though this movement must be built mainly around communication, our enthusiasm for discussion must not blind us to the fact that what we *do* is more important than what we *think*. There are thousands who *in opinion* are opposed to a great many injustices, who yet *in effect* do nothing to put an end to them. Those who, while they disapprove of the character and measures of a government or an industry yield to it their tacit allegiance and financial support, and undoubtedly its principal *raison-d'etre*, and so frequently one of the most serious obstacles to reform.

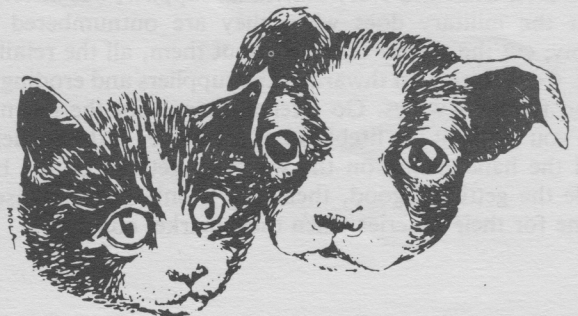
So important is action that we can reasonably condemn any thinking which has as its purpose the evasion of useful or necessary action.

To be sure, there is *something* to be said for animal exploitation, and much to be said for animal liberation. But if the "humaneists", as Connie Salamone calls them, use this in order to do nothing of real consequence, then they are doing less than nothing; they become a hindrance to the movement because they confuse the issue for the uninformed public.

Animal exploitation is going to change as a result of an array of global influences, and the effect of abstention is more likely to result in undesirable change. By not acting, or, in the case of the tired animal activist, by withdrawing from the struggle, we have not escaped the requirement of playing a part in the transition; we've only made it impossible for our part to be a useful one.

An argument used by both the morally uncaring and those who drop out of the animal liberation movement is to escape from their ethical responsibilities or their commitment to the cause by claiming, like Thoreau, that "(they) came into this world, not chiefly to make this a better place to live, but to live in it". But we cannot deny the necessity for action. By thus withdrawing into positions of relative comfort, those who quit and those who will not commit themselves not only impoverish the movement of vitally-needed resources, but also guarantee that animals will have that much longer to suffer under the human heel. Such selfish disinvolvement is a luxury which animals cannot afford of us.

Andrew Dagilis is an animal rights activist based in Quebec.



Letter to a Game Manager

by Ron Baker

(Editor's note: With the author's permission, the following is excerpted from a letter to a senior wildlife biologist for the state of Vermont. Because it contains information and points pertinent to the issue of hunting, we thought some of the letter would be of interest to Agenda readers.)

Healthy ecosystems and humanitarian ethics aside, the present system of wildlife management is like closing the barn door after the horse (or the deer) has gotten out. It concentrates on effects rather than on causes, and in my opinion does a poor job of this! As to why predator reintroduction is not tried more widely, I need not tell you that predators compete with human hunters and there is otherwise a disdain for this idea in rural and backwoods areas — an irrational disdain based largely on ignorance. Despite claims to the contrary, predation by cougars, wolves and coyotes on sheep and calves is minimal even in ranching areas of the West where there are large numbers of livestock free for the taking and greater wolf and mountain lion populations than are found in many other parts of the country.

But, even in the absence of large predators there is evidence that the effect of public hunting, over the long run, does not reduce deer populations but often results in deer population *increases* as natural factors overcompensate for the human "harvests". Thus, deer herds will be much larger at their cyclic peak. The common management "solution", as you noted, is to call for increased "harvests" by *man*; thus the vicious cycle continues.

A case in point: In the mid-1970's resource managers in New Jersey began to push for public hunting in the Great Swamp National Refuge. There were complaints from biologists that deer were destroying seedling which had been planted adjacent to the refuge and that "overbrowsing" had resulted in the absence from the refuge of the native short-eared and saw-whet owls. The result was that in 1975, over the objections of such groups as The Fund for Animals and Friends of Animals, hunting was established in the refuge on a *permit basis*. Since 1975 there have been annual "deer of either sex" hunts on the refuge. At first these were six days in length, but were subsequently expanded to 11 days. By every wildlife biologist's rule this should have resulted in a substantial reduction in the size of the deer herd in the swamp. The fact is that since public hunting via permit was introduced six years ago the deer herd in the Great Swamp has nearly *doubled* in size from an estimated 350 to about 700. (It is relatively easy to obtain a fairly accurate deer population estimate in such a confined area.) The deer herd now appears headed for legitimate deep trouble. Meanwhile, my research indicates that the complaints of "overbrowsing" and deer damage in the early 1970's were greatly exaggerated and used largely as excuses to muscle recreational hunting onto the refuge. Whether hunting by itself or in combination with other factors, is responsible for deer population increases in the Great Swamp and elsewhere is academic to the case in point. Such experience indicates that lack of value of recreational hunting as an effective management tool. It may be true that the confines of the Great Swamp, surrounded as they are by human development, are not comparable to the sparsely-settled woods and open spaces of Vermont. But *biologically* the experience at the refuge must be considered a microcosm of the problems with deer management elsewhere, regardless of habitat factors.

