(No. 27) -- Pet Ownership Survey Yields Surprising Results

Humane Information Services, Inc.
HUMANE SOCIETY TRIES TO REFORM JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, PUBLIC POUND

by Stephen Byrd
Member, Board of Directors
Mississippi Animal Rescue League

Editor's Note: Nobody knows how many dog pounds exist in the United States, or how many dogs and cats are destroyed in these pounds annually, sometimes in ways that are cruel and cruel beyond belief. But they are countless. A tremendous variation is found in the buildings, equipment, personnel, operating methods and treatment of the animals handled. The public pound described in the accompanying article falls somewhere between the extremely bad and good public pounds. Dr. Frederick L. Thomsen, president of the International Humane Society, visited this pound over a year ago, and his one-day observations agree entirely with those cited in this article.

In 1973, representatives of the Mississippi Animal Rescue League began visiting the Jackson city dog pound with the permission of Mayor Russell Davis. They had the idea of helping the men at the pound improve conditions there. They had received many reports that conditions were abominable and a discredit to the City of Jackson as well as inhumane for the animals.

This report will describe what was found at the pound and what might be done to correct the deficiencies. Nothing in this report is hearsay evidence: all of the facts and conditions were actually witnessed by the writer.

CONDITIONS AT THE POUND

The first thing in the morning the attendant in charge of the animals washed out all cages with a high-pressure water hose. The animals were not removed from the other cages. Many sick dogs were up and about. The cages were not isolated.

Each afternoon an attendant went to the City jail with a garbage can to get the “food” left over by the prisoners from their cells. The food consisted of rice, beans, peas, potato peels, lemon rinds, spinach, chicken bones, etc. When the League's representative first went to the pound, the animals were fed nothing but this slop, which was food enough to keep them alive.

Six cages were specified as the sick ward. These cages were not isolated from the other cages. Many sick dogs were up for adoption, some with contagious disease. Animals were destroyed only on Tuesday mornings. This meant badly injured came in on Tuesday afternoon, it was made to wait until the next Tuesday to be put to death (if it lived). These sick and injured animals included dogs which were paralyzed, orphaned animals, able to eat but too sick to eat, dogs and cats with distemper, animals with broken bones, animals in convulsions, etc.

On Tuesday mornings each animal to be destroyed was taken from his cage by means of a noose around his neck, the noose being attached to a pole. The animal was held up by his neck, often with all four legs in the air. His front legs were spread apart and the needle stabbed in the chest. The needle would frequently be heard as it often hitting the rib bones and also often injecting into the lungs. The animals when not immediately placed on the table would scream in pain and sometimes go into convulsions, retching, clawing, and exhibiting many signs of distress.

While still fully conscious, in many instances, the animals were then thrown into the back of a truck. The men assisting were afraid to hold the animal after it was injected for fear they would absorb the solution through their skin and die also! If the animal crawled off of the table and back onto the pile, often several times. Many times young puppies had to be injected two or three times before losing consciousness.

On Wednesday mornings a truck would back up to the door, and all dogs over five pounds were loaded into the truck and taken to the University Medical Center. This included taking mother dogs away from their newborn puppies (leaving her puppies to starve and her to grieve). On one occasion a dog was observed being taken to the Medical Center while in labor. Sick animals were also taken (including dogs and cats with distemper; one cat observed in convulsions). If the animal were sick or frightened they didn’t respond to the way the attendant wished, they were kicked, or hit over the head or back with a steel pipe. The steel pipe has a loop on the end which is used to catch the animals.

About once a week (usually Tuesday or Wednesday) the animals were moved from their cages, and their cages were then cleaned. Occasionally an animal was left in a cage when it was cleaned. The employees at the pound frequently were observed giving erroneous information to the public. They told the people coming to the pound or calling in that they don’t usually have to put any animals to sleep. They said they find homes for nearly all the animals, when actually only a small percent were adopted.

When dogs with collars and tags came into the pound, the driver would take the information from the tags and turn it in to the office. No apparent attempt was made to call the owners, although the public was told that they did. We know this to be true, because the League representative has taken this information from the tags and called the owners to see if they had been contacted by the pound.

Very poor records were kept. Often the office had no idea how long the dogs had been there. Frequently the attendant would tell a prospective customer that a dog had been there only a couple of days and then tell another customer a different story about the same dog.

