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(No. 15) -- Man's Greatest Cruelty to Animals

Humane Information Services, Inc.

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Ritual Slaughter

Following publication of our Report No. 5, in which reference was made to the suffering encountered under conditions that are usually described as humane, we received a number of indignant letters from Jewish members, protesting against the use of ritual or kosher slaughter, as being almost instantaneous unconsciousness. Apparently without reading the remainder of the article which explained that it is not the actual cutting of the throat, but the pre-slaughter handling, which gives rise to the suffering, they canceled their memberships and ordered that their names be removed from our mailing list.

We deeply regret this kind of misunderstanding. Unanimously, board members of Huannee Information Services is in no way connected with the handling of animals killed for human consumption. We offer sincere assurances that our reports are for the benefit of the American animal lover and to our knowledge no Jew has conducted other than religious slaughters for the purpose of bringing it into the world, even omitting poultry. Brain that unconsciousness is produced in being cut or are cast in a device called a pince nez.

In some plants the head is positioned as described below by a former shochet:

The head is lowered to the floor, backward into the box while the head is held by the guide, with the help of a hook. The hook is pulled to the other wall, thus hoisting the conscious, struggling animals, which are restrained by a wall on one side and a shed on the other.

Federal and State
Humane Slaughter Laws

In the United States and some European countries, humane laws have alleviated the worst cruelties for a substantial proportion of the animals slaughtered. But for the most part, the laws are designed to the slaughter in this country, and many more animals have been slaughtered in other countries, conditions, and other methods than know humane state personnel now have. But there is one area involving the most acute suffering -- that we could do something about now. That is the slaughter of millions of animals killed for human consumption in the world, even omitting poultry. Brain that unconsciousness is produced in being cut or are cast in a device called a pince nez.

The Cruel Pre-Slaughter Process

For slaughter purposes, animals are restrained in different kinds of meat-packing plants. But in general, they involve the shackling and hoofing of conscious, struggling animals, which are strung up by the leg, bellowing in fear and pain, until they reach the shochet, when the head and throat of the animal must be positioned or prepared for the ritual cut. This positioning procedure has been described by one eyewitness as follows:

"And then I witnessed something I had read about, as occurring in kosher plants, the very first time I visited one. The packer house employee deliberately plunged both his hands into the steer's eyes, which were then clamped shut by being pushed back into the head. He then grasped the sides of the eyes and the head and the animal was either cast to the ground before the shochet stepped forward to cut the steer's throat... This entire procedure, involving the pushing in of the eyes, was routinized and systematically carried out on all the animals I watched being slaughtered."

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SLAUGHTER — from page 1

... of the animal is subjected to a series of manipulations which, although not physically injurious, must create tremendous psychologi­
ical trauma. They see in the insistence on stunning before slaughter a cruel action that appears to them to be an arbitrary and com­
pletely illogical interpretation of the original purpose and character of shechita.

... Euthanizing before stunning and hoisting, they believe, would not violate the religious idea, that the animal be "healthy and normal" when cut, since the ani­
mal's body would not undergo any physical change. They are afraid this would interfere with what really are religious re­
quirements, but believe that electrical stunning before hoisting and hoisting are mere additions to the sanitary prohibition of casting to the floor, or fire or other regulations applying to the use of animals prior to slaughter.

When they do, they ask, mauls and cli­
... involved in this kind of activity.

We are not expert in these mechanical matters, but we wonder why the Danish Welfare pen, used in Israel, could not be adapted to United States requirements. We understand that it is considered by packers to be too costly.

What Should Be Done?

Some concerned humanitarians think it best to attempt once more to gain acceptance of the British-style holding pens for large animals, leaving that for other species and weights for later action after a suitable pen for smaller animals has been developed.

Others press now for humane slaugh­
ter laws in the various states now hav­ing them, such as New York, containing the same ritual exception as do present federal and state laws, with the small-animal-holding pen ready. This would at least bring the problem into focus.

Some humanitarians do not agree with ei­
... transhipping the animals. For this reason, they say that very little has been accomplished in any state attempts to develop federal legislation requiring their use.

These humanitarians even doubt that these humane slaughter methods can be fully humanized since the animal is subjected to a series of

SLAUGHTER — from page 1

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When they do, they ask, mauls and cli­
sions of animals subjected to such agony after years merely to conform to what is supposed to be a question of "health" really is nothing more than a tradition which is imposed on a minority of the Orthodox, and to the union of kosher slaughterers?

Anyhow, their view is that all effective opposition to applying to all slaughter the humane methods now required for kosher slaughters will require a massive educational program were conducted in the Jewish community. The only reason it has not been done, they say, is the fact that most Jews do not know the facts. Once they do, it is believed, they will be moved to act.

We find the problem of the slaughter of sheep and cattle in the United States of course, is that it is not as common as in the Jewish community itself. The real trouble, they say, is that everybody concerned has been pussyfooting around the subject of anti-Semitism or, if they are Jews, of being unfaithful to the traditions of their fathers. It is believed that if all will come to grips with the real problem, which is the need for human education. Send a simple wall chart to every Jewish school which truthfully and honestly presents the facts to every Jew in the United States, it is claimed, and the demand for humane slaughter in this commun­
ity itself would be so great that it would overwhelm the remaining minority. And the problem would be that we are now giving the solution, which would at least be a start, to the problem of anti-Semitism.

