Bite Back

BITING BACK AGAINST ANIMAL ABUSE

Issue 1
March/April 1999

FREE

CHIPPERFIELD CRUELTY



LAB ANIMAL DEALERS

FUR ● HUNT NEWS ● LIVE EXPORTS

and much more

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WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF BITE BACK. . .This magazine is designed to cover all aspects of cruelty and the animal protection movement, where possible, with a positive angle. Whilst we all know the horrors of animal abuse, we have made real progress and although there is still a tremendous amount of work to be done we can and will win. But we must do this together.

Bite Back is distributed free of charge because we really want to reach out to those who know what's going on and to those who don't.

How many of you received a leaflet and it changed your life? Well that's what we're here for.

To do this for free is very expensive, but vital. If you can support us financially then please do so.

We are all volunteers so every penny you donate goes to fighting animal cruelty.

Please make cheques/ P.O.s payable to 'Bite Back'

If you want to receive Bite Back in the future then all you have to do is stamp and send the enclosed postcard.

Bite Back

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Cover photo : A circus lion at Chipperfields (CAPS)
Inset : Beagle (Harlan Catalogue)

NEWS

BADGER CULL SHAMBLES



The mass cull of badgers due to start in May in Gloucestershire may be called off following a series of blunders.

At a meeting with farmers in Holsworthy, Devon, on the 11th of November, agriculture Minister Jeff Rooker was asked by West Country Television for his views on the Bern Convention, after the National Federation of Badger Groups claimed the cull would breach the 1979 treaty to which Britain is a signatory. Rooker replied, "I have to say . . . I haven't got a clue what the question is about," and later revealed that he knew nothing about the convention.



Just a month later, Britain alone abstained from supporting a motion at the Bern Convention's annual standing committee meeting, calling on the British Government to suspend the cull immediately.

MAFF's own research shows that if the full cull goes ahead as planned, more than 2,300 badger cubs will be left to starve to death.

The first cull in Devon was thought to have been completed quickly, but it has been revealed that some farmers refused to allow the badgers on their land to be killed, and some badgers appear to have dispersed to small outlying setts. If some of the badgers survived, the experiment will be invalidated.

It has also been revealed that farmers in some of the control areas - where no culling was supposed to take place - have been illegally killing badgers. This has invalidated the experiment results even further.

It is thought that the next culling zone, around Ross on Wye on the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire border, is likely to be far more difficult to undertake because it will be within easy reach of animal rights activists from Gloucester, Bristol and the Midlands.

News in Brief...

BROILER COLLAPSE

The chicken market has taken a turn for the worse again.

In a recent edition of "Broiler Bulletin" from the NFU, editor John Parsons had begun to speak of "light at the end of the tunnel" in early September.

The optimism proved ill-founded and by the start of November, he was forced to report that the wholesale market "has totally collapsed again."

HOUNDS KILLED

At least five hounds were killed when they were struck by a passenger train. The dogs were hit by the Manchester to Penzance service on Saturday 9th January at 2.20pm. Police said the only hunt out at the time was the Llangybi.

FUR

Last year was a bad year for fur farms in Finland with over 100 closing down.



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SCOTTISH BEAVERS

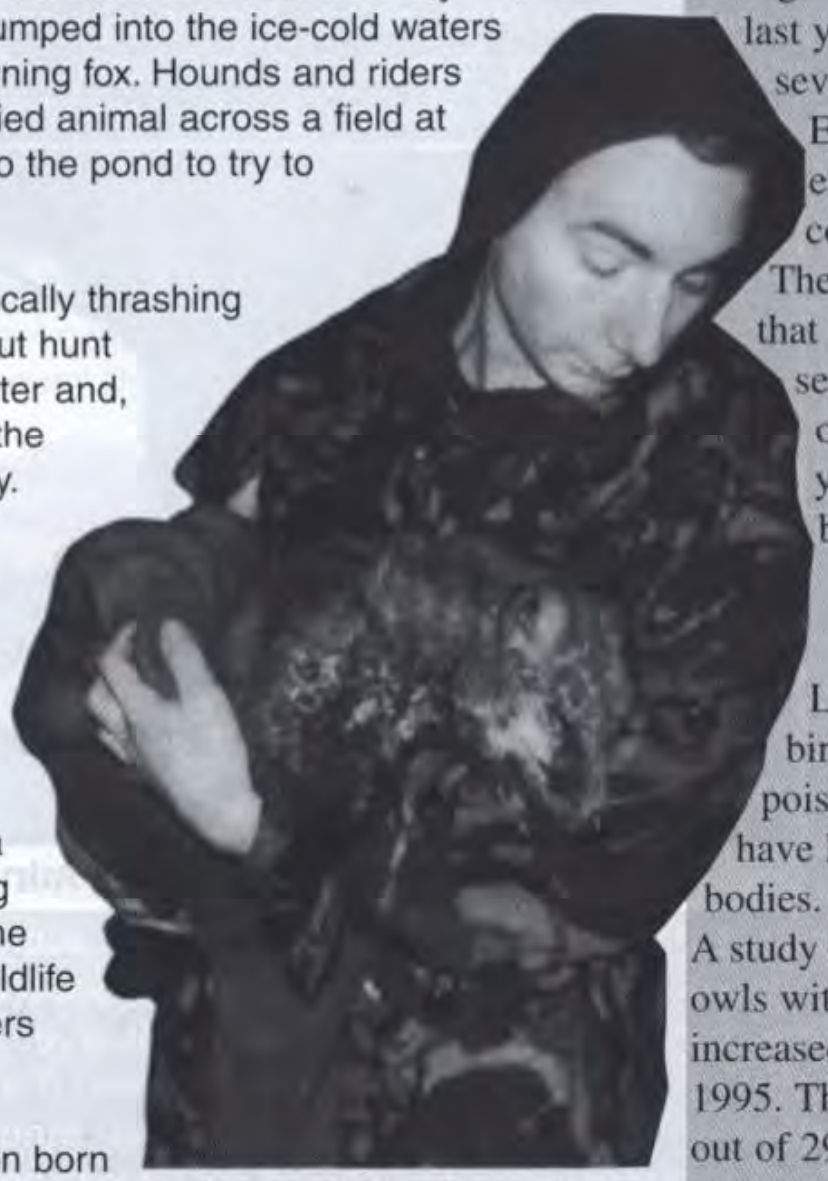
A pilot scheme to bring beavers back to Scotland has been given the go-ahead by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and will probably start within three years. This follows European beaver reintroduction projects in 14 other countries since the 1920s.

NEWS

SAB RISKS LIFE TO SAVE LIFE

During a hunt of the Cheshire Forest Foxhounds on Wednesday 11th of November 1998, a hunt saboteur jumped into the ice-cold waters of a flooded pond to rescue a drowning fox. Hounds and riders from the hunt had been chasing the terrified animal across a field at Ashton, near Chester, when it jumped into the pond to try to escape.

The fox, too exhausted to swim and frantically thrashing about, disappeared below the surface - but hunt protester Mark Davies leaped into the water and, almost submerged, plucked the fox from the bottom of the pond and carried it to safety.



A fellow saboteur who witnessed the incident said : 'Mark is a real hero; without a thought for himself but only for the fox he went straight in and pulled it out. The fox is now being cared for at a wildlife hospital and it looks as though it will survive the ordeal. Mark is suffering a bit from the soaking he got in the freezing pond, but he is determined to be out at the next Cheshire hunt meet to save more wildlife from the torture and abuse that the hunters inflict'.

The fox, a young cub which had only been born that year, was extremely lucky - the hounds had almost caught it and would have torn it to shreds if it had not jumped in the pond. One can only hope that some of the hunters, especially those who looked on and did nothing to help but only jeered, will search their hearts for a little compassion and perhaps realise just how much pain and suffering they put wildlife through for their bit of entertainment.

FARMER JAILED FOR CRUELTY



A Welsh farmer has been given his third jail term for cruelty to animals.

William Jones, Hafod y Bryn, Bwlchgwyn, near Wrexham, was already banned from keeping livestock until 2011 when RSPCA inspectors checked the condition of 68 sheep grazing land at a water treatment works.