In short, the pound was in violation of just about every principle of humane operation known to experienced shelter operators. The staff lacked both technical information and incentive to use humane methods of operation.

IMPROVEMENTS ALREADY MADE

Improvements effected following these observations included: with the permission of the manager.

The cage were designated for use for housing cats and old, injured and dying animals and healthy dogs. Incomplete control of the cats has been given through the Mississipi Animal Rescue League. These cages are cleaned daily. The cages are cleaned after animal deaths, and litter boxes have been installed.

Cat food is now being bought by the City health department (the same food as spent picking up dead dogs in the streets). Now the cats are getting a complete commercial cat food diet. The cats and kittens have food and water before them all day.

The dogs are being fed a diet of about three-fourths slop and one-fourth dog food (mixed together). The City ordinance regulating animals was not being enforced. Jackson veterinarians have volunteered their time to come to the pound on a rotating basis twice a week. They intend to neuter the animals. They also will make recommendations regarding conditions needing improving.

CONDITIONS OBSTRUCTING ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Various problems were encountered while trying to make more improvements. (See PUBLIC POUND, page 2, column 1)
PUBLIC POUND—FROM PAGE 1

These problems must be overcome if progress is to continue.

The biggest obstacle is the attitudes of those in charge of the pound. These people seem to resent the League's offer to help, and the League's action in going above their heads by contacting the Mayor.

Management apparently does not want the help of the League, nor that of the veterinarians. When the League's veterinarians, 's firmly refused to come to the pound to assist in arranging for improvements, the head of the pound was insulting and hard to deal with. He repeatedly claimed that the veterinarian did not know what he was doing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT

The first and foremost recommendation to be made by the League is the immediate removal from their authority over the pound of certain police officials standing in the way of progress of the Small Animal Control Department.

The League requests that one of the attendants be replaced by a more humane-minded and conscientious person having some knowledge of animal care.

It is recommended that the cages never be worked down with the animals still in them.

It is recommended that the dogs be fed a complete commercial dog food and that the feeding of slop from the jail be discontinued. Puppies should be fed two to three times a day instead of once.

It is urged that all sick animals be isolated from the healthy ones.

The League wants its cooperating veterinarians to be able to visit the pound to assist in arranging for改进, the head of the pound was insulting and hard to deal with. He repeatedly claimed that the veterinarian did not know what he was doing.

The League does not consider the man who now handles the euthanasia to be either competent or humane, and he should never be allowed to do it again.

The League requests that all female animals with puppies or kittens under the age of six weeks be immediately euthanized and placed in the best available pens for a mother with litter.

All cages should be thoroughly cleaned daily, and kept down odor and disease. The cages should be disinfected at least twice a week.

The League requests that it be given a key to the pound, so the person who would like to get into the pound to check the animals on Sundays.

The public must be told the truth about the condition the animals in the pound now are not told that the animals are destroyed.

When dogs with tags come into the shelter, the owner should be called and told his animal is there. Drivers should patrol the City more frequently to ensure that dead animals picked up are taken to the sanitation department. The dead animals picked up should be taken to the sanitation department.

The biggest obstacle is the attitude that there will be no doubt as to whether the deceased animals are entered. No dead animal that enters the shelter will be disposed of until the very last.
A statistician has been defined as one who is adept at drawing a straight line from a preconceived notion to a foregone conclusion. And that aptly describes to some of the "facts" we in the humane movement have been using in trying to convince ourselves and others about what should be done really to deal with the population explosion. We are inclined to treat as gospel any statistic quoted by anyone else which suits our purposes.

The principal "facts" about the surplus of dogs and cats that have been available in St. Petersburg are those found in the little leaflets which have been circulating in the humane movement for many years, such as the one entitled "10,000 per hour".

The origin of this mythical figure goes back to the days when nobody seemed to know exactly how it was derived, and there is even some dispute over who originated the figure. It is of highly dubious accuracy, but does have anything better, Humane Information Services has been using the figures on the two leaflets, together with estimates of the numbers of puppies and kittens produced each year that are quoted in this leaflet, after making allowance for the greater trend in the human population since the estimates were made.

But even assuming that these estimates originated really to the marks of conditions when dog ownership have changed greatly since these estimates were made, and that national estimates carry little meaning to the average person who sees the city council member. He has no idea of what 10,000 per hour for the country as a whole means in terms of the local community.

