(No. 41) -- Mechanized Cruelty

Humane Information Services, Inc.

Follow this and additional works at: http://animalstudiesrepository.org/rephumsc

Recommended Citation
http://animalstudiesrepository.org/rephumsc/12

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the Animal Studies Repository. For more information, please contact eyahner@humanesociety.org.
The Poultry and Egg Industry
by Frederick L. Thomsen, Ph.D.
President
Steve Goodman
Field Investigator
Human Information Services, Inc.

If the cruelties inflicted on chickens as part of the intensive husbandry practiced in the production of poultry and egg products were visited upon any other animals, exigencies of business would not be a rising tide of indignant demand for remedial action.

This inhumane treatment of chickens in the poultry and egg business is nothing new. It has not developed suddenly as a result of some new inventiveness or process. The business has been mechanized for decades. The changes made in recent years have been most for the worse, not for competing or countering disease and other effects of intensive husbandry, and increasing the cost-effectiveness of the business. The facts on which this article is based have been in the public domain since the early 1960s. These have been verified by visits to poultry establishments in 1977 by the junior author, who also took many of the photographs included.

But in all this time little or nothing has been done, or even attempted, to reduce or correct this cruelty. And, judging by the humane society literature reaching our desks, no action of significance has been taken by the public or the industry to ameliorate these conditions.

First, few animal lovers, even humanitarians, are "chicken lovers." This is not because such terms have not been publicized by the humane movement. Most humanitarians are not even aware that they exist. The reason for this is that cruelty to chickens is so widespread and so likely to generate new members of and contributions to humane societies. Baby seals, wolves, tigers, and other species of animals are much more photogenic and sympathy evoking. Not to mention dogs and cats.

The truth of this is not to mention what you are doing for chickens!

Third, even though many of the conditions described have been long known to our intelligence, there have been no practical proposals for eliminating or ameliorating the cruelties have appeared.

This is well stated by Ms. Jean-Alice Uhlinger in a review of Peter Singer's well-publicized recent book Animal Liberation, 1975.

"...the whole campaign is an impassioned denunciation of factory farming including the poultry industry. This review is contained in the March, 1976, issue of the Human Information Services, Inc., published by the Massachusetts SPCA:

"Animal Liberation has received a great deal of attention in recent months, which would seem to betoken a brighter future for its cause. And yet I cannot help having some misgivings about its success. When I reflect that Peter Singer is actually saying something very little that has not been said before...He makes no new case for vegetarianism...But when I consider (an article of similar import), which appeared in Animals in 1972, I begin to see that philo-animal liberationists will never get our fellow creatures..."

She is right. Denunciation without practical proposal is not enough. Everything contained in this article is designed not to arouse futile indignation, but to lead up to the practical remedies that we suggest. Description of gory details for its shock value is omitted. Everything contained in the article has a bearing on what can be done to prevent or alleviate the conditions to which we object.

The attitudes of the industry and as pieces of raw material in a highly-mechanized manufacturing operation. All this is an inevitable result of the impersonal factory environment, with the industry operating. We wish to make it plain that people in the poultry and egg industry are no less humane than those compos- ing other segments of the business is just a business, pure and simple.

No more concern has been expressed by the millions of children who purchase to alter cruelty products, and even by the bulk of members of humane societies.

Chickens are frequently get all worked up over the treatment of baby Eastern chicks by children too young to know better, supervised by parents who don't care. To us this is not as serious as it is for inanimate toys, something to bring squeals of delight from youngsters un- derstand aand glory, or the kids lie dead or dying from being squeezed so lovingly, or become ugly and awkward after a week or two of precarious living. Then they are thrown in the trash along with wasted food and other broken products served for dinner. So humanitarians have put on campaigns for legislation to ban the sale of Eater chicks, as we at HUMANE INFORMATION have been doing for years in Florida successfully in Florida several years ago. But most of these same humanitarians have shown practically no interest in the plight of the millions of mere baby chicks produced daily in the same hatcheries, and thrown into plastic bags or bars to another merely because they are male and can't lay eggs. A chicken," as Gertrude Stein might have said, "is that is the reason for the massive indifference on all sides to the cruelties inflicted on chickens. They are not "cute," "darling" little bally like the yellow-colored Eastern chicks.