At an earlier hearing, South East Cheshire Magistrates Court was told that 20 of the sheep owned by Mr Jones, were in severe pain from footrot. He was convicted of causing unnecessary suffering to 15 of the animals.

On Monday 25th January magistrate David Gostling sentenced Mr Jones to four months imprisonment.The court heard that Mr Jones was jailed for cruelty to farm livestock in 1993 and 1996.

News in Brief...

BSE INCREASE

Portugal reported 104 cases of BSE last year, more than the previous seven years put together. The EC promptly banned the export of live cattle from the country.

The knock-on effect of this is that the bull rings in Spain face a severe shortage because 40% of the 1500 bulls killed each year come from specialised breeders in Portugal.

OWLS

Large numbers of predatory birds and mammals are being poisoned after eating rodents that have high levels of poisons in their bodies.

A study found that the proportion of owls with rodent poison in their livers increased from 5% in 1983 to 36% in 1995. The same study found that 9 out of 29 dead polecats collected between 1992 and 1994 contained rat poison.

MLC

The Institute of Practioners in Advertising (IPA) have given an advertising effectiveness award to one of the country's biggest advertisers - The Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC). This is a reminder of the amount of money going into the promotion of meat.

The MLC spent £36.2 million on media advertising on red meat during the four years from 1994-1997.

This year they plan to spend an estimated £28 million of tax-payers money on advertising.

DRUG NEWS...

The NHS spends around £6.3 billion a year on prescription medicines. The pharmaceutical industry that makes these drugs spends about £570 million a year marketing them.

NEWS

IS FUR FARMING ON IT'S WAY OUT?

Despite repeated claims by Labour that they do intend to carry out their pre–election promise to ban fur farming, they have admitted that there are no immediate plans to do so. As a result, Labour MP Maria Eagle introduced a Private Members Bill on 13th January aimed at banning fur farming. The move would close the remaining 13 mink farms in Britain and prevent any animal being raised for its fur again.

The Bill has come second in the ballot for backbenchers, so any attempts to disrupt it could also disrupt those PMB's lower down on the list, and the Bills' sponsors are therefore hopeful that it will pass through its various stages more easily than otherwise. It also has the support of a large number of MPs of all parties. The Government has already expressed its support for the Bill but in what way this will be shown remains to be seen.

The final draft of the Bill is still being completed so a time–scale for closing farms and the issue of compensation is not yet known. We hope that farms will close as soon as possible and no compensation (or as little as possible) will be given. Legal advice has revealed that if a phase–out period is given then compensation should not have to be paid. If the Bill is successful (and if there are few interruptions to it, it could be law by the summer) it is most likely that fur farms will have to close down by the time the licensing legislation comes up for renewal in December 2000.



Tin can used to suffocate mink

Although the Coalition to Abolish the Fur Trade (CAFT) believes that the government should be introducing primary legislation on this issue we recognise that that is not likely to come for some time, and this Bill may therefore be the best chance we have had to abolish fur farming.

Please contact your MP and ask them to support Maria Eagle's Fur Farming (Prohibition) Bill. (House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA)


"Beagles bred for laboratories can never be rehomed".
- Bob Coley, manager of Harlan Interfauna (breeders of Beagles for labs)

DOG COPS SACKED

Following an internal disciplinary hearing, the two police dog trainers convicted of animal cruelty in November were sacked from the force. Sgt Andrew White, 38, and PC Kenneth Boorman, 45, lost their jobs after being given four month jail terms. PC Stephen Hopkins, 42, who had been given a community service sentence, was reprimanded and banned from working with police dogs. White was Head of training at the Essex police dog headquarters in Sandon. Boorman and Hopkins were instructors.

Last year magistrates heard how they ordered police handlers to treat their dogs savagely.

One dog, a four-year-old German Shepherd called Acer, died of a ruptured liver after being hanged and kicked twice within three days.

The three are to appeal against their convictions.

NEWS

NEW TACTIC ON BADGERS?



In a proposal intended to stem the upsurge of tuberculosis sweeping through cattle in the West Country and the Midlands, producers have told ministers that it might be better to abandon large areas of farm land to badgers instead of provoking protests by killing them. In return farmers would expect compensation from the government for loss of income, says the National Farmers' Union.

Parts of Devon, Cornwall, Herefordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire and Gloucestershire are the most likely candidates for the "no-go areas."



The first of these trials under a new programme was completed in Devon before Christmas when more than 250 badgers were killed. But this trial provoked protests from wildlife experts who say that culling the animals is barbaric and ineffective. Brian Jennings, Chairman of the NFU's Animal Health & Welfare Committee, said : "The idea would be to create a kind of disease control set-aside where cattle would be removed from 'high risk' zones containing large populations of badgers. I already have a couple of areas in mind where the idea could be tried out."

WELCOME TO THE GOOD LIFE



Meet Mickey. He is one of 27 dogs rescued from puppy farms in Carmarthanshire in 3 separate raids during December. The anonymous communique continues ; "Mickey was kept in filthy conditions in the back of an old van with three other dogs. They were all living in their own excrement. Some of the older bitches had lived like this for years. Several vehicles were also disabled". It finishes "we will continue in silence and darkness."

News in Brief...

DRUGS NEWS CONTINUED...

Canada has banned bovine somatotrophin (BST), a genetically engineered growth hormone that increases milk yields when injected into dairy cows.
Veterinary experts concluded that cows treated with the hormone are 25% more likely to develop mastitis, 18% more likely to be infertile and 50% more likely to become lame.

European agriculture ministers have banned four antibiotic drugs from animal feed after warnings that over use by farmers is causing resistance to antibiotics in humans who eat pork and chicken.
Pharmaceutical producers reacted angrily to the ban. The US-based drug company Pfizer is planning to sue the European Union and is backed by Eli-Lily and other companies.

On 2nd February 1999, The Food and Drug Administration in America alerted consumers not to purchase or consume products that contain gamma butyrolactone (abbreviated as GBL).
The agency has also asked the manufacturers to voluntarily recall these products. This action has been taken on account of some 55 serious, and in one case fatal, adverse effects. These include unconscious or comatose states, seizures, vomiting, slow breathing, and slow heart rate.
Over the past 30 years this drug has been tested on animals countless times (there are over 370 PUBLISHED experiments, many more experiments would not be published). This proves once again that animal tests are completely unreliable.

HIV protease inhibitor research was delayed for 4 years as the drug killed lab dogs and cats - 20,000 humans died of AIDS in that time.

NEWS

viva victory !


VIVA
An orphaned joey after her mother had been shot.

After a high-profile consumer campaign by the animal rights group Viva! against the sale of kangaroo meat in Britain, the last remaining supplier conceded defeat on Wednesday, 27 January.

Sainsburys advised Viva! that sales of all kangaroo meat in the company's more than 300 stores will cease in February due to 'lack of customer demand'.

Sainsbury's decision conveniently pre-empts a national Day of Action against the company planned for February 27 when over 150 local Viva! groups were to hold demonstrations outside Sainsbury's stores under the slogan - Sainsbury's don't give a XXXX about Kangaroos.

"Sainsbury's customers were shocked when they found out about the company's support for the commercial destruction of wildlife and many voted with their feet," explains Juliet Gellatley, director of Viva!.