The only way to localize the pet population explosion has been to cite the number of people who have owned and destroyed by the local shelters and pounds. Yet even these simple statistics frequently are lacking. Many shelters do not keep any records and consistent permanent records of receipts and disposition of animals. Some who do keep records often lose or tamper with the records because of possible public misunderstanding and emotional attacks by animal lovers who do not believe in destroying "stray" animals. Humane Information Services is attempting to collect such information by counties, as a basis for national estimates, but it is a slow going job.

SURVEYS NEEDED

A wide variety of data is needed for any adequate analysis of the pet population explosion and what should be done to cope with it. Without this information, one cannot arrive at sound, defensible based on facts conclusions, engage in wishful thinking, and come up with "solutions" of the surplus problem which will not get anywhere.

Usually, action to deal with the surplus precedes the obtaining of information which would have been desirable and sometimes costly experience. Either the local humane society or the county or city should make a pet ownership survey before making the decisions.

Humane societies usually have women's auxiliary or other volunteer groups, the members of which don't want to try to deal with a problem as large as the pet overpopulation. They are seeking for work that is constructive and important. Surveys furnish an opportunity to obtain much-needed local information at very little cost of money, and with no unpleasant effort.

SURVEY OF PET OWNERSHIP

IN ST. PETERSBURG

Humane Information Services decided largely for the purpose of finding out how much effort and expense is required, and how reliable the results might be.

We had neither the volunteer help nor the time and money to do a really adequate door-to-door survey, using what the statistician calls a "probability sample", calling back to interview those who have a household and should be interviewed.

The Purina survey, after making allowance for the difference in our percentages, indicates that 17 percent of U. S. households own one or more cats, whereas our survey estimated that 15 percent.

But St. Petersburg has somewhat more than its share of widows, who frequently have a preference for cats, so we have to double the proportion owning cats (15 percent) for the Purina survey, compared with only 9 percent for the St. Petersburg survey.

The average number of dogs per surveyed household is .392, of cats .238, and of pets (dogs and cats combined) .630, of the household. The average number per household is 1.28 and for cat owners .61 cats.

There is an estimated 113,880 households in Pinellas County, and 50,000 in the County of Pinellas, and 270,309 in the County of Pinellas, and 62,874,000 in the United States.

We are inclined to treat as gospel any statistic quoted by anyone else which suits our purposes.

THE PURINA SURVEY

The Purina Pet Care Center has conducted or utilized surveys made by others covering all areas of the country, to arrive at the current population which are partially comparable with the projections for the United States from our St. Petersburg survey.

DOG ESTIMATES

The Purina survey estimated that 42 percent of U. S. households own dogs, as compared with only 14 percent. Part of this difference may be accounted for by the projection of the Purina survey that dog ownership is a percentage of total households varied from 85 to 88 percent in communities under 2,500 population to 36 percent for larger cities. St. Petersburg is a medium-size city, but it has many apartment houses and probably is more representative in these respects of the northeastern section of the country than of the western section which has a smaller proportion of the population owned by older people, than the Purina survey found that for the United States as a whole. Humane Information Services, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

Purina estimates are far below those commonly circulating in the humane movement, as exemplified by the leaflet "10,000 per hour". The latter contains an estimate of 72,690,000 dogs and 85,000,000 puppies and kittens born every year.

These estimates apparently are derived at with some difference in the United States from our St. Petersburg survey.

The Purina survey, after making allowance for the difference in our percentages, indicates that 24 percent of U. S. households own one or more cats, whereas our St. Petersburg survey shows only 15 percent.

The average number of dogs per house- hold is .392, of cats .238, and of pets (dogs and cats combined). The average number per household is 1.28.

There are an estimated 113,880 households in the City of St. Petersburg.

In Pinellas County there are 83,796 dogs and 40,546 cat-owning households. After making allowance for duplication, there are a total of 124,342 households. They own a total of 72,500 dogs and 65,200 cats.

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EXTRAPOLATION TO UNITED STATES

Although extrapolation from such a sample to the United States obviously is extremely risky, it will be interesting to see what the St. Petersburg results might indicate for the United States. The Purina survey estimated that the current U. S. population is 25,150,000 households owning a dog or cat or both, with a total of 72,690,000 dogs and 85,000,000 puppies and kittens born every year.

