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Winter 1981

# WCRO Winter 1981

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# REPORT

WINTER 1981

## NOT SO BLOODLESS BULLFIGHTS HELD IN CALIFORNIA IN SPITE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S RULING



HSUS Photo

Bloodless or Portuguese-style bullfight promoters in California are using a loophole in the California Penal Code to hold their not-so-bloodless spectacles in the state despite a recent opinion by California Attorney General George Deukmejian.

Although bullfighting in any form is prohibited by law in California, an archaic exemption still exists under Penal Code section 597m, which reads: "This section shall not be construed as prohibiting bloodless bullfights, contests, or exhibitions held in connection with religious celebrations or religious festivals."

This exemption has caused much controversy and confusion among humane authorities and district attorneys when they are confronted by the bullfight promoters. The WCRO recently obtained a published opinion by the Attorney General on the subject of bloodless bullfights. According to this February, 1981 opinion, "It is a violation of Penal Code section 597m for a bullfight promoter to stage a bloodless bullfight at which a priest simply says a Catholic mass and blesses the bulls."

The opinion goes on to state that a bloodless bullfight would only be legal if it is an integral part of an over-all religious celebration or festival. But profit-hungry promoters still hold these events and are planning others, usually by approaching a priest of a Catholic church and offering to promote a bloodless bullfight "in connection with" a Catholic mass. An admission fee is charged and the proceeds of the bullfight are divided

between the sponsoring church and the promoters, even though it is common knowledge that Catholic masses are conducted daily throughout the world and bullfights are neither part of the liturgy of the mass, nor an essential adjunct to it. In fact, the Vatican has a long history of abhorring cruelty to animals and has condemned bullfighting throughout much of its history, even as recently as 1966.

Unfortunately, California bullfight promoters have been successful in finding certain priests who will sponsor the events and the WCRO has learned that these events are being held regularly in some areas, including Escalon,

*(Continued page 2)*

### PUPPY MILLS —

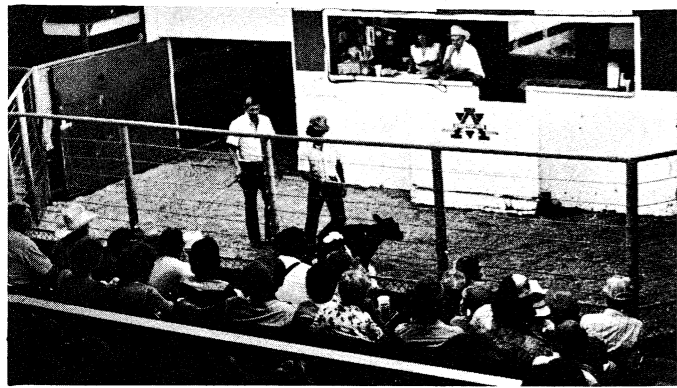
#### Profiteering on Massive Cruelty

Sentenced to a life of misery, adult dogs in puppy mills are frequently subjected to injurious and unhealthy conditions. They are deprived of the exercise, play, and affection that companion animals deserve. Most puppy mill operators see their dogs not as pets, but as puppy-producing machines to be used solely for profit.

A puppy mill is a mass dog-breeding establishment that produces puppies for profit by selling them wholesale to the pet industry. Thousands upon thousands of puppies are produced annually to be sold to brokers who, in turn, sell them primarily to pet stores across the nation. Because profit, not quality dogs, is the goal of the puppy mill owner, breeding practices are often shoddy, and the breeding dogs are frequently kept under the most inexpensive possible conditions that will keep them alive and producing. These mills are characterized by overcrowding, filth, inadequate shelter, and insufficient food, water, and veterinary care.

The HSUS believes the deplorable conditions must be brought to public attention if these cruelties are to be stopped. Help us educate the public about the hidden abuses, the consumer ripoff, and what can be done by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the WCRO. We will send you a free, informative puppy mill report to share with someone who cares.

## Cruelty at Livestock Auctions



HSUS Photo

The West Coast Regional Office of the HSUS has begun gathering information on the abuse of animals at livestock auctions on the West Coast. WCRO is compiling the information to determine how widespread abuses are in the transportation, handling, and sale of auctioned animals, and has concluded there is need for reform on the part of many livestock operators. A number of local humane organizations and animal control agencies are helping by sending officers to visit auctions, observe conditions, and report back so we can identify the most persistent problems.

Investigator Eric Sakach has inspected both large and small scale auctions in California and has found that, while some are kept clean and auctioned animals are handled in an appropriate manner, others are filthy and abuses are common. Some problems are common to most auctions: transportation (hauling animals like calves, sheep, goats and pigs in automobile trunks), abusive handling of young calves, excessive use of electric prods, and hitting with canes. Sharp protusions in runways, overcrowding, and lack of water are also common conditions.

The WCRO believes that, while some auctions do concern themselves with proper care and treatment of the animals they handle, many more show a total lack of concern, resulting in the needless suffering of hundreds of animals and a considerable waste of meat because of bruising and deplorable conditions.

### A. G. Ruling (continued)

Modesto, Gustine, and Pico Rivera.

