Lawmakers Dump Greyhound Bills

Two legislative proposals that would have legalized betting on greyhound racing in California and Washington were defeated in committee votes last April.

The California Assembly Governmental Organization Committee rejected Assembly Bill 455 by a 5-4 vote, after nearly eight hours of emotional testimony, in two hearings. The bill was sponsored by Assemblyman Leon Ralph of Los Angeles who worked closely with the Golden State Greyhound Assn. (GSGA) in a major effort to get the legislation passed. The GSGA recently mounted a well-financed campaign to get greyhound racing established in California.

Ralph produced a flurry of compromise amendments to make the bill acceptable to his colleagues. Included was a provision he had previously declared as unenforceable. The amendment stipulated that no greyhounds would be allowed to race in California if they had been trained on live animals.

HSUS West Coast Regional Director Frantz Dantzler countered Ralph's amendment by pointing out that most greyhounds in the United States are trained in Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas because of weak anti-cruelty laws and high rabbit populations. He speculated most greyhounds raced in California would be imported from those states.

Last November the HSUS West Coast Regional Office produced a special alert bulletin outlining the GSGA's plans to have the greyhound legislation introduced in the California legislature. The bulletin was sent to all California humane societies and HSUS members. The humane movement responded with hundreds of letters to the regional office. This reaction was reported by HSUS to Governor Brown, members of the Governmental Organization Committee, and Assemblyman Ralph. Numerous representatives from animal welfare (Continued on page 2.)
From the Director's Desk

Dogfighting's Destiny With the Law

By Franz L. Dantler, Director
HSUS West Coast Region

No one really knows when dogfighting was first introduced into this country, although it seemed to become an organized activity during the early 1800s. This was about the same time that the Staffordshire bull terrier was imported into the United States. The breed was the starting point for the development of the American pit bull terrier, which was bred expressly for fighting-capable of extended combat for several hours at a time.

During the mid-1800s, dogfighting was gaining in popularity and, as a result, several states passed laws prohibiting the cruel practice. Several sanctiﬁng organizations disassociated themselves from the activity, and a gradual decline in ﬁghting became apparent during the 1930s and 1940s. However, the decline was short-lived. During the late 1960s origi­ nal dogfighting was increasing and is currently at its highest peak ever in the United States. Presently there are several national publications devoted to the "sport." The activity even supports its own breeding registry. It has been estimated that over 8,000 people are now actively engaged in illegal dogfighting.

Although states outlaw the activity, dogfighting has prospered primarily because of a lack of enforcement and small, cursory ﬁnes for violators. One of the many problems of enforcement lies in the sad fact that law enforcement agencies in some geographic areas either ignore the activity or, in some cases, actually provide security privil­eges for the participants. Contests are frequently conducted in remote areas with very tight security, making enforcement difﬁcult, even under the best of circumstances.

This is a surprise to many people who learn that there is no federal law prohibiting the despicable activity. For years the "sport" has had virtual immunity from federal authorities while its promoters used the federal postal system to mail dogs and facilitate encouraging ﬁghting. It is well known that dogfighting is also a haven for a number of other illegal activities, such as gambling, drugs, and even murder. Although a number of bills were introduced during the last session of Congress, none was passed. Several bills have been reintroduced this session, and it seems likely that a federal law may be passed.

In California, Assemblyman Mike Antonovich (D-Los Angeles) has introduced AB 614, which would make dogfighting a felony with a mandatory prison sentence. In addition, AB 614 would require the seizure of animals by police, helping enforce the law. The latter is an important addition to the current mis­deemeanor law because it would emanate from a higher value on their dogs. Assemblyman Antonovich has indicated that he has received opposition to the bill by the organized dogfighters in the state. California is a major area for pit bull training, breeding, and ﬁghting.

Humanitarians in favor of the bill may make their views known by writing As­semblyman Antonovich, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. Hopefully, we will see the day it can become a cruel, medial prac­tice will become a thing of the past and will take its place among other atrocities no longer tolerated by a responsible society.