These estimates apparently are derived at with some difference in the United States from our St. Petersburg survey.
SURVEY—FROM PAGE 3

These large numbers roll off the tongue with sonorous effect upon anyone who does not stop to evaluate their authenticity or meaning. But to the non-numerate, they may be expected to create the impression that our figures, these ballooned estimations may seem questionable, and if questioned they are indefensible. In any event, because local figures are much more significant than national estimates, even those having some basis of fact, we recommend consideration by every city or county humane society of a pet ownership survey for its own community. This can serve many purposes: appeal for governmental financial aid and getting general newspaper and other publicity about the need for surplus control measures.

If enough societies are interested, we will be glad to prepare and send free of charge sample forms and simple instructions if you let us know you wish to send us the results of your survey. These could then be combined to furnish a better indication of conditions in the country as a whole.

NEED FOR OFFICIAL PET CENSUS

The difficulties involved in estimating even the total number of pets existing at any one time show how much we need such a survey. This we now supply in the next U. S. Census. If all humane organizations and many hundreds of individual humanitarians would write to the Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C. (3)233, insisting that this information is vitally needed for implementing immediate and effective pet control programs across the country, it might be included. Businessmen successfully demand the inclusion of many items which these same humanitarians and practicing analyses which are no more potentially useful than such statistics on pet ownership.

MALE AND FEMALE PETS—NEUTERED AND UNNEUTERED

Fifty-one (51) percent of the dogs owned by the surveyed households are female; 19 percent of the cats are neutered, and nine percent of the female dogs and cats combined are spayed (or neutered). This may be compared with the corresponding percentages of females in the City of Seattle, Washington, which has a license fee differential for sterilized and unsterilized pets. Just 48 percent of the female dogs, and cats licensed in 1973 were sterilized. Since this differential has been in effect for some time, and would tend to encourage spaying of pets in the St. Petersburg survey results seem to agree remarkably well with the actual experience in Seattle.

STEERING PET AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR SPAYING

Our survey indicates that an amazing proportion of owners does consistently succeed in getting their pets bottled up in the home during estrus, and hence from breeding. If these indications of the success of ordinary pet-owning standards of pet care in St. Petersburg, Florida, we will be glad to prepare and send free of charge sample forms and simple instructions if you let us know you wish to send us the results of your survey. These could then be combined to furnish a better indication of conditions in the country as a whole.

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

If we are to stop or greatly reduce the flow of unspayed female dogs and cats into the pet population by any means, including spaying, we must first determine their sources—where they are coming from. The St. Petersburg survey gives some indication.

The sources of dogs and cats are quite different. For example, 23 (3) percent of the dogs owned were obtained from friends, but only 31 percent of the cats. Most (42 percent) of the cats were just abandoned, and 16 abandoned or dropped by unthinking and irresponsible people in somebody else's yard. Only eight (8) percent of the dogs were strays. Twenty-six (26) percent of the dogs owned were obtained from a breeder, kennel, or pet shop; and only four (4) percent of the cats.

In the pet population originate? a pause a moment while we humanize: to assemble them into a comprehensive and detailed program for surplus control, based on hard facts. This project is in a forth-coming issue. We invite criticism, even er in the case of surplus. We invite criticism, even er in the case of surplus.
Discouraged Humanitarians

What can they do?

In the many welcome letters we receive from members, one of the most frequently occurring themes is the frustration and helplessness which so many humanitarians feel about the slow and sometimes stultifying response to abuse of their own animals. Animals used in making movies and television shows are subjected to more cruelties than ever before. Many thousands of animals have been slaughtered by methods reminiscent of the torture racks of the Inquisition. More to all kinds of abuses in the biomedical laboratories. After all the talking and writing and letter writing, millions of fur-bearers are still subjected to the tortures of the leghold trap. In most other parts of the world, the unbelievable brutality toward animals is even worse than in our own backyards.

Enough to make any kindhearted animal lover despair! And worst of all, many humanitarians feel so helpless individually to do anything about it. That is what seems to disturb them most.

But there is something they can do. Many things, in fact. Even if a person is confined to a wheelchair, or has no income except Social Security. All that is needed is sufficient dedication to helping animals.

This is the first of a series of articles on what individuals as individuals can do in this issue we deal with letter writing.

LETTER WRITING

Most humanitarians at one time or another have written letters to Congressmen, newspaper editors or local officials about some humane problem. And there are scores who engage in regular letter writing as a routine humane activity. This does a great deal of good, but some are afraid it will be directed it could accomplish much more.