Moreover, the chicken and its eggs are one of the chief sources of protein food in the world. Without desiring to get into any controversy with the beef and pork people, we understand chicken provides more protein for far the cheapest source of animal protein. Eggs are the nearest thing we have to a nutritionally complete food, and are cheap and easily recognized to be responsible for such largess. We must not overlook, either, that the industry provides a living for many thousands of farmers, plant workers, and people engaged in the marketing of poultry products.

These great benefits, indeed the very existence of the industry, are made possible by the methods which make the process cruel. If we turn back the calendar to the ordi- nary, old-fashioned barnyard flocks for our poultry and eggs, prices would be sky-high in order to limit demand to the very limited supply that would be available. Poultry and eggs would be luxuries. For, make no mistake, factory farming is effi- cient. The suffering of the birds is the price we pay for it..."

All of these conditions trace back to the fact that the chicken is considered to be nothing but a dumb bird, almost totally lacking in intelligence and capability for feeling pain and distress, governed in its actions only by instincts.

Older Americans, and younger ones who have lived on farms, can remember when the mother and other family member, sur- rounded by fascinated children, nonchalantly chopped or wrung off the head of a chicken and threw the bird on the grass in a chicken coop or whatever it was about to serve to expel the blood from the carcass. What a racket and what a mess it made. And we watched as Mother dissected the chicken killed by the local butcher. On such experiences are our reactions to the treatment of chickens built.

The tourist visiting a farmers' market in Asia watches as a native dis- plays a dozen or more live chickens hanging head down from a yoke carried on his shoulders since early morning when he left the farm. Is there pity or compassion for the chickens, as the tourist and his fam- ily focus the camera? No, it is just "quaint." Now, if it were dogs or cats, puppies or kittens (they, also, are used for food in many parts of Asia) hanging from the yoke, the tourist would let out a squawk heard in the nearest ambassador's office. But a chicken is a chicken.

DOES A CHICKEN FEEL PAIN?

Please note, we are not condemning any- one, much less the darling little girls who pluck the feathers from a Coronation Sanders' bucket and crunch it with such pleasure for the benefit of the ad agency or the photographer. Perhaps there is scientific backing for the almost universal belief that we don't have to worry about the suffer- ing of chickens.

Major C. W. Hume, the well-known Brit- ish scientist-humanitarian, has addressed himself to this question: "If I am ask- ing: Hume, C. W., Men and Beasts; Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, 1962, p. 112.

ed how low in the animal world such feelings (pain, fear, etc.) must be empit- cized, the answer is plain: any organism which is capable of learning by rewards and punishments must be assumed to be cap- able of feeling pleasure and pain in the absence of proof to the contrary."

Are chickens capable of learning by re- wards and punishment? For the answer to this question we do not have to search the
Poultry — From Page 1

...and the danger of disease is always uppermost in the mind of the poultry or egg producer. The chickens are dosed with disease-preventing drugs from the beginning to the end. And, while they are at it, the experts may also provide hormones or other drugs designed to produce more eggs per pound of feed and to control other conditions, although the use of such drugs is less common than formerly.

Commercial Hatcheries

The application of scientific technology in the poultry industry starts with breeding the chickens which produce the eggs which in turn are hatched into chicks used as the layers in commercial egg production. The laws of genetics are followed to produce inbred birds which as layers produce far more eggs than the old barnyard breeds, and are better adapted to stand the severe stresses to which the birds are subjected. These chickens, produced on specialized farms controlled by the hatcheries which use their eggs, or operating independently and selling to commercial hatcheries, are the source of most of the laying hens used by the egg industry.

The hatchery frequently is the key part of the whole operation, owning and controlling the breeding birds, and operating large incubators capable of producing millions of chicks annually, spaced out during the year to meet market needs (Fig. 2).

The hatchery also may have control over the other parts of the industry, including the breeder farm which keeps the chicks to the age of about eight weeks, the pullet farm where they grow to laying size at about 18 to 20 weeks of age, and the laying farm where the eggs for consumers are produced.

All of these specialized types of farms usually are arms of the hatchery enterprise, which furnishes the chickens, the feed, the medications, the transportation of the chickens to and from the farms, and detailed instructions based on daily reports received from the farms. The owners of the contract farms provide the facilities and the labor. In the states where poultry and eggs are less important, the owners of the farms assume a greater degree of responsibility and risk, as independent operators.

