INPUT ITEM - BEQUESTS

Jim Shaw, New England Regional Office, wants us to pass along that his office has form letters which can be mailed to all attorneys and all bank trust officers along with HSUS literature. These letters advise that the material is sent for file, and for reference in cases where clients express a wish to make bequests to animal welfare.

A friendly banker will be glad to furnish you, upon request, a list of trust officers and a lawyer friend can lend you a list of attorneys. And, of course, if you write to Jim in the New England Regional Office, he will gladly send you sample letters. (Be a decent fellow, however, and send him your own self-addressed envelope!)

THE LIMITS OF YOUR LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

How much legislative work can you do without jeopardizing the tax exempt status of The HSUS?

Very little. Direct work on behalf of legislation must be minimal and should be undertaken only after very careful consideration of its extent in relation to your overall activity. It is difficult to be specific in this crucial area, but perhaps the following general observations will be helpful:

(a) Do not publicly endorse or condemn a candidate for public office because of his position on animal welfare issues.

(b) Do not issue bulletins or general circulation letters urging people to write for or against legislation except in cases which have been cleared with the Washington office.

(c) Do not lobby in the sense that you or one of your employees goes to the state legislature and directly solicits the support or opposition of the legislators to a specific bill or bills.

(d) Do write letters, when appropriate, to legislators considering a specific bill and give the HSUS position on the issue. (If you have any question about our position, you should check with Washington.)

(e) Do issue bulletins or letters, when it seems advisable to do so, with information about bills before the legislature but not urging people specifically to write. This kind of information reporting may include details of the bill, the legislative committee considering it, what the bill would do; and there can be a statement to the effect persons interested have the right to write their legislators about it. (Economics, of course, dictate that any such mailings be cleared by Washington.)