According to the mail we receive, some have given up their letter writing in the belief that nothing has come of it. Results. Particularly discouraging to many of our correspondents is the apparent lack of response to their letters to Congressmen. Several have written to Congressman Gunter, who has been conducting a campaign to get letters to Congress in support of the Gunter bill, H.R. 8055 and H.R. 10775. This bill would require humane slaughter of animals in foreign meat packing plants exporting meat products to the United States.

But there is the non-committal nature of these replies should not disturb the letter writers too much. If they were in the vanguard of those who wrote, the Congressmen may not yet have received the nature and importance of the bill, Congressman Aspin, who has objected to the experiment, received about 6,000 letters.

Yet, the only specific concession to these protests to date appears to be a statement that as far as possible other animals used in research will be substituted for the beagles, that adult dogs rather than puppies will be used, and that the beagles would not be killed to see that the animals suffer as little as possible. It also has been said that the Defense Department will reexamine policies in respect to the use of animals in research.

The failure of this virtual blitz of letters from animal lovers to obtain any results is not encouraging, but it should not discourage the letter writers. At the very least, the letters did serve as a strong reminder to their recipients of how many people are interested in animal welfare.

But think how much good might have resulted if all of this effort and expense for postage had gone into a campaign for far better letters about the Gunter bill. Here is proposed legislation which would affect not just a few hundred but millions of animals annually, which now undergo much needlessly suffering. Its potential for eliminating animal suffering is far greater than any other humane legislation at the beagle experiment. There are no important vested interests in this country opposed to the Gunter bill. Nobody can claim that humane slaughter will help to save human lives. Even the foreign meat packers will be benefited by humane methods more efficient than the crude and cruel procedures now in use. Only apathy and indifference can prevent the passage of the Gunter bill. It is the continuing pressure until some congressman who has been opposed to the bill, has been rescued from its fate.

But even an adverse reply is no cause to give up. NAHL tells us about one Congressman whose early response to letter writers was very negative because he thought the bill constituted foreign trade discrimination. Later, he was convinced by letters and even threatened to hold hearings on the bill, largely generated by the National Association for Humane Legislation, began to reach Congress, especially members of the Agriculture Committee. Mr. Gunter sent a letter to all members of Congress inviting co-sponsorship of his bill, and 17 responded. But still the Congressman could not get a few more possible humanitarians in the State of Washington about the bill, and the extremely influential position with respect to the Gunter bill, Thomas S. Foley, chairman of the Subcommittee on Livestock and Grains of the House Agriculture Committee.

Since the routine news release by the United States Air Force last year announcing the toxicity experiment to be conducted on 200 beagles, almost 30,000 letters have been received by members of Congress and the Pentagon protesting the use of beagle puppies for this purpose.

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Even the comparatively few letters about the Gunter bill have brought a decided change in prospects for its passage. Several years ago when Dr. Frederick Gunter, chairman of the National Association for Humane Legislation, first tried to obtain introduction of a bill requiring humane slaughter in foreign meat packing plants, no one in this country, no member of the House Agriculture Committee would serve as sponsor. Even when, in 1973, Congressmen would have considered the Gunter bill, it just reposed in Committee like the many other humane bills too numerous to mention. Which this year Mr. Gunter worked hard, but to no avail, to get the Committee to hold hearings on his bill.

But this is the continuing pressure until some congressman who has been opposed to the bill, has been rescued from its fate.
Florida Legislature Starts Action to Outlaw Use of Live Rabbits in Training Greyhounds

As we go to press we have been notified by the National Association for Humane Legislation, our sister society, that the Florida Legislature has taken a first step to outlaw the very cruel use of live rabbits in training greyhound racing dogs.

A bill to accomplish this purpose, SB-99, was prefiled by Senator William M. Gilleges, of New Smyrna Beach, at the request made in 1973 of the National Association for Humane Legislation. NAHL believed that despite a court injunction obtained last year, prohibiting such use of live rabbits, it is desirable to legislatively outlaw the practice in Florida, since another court in South Florida refused to grant an injunction.

In a letter, Gilleges's bill was held February 25 in Tallahassee, by the Senate Commerce Committee. Evidence was presented to the Committee by a representative of Humane Information Services, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

In Australia, which prohibits such use of live rabbits, a greyhound trainer recently was convicted for his use of chickens. Trainers in Florida also might try to use fowl, or even cats, unless their use is also prohibited. This is done in a similar bill introduced by Senator Gilleges.