Killing Unwanted Chicks

Almost immediately after hatching, the chicks are sexed. This is for eliminating the male chicks, which are of no use since they cannot lay eggs and the laying type of chicken is not suitable for broiler meat production. Other chicks become unwanted because of fluctuations in demand for the chicks. The hatchery, for economical operation, employs of the hatchery to sell the males of no value, and are destroyed on the spot.

(See Poultry, page 3, column 1)
must be destroyed in a few hours. Chloroform or carbon tetrachloride were considered most suitable for smaller establishments. We have heard of no major attempts to make use of these findings.

DE-BEAKING

Shortly after the chicks are sexed the female chicks go through the process of being immunized and having their beaks partially removed.

De-beaking may be done before the chicks leave the hatchery, or at the brooder farm. A small machine is operated by a person with a trayful of chicks in front of her. She takes a chick out of the tray, applies it to the de-beaker, and throws the chick in a brooder box, all in one swift operation. Here, as elsewhere, the operation is highly mechanized and efficient (Fig. 5). De-beaking may be of only the upper beak or both of parts (Fig. 6). The chick is held in one hand and its beak applied to a guillotine-like machine which cuts off part of the beak. A red-hot bar behind the blade cauterizes the wound.

The purpose of the operation is to prevent the chicks from pecking each other, which can result in serious injury (bacterial). They do this apparently mainly because they are in such tight quarters, subject to stress at all times. Birds have been known to strip a fellow occupant of a cage of nearly all its feathers, and to pick big holes in a chicken's body. If a cannibalized hen suffering from a severe wound is able to continue to lay, it will be left in the cage until it dies. The bird's suffering is less important than the extra money obtained from the additional eggs it lays.

In the broiler industry, damage to carcasses results in placing the bird in a lower grade, or making it unfit for sale as a whole bird. So, from both a humane and economic standpoint, de-beaking is necessary. The books on factory farming make a big point of this. It was believed they offered a tempting place for the companion chickens to peck. Now, however, the combs were removed, because it was believed they offered a tempting place for the companion chickens to peck. Now, however, the combs were left on.

Formerly, the chicks' combs also were removed, because it was believed they offered a tempting place for the companion chickens to peck. Now, however, the combs were removed, because it was believed they offered a tempting place for the companion chickens to peck. Now, however, the combs were left on. This was discovered that apparently they are heat resistors. Well, less misery for the chicks to suffer!

DE-BEAKING

Brooder Farms

Although arrangements are not exactly the same in different parts of the country and for different operators, it is generally the practice to have the growing chicks pass through two stages before they reach the laying farm. The first of these is the brooder farm, where the young chicks grow rapidly until they reach the age of about eight weeks. This operation usually is financed and managed by the hatchery, the "farmer" merely supplying the land, buildings and labor. They may be small subsistence farms, the raising of which work in a nearby town or city, with the families supplying much of the labor.

Humane Information Services believes that it is possible to devise a more humane way of disposing of these unwanted chicks. In past issues of Report to Humanitarians we have discussed the possibility of using carbon dioxide for this purpose. We intend to thoroughly investigate the problem.

A study reported in the British Veterinary Journal, by a staff of the Poultry Research Station, Animal Health Trust, Nughton, England, pointed to the undesirability of any method of asphyxiation which does not induce anesthesia, and which in some way alerts the chicks to the change in their environment, thus inducing a vigorous resistance to asphyxiation. This applies to asphyxiation by smothering and drowning. With the latter methods struggling persists for at least 45 seconds before loss of consciousness.
more eggs per bird. After molting is completed, the birds may lay for up to five additional months. All of these practices and conditions vary from farm to farm and from one part of the country to another. The descriptions given are very general, and should not be taken as exact. This applies throughout this discussion.

The hens are kept in cages with wire floors which slope toward the aisle where the farm workers operate. When the hen lays an egg, it rolls down to a trough in front of the cage, where the eggs are collected several times daily. Above this trough on the outside of the cage is the feeding trough. The feeding procedure is mechanized, in different ways on different farms. Water is provided either in smaller troughs below the feed troughs, or in automatic devices actuated by the bird’s beak. The droppings fall through the wire floor of the cages to the floor, from which they are removed periodically with mechanical devices, part of which is shown in the exterior view of Fig. 10.

In the laying houses the cages generally are suspended on wires, in one, two, three, or even more tiers. The one and two-tier arrangements are most common. Figs. 10 and 11 show a two-tier arrangement.