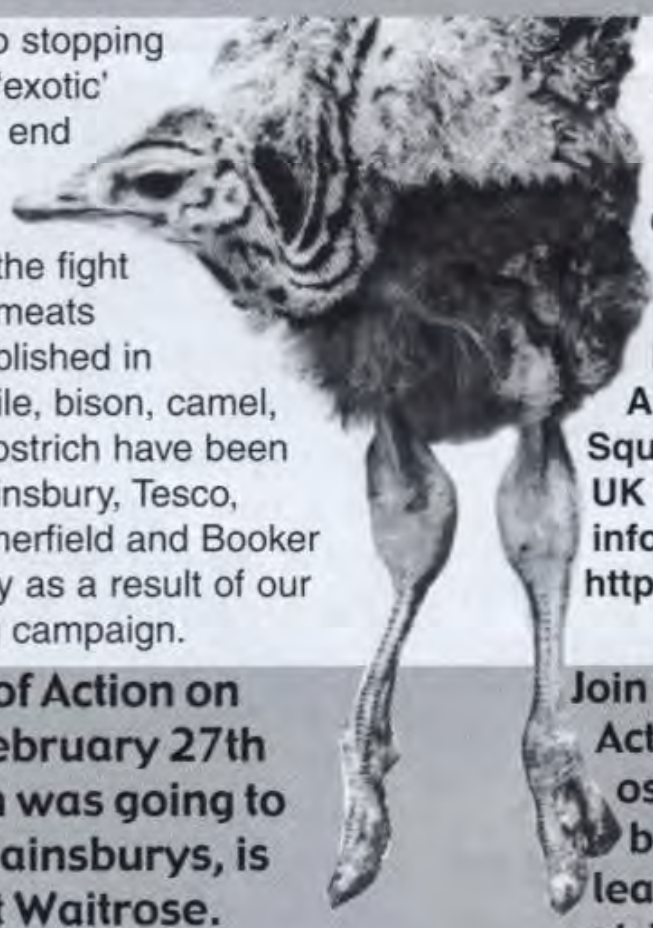
'Exotic' meats shunned by Asda

The supermarket chain Asda has revealed that they will no longer sell any 'exotic' meats in their stores.

Asda's Chief Executive Allan Leighton has said that ostrich meat had been on sale in selected London branches but will now be withdrawn.

There is now only one national outlet for 'exotic' meats - WAITROSE, who are the last stockists of ostrich meat.

Please protest to: Mr D Felwick, Waitrose, Southern Industrial Area, Bracknell RG12 8YA. Tel: 01344 825232.



Viva! is close to stopping the trade in all 'exotic' meats. Help us end it once and for all.

Viva! has won the fight to stop 'exotic' meats becoming established in Britain. Crocodile, bison, camel, kangaroo and ostrich have been dropped by Sainsbury, Tesco, Morrisons, Somerfield and Booker Cash and Carry as a result of our three-year long campaign.

For further information, or a copy of 'Nowhere to Hide' Viva!'s report on ostrich farming, please contact :

Viva! Vegetarians International Voice for Animals 12 Queen Square, Brighton BN1 3FD, UK Tel: 01273 777688 info@viva.org.uk http://www.viva.org.uk

Viva!'s Day of Action on Saturday, February 27th 1999, which was going to be against Sainsburys, is now against Waitrose.

Join in with the Day of Action, dress as ostriches, hold banners and give out leaflets to customers outside your local store.

The police want to make it easier to intercept e-mails (in other words spy on us)
A way round this is to use encryption software. "You might as well use strong, or as hard to crack as possible, software. Among the toughest of these is Phil Zimmerman's Pretty Good Privacy (PGP), which is such hot stuff that it is now treated as munitions-class product in the US - and therefore illegal to export.
To get around the software ban, the program was printed as a book and then scanned back in.
Find out more about electronic privacy at **www.epic.org**
Phil Zimmerman's story is at **www.nai.com/products/security/phil/phil.asp**

In 1999 BUAV hopes to build on their earlier campaign "Paradise Lost" and finally finish the trade in the transportation of primates to laboratories.


©PETA

Below are the airlines left who still transport primates to labs.
PLEASE BOYCOTT THEM.
For more Information contact the BUAV - 0171 700 4888

Air China(1)
Air France
Air India
Air Inter
Air Mauritius(2)
American Airlines
Amerijet International Inc.
Caribbean Air Cargo
China Airlines
China Eastern Airline
Continental (US)(3)
Delta Air (US)
ELAL (Israel)
Faucett (Peru)
Garuda Indonesia
Japan Airlines
Korean Air
LIAT (Caribbean)
Lufthansa (Germany)(4)
Northwest Airlines (US)
Sabena (Belgium)
Saudi Arabian Airline
US Air
Varig (Brazil)

1. Air China (UK Office) has stopped transporting primates into the UK only.
2. Air Mauritius has stopped transporting primates into the UK only.
3. Continental has adopted a policy to ban primates on their international flights.
4. Legal requirements imposed by the German government mean that Lufthansa is obliged to continue carrying primates for the German research industry. However, the transportation of all non-domestic primates has been banned.

NEWS

TWO STAGHUNTERS JAILED

Two hunt supporters who attacked a League Against Cruel Sports cameraman filming a staghunt were jailed last week as an example to others.

John William Bere, 25, of Bishop's Nympton, near South Molton, Devon, and Dean John Richards, 38, of Bishmill, South Molton, punched anti-hunt supporter Kevin Hill during a meet of the Quantock Staghounds at East Quantoxhead and took his video camera.

They pleaded guilty at Taunton Crown Court to assault and theft and Richards was sentenced to six months jail while Bere was given a four month sentence.

Judge Graham Hume Jones said they had become irritated with Mr Hill and said : "The fact is that people are allowed to hunt and people are allowed to demonstrate against the hunt. "In the present climate, emotions are high on each side and there is a very strong chance that violence will break out. Violence must



be stopped and an example must be made to deter others from such violence, particularly when it's going to arise in these highly-charged circumstances."

He said it would have been "quite wrong" to pass non-custodial sentences. "In my judgement, these are light sentences," he said.

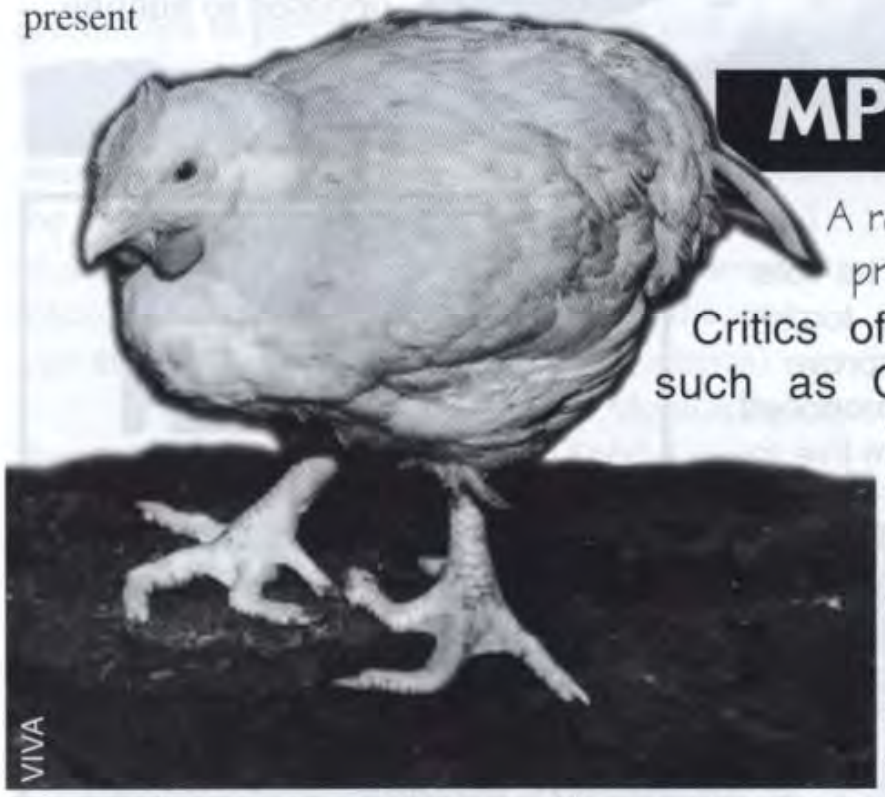
MP SPOTLIGHT

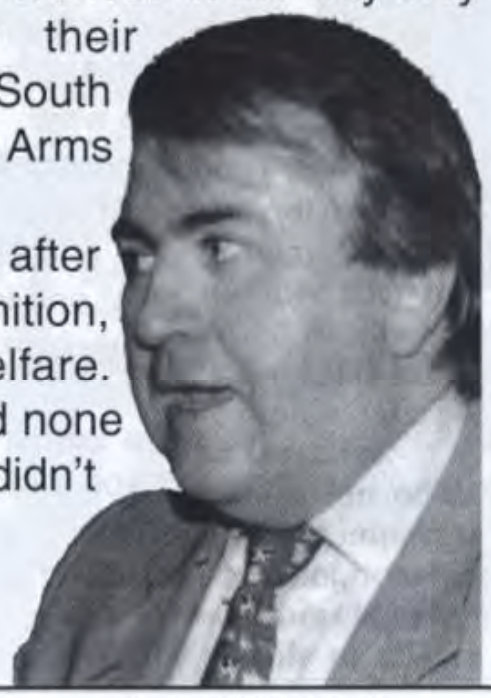
A regular column highlighting pro-cruelty MPs. . .