Others feel strongly that it is worse to mention the matter to the press. They say that this would only bring the subject into focus.

The results, of course, are quite different. The reader, who may perhaps not have read these Reports, may be shocked by some of the more graphic details of the cruelty which the animals are subjected to in foreign countries. We have seen large quantities of meat imported from countries where conditions of slaughter are very bad.

In the case of the importation of meat from the United States, we can include only general, not large quantities of meat imported from countries where conditions of slaughter are very bad.

Some countries that export meat to the United States are not very happy with the methods of slaughter. But much of our im­ported meat comes from countries where con­ditions of slaughter are very bad.

Imported processed meat products are re­quired to be labeled with the name of the country of origin. However, some countries have been marked "Jewish" or "kosher," but we have seen labels on canned hams and cured beef, for instance. The importation of meat such as beef or ham has been limited in some countries, perhaps because of the fear of bad publicity.

Thus, when we purchase a ham in one of the ubiquitous drive-in food dispensers, we see that the ham has been slaughtered in Brazil or Argentina. We have a newspaper article quoting a farmer as saying, "We have been able to sell about three-quarters of the hambone and other ground beef consumed in that state is from the United States, but we have been able to sell about three-quarters of the hambone and other ground beef consumed in that state is from the United States.

This is a "retail" approach to the problem. To really affect slaughter condi­tions, the effort must be concentrated on the wholesale level. It is true that the problem of slaughtering is a very complex one, and it is not easy to come up with acceptable solutions. However, we believe that there is a way to improve conditions in foreign countries. We believe that by working together, we can make a difference.

What is Being Done Now in Foreign Countries?

Both the International Society for the Protection of Animals and the World Federation for the Protection of Animals have done some excellent missionary work to improve slaughterhouse conditions, especially in countries where the use of humane stunning equipment is common. In some cases, they have been able to influence the use of humane stunning equipment, especially in countries where the use of humane stunning equipment is common. In some cases, they have been able to influence the use of humane stunning equipment, especially in countries where the use of humane stunning equipment is common.

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SLAUGHTER — from page 2 —

we must follow instead a "wholesale" ap­
proach to the problem. Yet, the differ­
ted tests and experiments applying to meat ac­
sion seems to be substantially less than those
which attended passage of the United States
law.

One of many inhumane ways of handling
food animals on their way to meat-packing
plants is described in a recent article from
further south. In that region there are sev­
eral live cattle are hobled over the side of
a ship. Many times a horn breaks, or
the animal becomes loose and falls on the
deck or railing of the ship, breaking its
legs and ribs. Occasionally an animal suf­
fers a broken leg, and is left to suffer in
strain. A number of bags are loaded togeth­
er in a single rope net and swung over the
side of the ship, with their legs sticking
through the net's mesh, resulting in many
broken legs. Cattle unloaded from barges
are dragged aboard and forced through a
broken hose. (Photograph by Interna­
tional Society for the Protection of Ani­
mal Rights

A Comparatively Easy Remedy?

Humane Information Services proposes that
the leading international and national hu­
mane societies meet to decide on a strategy
for the new task assigned to bring humane
slaughter to all countries engaging substan­
tially in the international meat trade. These
are the countries where the great bulk of
the world slaughter occurs. Once slaugh­
ter is made humane in those countries, the
problem of world humane slaughter is al­
most solved. We will not have such a
problem much longer if the countries in the
list above follow gradually, or can be dealt with
through education.

Fortunately, the more advanced meat­
importing countries have at their disposal a
ready tool for this purpose: their ability to control
imports of meat from any exporting country
that is not humane. Coordinative machinery for
handling the opera­tions already exists in, exist­ ence, in the form of meat and foreign plant inspection services of the importing nations.

Actually, to add humane slaughter to the
sales contract terms that are currently im­
ported into the United States would require
only a negligible additional expense. Just
as the United States Department of Agricult­
ure added humane slaughter certification to the
obligations of the veterinarians already stat­
uted in the plants for the purposes of san­i­
tary or health inspections, so it could add such
simple duties to those of its inspec­
tors already visiting foreign packing plants
that export meat to the United States. The
latter procedure for this setup already is on the
statute books.

All that is needed, so far as the United
States Government is concerned, is to
make illegal the importation of any meat
from a country that does not have and en­
force a satisfactory humane slaughter law.
This would bring irresistible pressure upon
big meat-exporting countries to take the
necessary steps to get in compliance.

If for reasons of international diplomacy
the United States is not prepared to go to
that extreme, an unwarranted interference in do­
cestic policies of the nations concerned, it
is not too late to require certification of meat
that had been slaughtered in any spe­
cific foreign plant not using humane meth­
ds. Inspection and certification for com­
pance could be handled by the same USDA
personnel that now inspect and certify for
sanitary requirements.