The individual cages vary in size and the number of birds housed in each one. That shown in the top view of Fig. 11 is 10” wide, 14” high and 15” long, and holds three hens. This gives about 50 square inches per bird. On other farms, 12”-wide cages hold four hens, even more crowded. Some hatcheries which control the operations of the contract farms pay more money per bird to contractors who house fewer birds per cage, apparently in the belief that the platoonic relationship serves to quiet the hens and is conducive to less pecking and more egg laying!

The ready-to-lay pullets are moved to the laying farm (Fig. 10), where they remain until egg production declines. Then they go to the cannery, which buys them at a low price for conversion into that can of delicious chicken noodle soup you had for lunch yesterday.

For some, the laying period is a time of freedom. The hen may lay for ten to 15 months. Others are kept through the molting period, which is hastened by feeding a little or no distinction in the trade between “broilers” and “fryers,” and the latter term has been largely dropped except in supermarket advertising to convey that the chickens are discarded hens raised on farms which produce the eggs used to hatch broiler chicks. These are heavier breeders than the hens for egg laying. There is little or no distinction in the trade between “brogollars” and “fryers,” and the former has been largely dropped except in supermarket advertising to convey that the chickens are discarded by processors of prepacked foodstuffs.

The hatcheries providing chicks for broiler production use a different kind chicken, bred to produce eggs which when hatched will give maximum gain in weight and which have good body conformation. The whole operation, from the contract farm producing the fertilized eggs for the hatchery, to the hatchery which operates similarly to those providing chicks for laying, to the chicken growers who raise the chicks to broiler size, may be controlled by the poultry plant which kills, dresses and markets the broilers. The arrangements vary in different parts of the country, but every-where the tendency is strongly toward concentration of control, rather than dispersion among a number of different kinds of producers. This concentration makes possible to produce a pound of chicken at a far lower cost than the old way!
POULTRY - FROM PAGE 4

Chicken, but scientific breeding and modern feeding methods now make it possible to produce chickens sufficiently fat for marketing at eight weeks.

In broiler production the male as well as female chicks are utilized, so the problem faced by hatcheries producing laying chickens, of killing chicks right after they are hatched, does not arise. The exception to this may occur if market prices for broilers drop precipitously, after the eggs have been placed in the incubator, and it becomes necessary to curtail the feeding operations. In that event, either unhatched eggs in the incubator or newly-hatched chicks may be destroyed.

BROILER FEEDING

Broiler chickens, after they go through the broader stage, are fed out in gigantic houses holding thousands of birds crowded together on wire floors, solid floors or a mixture of the two, and perhaps in some parts of the United States, broilers are kept on wire floors so that the droppings fall through for easy cleanup after the birds have gone to the processing plant, meanwhile keeping the birds cleaner and perhaps contributing to their health. As far as is known, however, the common practice in this country is to raise the broilers on solid floors.

Automatic water and feed-dispensing equipment greatly reduces labor requirements. The checked cylinders seen on each side of the floor in Fig. 14 are fed by the central feeders. These are filled from overhead conveyors.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHICKENS

Fig. 14 shows a truck packed with crates of chickens. The whole process of catching the birds, cramming the struggling birds into crates, and then removing them from the crates to the assembly line shackles at the processing plant is fraught with stress, terror and pain. As of course, the laying chickens transferred from one kind of farm to another, and finally from the laying farm to the cannery, also experience this trauma.

THE CHICKEN-PROCESSING PLANT

The main objective of the processes that process the bulk of the chickens used by American consumers is large and modern establishments which are homogeneous in design, geared to speed and cost cutting take precedence. The birds hang head down as they move along from station to station on the assembly line. The pressure of blood in the chicken's head apparently tends to be released, and so makes it unconscious. The steps or "stations" on the assembly line are: (1) stunning, (2) cutting off the head, (3) bleeding, (4) stunning, (5) removing the skin and feathers, (6) cutting off the head, (7) cutting off the feet, (8) removing the necks, (9) cleaning the carcasses, (10) freezing the carcasses, (11) removing the viscera, (12) cutting and packaging the meat, and finally from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

Arriving at the plant, the crates are unloaded onto the receiving platform, where a crew of "hangers" removes the chickens from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHICKENS

Fig. 14 shows a truck packed with crates of chickens. The whole process of catching the birds, cramming the struggling birds into crates, and then removing them from the crates to the assembly line shackles at the processing plant is fraught with stress, terror and pain. As of course, the laying chickens transferred from one kind of farm to another, and finally from the laying farm to the cannery, also experience this trauma.