Critics of farm animal welfare, such as Compassion in World Farming, were labelled 'cheeky' by Robert Walter, Conservative MP for North Dorset.

"Welfare standards on British egg and poultry meat farms are second to none and the welfare critics have a cheek in the way they present their arguments and reach their conclusions", he told the NFU's annual South West poultry conference at the Arundell Arms Hotel, Lifton, Devon.

"Those who earn their livelihood looking after animals for profit are, almost by definition, accused of being poor on animal welfare. Nothing could be further from the truth and none of you would be in business, today, if you didn't care for your birds," said the MP.





Robert Walter MP

News in Brief...

McRIP-OFF

McDonalds is investing £12 million in the Millenium Dome and is planning to build a giant 1,000 diner restaurant which will dominate the approach to it. Lib Dem MP for Montgomeryshire Lembit Opik asked Tony Blair why the showcase for the British culture should be sponsored by "a great big American fast food corporation, which would probably try to reduce it to a large McDome and fries." Blair said that the Greenwich project needed all the sponsors it could get.

HUNT RAMPAGE

Hoofmarks were left on Winston Churchill's grave when horses from the Heythrop Hunt rampaged through St Martins Church Yard at Bladon, Oxford.
The former Prime Minister's grave was recently restored at a cost of £380,000.

BSE

The fourth case of BSE this year has been identified in France in a dairy cow born in July 1994, bringing the total number of cases to 53.
In keeping with government policy, the entire herd has been destroyed.

SPECIAL BRANCH

Several South West Hunt Sabs have been approached by Special Branch officers and offered cash with promises of charges being brought against them being dropped in return for information about other activists. The police offered to pay the mortgage for one sab who had lost his job following an arrest at Hillgrove cat farm. Another, in custody, was given tea and biscuits and offered money and an end to proceedings against him.

NEWS

HUNT LIES EXPOSED... AGAIN

One of the country's leading fox hunts, accused last year of trapping fox cubs for hunting, faces a new investigation after allegations that an artificial earth was found on its land.
Less than eight months ago, the RSPCA rescued a pair of three-month-old cubs from an underground cage on the Sinnington Hunt's land in North Yorkshire.
Now the RSPCA is carrying out another inquiry after photographs and video film were produced, allegedly showing evidence of an artificial earth in the same area.
The League Against Cruel Sports, whose undercover investigators discovered captive fox cubs, are demanding the closure of the Sinnington Hunt.
Steve Rackett, one of the campaigners, said : "It is clear this hunt is encouraging fox numbers. The Sinnington has been involved in other trouble, and it really is time for it to be closed down."
On Boxing Day last year, hounds from the hunt killed a cat in a garden in Kirkby Moorside. Owner Joan Salmon and her children failed to save their pet. She accused the hunt of being arrogant and failing to apologise.
A month earlier, Ryedale District Council ordered the hunt to remove an incinerator used for animal carcasses, which it said had been causing air pollution.
Posters about the hunt have begun appearing in villages in the area, put up, it is said, by local farmers. One shows a cat lying on its back with its legs up in the air and the caption "Latest from Sinnington pantomime productions, puss in bits".
Last night James Holt, the chairman of the Sinnington Hunt said: "I don't know what all the fuss is about."
Mr Holt's ex-wife, Annabel Holt, a former huntswoman, is now a campaigner against bloodsports and intends to set up a register of landowners opposed to hunting.



ABOUT TIME TOO !

Euro MPs have voted to end battery cages for hens within 10 years. The vote was won 228 votes to 152 with 15 abstentions to phase out the cages, forcing European Union farm ministers to reconsider their plans to merely "improve conditions" for about 250 million battery hens in Europe. It had been proposed that by 2003 the number of birds in each cage would be reduced from five to four. (big deal)
In Britain around 30 million hens spend most of their short, miserable lives caged in artificially-lit sheds unable to even stretch their wings. They suffer from stress, osteoporosis, infections and lose their feathers from being pecked by other chickens and scraping against the wire.



©PETA
The unwanted by-product. Live day-old male chicks left to die. They were discovered in the rubbish bins outside a hatchery

After one year of this torture the chicken has reached the end of her "working life" and is shipped off to the slaughterhouse. There many arrive with freshly broken bones, to be killed and end up in soups, pies and pet food.
Phil Lymbery of Compassion in World Farming said : "This is a tremendous day for animal welfare. Battery cages are the oldest and perhaps the cruellest of all the factory farm systems."
(Ed's note; to avoid paying for animal exploitation join the quarter of a million Vegans in this country and don't eat eggs at all.)

CALOR cruelty

Calor Gas has shown support for the poultry industry by launching a leaflet entitled "A Consumer's Guide to Modern Poultry Rearing".
An advert from Calor Gas states : "Calor remains committed to supporting the agriculture industry and it has developed strong links with the NFU, more recently sponsoring the NFU Chicken 'n' Egg marquee at the 1998 Royal Show".
Calor Gas have set up a free phone telephone number so that people can request the guides : **0800 216659**

NEWS

FUR FARM SECURITY

As a direct result of the ALF raids on UK fur farms in 1998, the Ministry of Agriculture (MAFF) have announced plans to force fur farmers to significantly increase security in a move that may well force some of them out of business. The new law would be a large financial burden on farmers at a time when pelt prices are falling due to a decreasing market.



Current legislation requires farmers to carry out certain precautions to prevent mink escaping, but "are not aimed at preventing unauthorised entry on to the premises or any act of sabotage leading to the release of farmed mink into the wild."

The letter admits that "a physical barrier alone is unlikely to keep determined intruders out for long in an isolated situation" and lists other security measures along with their costs. These include:

-Security guard: 12 hours each night, 365 nights a year: £20,000 a year

-Fence sensors: cost up to £12,000 plus annual monitoring cost of up to £800

-Infra-red beams: 5 transmitters and receivers installed: cost around £7,500, with monitoring costs of £300 a year

-CCTV (Cameras): £5,000. Monitoring costs up to £600 a year

The recurring costs could range from £4,000 to £260,000 the, non-recurring costs from £4,500 to £156,000. "The security measures will be required to be maintained in place and in full operation until fur farming is prohibited." It also appears that the more 'targeted' a farm is, the more pressure there will be for greater security measures.

We are aware that some mink farms are only still operating in the hope that they will receive compensation when they are banned. Having to now pay extremely large amounts of money when their future is so uncertain may well encourage some farmers to pull out now. However, increased security would also impede legal inspections by animal rights groups.

News in Brief...

WILDLIFE AWARD

As a recognition of Viva!'s success in virtually ending the kangaroo meat trade in Britain, the Australian Wildlife Protection Council has awarded its director, Juliet Gellatley, its coveted annual award 'in recognition of her contribution to the conservation and protection of Australian wildlife'.Her work ended Australian Meats Ltd., a major exporters of kangaroo, $1 million a year export business.



Maryland Wilson, President of the Australian Wildlife Protection Council said: "Viva!'s efforts to stop the sale and consumption of kangaroo meat in the UK are of utmost importance to the success of our campaigns in Australia. The industry had high hopes for the selling of kangaroo to Britain. Our government saw the UK as the first big target in Europe to make money out of our wildlife.

