When the first Earth Day was celebrated in April of 1970, HSUS Senior Vice President Patricia Forkan was a recent graduate of Pennsylvania State University beginning her career. An activist involved in a variety of social causes, she had had first-hand exposure to a myriad of animal protection issues. Her mother ran a local animal shelter in rural Pennsylvania, so working within the animal-welfare movement was a natural outgrowth of Ms. Forkan’s interest in improving conditions for people and animals. After working for the Fund for Animals in New York and Florida, Ms. Forkan came to The HSUS as program coordinator in 1976. Since then, she has played a leading role in legislative strategy, communications, and campaigns for The HSUS. In this interview, Ms. Forkan reflects on how animal protection has changed since the first Earth Day, held in 1970.

**Patricia Forkan**: The late ’60s and early ’70s were exhilarating, as we worked with Congress to enact the Endangered Species Act, the Federal Laboratory Animal Act (which was renamed the Animal Welfare Act in 1976, when it was expanded), the Humane Slaughter Act amendments, which, in 1978, finally brought protection to food animals (although chickens are still unprotected), the Wild Free-ranging Horse and Burro Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act (in 1972), and the Horse Protection Act to prevent soring. Also, Congress passed resolutions to place moratoriums on whaling and to stop a cruel predator-control program on federal land.

The euphoria died quickly as the reality of the federal bureaucracy sunk in. Getting laws passed is only the beginning. It is incredibly difficult to make sure the government then actually enforces and funds them. Consequently, there were countless years spent trying to change pathetically weak regulations, instead of enforcing these newly enacted laws. But, at least in the ’60s and ’70s, laws were passed to help protect animals. Instead of the “greening” of America, you’d call the ’70s the “politicalizing” of the animal-welfare movement.

**Forkan**: During that time, there were some pretty exciting hearings held by Congress on issues that had never been considered before. There was a circus-like atmosphere at the first hearing at the federal level on leg-hold traps. A propping Congressmen put his hand in a trap used to catch squirrels. (He refused a challenge from an animal activist to be trapped in one meant for bears.) And there were hearings on things like transportation of farm animals and puppy mills and intense scrutiny of the laboratory-animal issue, as well as all the emerging wildlife bills. There were highly publicized hearings about dogfighting, including the testimony of one undercover humane agent whose life and family had been threatened. All of this caused the public and the media to more conscious of animal issues. Individuals were galvanized to act on a national level in a concerted fashion for the first time. People became more aware that they could really make a difference.

**Forkan**: The Reagan inauguration changed everything. The streets were filled with limousines, for coats, and everyone dined on veal piccata. It was a radical change to go from the Carter presidency, during which animal and environmental causes had a sympathetic ear, to the Reagan years of disregard for the environment and its creatures and opposition to any and all regulations.

**Forkan**: It was an awakening of the public to environmental issues beyond the traditional sheltering work. The late ’60s and early ’70s were exhilarating, as we worked with Congress to enact the Endangered Species Act, the Federal Laboratory Animal Act (which was renamed the Animal Welfare Act in 1976, when it was expanded), the Humane Slaughter Act amendments, which, in 1978, finally brought protection to food animals (although chickens are still unprotected), the Wild Free-ranging Horse and Burro Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act (in 1972), and the Horse Protection Act to prevent soring. Also, Congress passed resolutions to place moratoriums on whaling and to stop a cruel predator-control program on federal land.

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**Forkan**: Our strategy in the 1980s was to dig in—hold on to what we had achieved up to that point, and, frankly, a lot of things were lost. The wild horse bill was very badly under-cut, as there were many more roundups, abuses, and federal funds spent to the detriment of the horses. Another example of laws being weakened is the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Instead of phasing out the killing of dolphins to zero, the tuna industry was able to get a sympathetic ear and get legislation passed allowing them to kill 25,000 dolphins per year! Fewer animals protection bills were being introduced—partly because the budget crisis was now of such concern. Any new law that would require government expenditure or impose paperwork on busi-
News: Did The HSUS change its strategy?
Forkan: Yes. We worked even harder to bring environmentalists, lawyers, and other professionals to our staff so we could better argue before congressional committees and agencies. The battles were getting more technical.