THE CHICKEN-PROCESSING PLANT

The main objective of the processes that process the bulk of the chickens used by American consumers is large and modern establishments which are homogeneous in design, geared to speed and cost cutting take precedence. The birds hang head down as they move along from station to station on the assembly line. The pressure of blood in the chicken's head apparently tends to be released, and so makes it unconscious. The steps or "stations" on the assembly line are: (1) stunning, (2) cutting off the head, (3) bleeding, (4) stunning, (5) removing the skin and feathers, (6) cutting off the head, (7) cutting off the feet, (8) removing the necks, (9) cleaning the carcasses, (10) freezing the carcasses, (11) removing the viscera, (12) cutting and packaging the meat, and finally from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

Arriving at the plant, the crates are unloaded onto the receiving platform, where a crew of "hangers" removes the chickens from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHICKENS

Fig. 14 shows a truck packed with crates of chickens. The whole process of catching the birds, cramming the struggling birds into crates, and then removing them from the crates to the assembly line shackles at the processing plant is fraught with stress, terror and pain. As of course, the laying chickens transferred from one kind of farm to another, and finally from the laying farm to the cannery, also experience this trauma.

THE CHICKEN-PROCESSING PLANT

The main objective of the processes that process the bulk of the chickens used by American consumers is large and modern establishments which are homogeneous in design, geared to speed and cost cutting take precedence. The birds hang head down as they move along from station to station on the assembly line. The pressure of blood in the chicken's head apparently tends to be released, and so makes it unconscious. The steps or "stations" on the assembly line are: (1) stunning, (2) cutting off the head, (3) bleeding, (4) stunning, (5) removing the skin and feathers, (6) cutting off the head, (7) cutting off the feet, (8) removing the necks, (9) cleaning the carcasses, (10) freezing the carcasses, (11) removing the viscera, (12) cutting and packaging the meat, and finally from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

Arriving at the plant, the crates are unloaded onto the receiving platform, where a crew of "hangers" removes the chickens from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHICKENS

Fig. 14 shows a truck packed with crates of chickens. The whole process of catching the birds, cramming the struggling birds into crates, and then removing them from the crates to the assembly line shackles at the processing plant is fraught with stress, terror and pain. As of course, the laying chickens transferred from one kind of farm to another, and finally from the laying farm to the cannery, also experience this trauma.

THE CHICKEN-PROCESSING PLANT

The main objective of the processes that process the bulk of the chickens used by American consumers is large and modern establishments which are homogeneous in design, geared to speed and cost cutting take precedence. The birds hang head down as they move along from station to station on the assembly line. The pressure of blood in the chicken's head apparently tends to be released, and so makes it unconscious. The steps or "stations" on the assembly line are: (1) stunning, (2) cutting off the head, (3) bleeding, (4) stunning, (5) removing the skin and feathers, (6) cutting off the head, (7) cutting off the feet, (8) removing the necks, (9) cleaning the carcasses, (10) freezing the carcasses, (11) removing the viscera, (12) cutting and packaging the meat, and finally from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

Arriving at the plant, the crates are unloaded onto the receiving platform, where a crew of "hangers" removes the chickens from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

TRANSPORTATION OF CHICKENS

Fig. 14 shows a truck packed with crates of chickens. The whole process of catching the birds, cramming the struggling birds into crates, and then removing them from the crates to the assembly line shackles at the processing plant is fraught with stress, terror and pain. As of course, the laying chickens transferred from one kind of farm to another, and finally from the laying farm to the cannery, also experience this trauma.

THE CHICKEN-PROCESSING PLANT

The main objective of the processes that process the bulk of the chickens used by American consumers is large and modern establishments which are homogeneous in design, geared to speed and cost cutting take precedence. The birds hang head down as they move along from station to station on the assembly line. The pressure of blood in the chicken's head apparently tends to be released, and so makes it unconscious. The steps or "stations" on the assembly line are: (1) stunning, (2) cutting off the head, (3) bleeding, (4) stunning, (5) removing the skin and feathers, (6) cutting off the head, (7) cutting off the feet, (8) removing the necks, (9) cleaning the carcasses, (10) freezing the carcasses, (11) removing the viscera, (12) cutting and packaging the meat, and finally from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.