I should note that my wife and I are Adirondack wilderness homesteaders who neither hunt nor trap but have done a considerable amount of independent study of wildlife in this area. Despite scandalously long big game seasons in the Adirondacks, we nonetheless live in a very sparsely hunted area. Our own 100 acres plus 160 acres of private land behind us are closed to hunting. There is also relatively little hunting done on state land behind us. During the past two hunting seasons there have been only two deer per season killed in an area of about four square miles in which we are located. Hunting in the wild forest beyond this area is virtually nonexistent. The only evidence I have found of deer die-off, and that of very low magnitude, came during the winter of 1977-78. This particular winter was characterized by unusually deep snows (four feet deep in our area). Does this mean that the deer population in our area during the past two years was at a cycle low, thus accounting for the low number of deer killed in the surrounding area? Perhaps. There is a "bucks only" season in the Adirondacks and it would take a few years for deer born in subsequent seasons, including those fawns of the past two relatively snowless winters, to mature. On the other hand, our area has always been sparsely hunted. My evidence indicates consistently low deer populations in this area. There has been no evidence in the six years we have been here of deer "overbrowsing" or of deer populations reaching anything close to a "range carrying capacity". I should note that the surrounding habitat is varied and has grassy fields, and open beaver meadows as well as open woods and dense forest. In fact, the habitat in our area is not unlike that in the Green Mountains and their foothills. Deer populations here may be higher than in most parts of the Adirondacks (at least the lightly hunted sections) which are characterized by dense forests and rugged terrain. There are coyotes here but I have found no evidence of deer killed by coyotes. Apparently the greatest effect of the coyotes is to keep deer alert and on the move in some local areas. One might ask, since there are apparently reasonably healthy deer populations in our area in the relative absence of recreational hunting, whether one can attribute the condition of the Vermont deer herd largely to "bucks only" seasons or to hunting itself.

In very broad terms I could sum up the results of my experience and research thus:

- a. When *man* (a species long having exceeded the carrying capacity of *his* range) applies his subjective standards to Nature's purposeful design, wildlife- and human life- are in serious trouble, as indeed they are and *we* are worldwide.
- b. Wildlife management as it is now practiced is often an effective procedure not because it is environmentally sound; rather because wildlife are living in ecosystems which man has upset. The prevailing procedure is to upset them even further by maintaining or contributing to a synthetic "balance" in which the habitat is top-heavy with commonly-hunted herbivores and noticeably lacking in large predators. The method employed to maintain this synthetic balance is to use *man* as a predator, although this system does not fit harmoniously into a well-balanced environment, particularly since *man* taken as a species does not contribute to ecological balance by any of his actions. The purpose of this procedure, as far as I can determine, is to maintain the status-quo and insure that everyone gets his or her share of the wildlife "resource", and to perpetuate the economic "benefits" which accrue from sports hunting and trapping.

c. Wildlife management thus did not evolve because it is the most environmentally effective system, but rather because it is the system which generates the greatest amount of revenue for the most people. (After all, animals living wild would otherwise be economically non-productive.) Meanwhile wildlife are the losers. Even non-game management is often the management of present non-game animals with an eye to future "harvestable surpluses". Witness the push by the New York State Department of Environmental Protection for hunting on mourning doves. And the spring and fall wild turkey hunts which were initiated as soon as a few of these birds were spotted in the Adirondacks. And the trapping of fishers which were first introduced a couple of decades ago to "control" porcupines, but which have evidently outlived their usefulness. Ah well, the animals don't vote, don't pay taxes, and don't generate revenue by themselves. And they aren't in a very good position to protest their mismanagement by *man*. As Cleveland Amory has said, "*Man* has an infinite capacity to rationalize his own cruelty". And this will be true as long as self-interest and economic considerations are the quiding forces in wildlife management.