Even the second of these alternatives has
much promise, especially if other meat­
importing countries are induced to do so,
as part of a world plan for humane slaughter,
would institute the same requirements.

Among these nations, and so powerful are the
important exporting countries.

Demonstrating the humane equipment and
other educational work are tactical devices to help the humankind na­tionally to meet meat demands, while they are man­aged as part of an overall strategy. That
strategy requires the cooperation and coordi­
nation of all the humane societies.
Such cooperation should be more
easily effected in this case, because there are
so many common differences over objec­
tives and it is so obviously ineffective for
any individual society alone to tackle the
problem of world insanitary slaughter.

In a campaign of the kind outlined above,
it is quite probable that the cooperation of
politically menaced nations, especially produc­ing groups in this country could be obtained,
and also of labor unions. In
fact, the only thing that might be the
overbear is inertia, starting with the hu­
mane movement itself.

Fortunately, the Whitehurst bill has a
stronger chance of influencing legislation, Humane Information Services can do no more than point out the need and the possibili­ties. However, the National Association for Humane Legislation, which is not tax exempt, is in a position to be get the money this is provided, but it is
given the required financial support.

The Immediate Need

The suffering of the millions of animals
undergoing inhumane slaughter in the United
States and some other countries represents a hu­
mane problem of the greatest magnitude.

First, it is necessary to realize that it is not
a problem for attack by individual soci­
eties. Here is a perfect illustration of the need for cooperation and coordination among all humane societies.

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CRUEL KILLER DRUG

Usage by Some Humane Societies

As part of its continuing action program dealing with euthanasia (see Report to Humanitarians No. 15, March, 1971), Humane Information Services has been trying to eliminate use of the cruel drug succinylcholine chloride (Succostrin) for destroying animals.

Succinylcholine is a drug similar to curare, of such ill repute as an aging people, that few people use it in laboratory experiments. A lethal dose of the drug produces death by immobilizing the respiratory muscles, causing fatal suffocation. But there is no depressant action on the brain, and the kidneys and liver are not involved, so that the animal is unable to communicate his suffering. A physician discussing an operating technique in which a less-than-lethal dose of the drug is used warned against an overdose, which he said would produce "a death too horrible to describe."

Another physician who experimented on himself by taking a non-lethal dose of the cruel drug succinylcholine chloride (Succostrin) for destroying animals. A committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association said that succinylcholine chloride should never be used for euthanasia.

We could cite other authoritative sources for concluding that succinylcholine chloride is a cruel drug which should never be used for destroying animals. A committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association said that succinylcholine chloride should never be used for euthanasia.

We discovered that succinylcholine chloride is used in a large humane society animal shelter with a name familiar to every veterinarian, in the belief that it was a humane drug. We have contacted the shelter, the drug, which completely immobilized him, preventing communication of his plight to those observing the treatment.

Several years ago, one of the authors of this report contacted a prominent veterinarian who was then employed by the National Association for Humane Legislation, who had admitted to us that the drug is not suitable for euthanasia, although he has not stopped the veterinarian from continuing its use. He is ready for printing.

The results of this monumental task will be available in two volumes to be ready in the summer of 1971, and two more in the summer of 1972. It will contain bound loose-leaf sheets so that revisions can be incorporated at a later date. The purchasing may be made by U.S. Government and foreign governmental agencies.

The two volumes to be available in 1971, as described by Dr. Ford, are:

Volume 1. A history of humane legislation involving animals. To be available early summer 1971.


Important contribution to preparation and enforcement of laws affecting animal welfare

Many state laws and local ordinances affecting animals are very loosely worded, making them difficult to enforce. Most of these laws were passed years ago, when the legislatures were dominated by the rural vote, and the laws are stated in terms that are much pliable to interpretation than to enforcement.

A rather typical result is to be observed in what happened in Florida when two young men used one a visitor from a Northern state, were out to ob­tain some "kicks." They tied one end of a rope to the front bumper of a car, and then drove along with the car, using the rear bumper of an automobile, and then drove along until another car stopped them. The dog was not returned to its owner, and the owner was not notified.

By making the law more definite, we have at least made the trial more feasible. Naturally, this fiendish act aroused the indignation of the community in which it occurred. The state's attorney, wishing to prosecute the offense as a felony, as mentioned at the outset of the present report, acted on the information and arrested the two men. The dog was returned to its owner, and the owner was notified. The trial was eventually dismissed.

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BULLFIGHTS

The National Association for Human Legis­lation informs us that progress is being made toward the passage of a bill in Arizona, 1970, 1971, in 1970 permitting bloodless bullfights. Forty-eight (48) candidates for the legislature are sponsoring a bill which would prevent bullfighting in the fall. We hope to have details from the bill at the next meeting for inclusion in our June Report to Humanitarians.

NEWS about ANIMALS

We have been too busy to put out another issue of News About Animals, which so many of our subscribers use to keep in touch with the activities of Humane Information Services, where you will be picked up or read by the public. News About Animals Does not get out very frequently, and each issue is used as many as you can, won't you please send us a copy for a supply, enclosing just a penny for every two copies to help pay the postage.