Arriving at the plant, the crates are unloaded onto the receiving platform, where a crew of "hangers" removes the chickens from the crate and hangs them on shackles attached to the assembly line. This also may be a painful process for the birds, which are pushed roughly from the crates, wings flapping, necks at all angles, which is conducive of broken wings and even broken necks and is "a bad practice" but generally on solid floors and under conditions of humane stunning, cannot easily be avoided.
Poultry — From Page 5 —

which the chickens pass through the flexible wire electrodes was found to result in effective stunning in at least 90 percent of the birds studied, "but mistakes did certainly occur," that agrees with our own observations.

A more recently-developed type of stun­ner, which will be discussed in a separate section, is used in Florida and some other places in the United States (Fig. 15). This is based on the water bath principle. The chickens are not touched by the mechanical parts of the stunner, contact being made by the head and neck of the chicken with the electrified water at low voltage. This stunner is designed to operate at speeds up to 6,000 birds per hour. The Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAN) examined chickens passing through the stunner and not subjected to venesection (cutting). "It was concluded that after stunning the birds were unconscious for 35-40 seconds and definitely unconscious for the next two minutes. This allowed sufficient time for venesection or making the cut by which the bird is bled to death."

The final conclusion: "The electrically bathed poultry stunner is certainly the best method of stunning which has been investigated by UFAN. When carried out properly the electric stunning of poultry and eggs is humane and reduces over-all suffering. Some doubt exists, however, as to whether in all circum­stances electric stunning is properly carried out." England in 1967 adopted the Slaughter of Poultry Act which became effective in 1971. The Act covers all stunning methods forcing the Act approved stunning instru­ments of the following kind: "An instrument which passes an electric current through the brain of the bird sufficient to render the bird instantaneously insen­sible of pain."

From all of this information is obtained, expresses doubts that the phrase "instanta­neously insensible" is being correctly inter­pretation of the word "insensible." The phenomenon of the electroporative spasm is neither understood nor indeed recognized by many operators of stunning devices and it may well be that inspecting officers also have difficulties in differentiating electrical paralysis from electrical nerve shocks." This differentiation by UFAN has been a significant contribution to venesection and bleeding before entering the slaughtering line.

The fact is that the poultry and eggs now available from the "factory farms" and modern Apholistic operations in what the public accepts as quality than the old barnyard products. Now, when you buy a dozen eggs at a local health food store, they likely have come from a specialized farm with no more similarity to the old-time farm flock than to the factory with no more similar­ity to the flock among the flock, flocking fertile eggs (a psychological advantage only), the yolks are dark yellow, the shells are large (breed of the bird), and the yolks may be a darker yellow because the chickens are outside all day. Even the yolks attached to eggs, and even the meat are available (egg yolk color is strictly a matter of the kind of feed, and the color of the desired). Despite the beauty of opponents of factory farming, consumers in most places prefer the lighter yolks, otherwise the egg producers put some cheap yellow dye in the feed.

Despite the sentimental attachment to the family farm, it has disappeared from the American scene by the million. The poultry and egg industry has been "back to old-fashioned barnyard production." A British humane society that is devoted to this line of work agrees that this is not the approach to take in the United States.

BACK TO THE HEN HOUSE?

In the good old days nearly every famil­y farm had at least a few cows and a flock of chickens. But the UFAW, from whom a letter was received, have some doubt about the next two months. This may be all right for a few producers of "farm-fresh" eggs sold in special­ized markets, but the few of them who are left are not going to make them and will visit a different market to obtain them. But we can be sure that the next two months of "factory farms" of the kind that have been discussed here, the chickens used in the United States will continue to be from "factory farms" of the kind that are rapidly taking over agricultural areas of very severe and continuing poultry epidemics not treatable by even new drugs and methods of husbandry could not check the infection. We certainly do not count on that.

VEGETARIANISM

The remedy apparently favored by Pe­ linger and some others is to avoid eat­ing eggs and poultry. This subject was comprehensively discussed. Report to Humanitarians No. 39, so not need be said here.

WHAT ARE THE FEASIBLE REMEDIES?

These practical remedies can be im­plemented by the government and agri­cultural and poultry industry, not by fighting: For reasons indicated in the first par­agraph of this article, the industry is too big and too powerful to be pushed down its throat. No legislation of any kind, none was achieved by force. The last couple of sentences of this section consider the first of these specific remedies, stunning.