I suppose I should mention before closing that I have found few professional groups as touchy about criticism from outsiders as wildlife biologists and game management people. I suppose this is to be expected since those in positions of power aren't in the habit of letting those with opposing viewpoints share that power. But as the worldwide animal rights movement gains momentum and an increasing number of people become interested in natural or restored ecosystems, forest and wildlife management procedures have not progressed past a Boone and Crockett Club level. (Except for the protection of endangered species, the funds for which are mysteriously lacking, and the relatively new concept of "non-game" game management.) The response to criticism from wildlife officials and biologists is commonly to the effect: Who are *they* to tell us how to do our jobs? We've been trained in wildlife biology and know all of the proper procedures to employ in a given situation."

Let me say from personal experience that unless the education of wildlife biologists has changed dramatically during the past fifteen years, there is a great deal of hogwash being pandered as infallible doctrine in wildlife biology curricula. I am not talking about wildlife *facts*; facts are facts. I am speaking of theories-which result in a human misapplication of subjective therapy to environmental problems such as deer "exceeding their range carrying capacity". Students are not encouraged to think independently when such thinking would be contrary to the prevailing management system. The education of wildlife biologists, like most of what passes for education in our society, is commercialized. It is not an end in itself, to teach students a love of Nature and a close empathy with wildlife; rather it is designed for the sole purpose of training wildlife biologists who will be well-versed in the subjective methods of the present system of wildlife management.

The result of this "education" is often an insensitivity toward other life forms. Wildlife are thought of as little more than pawns in a dispassionate process not unlike the production of coal or petroleum. (What were the "mean dressed weights" and "mean antler beam diameter" of yearling bucks by zone?) This constitutes what has been termed a "biological totalitarianism" by *man* over other creatures rather than what ought to be an ecological democracy with the needs of all native species in mind. If you will permit me some even stronger language, it is personal opinion that this mis-guided "education", based as it is on the manipulation of the ecosystem for *man's* economic en-

richment, is as insidious as any brainwashing tactic ever developed at the Kremlin. Students, most of whom arrive in college with open minds, can often be easily manipulated by one-track-minded wildlife biology professors. The "proper management decisions" are instilled into the student and those who disagree are given a pat on the little pointed head and told that this is how the system operates. If you don't like it change curricula. But don't rock the boat; we don't like troublemakers.

One of the results of this operating method was seen at the University of Vermont a few years ago when abuse was heaped upon Michael Frome who suggested in a lecture to wildlife biology students and faculty members that coyotes should be introduced and that other constructive changes might be considered in Vermont's wildlife management program. Frome, of course, was accused of "degrading wildlife biology as a profession". But he wasn't. He was criticizing subjective one-track-mindedness which is inherent in the wildlife management system in Vermont and elsewhere. In my opinion, Frome's suggestions are conservative.

The educational process is much like the profession scene. You aren't likely to receive an "A" on your master's dissertation in wildlife biology by suggesting radical reforms in wildlife management. Neither are you likely to receive promotions and good job ratings by openly questioning your superiors, by suggesting the re-introduction of large predators, the shortening of hunting or trapping seasons with restricted quotas, or the scaling down of hunting in various areas to find out what effect public hunting actually *does* have a wildlife populations. You go according to the book, keep your head down and don't make waves. And if you can illustrate that prevailing philosophy really does work, you may make it to the top.

What is needed most is proper education of potential wildlife biologists and of the general public. This would be an education which would teach a respect for the land and all its inhabitants. Unfortunately, someone will first have to educate American educators. Until wildlife officials are will to admit the existence of environmental viewpoints other than their own and adopt an ecocentric ethic, wildlife habitat will continue to decline.

Ron Baker edits and publishes Backwoods Journal, a magazine about living in wilderness, with nature.

★ ★ ★

Agenda people: Sunshine Beyer, Amy, Randy & Geri Gould, Jim Mason, Doug Moss, Pat Valentino

THAT'S SPECIESISM!

The following is excerpted from the fall 1979 bulletin of The Wildlife Conservation Fund of America..

The exceedingly dangerous concept that animals should have legal rights has gained a toehold in the United States. The California legislature in September adopted a resolution decalring "...that the Legislature of the State of California should take effective measures to protect and defend the rights of animals. . . ."

The push for animal rights represents an increasingly important strategy of the anitmovement. If legislatures accept the notion that animals have legal rights, it will become far easier for the antis to achieve the prohibition of the consumptive use of animal resources.

"Rights" is a special word in this country. In the world formation and development of our nation, it is the central word that has differentiated the *political status of individual Americans from individuals anywhere else in the world*. It represents a principle sacred to us.

To associate this word with lower animals is a desecration.

Rights aren't created out of thin air. They are allocated. Allocation of rights to animals is a subtraction from the rights of human beings.

