Do I Look Happy?
WHAT'S A PICTURE WORTH?

Use this photograph to tell your students about roadside zoos. Explain that, unlike zoological gardens, these menageries are run by amateurs whose main motive is to make money. Some may actually love their animals; but it is a misplaced love, ignorant of the real needs of the animals.

Roadside zoo animals often live in tiny cages. Their cages are often dirty, and the animals frequently lack companionship with others of their own species. They seldom have any privacy—since their function in a roadside zoo is to be seen and to make money. Their life is a highly stressful one.

Point out to students that even if roadside zoo animals look healthy, they have needs that cannot be met in these menageries. Ask students: "How much room do you think you would need in order to live comfortably? If you were going to live in a box or cage, how big a box or cage would it have to be? Could it ever be big enough to hold your school? your friends and their families? how about the stores in which you shop or the street where you live?" Then have students discuss: "How big an area might a monkey want for its living space? Would it want an area as big as your classroom? as big as your school? as big as your town? What are some of the things that a monkey likes to do? How much space might it need in order to do these things comfortably?"

Have youngsters draw pictures of what that space might look like. On the back they should list all the things that a wild monkey would enjoy in the place they have drawn—things that a captive monkey does not have the chance to enjoy in a roadside zoo. Then discuss: What can students do to discourage the practice of allowing roadside zoos? Letting others know how you feel is one way. Another way is to tell sponsors of roadside zoos that you will not buy their products unless they find another means of advertising that does not cause stress or harm to animals.