HILLGROVE PETITION

On February 1st thirty members of Save the Hillgrove Cats handed in a 200,000 name petition to the Home Office calling for the closure of Hillgrove Farm. Bringing the total number so far to 400,000 signatures.



NEWS

RUDDY DUCK IN HUNTERS' SIGHTS



On February 1st, the Department of the Environment announced its plan to start trial shootings of ruddy ducks - with the eventual aim of wiping out the entire UK population (4,000 birds). The ducks are being targeted because they are allegedly flying over to Spain and mating with the endangered white-headed duck, leading to what conservationists describe as a 'genetically impure' hybrid. The white-headed duck is endangered because it has been shot and its habitat destroyed by people.

The shooting of ruddy ducks will initially be taking place in Fife, Anglesey and the West Midlands. The proposal is backed by major conservation organisations such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT). The cost of the operation will ultimately be around £800,000.

Animal Aid has been campaigning against the proposed slaughter of ruddy ducks for over 2 years. Together with local campaigners, we have lobbied the Department of the Environment and staged protests outside the RSPB AGM and the 8 centres of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. Following the protests, cull plans were cancelled back in April 1997. However, Environment Minister Michael Meacher now appears determined to relaunch this cruel and pointless project.

The government is planning to start the killing in April, so at this stage it is essential that we do everything we can to draw public attention to the plight of the UK's ruddy ducks.

How you can help the campaign to save the ruddy ducks :

1. Write to your local paper about the ruddy duck cull.

2. Write to the Environment Minister, Michael Meacher at the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5DU. Urge him to cancel the proposed cull.

3. Write to the RSPB and express your opposition to the cull. If you are a member, explain your intention to withdraw your membership and financial support until the organisation starts offering protection to all birds. Write to : The RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL.Tel. 0800 906090 / 01767 680551

4. Write to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and express your opposition to the cull. Write to The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge, Glos, GL2 7BT. Tel.01453 890333

More info. on the campaign against the ruddy duck cull available from Animal Aid on 01732 364546.

HUNT SABS IN COURT

The Hursley Hambledon fox hunt is notorious as one of the most violent hunts in the country. This led to a situation where it was impossible for hunt saboteurs to attend the hunt due to serious physical attacks and intimidation by the hunt.

After 2 years of the Hursley being a no-go area for sabs, a mass hit was organised with the aim of bringing as many sabs together as possible, so that the hunt could be successfully sabbed in safety. On the day of the sab the police indiscriminately arrested 42 people (approximately half the number present). Three of these people, all well known local activists, have since been scapegoated and charged with "conspiracy to commit violent disorder". This prosecution has nothing to do with alleged criminal damage to hunt vehicles. It is an attack on our right to organise mass direct actions.



The defence campaign aims to raise awareness of the political nature of this prosecution and provide support to the 3 as they face trial. The trial is due to commence on 1st March 1999 at Portsmouth Crown Court and is scheduled to last 3 weeks. Any donations to the campaign can be used to continue to raise awareness and to support the Portsmouth 3 during any prison sentence that they receive if they are found guilty.

Donations are welcome and cheques/PO's should be made payable to : The Portsmouth Three Defence Campaign.

The Portsmouth 3 would also appreciate letters and messages of support, both now as they face trial and during any time they may spend at her majesty's pleasure.

Send letters and donations to Portsmouth Hunt Sabs, Box H, 167 Fawcett Road, Portsmouth, PO4 0DH. Tel. 0411 166533

NEWS

ABATTOIR THUGS


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Meat inspectors are planning to strike again after disrupting meat production for 24 hours at abattoirs across the country. Up to 1000 inspectors walked out on February 2nd.

The inspectors say an imposed pay increase of 3.65% is not enough to compensate for the abuse they suffer while doing their job.

A survey found more than 50% of inspectors reported being attacked or verbally abused, with 10% who returned questionnaires claiming they had been threatened with a weapon.

One such incident involved an inspector being kidnapped by abattoir staff and thrown into a vat of potentially dangerous offal. The inspector was visiting Rose County Foods in Sawley near Clitheroe, Lancashire. Initially he was subject to such threats from slaughterhouse workers that he escaped through a window. But he was then followed to a local cafe, kidnapped, driven back to the firm's site in the back of a car and thrown in the vat.

At the beginning of February a Manchester slaughterman was fined £500 and ordered to pay £50 compensation for assaulting a female Meat Hygiene Service vet.

MAD GUNMAN ON THE LOOSE !

This photo was not taken in war-torn Bosnia or Northern Ireland but is actually taken from the latest copy of Shooting Times. This is how sad inadequates dress up to shoot British wildlife ie. anything that moves. With madmen like this on the loose who can feel safe in the countryside?



MEAT KILLS

Geoff Spriegel of Sainsburys said at a poultry conference: "We have just completed a major survey of a wide range of meat products. I have to say the micro-biological quality of our poultry is so poor I am not prepared to state the results in public."

9.5 million people get food poisoning each year the vast majority of which are caused by meat products costing the NHS £750 million annually.

RDS PANIC

The Research Defence Society director Dr Mark Matfield sent out a secret memo on the 25th January complaining that vivisectors were losing ground to the anti-vivisection movement. It urged all involved in animal experiments to put pressure on the government. He complained that the balance had tipped too far towards animal welfare and that this must be stopped.

News in Brief...

HUNT NEWS...

A farmer who drove his Land Rover at anti hunt protesters last January was fined £1,000 for dangerous driving and has to pay £1,184 in court costs. He was also banned from driving for a year and will have to resit an extended test. Sampson Smith of Church Lane, Ashington, Sussex, caused protesters against the Crawley and Horsham Hunt to jump into a ditch as he drove at them repeatedly.

On Saturday 6th February, members of the West Sussex Wildlife Protection Group (WSWPG) rescued an exhausted fox from the jaws of hounds during a fox hunt by the Chiddingfold, Leconfield & Cowdray Foxhounds. The fox then went to ground and the hunt attempted to dig it out but were prevented by hunt saboteurs. Later with the help of a local badger group the sabs managed to catch the fox and take it to a vet, where it is now doing fine and will soon be released into the wild.

On Saturday 6th February, a hunt supporter deliberately hit a hunt saboteur with their car during a meet of the Cattistock foxhounds near Bridport, Dorset. The sab was taken to hospital and was later released with bruising. Video footage was handed to the police for further investigation.

FUR OUT

The last remaining fur store in the North of Sweden has closed due to an attack by animal rights activists which resulted in damage of $13,000. The owner was quoted in a Swedish newspaper saying "We can't take it anymore".

Half of Sweden is now fur store free.

We need news, news and more news for future editions of Bite Back. If you have any cuttings, articles etc. no matter how large or small, please send them to us. We would also like any good quality graphics or photos.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

LIVE EXPORTS

Farmers Ferry Ltd (who bought the ship Cap Afrique) boast exporting a record number of ewes and lambs in the week ending December when more than 50,000 animals were shipped to the Continent. Since the inception of Farmers Ferry in August 1998, 510,000 animals have been shipped to the hell holes of Europe, travelling thousands of miles on their feet, many without food, rest or water. The scenes of appalling brutality enacted during transport, at disembarking points and slaughterhouses throughout Europe are a disgrace. The brutality makes your blood run cold.



Business as Usual !

Farmers Ferry Ltd stated that anyone who broke the welfare rules would not be allowed to sail with them. Well, in October 1998 one of their biggest customers, Machin & Sons, (Yorkshire) were found guilty of 248 charges of breaching Government regulations on Animal Welfare and transportation. Machin has appealed so the Government and Farmers Ferry are allowing him to continue shipping animals regularly through Dover.

The law, effective since 30 September 1997, gives Ministers the power to suspend or revoke transporters' authorisation if they are found guilty of breaching the law. We want to see if Machin's licence will be revoked. In the meantime he continues to transport thousands of animals to horrific deaths

At present the Cap Afrique sails on Mondays and Fridays from Dover Eastern Docks. Support is desperately needed. There are National Demonstrations from time to time and we desperately need to boost numbers at both the weekly and National demos. The death trucks with their cargoes of misery are there for all to see. Some days as many as 28 transporters fully loaded with sheep/lambs travel on the Farmers Ferry. These three-tier trucks can carry up to 700 animals at a time.