WCRO Investigator Eric Sakach attended six such events in San Joaquin County in early September, accompanied by Peninsula Humane Society humane officer, Captain Kurt Lapham, to gather information and documentation. The six bullfights were staged by bullfight promoter Frank Borba at the Campo Bravo bullring in Escalon and advertised as a fundraiser for the Fiesta Holy Ghost Portuguese Social Group of Oakdale, California. Although the Fiesta Group had a beer stand at the bullring and a priest delivered a simple mass before the bullfights began, a spokeswoman was unable to state what was the actual religious celebration or festival in connection with which the bullfights were being held.

What Sakach and Lapham later observed and photographed during the bullfights could hardly be termed

bloodless or religious. According to their reports, one horse ridden by the matador in two fights was exposed to unnecessary danger because no pads were used to protect it from the bull's horns. The frightened horse was spurred so severely, during the matador's attempts to attach velcro-tipped banderillas to the charging bull's back, that by the end of the second fight the horse's sides showed bloody cuts, and blood was dripping from the matador's spurs.

The other bullfights involved one or more matadors challenging the bulls, or a "suicide squad" of men who would tease and then grapple with the confused animals. In the last bullfight, a matador dressed as a woman entered the arena and performed a striptease for the spectators while attempting to drape a brassiere and wig on the bull's horns. After that act, the matador again entered the ring, this time on a go-cart. The bull attacked and fell over the cart, much to the crowd's amusement. Finally, the matador grabbed the animal's tail, yanking it so violently that the bull turned in circles as it tried to free itself, and it was eventually pulled down. Large open wounds could be seen on the animal's body and were photographed by the investigators.

Convinced that the bullfights staged by Frank Borba had little, if any, religious significance, and having witnessed the senseless and often brutal treatment of the animals used, the WCRO compiled a lengthy report asking that charges be brought against Borba and the Fiesta Group by the San Joaquin County District Attorney's office. According to Sakach, "More than 1,500 people paid ten dollars each to watch a group of men terrorize a few animals and make a mockery of the Catholic Church."

The HSUS believes it is more important than ever that California humanitarians let their state representatives know they want this loophole, which is being used as an excuse for cruelty under the guise of religion, closed once and for all.

## WCRO Inspects Animal Shelters

### CITY OF LONG BEACH

Field Investigator Eric Sakach conducted an inspection at the animal sheltering facility for the City of Long Beach, California.

The unannounced inspection was in response to requests from City Administrative Analyst Lloyd Kuhn and Animal Control Superintendent Dorothy Monnier. A report of our findings was forwarded to officials with our recommendations for improvements following the inspection.

### YUBA COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

An in-depth study of Yuba County's animal shelter was conducted at the request of animal control officials in Yuba and Butte Counties, who had complained to our regional office about the very poor conditions at the county facility and the county's apparent lack of concern over overcrowded and impossible-to-clean kennels. While a scathing report of findings with recommendations for improvements has been sent to Yuba County officials, the WCRO continues to receive complaints and stronger action may therefore be necessary.

## DIRECTOR'S DESK



We win some, we lose some—but the important thing is for all of us to continue our fight to prevent cruelty and suffering of animals. Congratulations to California Senator David Roberti who authored SB 1047.

Senator Roberti refused to compromise and, as a result, we now have a law allowing the elderly to keep pets in public housing developments. This session (1982) the Senator will carry legislation to outlaw pound seizure in California. If the legislation passes, it will stop all animal shelters from selling or giving away dogs and cats for research. Every humane-minded person needs to contact legislators from their district or write to the WCRO asking that such legislation be passed.

Our office also has addressed the dog eating problem. We are told our request to the legislature for an Attorney General's Opinion will be met. We have also been in contact about the problem of dog eating in the Philippines.

Some things already on the 1982 West Coast Regional Office schedule include: 1) A NAAHE Humane Education Seminar in Portland, Oregon in May, 1982. 2) The HSUS Academy Animal Control Training Program in San Mateo in February. 3) A Veal Calf Awareness Campaign in major newspapers and magazines. We need more HSUS members to sponsor these veal calf awareness ads. 4) Stepped up attention to Rodeo Animal Abuse.

If you want to help us on any of these or other issues, call or write our office. If we know you are interested in a specific issue, we'll add your name to special lists to receive alerts and information in more detail.

Grateful thanks to all our HSUS members who have supported us emotionally as well as financially. Eric, Judi, Dee and I are doing our best to keep costs down without reducing our programs or our service to you. Let's make 1982 an even more productive year.