A HUMANE SLAUGHTER LAW FOR POULTRY

As we have seen, the slaughter of millions of birds is required to meet the demands made hum matrix the adoption of the best method or methods of stunning the bird before sticking. England and some Eur­opean countries have laws that cover this. Why not, then, immediately demand a federal law that protects poultry for humane slaughter methods? As we have seen, the H.R. 1464, the Human­Slughter Act of 1977, which our siste­ri slaugtherer had introduced into the Con­gress, has been out of session. Why not, then, immediately demand a fed­eral humane slaughter law for poultry, including the so-called "factory laws?"

We expect that H.R. 1464, the Human­Slughter Act of 1977, which our siste­ri slaugtherer had introduced into the Con­gress, has been out of session. Why not, then, immediately demand a fed­eral humane slaughter law for poultry, including the so-called "factory laws?"

We expect that H.R. 1464, the Human­Slughter Act of 1977, which our siste­ri slaugtherer had introduced into the Con­gress, has been out of session. Why not, then, immediately demand a fed­eral humane slaughter law for poultry, including the so-called "factory laws?"

H.R. 1464 would not hurt anybody. Packers express no opposition. The le­gislative processors' and others who have expressed approval. So far, there has been practically no opposition to the except from one or two humane organiza­tions who are obvious that they do not want it, and don't want to. The reason for this general approval is that humane...
LIVING CONDITIONS ON PULLET AND LAYING FARMS

We believe, but cannot now prove, that the economic advantage of reducing the amount of space per bird on pullet and laying farms would be greater than the apparent economic advantage of reducing the space for the pullet and laying farms. The reason is that at least one hatchery is willing to sacrifice some of this space, but not in such a way that the advantage of reduced space would be as great as between three and four, but rather in a way that would not cause the pullet and laying farms to become overcrowded with chickens.

The real purpose of the pullet and laying farms is to find the point of optimum returns on this curve. It is not the pullet and laying farms that have made the major improvements in this field. It is up to the pullet and laying farms to find out for themselves what is the best way to keep chickens healthy and to keep them from dying.

The pullet and laying farms would be required to merchandise their eggs in such a manner that the pullet and laying farms would be able to merchandise their eggs and at a higher price than the hatchery would have to do. This would be the pullet and laying farms' approach, if the pullet and laying farms were able to merchandise their eggs at a higher price, but not as much as the hatchery would have to do.

The stress of transportation of chickens is the most promising point of attack on the cruelty of the poultry and egg business. The pullet and laying farms are used for the transportation of chickens, and this is a self-interested activity of the most humane-oriented businesses. There is nothing to be gained by the hatchery from taking the killing of chickens seriously. The hatchery has to take care of the pullet and laying farms and the poultry and egg industry.

Humane Information Services believes that this is being done. It is up to the pullet and laying farms to find out for themselves what is the best way to keep chickens healthy and to keep them from dying.

SUMMARY

The five areas of potential improvement covered by these recommendations are: (1) a residue of sodium pentobarbital was found in the tissues of the treated birds after processing, and this is unacceptable from a human health standpoint; (2) sodium pentobarbital probably would not now be obtainable for this purpose; (3) it might be possible, however, to find an acceptable residue of sodium pentobarbital, which would not leave an unacceptable residue and which would be available.

Humane Information Services is prepared to test this hypothesis by testing the residue of sodium pentobarbital for these tests and also determining the tissue residue, suggesting that the search for a satisfactory sedating agent be continued. There is no indication that this is being done. It is up to the pullet and laying farms to conduct a search for a satisfactory sedating agent. Humane Information Services will continue trying.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We have recently received some interesting letters which we hoped to use in this issue. But the need for space for the lead article on poultry and egg production prevented. Some may say it is unwise on our part to publish the paragraphs of the article that they think could be eliminated without reducing the readers' understanding of what needs to be done and why. We will save it for a future issue.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF REPORT TO HUMANITARIANS

Ten years ago this month the first issue of Report to Humanitarians was reproduced on a small offset press in a room in the home of Dr. Thomsen, our president. The first issue was mainly devoted to laboratory animal legislation, which everyone who read it found interesting. In contrast, we have found it more difficult to write for the lay public. The circulation was to a few hundred names culled from Doctor's and Emily's correspondence with humanitarians, mainly in the Baltimore area.