Since live rabbits are used for training greyhounds in a number of other states, including Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, societies outside Florida may be interested in the written brief which was presented to each member of the Senate Commerce Committee for Humane Legislation, and which will go to all members of the Legislature when the bill reaches the Committee.

Also in attendance at the hearing were representatives of the Leon County Humane Society and several other humane organizations.

DISCOURAGED—From Page 5—

is from Hazel Watts, of New Hampshire, one of the most indefatigable and effective letter writers in the humane movement.

"The Committee chairman should have received at least 21 letters from me and my friends. These Congressmen on that Committee should have received three letters from California people plus me, from New Hampshire, and there are three Congressmen from Californi a. Every Congressman from New Hampshire should have received two letters from my New York people, and there are three New York Congressmen. Massachusetts Congressmen should have received two letters from Massachusetts people, and there are two Massachusetts Congressmen on that Committee.

I'm only speaking of my friends who live in these states. Every Congressman on that Committee got at least four letters I'd say from just me and my friends. I tell my friends to write to the chairman plus about three others; only I write to them all. I give each of my friends about three others to write to the chairman. I go through the whole Committee, then if I still have friends left, I go through every state over and go through the Committee again. I and my friends also write to the Senate Committee. My own Senator Norris Cotton is on that Committee. I got 20 friends who write to New Hampshire who write." 

QUALITY OF LETTERS

Almost as important as the number of letters is their quality. As well as quantity, a considerable segment of the public looks upon us "animal lovers" as "those animal nuts". They tend to discount what any of us says or writes in the third person. Any language a few of us use in public.

To these over-emotional humanitarians an "animal experimenter" becomes an "animal butcher", that neighborhood youth with his new Christmas shotgun out to get a rabbit becomes a "sadistic killer". Indignant animal lovers who protest the latest experiment wrote to their Congressmen: "Don't use hormones, they are not health foods." 

"Tories". How can the writers of such letters expect a sympathetic response from the Congressmen?

Every Congressmen, most any government official, almost any newspaper editor becomes accustomed to these denunciatory and extortionate demands for animal welfare, even that received from the most reasonable and tactful humanitarians. As a result, the sensitive letter writer of humane organizations is maligned. In a way, they, along with the animals, must suffer for the sins of the denouncers! Fanatical nonsense which is far more harmful than good. If they really want to help the animals, they will think twice before using such language. To be written in all capital letters, will be typed. In fact, well-worded letters, which do not ramble but get right to the point, written legibly in longhand, may convey every bit as much fact or feeling as the garbled, printed letter. Even if you are not a master of English, your letters will be effective if they are reasonable in tone and appear genuine. Don't copy some other writer's words. Use your own.

REPLIES TO YOUR LETTERS

Especially frustrating to some humanitarians is the apparent lack of response to letters written to newspaper and magazine editors, television broadcasters, or newspaper or magazine publishers. They will print the letter, but nobody later comments on it. It just seems lost in the shuffle. But that does not mean it has gone forever.

People do read your letters—nearly always. Some will reply with what is obviously a standard printed reply. If your letter has been at least counted, if quite a few are received, the big boss will be told that you got so many letters of particular interest. Carl Whipple, of Bedford, New Hampshire, received a letter from CBS which included the following paragraph:

"Many of our correspondents, both through mail and television, have made it clear that they believe the commercial pet trade's contribution to the pet surplus problem is of such importance that it should be given top priority. CBS News, as well as all of the major networks, is now expanding coverage of this important subject, and every effort will be made to bring the public's attention to the problem with increased force and urgency." 

Letters to a syndicated columnist receive no reply unless used in the column of which there is only a small chance, especially in the broadsheet by the columnist's secretary, who had little or nothing to do with introduction of the bill or the Committee's action, was able to use the media taking exclusive credit for the action. NAHL always is glad to share credit for any accomplishment or opportunity for the contributing humanitarians to reach the public. This is found in the highly commercialized pet of the pet trade. Humane Information Services will perform this important service to a writer of letters.

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LETTERS—FROM PAGE 8—

subject. We were wrong. The following letter gives some more interesting tips from a veteran's experience. (If any veterinarian does not agree, please write.)