Animals need your help and they need it now. If you can support either the Monday, Friday or National Protests please send a SAE to

N.O.W.A.L.E. St. Josephs, Aldern, Nr Bicester, OXON OX6 9LA

SAVE THE SHAMROCK MONKEYS



Shamrock Farm is tucked away down a dirt track on the edge of Small Dole, West Sussex where for the last 40 years thousands of monkeys have been imported, quarantined and then shipped on to certain death in the labs all over Europe.

But Shamrock's days are numbered.

The Save The Shamrock Monkeys campaign began with several small demonstrations designed to let the press know who we are and what we're doing. Then came the official kick-off which saw up to a thousand people outside the farm, letting Shamrock know that their cosy little business cannot continue.

There are regular demonstrations, both organised and impromptu, and the workers are getting used to going to work under police escort. And this is just the beginning.

World Day for Laboratory Animals has come back to Brighton this year with a march from Preston Park through the town, followed by a wreath-laying ceremony at Shamrock. Let's make sure everyone in the area knows about Shamrock Farm and its terrible trade. Meet at Preston Park (on your left as you approach Brighton on the A23) at noon on Saturday 14th April.

For further details, information about other demos and vigils, newsletters, leaflets and posters, contact **Save The Shamrock Monkeys, PO Box 3090, Brighton BN1 3QU**

We would like to expand this column, we can only do this if you tell us what your group is doing.
Please send articles to Bite Back, Box 47, 82 Colston Rd, Bristol BS1 5BB e-mail info@biteback.u-net.com
PLEASE INCLUDE PICTURES - stating whether you want them to be returned.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

STOP QUINTILES ANIMAL TESTS



Quintiles laboratory in Ledbury (Herefordshire) is a contract testing lab which tests all manner of substances, including household products and surgical implants, as well as drugs, on such animals as rats, mice, rabbits and beagles. It is part of the largest contract testing company in the world.
In the last 18 months the lab has been picketed at least once a week and there have been several larger "national" demonstrations there. Leaflets have been distributed door-to-door in Ledbury which has lead to increased opposition to animal experiments at Quintiles.
Since the campaign started several workers from Quintiles have left their employment at the lab because of fear of animal rights campaigners. An internal letter was sent to all members of staff telling them that the firm could not guarantee their safety if they continued working there.
Quintiles has also had to spend a fortune on increased security at the lab after one activist on an evening vigil demonstrated how easy it was to get in by scrambling over the six foot fence, dodging past a security guard and getting on the roof.
For more info contact: Stop Quintiles' Animal Tests, PO Box 127, Kidderminster, Worcs, DY10 3UZ E-mail: sqat@messages.to



A beagle inside Quintiles

ANIMAL AID VEGGIE MONTH

Sir Paul McCartney, Victoria Wood and Spike Milligan are among stars donating their favourite vegetarian recipes in support of this year's Veggie Month - Animal Aid's annual initiative to promote vegetarianism in the UK.
Their recipes are featured in a new colour booklet, available free of charge to members of the public during March.
Other recipe contributors include Tony Benn MP, Dannii, Virginia McKenna, Eric Richard and Michaela Strachan. The booklet, entitled 'Recipe for Life: Veggie Food from the Stars', also contains concise information about the nutritional, animal welfare and environmental benefits of vegetarianism. Animal Aid is encouraging meat-eaters to have a 'trial' meat-free month during March and to experiment with some of the delicious celebrity dishes. By phoning the special Veggie Month helpline, callers will also receive nutritional advice and support on all aspects of becoming a vegetarian.

Veggie helpline throughout March 1999 on 01732 354032



SEAGULL CULL HALTED

Newcastle Animal Rights Coalition (NARC) have recently undertaken a short-lived but intensive campaign to save the Berwick seagulls from a mass slaughter.
We had heard that Berwick-upon-Tweed Council would be voting on whether to carry out a cull of the town's seagulls.
This was time for action. Guy Merchant, the UK's leading bird control expert, was contacted to put forward the argument that the cull simply would not work. Providing the nesting sites and food supply are still available, more gulls would move into the area to take the place of the birds shot.
Campaigners took to the streets of Berwick petitioning, and the week before the council meeting, handed in the petition with 1,440 signatures. Many of the Berwick residents didn't have a problem with the gulls, realising that a coastal town will always have seagulls.
Demos of a varying nature were also happening leading up to the meeting, such as banner demos in Berwick town centre to keep in the public eye, and a well-publicised "go-naked" demo. Three campaigners clad only in a banner exclaiming "we'd rather go naked than be shot!" braved the January cold outside the council offices to highlight the fact that they, along with many others, would be prepared to sab any shoot that happened.
The end result was that the councillors voted against the cull. It was brought up in the meeting that a cull was not a realistic option, because of public opinion and that it would be difficult to get a licence from the Home Office to shoot in the town.
This short campaign has saved the lives of a countless number of gulls !

We would like to expand this column, we can only do this if you tell us what your group is doing.
Please send articles to Bite Back, Box 47, 82 Colston Rd, Bristol BS1 5BB e-mail info@biteback.u-net.com
PLEASE INCLUDE PICTURES - stating whether you want them to be returned.