*Char Dremmon*  
DIRECTOR

## HSUS Academy Come to West Coast

Peninsula Humane Society and Marin Humane Society, both accredited by The HSUS, wanted more of their staff and other West Coast personnel to have an opportunity to attend the professional 100-hour HSUS Academy course which is based at the University of Alabama. They, therefore, offered to sponsor the course and it will be held at the Peninsula Humane Education Building on February 15-26, 1982. Space will be limited so anyone wanting to attend should send in their name immediately. The price is \$224 for two weeks.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT TRAPPING . . . OREGON GROUP FILES SUIT



In the Summer/Fall 1980 issue of the *West Coast Regional Office Report*, we reported the formation of Oregon Veterinarians Against Trapping and Oregonians Against Trapping (OAT). These two groups had campaigned an Oregon State initiative that would have banned the sale and use of snare and leghold traps for

(continued back page)

**Reflect for a moment... how can I help animals even when I no longer share their world...?**

By your bequest for animal protection to The Humane Society of the United States. Your will can provide for animals after you're gone. Naming The HSUS demonstrates your lasting commitment to animal welfare and strengthens the Society for this task. We will be happy to send information about our animal programs and material which will assist in planning a will.

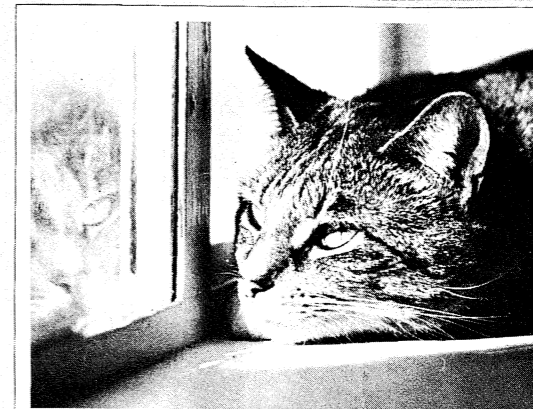
Please send: Will information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail in confidence to: Murdaugh S. Madden, Vice President/General Counsel, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.



## As We Go To Press . . .

The WCRO has vigorously protested the recent cruel clubbing and throat-slitting of some 22,000 jack rabbits by farmers and townspeople in Mud Lake, Idaho. The HSUS abhors the manner in which the killing was conducted and has urged Governor John V. Evans to intervene to stop further such atrocities from occurring. Contact Governor Evans urging his intervention by writing to him at: Statehouse, 700 W. State Street, Boise, ID 83720.

## Truth About Trapping (continued)

catching furbearing animals and would have phased out the trapping of predators. Humanitarians had managed to collect well over the 54,773 signatures required for the initiative, which was designated BALLOT MEASURE #5.

The WCRO sent Action Alerts to HSUS constituents in Oregon urging their support but the measure failed because its opponents, heavily financed from out-of-state sources, portrayed trapping as a public service to Oregon's economy and a boon to public health.

OAT subsequently filed suit against the opponents of Ballot Measure #5 citing nine areas in which false statements were made. (Under Oregon law, a political action committee can sue for damages caused by false campaign statements.) The WCRO has now been advised that OAT has joined forces with the Northwest Wolf Preservation Society to form Wildlife Defense Northwest (WDN) to build support for the lawsuit.

The defendants in the suit, an Oregon-based political committee and an Ohio corporation, first moved for dismissal of the case on the grounds that the Oregon law unconstitutionally stifled free speech. However, according to an update from WDN, the motion was denied. Ruling in favor of Oregonians Against Trapping, the judge stated, "I conclude that under the Oregon Constitution the people contemplated that free speech would and should be limited by statute designed to prevent abuse . . . Nothing is more fundamental to elections than the public interest in having them as free as possible of deliberate falsehoods concerning the material facts."

The WCRO has been advised the defendants filed a second motion, now pending, asking that the suit be thrown out for lack of standing by OAT. The opponents want the suit to die. This second motion will result in further delay before the actual trial begins.

The suit is shaping into an important issue for wildlife and the future of the Oregon electoral process. Oregon citizens who care about the suffering of animals caught in cruel steel traps or snares may contact Wildlife Defense Northwest at P.O. Box 3582, Portland, Oregon 97208.

## The Humane Society of the United States

West Coast Regional Office  
1713 J Street, Suite 305  
Sacramento, CA 95814



## West Coast Seminars for Law Enforcement Agencies A Success

Nearly 600 police officers, sheriff's deputies, humane officers, animal control officers, and federal agents have attended recent seminars on the West Coast on investigating the illegal activities of dogfighting and cockfighting. As mentioned in the last issue of the *West Coast Report*, several hundred officers had attended programs conducted by HSUS Chief Investigator Frantz Dantzer and WCRO Investigator Eric Sakach in Northern California. Since then, hundreds more, including a number of prosecuting attorneys and judges, have attended HSUS workshops in Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and Southern California.

Each workshop was jointly hosted by a humane or animal control agency in cooperation with a police or sheriff's department or district attorney's office. The HSUS thanks all the hosting agencies and all who attended these workshops.

### Did You Know?

HSUS publishes **Kind** magazine for children ages 8 and above. Bimonthly, \$4 per year. HSUS's National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education publishes **Humane Education** magazine for teachers and other humane educators. Quarterly, \$7 per year. You can write to either or both at:

HSUS  
2100 L Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20037

**The HSUS West Coast Regional Office serves California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. Requests for assistance should be addressed to Charlene Drennon, West Coast Regional Director, 1713 J St., Suite 305, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916-447-3295). All contributions made to the HSUS West Coast Regional Office will be used for regional purposes and are tax-deductible.**

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