If you want to see how an animal looks with "rights," go to India and watch cows being allowed to eat human food while humans are starving. Rights have been reallocated there. In this country, apply the principle to the caging of chickens, where the anti groups complain that a chicken should have the right to run in the open air, and lay its eggs in nests as chickens so on

small farms, instead of on conveyor belts. If you grant chickens this right, you ineluctably and substantially decrease the availability of eggs—a subtraction from the rights of *children* to proper nourishment. Rights given to muskrats are a subtraction from the rights of the farmer or ther water supplier to conduct his business.

The California resolution changes the status of animals from things to persons. Things can't have rights, only persons can have rights. To give an animal rights makes it some sort of person. All of our constitutional protections, all of the English-speaking tradition of political freedom, all the feelings that we have developed in the continuing debate on human rights and the subconscious reactions that we have to the taking of life or to the depriving of liberty or dignity of the individual attach to persons. If the majority of people become convinced that animals, as our fellow creatures, are persons, simply with less intelligence and in forms different from that of the human animal, then it follows that the majority of people—and our courts—will become convinced that our tradition of human rights should attach to animals.

If we make "animal rights" a legal principle, how does one distinguish this legal principle of "rights" from "rights" as in the "Bill of Rights" in the United States Constitution? And how do you eat something that has such rights? The answer is you don't, and this is the significance of the present resolution. Down the road, it means animals will not be used for food. Or fur. Or hunting. Or fishing. This is the spearhead of the movement that would revolutionize man's relation to animals.

READING FOR REVOLUTION

This section, a collection of quotes, references, reviews and excerpts, aims to present animal liberation as the political movement that it is, with its roots closely bound up with the moral foundations of other liberation struggles.

Animal Nonfarm

by John Berger

Adults take children to the zoo perhaps in the hope of refinding some of the innocence of that reproduced animal world which they remember from their own childhood.

The animals seldom live up to the adults' memories, while to the children they appear, for the most part, unexpectedly lethargic and dull. (As frequent as the calls of animals in a zoo are the cries of children demanding: Where is he? Why doesn't he move? Is he dead?) And so one might summarize the felt, but not necessarily expressed, question of most visitors as: Why are these animals less than I believed?

Visitors visit the zoo to look at animals. They proceed from cage to cage, not unlike visitors in an art gallery who stop in front of one painting and then move on. Yet in the zoo the view is always wrong. Like an image out of focus. One is so accustomed to this that the apology habitually anticipates the disappointment. And the apology runs like this: what do you expect? It's not a dead object you have come to look at, it's alive. It's

leading its own life. Why should this coincide with its being properly visible? Yet the reasoning of this apology is inadequate. The truth is more startling.

However you look at these animals, even if the animal is up against the bars, less than a foot from you, looking outwards in the public directions, *you are looking at something that has been rendered absolutely marginal*; and all the concentration you can muster will never be enough to centralize it.

Within limits, the animals are free, but both they themselves, and their spectators, presume on their close confinement. The visibility through the glass, the spaces between the bars, or the empty air above the moat, are not what they seem. Visibility, space, air, have been reduced to tokens.

The animals, isolated from each other and without interaction between species, have become utterly dependent upon their keepers. What was central to their interest has been replaced by a passive waiting for a series of arbitrary outside interventions.

All this is what makes them marginal. The space which they inhabit is artificial. Hence their tendency to bundle towards the edge of it. (Beyond its edges there may be real space.) The environment is illusory. Nothing surrounds them except their own lethargy or hyperactivity. They have nothing to act upon — except, briefly, supplied food and — very occasionally — a supplied mate. Lastly, their dependence and isolation have so conditioned their responses that they treat any event which takes place around them as marginal. (Hence their assumption of an otherwise exclusively human attitude — indifference.)

Zoos, realistic animal toys and the widespread commercial diffusion of animal imagery all began as animals started to be withdrawn from daily life. The zoos, with their theatrical decor for display, were in fact demonstrations of how animals had been rendered absolutely marginal.

All sites of enforced marginalization — ghettos, shanty towns, prisons, madhouses, concentration camps — have something in common with zoos. But it is both too easy and too evasive to use the zoo as a symbol. The zoo is a demonstration of the relations between man and animals; nothing else. The marginalization of animals is today being followed by the marginalization and disposal of the only class who, throughout history, has remained familiar with animals and maintained the wisdom which accompanies that familiarity: the middle and small peasant. The basis of this wisdom is an acceptance of the dualism at the very origin of the relation between man and animal. The rejection of this dualism is an important factor in opening the way to modern totalitarianism.