FEATURE

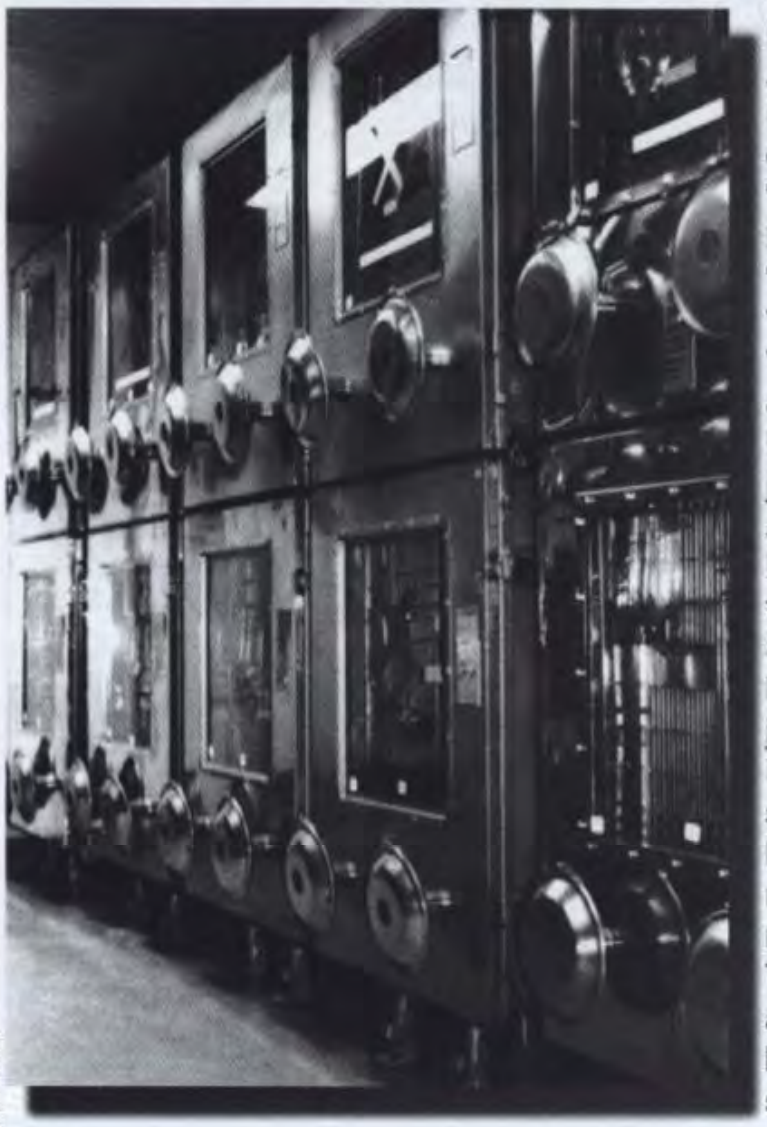
DEALERS IN DEATH

On the trail of lab animal dealers

Today in the U.K. an industry exists that is shrouded in as much secrecy as MI5.
Welcome to the world of the lab animal breeders. Once you have gained their confidence the horrifying reality hits you as prices and weights are reeled off as if the animals are sacks of potatoes. It is possible as you can see opposite to not only buy an animal but also any body part as well. They can supply any animal at any age, sex, size and weight for a price because money, money, money is all they care about.
Phil Gibbs of Wrights Breeding Centre laughed as he described how they supplied hamsters to pet shops who were unaware of their lab trade.He continued "but of course yours will be cheaper, no problem" after I had explained I was from an animal research lab.
Initially some were suspicious, obviously wary but as my story panned out they were soon at ease in their greedy search for cash. I was soon given prices for ferrets, birds, rats, mice, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, pigs, minipigs, cats, beagles and hounds.
Welfare has no place in the world of the lab animal dealer. Instead welfare becomes an industry joke.
In a leaked memo to dog unit staff at the



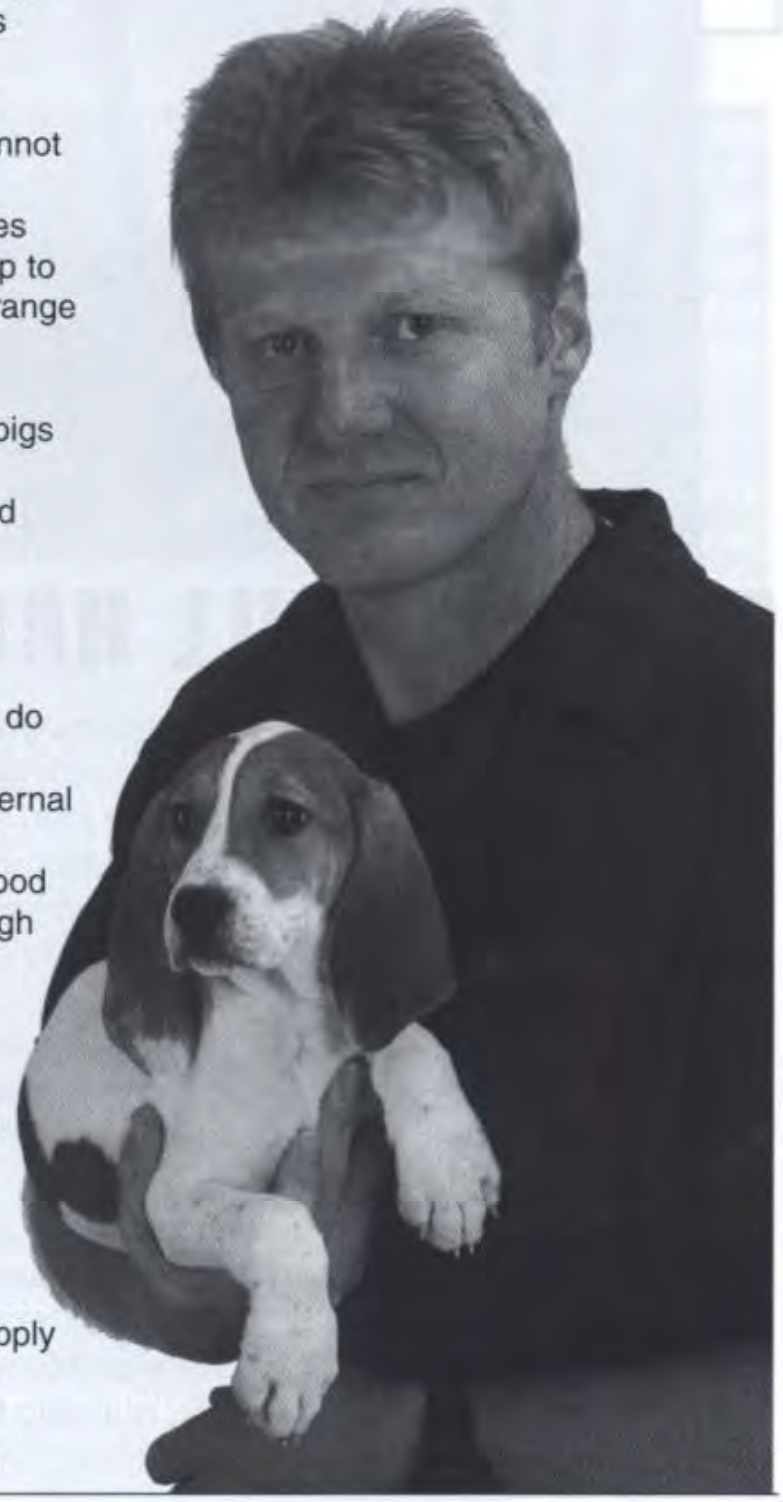
notorious Harlan Interfauna Beagle Breeders, manager Bob Coley complains that staff are being too generous with the wood shavings used for bedding and orders them to be "more economical" as he tries to squeeze out a few pennies more.
This is a one way trip to hell with the Harlan catalogue stating "Returns cannot be accepted."
The price of Interfauna beagles ranges from £475 between 3-4 months old up to 8-9 months old at £690 and hounds range from £540 to £775.
Pig Supplies and Services of Aylesbury priced eight week old pigs (30kg) at £120 each plus £100 delivery for six pigs. When I asked "Are they calm-natured for easy handling" I was told:
"Get them to do what you want?"
"Yes"
"Oh yes, with a bit of force they'll do as they're told alright."
Most display their evil trade in internal journals such as The Laboratory Animal Buyers Guide and Eastwood Directory Services. To read through these makes sickening reading. Some even try to hide out of the limelight by not advertising in journals, like David Hall & Partners of Burton-on-Trent, who supply guinea pigs to labs. They had changed their telephone number several times but we managed to track them down. They bragged how they could supply any number of guinea pigs, non-barrier or full-barrier with prices starting from £7.65 (Non-barrier).