Spokane to Sell Shelter Animals

The Spokane, Wash., city council has voted to sell unclaimed dogs and cats at the city's animal shelter to universities for research purposes. The agreement would provide a minimum of 1,000 dogs and cats per year to the University of Washington and Washington State Uni­versity. Dogs will be purchased for $15 each, and cats for $5.

When Mrs. M. G. (Joyce) Sutherland learned of the council's action, she organ­ized 200 volunteers and formed the Interested Citizens Committee to ﬁght the decision. Petitions calling for an ini­tia­tive to overturn the council's decision are now being circulated by the committee. Six thousand signatures are needed.

The committee contacted the HSUS West Coast Regional Ofﬁce for help in their project. Franz L. Dantler, director of the HSUS West Coast Regional Ofﬁce, said he will offer assistance to the committee. Dantler said HSUS is opposed to selling any surplus animals to research facilities because of the in­humane treatment to which many laboratory animals are subjected. He also said such a practice destroys the public conﬁdence in animal control pro­grams.

The Spokane City Pound has been under severe criticism recently because of alleged inconsistencies in its opera­tion. Recently the facility's poundmaster was indicted by the Spokane grand jury on charges of illegally selling animals. The grand jury is currently investigating this and other charges.

Greyhound Continued

Greyhound groups throughout the state appeared to testify against the legislation.

Earlier in April a Washington state sen­ate committee soundly defeated a similar bill, SB 2906.

Californians interested in keeping greyhound racing out of their state cannot rest with the defeat of Ralph's bill. The news media quote the DGCA as say­ing that they will attempt to qualify an initiative for the June, 1976 ballot. Be cause of the dire need of funds, the last general election, California proponents of greyhound racing will need fewer signatures than last year to qualify the initiative.

Marta York, a member of Weinstock's Trendsetters, shows a hamster to elementary school children during a student teaching session. The Trendsetters are members of Sacramento's Weinstock Department Stores youth board. The board recently chose humane education as their community service project. HSUS designed a program using visual aids and the film "Why Protect Animals," which the graduating seniors presented to more than 8,000 students in Sacramento County, Calif.

Humane Education's Chain Reaction

By John J. Demmers, Director
HSUS Norma Terris Humane Education Center

There is probably no more comfortable and valid method of creating enthusiasm for HSUS programs in a teacher than by having another teacher explain and support our effort. In this way one teacher becomes a beacon, guiding scores of teachers into the HSUS humane education port.

The humane education chain reaction does not stop with the teacher. When a teacher becomes enthusiastic about humane education and learns the proper skills in which to convey it, he or she becomes a humane generator, exposing hundreds, and eventually thousands of children to HSUS humane education programs. The students, in turn, take advantage of HSUS's peer-to-peer youth teaching program. This program is de­signed to allow children to teach other children basic concepts in humane education. In this program, for example, a junior high school student can elect to take the HSUS material into an elementary school and teach such subjects as basic pet care or the reasons wild animals don't make good pets.

Like the enthusiastic teacher success­fully exciting other teachers, the student can often relate with other children much more successfully than an adult figure. And what is probably no greater learning situation for the student than the teaching role. The intense prep­aration needed for the in-depth classroom discussions give stu­dents a legacy of humane education to carry with them the rest of their lives.

I am proud to report that educators throughout the nation see the Norma Terris Center as a valid educational in­stitution. This is conﬁrmed when I return to school and listen to students before and see HSUS programs blossoming into a regular and accepted part of the school curriculum. HSUS will continue to give great priority to turning on individual teachers and students to humane education. Like spokes from the Norma Terris Center hub, these in­valuable people are the mainstays sup­porting our important message.

Projector Needed

Because of expanded educацион activities in the region, the HSUS West Coast Regional Ofﬁce has an urgent need of a 16mm projector. If you have a projecting to donate a projector is kindly asked to contact the regional of­ﬁces.
West Coast Legislative Highlights

(Abbreviations: SB—Senate Bill; AB—Assembly Bill; HB—House Bill.)