The zoo cannot but disappoint. The public purpose of zoos is to offer visitors the opportunity of looking at animals. Yet nowhere in a zoo can a stranger encounter the look of an animal. At the most, the animal's gaze flickers and passes on. They look sideways. They look blindly beyond. They scan mechanically. They have been immunized to encounter, because nothing can any more occupy a *central* place in their attention.

Therein lies the ultimate consequence of their marginalization. That look between animal and man, which may have played a crucial role in the development of human society, and with which, in any case, all men had always lived until less than a century ago, has been extinguished. Looking at each animal, the unaccompanied zoo visitor is alone. As for the crowds, they belong to a species which has at last been isolated.

The historic loss, to which zoos as a monument, is now irredeemable for the culture of capitalism.

John Berger, an art critic, novelist and film scriptwriter, is author of a collection of essays, "About Looking," from which this article was adopted.

"We are not just rather like animals; we *are* animals. Our difference from other species may be striking, but comparisons with them have always been, and must be, crucial to our view of ourselves. This is a general book about how such comparisons work and why they are important. The gap between *man* and other animals comes, I believe, in a slightly different place from the one where tradition puts it, as well as being rather narrower. The traditional view has certainly distorted argument in ethics and may have caused mistakes about the possibilities open to humanity.

"Many people dislike using concepts evolved for talking about animal behavior to describe the human scene. The first use of such concepts, however, is the controversial one of telling us more about animals themselves. This knowledge alone directly alters our idea of *man*, because that idea has been framed, traditionally, by contrast with a profoundly ignorant and confused idea of other species. We can now do something to correct this ignorance and confusion. The kind of animal that careful observation shows us does not seen by any means so obviously incomparable with *men* as the travesty we are used to.

"Still, people have a lot of obvious and important things that other species do not—speech, rationality, culture, and the rest. Comparison must deal with these. I have tried to discuss some of the most important of them, not attempting at all to deny their uniqueness, but merely to grasp how they can occur in what is, after all, a primate species, not a brand of machine or a type of disembodied spirit. I have tried to show these capabilities as continuous with our animal nature, connected with our basic structure of motives.

"... Consideration of motives brings up the matter of free will. I had better say at once, that my project of taking animal comparisons seriously does not involve a slick mechanistic or deterministic view of freedom. Animals are not machines; one of my main concerns is to combat this notion...

"*Man* has his own nature, not that of any other species. *He* cannot, therefore, be degraded by comparison, if it is careful and honest, because it will bring out *his* peculiarities, it will show what is unique about *him* as well as what is not. Certainly *he* is *more* free than other species. But that extra freedom flows from something natural to *him*—his special kind of intelligence and the character traits that go with it. It is not, and does not have to be, unlimited. (In fact, unlimited freedom is an incoherent notion). It is not something added by *his* own will after birth, or by some external force called culture. (from the introduction).

"... *Man* is a social species. Can *he* be understood in isolation from all other species? Are *his* apparent likenesses to them really external or misleading, comparable to those between (say) birds or airplanes, tractors and elephants, or starts and diamonds? Or does *he* fall into place as one remarkable variation among many others on a vast but coherent evolutionary range?

"Once you really begin to grasp the vastness and coherence of that range, it is scarcely possible to hesitate about these questions. People's difficulty about seeing themselves as members of the one creation has come from a crude, narrow, highly abstract notion of what the other members were like. (pp. 95).



"We Are Not Tourists Here"

"What we need, in order to feel at home in the world, is certainly *not* a belief that it was made for us. We are at home in this world *because we were made for it*. We have developed here, on this planet, and are adapted to live here. Our emotional constitution is part of that adaption. We are not fit to live anywhere else. (The possibility, such as it is, of surviving briefly, and at ruinous expense, in space-craft and the like is just parasitical: it depends on extending the conditions we are used to into a few bizarre corners, not on our being able to live in *other* conditions.

... "Anyone who expects a personalized, custom-built world is certainly likely to find the existing one absurd.

... "We cannot dismiss our emotions and the rest of our non-intellectual nature, along with the body and the earth it is fitted for, as alien, contingent stuff. We have somehow to operate as a whole, to preserve the continuity of our being.

"This means acknowledge our kinship with the rest of the biosphere. If we do not feel perfectly at home here, that may after all have something to do with the way in which we have treated the place. Any home can be made uninhabitable. Our culture has too often talked in terms of *conquering* nature. This is about as sensible as for a caddis worm to talk of conquering the pond that supports it, or a drunk to start fighting the bed *he* is lying on. Our dignity arises *within* nature, not against it.