Due to Reagan's budget cuts, we shifted our lobbying efforts to the appropriations committees. They hold the purse strings, and even hired one excellent lobbyist because she was a southerner and the appropriations committees are dominated by southerners. We spent massive portions of our lobbying budget each year to convince Congress not to zero-out our efforts.

In HSUS News, Charles Krupa reported: "The humane movement started over 100 years ago, and only five states still mandate it. Only two states are working to ban pound seizure, and sometimes must be accomplished in a short amount of time. They become discouraged, and feel hopeless—or worse, bit ter. But we must also create new energy, excitement, and desire for change in our work. We must take the new opportunities made possible by the new energy and ideas into the movement. Unfor

Laws are being changed radically to provide more protection. These laws, many of which we have fought for over 100 years, are finally getting some real teeth in them. For example, deliberate cruelty is now a felony in Maryland and Florida. State laws deny people who care to see animals treated cruelly the right to possess animals; it is a violation to allow a domesticated pet to carry a gun on a hot vehicle or to carry them in an unsafe manner in an open pickup truck. Trapping laws are, slowly but surely, coming into being. New Jersey's ban has the most comprehensive prohibition of the sale of wild-caught birds imported into the state. Even rodeo is no longer sanctioned as, Rhode Island law now prohibits the cruelst events. After years of exposure of the horrors of midwestern puppy mills, Kansas enacted a law to safeguard the dogs kept in such facilities; other states are considering similar actions.

News: How has the opposition chosen to deal with our movement?
Forkan: Our opponents, the furriers, the cosmetic companies, and many agricultural interests are uniting against us. They are working to discredit everyone in our community by labeling everyone an extreme anti-animal group.

News: What advice would you like to give those new to the movement?
Forkan: Definitely, yes. In several areas our members are working hand-in-glove with national and international groups. We are working with national and international groups to see that those things are being carried out on a global scale. The animal campaign of the World Society for the Protection of Animals, Global 2000, Earth Day 1990, the United Nations Environment Programme, and many other things bring our humane outrage to front and center. I'm optimistic about the future. Old ways of thinking are breaking up worldwide, and... our message has a chance to be heard.
Large-scale agricultural systems... are wasteful of natural resources...

Garbage-strewn water in Hong Kong water pollution contributes to Earth's malaise.

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mental harm pesticides, nitrate and other chemical fertilizers, and animal drugs alike.) We believe that every nation should conduct an environmental impact assessment of its animal and other agricultural practices. As an example, consider the world population of 1.2 billion cattle and 1.6 billion sheep and goats, a significant contributing factor to the global greenhouse effect in many countries and bio-regions since it is linked with deforestation, overgrazing, and desertification in parts of the world. Largscale agriculture...

References

2. Ibid.
4. William Booth, "Nitrogen Fertilizers May Be Add-..."" to Earth's environment, either human or animal.
5. Dr. Michael Fox joined The Humane Society of the United States in 1987. He currently serves as vice president for The HSUS, heading the division of Bioethics and Farm Animals. In addition, he was named Director of the Center for Impact of Life and Death, a new division of The HSUS, in 1987.
6. Dr. Fox has authored more than thirty books, is a contributing editor of theout magazine, and has a syndicated syndicated newspaper column, "Ask Your Animal Doctor." He is also a consulting veterinarian and gives lectures, seminars, and presentations both in The United States and abroad on topics related to animal welfare, behavior, and conservation.

systems that are geared to producing meat as efficiently as possible. Every staple is wasteful of natural resources (water, top soil, and fossil fuels) and cause much pollution and destruction of the environment. The destruction of the soil and excessive use of synthetic fertilizers contribute further to environmental degradation to these adverse climatic events. Every nation should take immediate steps to those importing products from coun-

to...or worse, our only home upon the seas or our fellow creatures. Perhaps another time and place and time and place and time and place...