"About fleas on cats and dogs—tell your readers to give the cat about a quarter teaspoonful of brewer’s yeast once a day. For a dog, increase according to size. The yeast causes the dogs’ coats to become shiny and helps improve the animal’s welfare, anyway."—Mrs. Joseph T. Biddy, Winter Park, Florida.

HUMANITARIANS NOT RETARDED!

"The Report on puppy mills was really excellent. It seems incredible that so few individuals can put together such excellent material. Tell it like it should be told."—Mrs. Niles E. Nickerson, President, Boothbay Region Humane Society, Boothbay Harbor, Maine.

REPLY:

Thank you for the compliment. One reason others do not offer for the thorough, factual analysis that we attempt to present is the lack of a consciousness of humanitarians’ intelligence and attention span. We know that many humane society officers have the erroneous idea that the ‘‘little old ladies in tennis shoes’’ have the market on animal welfare. Ire and long-established animal societies have grown rich doing just that, because there are a good number of animal lovers who refuse to think, and must be appealed to solely through the emotions. But the long-established Humanite Service shows that there also are many humanitarians who are far beyond the baby food stage, and are quite capable of digesting material requiring intelligence and concentration.

RESENT OUR ATTACK ON STENOGRAPHERS!

"I received Report No. 26 and am disgusted with your attack on a stenographer ... A top stenographer is as much needed in our society today as a trained veterinarian or technician. Being a stenographer does not preclude her from having a brain and using it. I hope she will continue to tell it like it is, and I for one don’t believe veterinarians belong as directors in any humane organization. Many people (in United States) think they can pursue the laboratory problem solely with so many researchers on their board is a puz­

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR...

MORE LETTERS THIS ISSUE.

Because we had to omit from our last issue all except one letter to the editor, a time comes when you see two pages of very worthwhile comments from our readers. It pays to know what other humanitarians are thinking about our mutual problems.

READERS AGREE WITH OUR ANALYSIS OF PET POPULATION CONTROL

"I am in complete agreement with all you say on the pet population... Any society that adopts out unaltered animals is defeating its purpose."—Mrs. Peter C. Marchbanks, Gaines, Michigan.

"We heartily agree with you on how to prevent the pet population explosion, and feel it is the only answer to the problem. Merely finding homes for unwanted pets creates more problems."—Mrs. F. Girardi, Crow's Nest Pass B.P.A., Coleman, Alberta, Canada.

REPLY:

"What an entrancing name: "Cows Nest Pass". It has the flavor of mountain dew, wildlife. Much better than "St. Petersburg!" But if you are so favorably impressed as we are of your concern to Humanitarians, the organization with which I am affiliated, Pet Assistance Foundation, is a no-nonsense group that gets things done without any of the frills—which might explain why your practical, down-to-earth approach has great appeal for me..."—Mrs. C. L. Leary, Newhall, California.

WANTS TO IMPROVE EUTHANASIA

"As a volunteer in humane work for a number of years, I've acquainted with most of the publications in this field. I don't come across anything so favorably impressed as your reports to Humanitarians. The organization with which I am affiliated, Pet Assistance Foundation, is a no-nonsense group that gets things done without any of the frills—which might explain why your practical, down-to-earth approach has great appeal for me..."—Mrs. C. L. Leary, Newhall, California.

REPLY:

"Thanks for your compliments. Interpretations of scientific evidence differ regarding the humaneness of the decompression chamber and other methods of euthanasia, and in many cases seem biased by considerations of cost and convenience. The word euthanasia is the difference between (1) putting a dog or cat to sleep and (2) putting a dog or cat to death. If your organization is concerned about the welfare of young animals and for many adult animals with respiratory ailments, but these devices continue to be sold, substantial numbers to shelters and pounds. What is needed is an affirmative method that requires no time and expense and does not subject personnel to disagreeable personal contact with death. All methods, in relation to each other, will be described and evaluated in a forthcoming Report.

COLD, CUNNING AND CALLOUS!

"In regards to your pet population article, your cold, cunning and callous remark that a 'guiding save-a-life' enthusiasts wouldn't be so callous as to make a statement that a 'dead dog or cat does not contribute to the surplus'. That is just one of so many cruel, offensive remarks you so aptly throw around... Heaven help us if you were in charge of the human race!... All God's creatures have the right to life... All life is precious."—Mrs. Jackie Geyer, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WANT OUT!

"Take my name off list. Please discontinue Reports."—Mrs. Bertha Shoffner, Birmingham, Alabama.