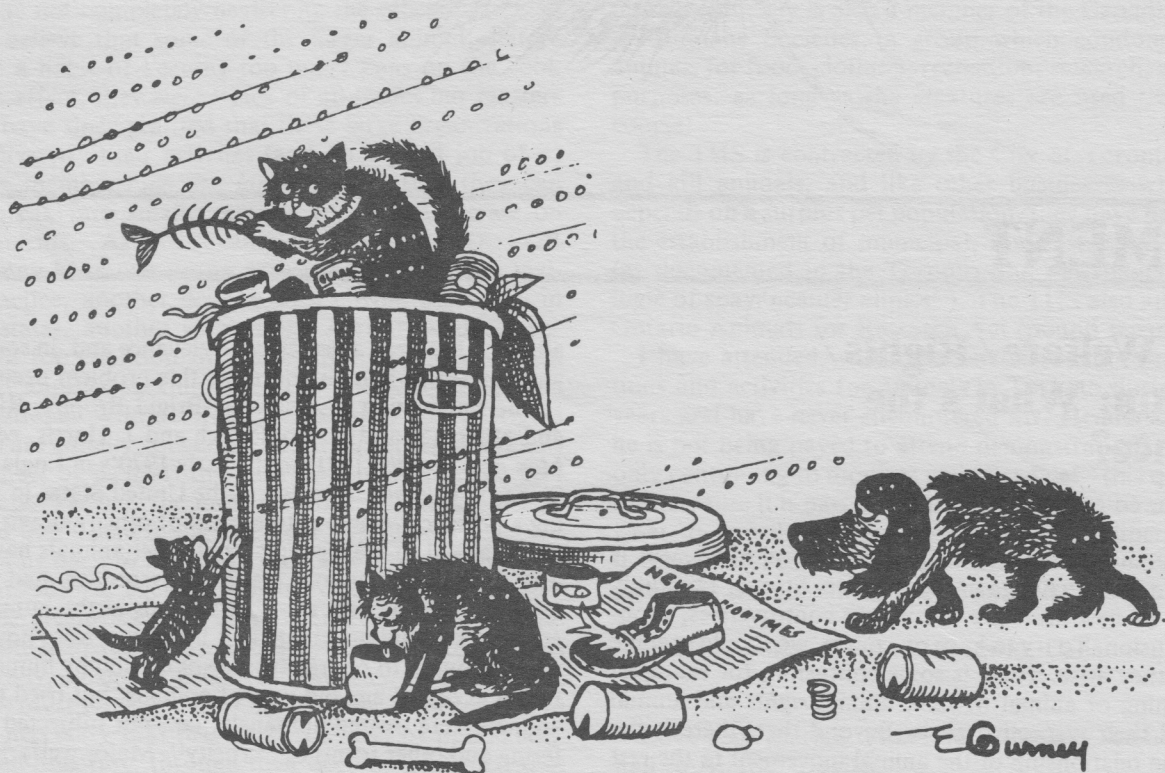
"I have suggested that we ought not to feel that dignity threatened by our continuity with the animal world. And I have compared the threat people feel here with the threat Christian thinking detected in the Copernican Revolution and in the theory of evolution. (pp. 194-196).

Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979.

"M.J. Adler (in: *The Difference of Man and the Difference it Makes*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967) concludes that the communication system of honeybees is 'a purely instinctive performance on their part and does not represent, *even in the slightest degree*, the same kind of highly variable, acquire or learned, and deliberately or intentionally exercised linguistic performance that is to be found in human speech.' He then goes on to argue that if it were to be established by some future investigations that animals differ from *men* only in degree and not radically in kind, we would then no longer have any moral basis for treating them differently from *men*, and, conversely, that this knowledge would destroy our mortal basis for holding that all *men* have basic rights and an individual dignity that render it wrong to mistreat groups of *men* judged to be inferior for the benefit of supposedly superior groups.

"Followed to its logical conclusion, this argument implies that the comparative investigation of communications behavior has more dangerous potential consequences than nuclear physics has in the 1930's, or the current fear that synthesis of certain new forms of DNA might produce uncontrolled pathogens. (pp. 46).

Donald R. Griffin, *The Question of Animal Awareness: The Evolutionary Continuity of Mental Experience*, New York: Rockefeller University Press, 1976.