California

Dog Tattooing (AB 260, Ralph)—allows dogs to be tattooed in lieu of wearing dog license tags.

Animal Fighting (AB 614, Antonovich)—makes possession with intent to train or fight any bear, bull, cock, or dog a felony instead of a misdemeanor; calls for mandatory jail sentence of six months and forfeiture of animals and implements.

Sodomy (AB 489, Brown)—part of this bill makes molesting an animal sexually a misdemeanor.

Veterinarian Report of Animal Cruelty (AB 1043, McVittle/Goggin)—requires veterinarian to report to local law enforcement or animal control any violation he observes of animal cruelty statutes.

Veterinarian Report of Dog Fight (AB 1062, MacDonald)—requires veterinarian who has reasonable cause to believe dog’s death or injury resulted from participation in a staged dogfight to report it to law enforcement officials.

Sale of Scrimshaw (AB 1069, Thomas)—changes law so scrimshaw (carved or engraved whalebone or whale ivory) may be sold if seller can demonstrate that it was produced prior to Jan. 1, 1972.

Movie Cruelty (SB 778, Roberti)—prohibits selling or showing for admission movies which depict actual or deliberate killing of an animal unless a certificate is filed with attorney general stating no animal was killed in the making of the picture.

Poling of Horses (SB 273, Schrade)—prohibits horses’ legs from coming into contact with any kind of wire, except electric wire.

Penal Code Revision (SB 565, Roberti)—formerly SB 39; revises entire penal code including animal sections.

Greyhound Racing (SB 2888 & HR 1173)—would have legalized greyhound racing in Washington; was soundly defeated in the Senate Committee in April 1975.

Animal Cruelty Statutes (SB 2730, Lewis)—provides for stronger animal cruelty statutes; passed the Senate Agriculture Committee but with amendment exempting agricultural practices.

Trapper Training Program (SB 2731, Lewis/Peterson)—provides that anyone obtaining a license to trap for the first time and all youth under the age of 17 must first complete a course in humane, safe, and proper trapping techniques, including the use of instant kill and painless capture traps.

Oregon

Humane Investigators (HB 2027, Byers)—sets up 3-member board nominated by humane societies and appointed by the governor to designate state humane investigators.

Animal Control Statutes (HB 3129, Whiting)—revises Oregon animal control, dog leash, and running-at-large laws; establishes minimum $5 dog license fee with at least a 3-to-1 differential for spayed and neutered animals.

Confinement of Animals (HB 2821, Whiting)—prohibits confinement of animals in vehicles when it endangers the health of the animal.

Seminars Continued

Mrs. Drennon to conduct another humane education seminar on March 18 for a group of professional educators.

The University of California at Fresno gave one semester unit of college credit to all teachers attending the March 21-22 humane education seminar in Fresno. HSUS and the Central California SPCA co-hosted the seminar. Mrs. Thelma Shipman of the Central California SPCA coordinated the fast-paced two-day program.

The Fresno teachers greeted Domes’ “Evening at the Movies” program with enthusiasm. Several humane education-related films were shown, including “Whales, Dolphins, and Men.” The seminar included a roundtable luncheon which enabled teachers to share ideas and information with humane society education experts from all over California. A segment of the program included a presentation on instructional television (ITV). Bernice Marshall, an expert on ITV, explained how to effectively use ITV as a teaching tool. Other guest speakers were Sherrie May, director of education for the Monterey SPCA, and Charlotte Moore, education coordinator for the Santa Barbara Humane Society. Fresno Mayor Ted Wills proclaimed March 21 as Humane Education Day for the city.

The Humane Society of the United States
West Coast Regional Office
1713 J St., Suite 4
Sacramento, CA 95814

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage Paid
Washington, D.C.
PERMIT NO. 42828