

A Call to Personal Action

By John A. Hoyt

One of the frequently asked questions communicated to me by HSUS members is "What can I do *personally* to assist in preventing cruelty to animals?" It is not always easy to give a specific answer to that question. Often many of the conditions and situations affecting cruelty to animals are so remote to individual humanitarians or so complexly interwoven within governmental or industrial policies that direct personal action is virtually impossible. It is for these reasons that it is vitally important that strong organizations such as HSUS exist.

On other occasions, however, the action of the individual, when added to that of millions of others, will be much more effective than the actions and protests of any organization. I am quite convinced that the tuna-porpoise issue is just such a case.

On page 12 of this issue of *The Humane Society News* you will read about the incredible cruelty and suffering being inflicted upon porpoises by the tuna industry. Literally thousands upon thousands of these sensitive creatures are being brutalized and destroyed each year to accommodate an industry that is presumably catering to the needs and desires of the American public.

There comes a point when the price to be paid in animal exploitation and suffering can no longer be tolerated in the interest of man. We believe that threshold has now been crossed by the American tuna industry. Consequently, HSUS calls upon you as a concerned humanitarian to refuse to buy any tuna products, either for personal consumption or as food for pets. No longer can we tolerate the excuses and indecisiveness of this industry and the federal government that have resulted in failure to correct and eliminate those procedures that cause suffering and destruction.

While it is clear that certain tuna products, specifically "white" or albacore tuna, are not obtained by the purse seining method that results in the suffering and destruction of porpoise, it is not always certain that this distinction can be made by the purchaser. Consequently, a refusal to buy all tuna products will ensure the effectiveness of your protest.

I further urge you to express your protest by writing to the presidents of the major tuna canners listed on page 13. We know for certain that consumers' letters of protest are of great concern to commercial enterprises and are not casually dismissed.

Also, write to Robert Schoning, Director, National Marine Fisheries Services, Washington, D. C., urging that quotas affecting the incidental killing of porpoises as a result of purse seining for tuna be fixed immediately at a level which will require the industry to alter its fishing methods.

Your voice and action are greatly needed in regard to this critical issue. Indeed, it is your opportunity to personally participate in a campaign to reduce, and hopefully eliminate, cruelty and suffering to one of the most intelligent and sensitive creatures who shares life with us on this planet.



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COVER: Our cover photo stands as a reminder to all those who care about the other animals that share this planet with us. It is a reminder to avoid all tuna purchases until the senseless slaughter of dolphins and porpoises has ceased once and for all. Photo by Leonard Lee Rue III.