"Even Thomas Jefferson subscribed to [the belief that apes make a habit of raping "negresses"]. *Query XIV* of the *Notes on Virginia* contains a discussion of the differences between negroes and whites, as a preliminary to the author's plan for abolishing slavery in America. The proposed course of action, although extremely enlightened and humane for Jefferson's day, is nevertheless based on a firm conviction of white superiority, as demonstrated by the negroes' 'own judgment in favour of the whites, declared by their preference of the Oran-utan for the black woman over those of *his* own species'. In other words, the ape 'strives upward' by wanting to breed with negroes, the negro by wanting to breed with whites. Jefferson—if indeed he was the first to state this unfortunate analogy—could hardly have foreseen the impact of his remarks on the racial consciousness of the American South. (p. 276).

"The publication of [Edward] Tyson's book [*Orang-Outant, sive Homo Sylvestris. Or, The Anatomy Of A Pygmie Compared with that of a Monkey, an Ape, and a Man...* etc., 1699; based on his dissection of one of the first chimpanzees to reach Western Europe] marks the formal entry of the anthropoid ape into the consciousness of Western civilization... The impact of the *Orang-Outang* could be felt almost immediately;

it not only attracted wide attention among natural scientists but stirred the imagination of poets and philosophers, arousing them to flights of speculation about the nature of this novel creature, which they viewed as more human than simian. Tyson himself, while emphasizing its extraordinary resemblance to *man*, had clearly treated the *orang-outang* as an animal, but the fact that he called it a *Homo Sylvestris* and a *Pygmy* suggested to the non-technical reader that it was essentially human. Moreover, at this very time the West had just sustained a similar shock: travellers were returning from South Africa with the earliest reports of the Hottentots, a tribe so much more primitive than any other "savages" encountered heretofore that they appeared to be more bestial than human. Thus we need not be surprised that the eighteenth century found it difficult to distinguish the *orang-outang*, the 'super-ape' whose physical and mental resemblance to *man* was believed to go far beyond the limits of a mere animal, and the lowest forms of *man*, such as the Hottentots, who failed to live up to the accepted minimum standard for human beings. (pp 336).

H.W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, London: London University Press, 1952



COMMENT

Animal Welfare / Rights / Liberation: What's the Difference?

by Jim Mason, co-editor

Like a great ship at sea, the animal protection movement is going through another change in the weather. Strong, favorably directed gusts of new ideas are kicking up controversies, problems and confusion. To try to keep on course, we should grapple with these as they arise. There is some confusion, for example, over the meaning of *animal welfare*, *animal rights* and *animal liberation* and their respective goals. Beyond that, there is the problem of the relationship of the animal movement to the rest of the fleet of human progress. Is our issue merely an academic one? Under our evolving philosophy, where do we stand on other social issues? Since one of our movement's main problems

all along has been a perceived irrelevance and, in some instances, antagonism to human concerns, this problem needs attention.

The publication of essays by Brigid Brophy, Richard Ryder and others (S. and R. Godlovitch and J. Harris, eds., *Animals, Men and Morals*, 1971) in the early 1970's in England and Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* in the United States in 1975 is reviving a perspective on our treatment of other animals that appears quite radical to most people: that other animals have rights too. The established animal welfare perspective had never really questioned basic uses of other animals in the human economy; advocates of animal rights and liberation were now saying that animals ought to be free from exploitation by humans. The welfarists accepted age-old uses of animals, but tried to insure that animals were treated humanely, i.e., not subjected to pain, suffering and other forms of "cruelty". Major welfarist legislation, for example, included the Animal Welfare Act which reduced suffering of experimental animals in shipment and in housing (though not on the experimental table) and the Humane Slaughter Act reduced suffering of farm animals at the slaughterhouse.

Because of the built-in limitations of the welfarist approach, concerned people are leaning toward the kind of thinking set down by Brophy, et al and popularized in the United States by Peter Singer's book which would liberate animals from exploitation by humans just as society liberated humans from the slave system. Not all of the recent subscribers to this thinking lean quite as far, nor do they lean with the consistency and intensity of the authors. For many, it is sufficient to talk of various specific animal "rights" rather than full-blown, all-out "liberation".

What is the different between the two approaches? Merely one of degree? It should have been, but it has come to be something more. In just a few short years the difference has, because of semantics, grown into two ways of conceptualizing the elimination of animal exploitation and suffering. *Liberationists* say that human society need no longer use other animals as it once did because we are morally, intellectually and technologically developed enough now to make ways to replace animals as resources, food sources, tools for research and the like. *Rights* advocates say that other animals have or possess rights in the same sense that humans do — rights to health, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as their species knows it — and that humans cannot continue to use animals as we have been doing without violating these rights. The two approaches are not entirely divergent, though, for they both challenge the attitude known as "speciesism" which holds that animals are inferior to humans and are legitimate subjects for human exploitation.