REPLY:

"We suspect there are some others on our mailing list who feel the same way, but do not have the consideration to write and to let us know how they feel. We are not in a position to do anything. Thank you for doing so. We can't afford to waste even two cents postage. So please let us know if you want out. We will not be offended.

BETTER THAN A SALARY!

"The information in your Reports is always invaluable whenever I'm in a hassle on humane issues. I can depend on getting the clearest, most concise information from you. And I've been in a good many hassles!"—Mrs. Robert W. Kohloff, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

Miss Bernice Wallus, of Richmond, Virginia, writes: "Your Reports could not be improved!"

And from Gay Paree, France, (Mrs. Norton Tabackman): "Just a word to tell you how completely wonderful your latest Report, again!"

REPLY:

"We editor receives no pay except your encouraging comments - but frankly we are not here to make money. We hope many other equally sincere and complimentary remarks received since our last Report. Your high approval is deeply appreciated by all of us at Humane Information Services.

A CHALLENGE TO OUR READERS!

"In giving money to 'good causes' I always try to figure out some way to make those dollars even more. I will consider sending you $500 if you can figure out some way to put it to work on a matched-fund basis. It wouldn't gain anything just to set aside the first $500 of contributions after accepting my proposal, but it would be very worthwhile if that money could be raised among others so they would be as happy to go on, if necessary, say from new donors, or for some special purpose. Do you have any ideas?"—Mrs. (name withheld by request of donor), Massachusetts.

REPLY:

"Indeed we do! We think you have a great idea. Already, by letter, we have found a regular contributor who is willing to up her already generous annual contribution to match yours. And we have a specific new use for additional matching donations: the continued employment of a director of field services whom we have been able to obtain as a result of your generous contribution and the matching one. He is very much needed to conduct tests designed to evaluate alternative methods of euthanasia from an efficiency as well as humane standpoint, and for other purposes. He will then demonstrate the best methods to shelters and sounds. We wish you could see his reports on some of the frightful contradictions now being used to kill the dogs and cats in some shelters and pounds that we currently visit. What he will do has never been done before by any humane society. It will prevent the so-called 'nocking of thousands of dogs and cats. However, even your generous gift and the matching donation already obtained will continue to be very worthwhile for keeping the modern humane way to destroy animals. As it is now used so unmercifully, I think it's time conclusions are reached."—Mrs. Robert S. Laird, Newhall, California.

TWO SERIOUS QUESTIONS FROM ENGLAND

"It is too late to say I like the quality of paper and printing of your Report? Its contents are one of the few things I enjoy reading in the winter season. You should boost your circulation. Please answer two questions in a future Report: (1) Are animals cruel? (2) Is it cruel to kill fleas? These are serious questions. We need a (new) definition of cruelty. Be wise."—Miss Valerie Pratt, London, England.

REPLY:

"We take you seriously. In your query, your query is extremely pertinent to the question of what position humanitarians can intelligently take on many problems relating to wildlife and ecology. We will try to answer you in a later Report.

INTERNATIONAL USE OF REPORT TO HUMANITARIANS

"Your Report to Humanitarians fills a genuine need in the U.S. as well as being equally valid internationally, should you wish to reach other countries."—Mrs. Warren Rosensy, San Diego, California.

REPLY:

"Our reports go to just over 500 humane societies and humane leaders in foreign countries. Our articles frequently are produced in whole or in part in the publications of foreign societies. Because our information exchange is inconvenient for some of those residing in other countries (except Canada) to send small contributions, so our U.S. members must help to pay for the extra postage and envelopes required for minimum distribution, at it is worth the cost.

DIVIDED EFFORTS--AND CONTRIBUTIONS

"The divided and fragmented members of humane societies cause much more confusion. The cost of one case make one central contribution and feel it would be more effective."—Mrs. Warren Rosensy, San Diego, California.

REPLY:

"Are you surprised to receive two replies to your letter? Just think! We agree with the desirable efforts of humane societies, or having just one—provided the single organization does not become complacent, hidebound and devoted to maintaining the positions and salaries of employees rather than raise humane methods. (January 14, 1970). Real competition is healthy. But you can help to achieve more unified action by concentrating your support of or only one or a very few societies. If you do, we hope you will decide on one.

THE FEARS ARE HEARD FROM AGAIN

We had thought that our reply, in Report No. 23, to additional letters about fees would be our final word on the