Human Information Services has come a long way since then. Report to Humanitarians now goes to nearly 19,000 offices of humane and veterinary organizations, humane societies, cities, states and many foreign countries. Our comprehensive, factual reports are read by humanists leaders everywhere, we know, because of the letters we receive commending the service.

Human Information Services takes this anniversary occasion to thank all of its members, whose interest and financial support have made all this possible. Thanks and good wishes for the future, dear friends.

STATE OF WASHINGTON LEGISLATION MAKES SODIUM PENTOBARBITAL AVAILABLE TO ANIMAL SHELTERS

The State of Washington has followed Virginia and several other states in making available to humane society and animal control agencies shelters the restricted euthanasia drug sodium pentobarbital.

Many shelters and pounds claim that they would like to shift from some less humane method of destroying dogs and cats and employ sodium to a barbiturate. The reasons they do not, it is said, is that they have no veterinarian on their staff and cannot obtain the drug without the cooperation of private veterinarians who would charge fees for one-time consultations. Often reports go along because they are afraid that the shelter or pound will not follow the regulations regarding purchase, handling and use of the pentobarbital, to avoid the cooperation veterinarian into trouble with the authorities.

In Virginia, the law making barbiturates available to shelters seems to have worked very well. Shelters which employ no veterinarians report that they have encountered no difficulties if they follow the rules.

Human Information Services for a long time has been urging humanitarians to initiate state laws similar to the one in Virginia. Apparently the two greatest obstacles to such action have been (1) inertia on the part of humane societies which prefer to keep any change to a minimum rather than take on the expense of acquiring a new technique; and (2) opposition by veterinarians who apparently fear such a move as just another effort to bypass them.

This represents an attempt to pull our readers, but to illustrate an important point brought out in the same issue of the Journal, we believe these attitudes result from lack of understanding of the proposed legislation and its prospective benefits.

Human Information Services will make a copy of the new Washington law for anyone requesting it. Please allow sufficient time for reply to enable us to determine how many to reproduce.

More About Greenland Dog Hangings

We were flattered to receive a number of long letters setting us straight about the dog hangings in Greenland (Report to Humanitarians No. 40, June, 1977). It seems that:

(1) Denmark is a very humane country. We were told that if anything could be done to improve conditions in Greenland, the Danish government could be counted on to do it. Although Greenland is not a part of the country, it has passed a new ordinance banning the hanging of dogs.

(2) Greenlanders are a rugged, self-reliant people living under very harsh conditions. They are said to take satisfaction from the necessities of the environment, particularly those with over-emotional animal protection views. This may account for the quickness, especially that relating to the alleged slow and repeated hangings to raise the dogs' hair, which is said to be "pure rubbish." Even the death of the dog is said to be prevented from the dog skins in Greenland, but the skins are used locally.

(3) Apparently the photograph of the single dog being hanged which appeared in the article was staged for pay furnished by the journalists. We suspected as much.

(4) We do not object too strongly to such staging, if the scene correctly portrays actual conditions, since some people seem to be more impressed by pictures than by words. We never have returned to such methods, although some other humane societies have done so with the best of intentions.

(5) Apparently the photograph of the hanging of dogs was and still are done to some extent in remote areas of Greenland, defenders of the practice say this is because of the high cost and scarcity of ammunition. Hanging is said to be by the neck, producing unconsciousness more quickly than when dogs are executed on the gallows.

(6) One of our correspondents who lived in Greenland writes: "The real reason why the hanging of dogs is being allowed is to prevent the dog from chowing, making it bolt its food whole so that it takes longer to digest, which means that the dog gets hungy less often." We don't know if this represents an attempt to pull our leg. If not, it takes a great load off the bill collectors! Perhaps there is all some correction needed about the way, described in their article, dogs are being hung and chains and fed only weekly. About the deponents sayeth not; could it be just the opposite of what the Greenlanders' hearth and home? We doubt it.

Whatever parts of the Swedish journal's story were true, and what parts were false, the article was not to suggest any action on the part of our readers, but to illustrate an important point. The article was not to suggest any action on the part of our readers, but to illustrate an important point. We violated our usual rule and printed the article without verification. We therefore expressed absolute doubts about its accuracy.

The real point we were trying to make is that far greater cruelties to far greater numbers of animals are occurring daily right here under our noses in the United States of America. About these cruelties we are in a position to know. The real problem is not what and how to do it, but how to divert the flow of funds from what borders on war to what borders on peace.