Although the *liberation* approach is more straightforward and more in touch with reality, most of the talk going around now is *animal rights* and the string of doctrines, theories and other abstractions that devolve on those who indulge in discussions of "rights". Now you may think I'm hairsplitting or putting forth a bone for contention when none is needed, or that I'm disparaging the *rights* approach. Both approaches have validity, you say. Well, to that I say not really, but the *rights* approach may be useful and convenient in some situations. Oh my god, you say!

You see, my main purpose in going into all of this is to point out how much obfuscation and distraction can result when we carelessly use "rights" when we mean "liberation". At its deeper levels, the *rights* approach tends to degenerate into a morass of jargon and academic nit-picking over the nature and source of "rights". Whereas the *liberation* approach speaks of the real world at all levels — of the uses of animals, of alternatives, of how to get from here to there. *Liberation* recognizes our cultural and technological dependence on exploitation of animals and urges cultural and technological progress away from it.

On a more superficial level, however, I'll admit that the *rights* approach may be easier and simpler to get across than the other. But be careful, because this is precisely where the trouble starts — using "rights" when "liberation" is meant. Because of such repeated usage, *liberation* tends to play understudy to *rights*; if we continue to rely on *rights* we multiply the risk of further splits in the movement as well as the risk of confusing or misleading an increasingly sympathetic and receptive public.

Because of the rapid ascent of the *rights* approach and the media coverage being given to it, I think it's time to stress the difference between the two approaches and of keeping them in proper perspective. How, then, did the *rights* approach get star billing while the *liberation* approach waits in the wings? Two factors, I believe, contribute to the word (and perhaps conceptual) preference. First, many of the people recently attracted to the animal welfare/rights/liberation movement, philosophers, lawyers and academics, are more disposed toward the intellectualism of the *rights* approach. They have more familiar footing on theories, doctrines, logical principles and notions of "rights"

than they do on the scientific (and perhaps political) stepping stones of the *liberation* approach. This should not be interpreted as disparagement, for I realize the importance of working from established thought. Second, the emotional associations with the word "rights" are more positive and familiar to us than those with the word "liberation". We talk freely and proudly of the Bill of Rights, human rights, children's rights and so on. We are amply and favorably programmed for talk of rights. *Liberation*, on the other hand, sounds negative and shocking because it conjures up images of revolutions ("wars of liberation") and fringe groups like the Symbionese Liberation Army of the Patty Hearst kidnapping case.

Because of the second factor, I agree that it is probably better "PR" (public relations) to talk of "rights" than of "liberation" in some situations. And I believe a great many liberationists do use the word "rights" when they really mean "liberation". For public relations reasons of another kind, you'll probably hear animal welfarists try to get on the bandwagon by using the buzzword "rights" when they really mean "conservation" or "welfare". The latter's misuse of terminology probably isn't all that bad because it does aid in getting the words and the concepts out the public which attracts attention to our movement and stimulates thought and discussion — all of which leads to progress toward animal liberation. I think we do have to be on guard, though, against the possibility that old *welfarist* wine will be poured from *animal rights* bottles to legislators, scientists and others who are in a position to protect animals. But, to get back to the choice of *rights* over *liberation* for the time being, I would just hope that all this talk of "rights" does not deteriorate into a lot of squabbling among ourselves over how much space a factory chicken has a "right" to, or what kind of killing instrument a pig or a steer has a "right" to. Let's be on guard against going in circles in our quest to establish rights for animals. What do we want? The anesthetic comfort of knowing that animals have rights written down in books, somewhere, or the genuine peace and security of an aware society that no longer need brutalize itself under the myth that it is "necessary" to use animals?

One last point in favor of the *liberation*: I think it offers more to humans as we go through the process of untangling our attitudes and neuroses about other animals and the natural world. Conveying abstract "rights" to animals may seem noble, but we are still the drafters of those rights, we are still in command. The thing is to alter the *relationship* and the attitudes and the culture that goes with it; *liberation* goes more deeply at this than does *rights*. *Liberation* touches on human problems, specifically on the age-old problem of understanding human nature. As Mary Midgley, Barry Lopez, Rene DuBos and others have explained so well: We need to learn to love and respect the beast within, the *animality* of human nature. To do that, we'll have to change our whole way of thinking about, and relating to, other animals. We can liberate ourselves in that process.



AGENDA

A JOURNAL OF ANIMAL LIBERATION
BOX 5234
WESTPORT, CT 06880

U.S. Postage
PAID
Non-Profit Organization
Permit No. 51
Westport, CT 06880