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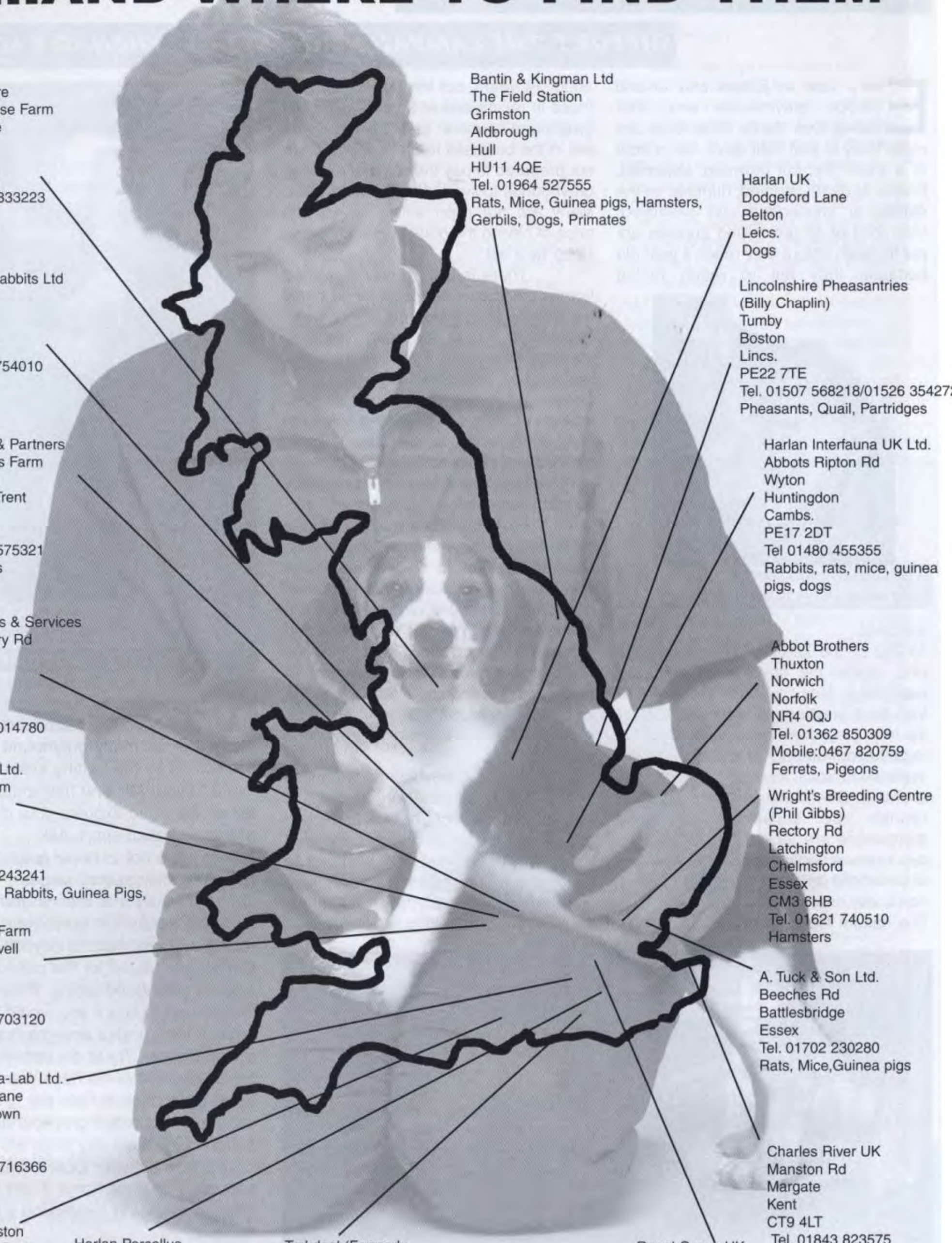
There is hope as this is a shrinking industry in the UK.
To fully understand just how sick an industry it is we only need to look at a very recent quote by Adam Little of the now closed down Consort Beagle Kennels, who when asked during a recent court case what he thought of the beagles at Consort, replied "WORTHLESS !"

If you know of a lab animal dealer not listed opposite or of a rabbit farm etc. then please contact us at Bite Back, Box 47, 82 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB.
e-mail info@biteback.u-net.com



FEATURE

...AND WHERE TO FIND THEM



Leslie Moore
Stocks House Farm
Cragg Lane
Thornton
Bradford
BD13 3SW
Tel. 01274 833223
Pigeons

Cheshire Rabbits Ltd
Statham
Lymm
Cheshire
WA13 9BT
Tel.01925 754010
Rabbits

David Hall & Partners
Darley Oaks Farm
Newchurch
Burton-on-Trent
Staffs
DE13 8RJ
Tel. 01283 575321
Guinea pigs

Pig Supplies & Services
71 Aylesbury Rd
Wendover
Aylebury
Bucks
HP22 6JJ
Tel. 01589 014780
Pigs

Harlan UK Ltd.
Shaw's Farm
Blackthorn
Bicester
Oxon
OX6 0TP
Tel. 01869 243241
Rats, Mice, Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, Ferrets

Hill Grove Farm
Minster Lovell
Oxford
Oxon
OX8 5NA
Tel.01993 703120
Cats

Harlan Sera-Lab Ltd.
Hophurst Lane
Crawley Down
Sussex
RH10 4FF
Tel. 01342 716366

M. R. Grayston
Litlle Lions Farm
Ashley Heath
Ringwood
Hants
Tel 01425 473115
Ferrets

Harlan Porcellus
Firgrove Farm
Cross-in-Hand
Heathfield
Sussex
TN21 0QL
Tel 01435 863035
Guinea pigs, Rabbits, Rats

Trekdeal (Formerly
Shamrock Farm)
Henfield Rd
Small Dole
West Sussex
BN5 9XH
Tel 01903 879191
Primates

Bantin & Kingman Ltd
The Field Station
Grimston
Aldbrough
Hull
HU11 4QE
Tel. 01964 527555
Rats, Mice, Guinea pigs, Hamsters, Gerbils, Dogs, Primates

Regal Group UK
Chapel Lane
Gt Bookham
Surrey
KT23 4QG
Tel. 01372 457855
Rabbits, Pigs

Harlan UK
Dodgeford Lane
Belton
Leics.
Dogs

Lincolnshire Pheasantries
(Billy Chaplin)
Tumby
Boston
Lincs.
PE22 7TE
Tel. 01507 568218/01526 354272
Pheasants, Quail, Partridges

Harlan Interfauna UK Ltd.
Abbots Ripton Rd
Wyton
Huntingdon
Cambs.
PE17 2DT
Tel 01480 455355
Rabbits, rats, mice, guinea pigs, dogs

Abbot Brothers
Thuxton
Norwich
Norfolk
NR4 0QJ
Tel. 01362 850309
Mobile:0467 820759
Ferrets, Pigeons

Wright's Breeding Centre
(Phil Gibbs)
Rectory Rd
Latchington
Chelmsford
Essex
CM3 6HB
Tel. 01621 740510
Hamsters

A. Tuck & Son Ltd.
Beeches Rd
Battlesbridge
Essex
Tel. 01702 230280
Rats, Mice,Guinea pigs

Charles River UK
Manston Rd
Margate
Kent
CT9 4LT
Tel. 01843 823575
Mice, Rats, Guinea pigs, Marmosets, Fish, Invertebrates

FEATURE

YOU BET - THEY DIE

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST GREYHOUND RACING

Every year in Britain and Ireland 30,000 greyhounds end their racing lives. Sadly, these dogs are more likely to end their days, not in front of a warm fire, but drowned, poisoned, beaten to death, starved, dumped on the streets or impounded and destroyed. One third of all greyhound puppies are put to death before they reach a year old because they fail to reach racing standard.



A rescued ex-racing greyhound who had been left to starve to death

10,000 of the 20,000 Irish greyhounds who make the grade each year are exported to race on British tracks where Irish-bred greyhounds make up 75% of the total greyhound population.

Substantial numbers of greyhounds are exported to Spain for racing, hunting and coursing. Conditions in some Spanish kennels are appalling and many greyhounds are locked up 23 hours a day. Hunters and coursers often dispose of unwanted dogs by hanging and other horrifically cruel methods.

The natural life-span of a greyhound is about 14 years, but the lives of most of those in racing end at 2 years old. Most greyhound owners and trainers, who are,in the business to make a profit, are not prepared to pay the costs of allowing greyhounds to live out their natural lives. Many are not even willing to pay the price of having the dogs humanely put to sleep by a vet.

There is just no way that good homes could ever be found for so many thousands of greyhounds every year. Greyhound racing inevitably leads to massive killing and suffering. The only real solution is its abolition.

Greyhound Action was formed in 1997 with the ultimate aim of putting an end to greyhound racing. It has already been banned in 7 states in the USA, so there is no reason why it shouldn't eventually be abolished here.

From the 22nd to 29th of May 1999, Greyhound Action will be staging another Greyhound Awareness Week with the aim of educating the public not to support greyhound racing. Many local animal protection groups and concerned individuals will be taking part in this by doing street stalls, writing letters to newspapers and doing interviews in the local media. Leaflets will also be distributed to those attending greyhound races.

The first Greyhound Awareness Week, last May, was very successful with at least 20 local animal protection groups taking part in different areas of the country. This year it is intended to make it an international event, with groups from other European countries, the USA etc also getting involved.



Unwanted racing greyhound who had been thrown off a pier in West Cork, Ireland. They were discovered when the tide went out.



Squalid conditions in Spanish greyhound kennels

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

Don't attend greyhound racing and never bet on a greyhound race. Better still, boycott bookmakers altogether, as many greyhound tracks are owned by the betting industry. Write to your MP and newspaper letters pages to express your disgust at this so-called sport. Ask newspapers not to cover greyhound racing on their sports pages. Tell your family and friends about the suffering involved in greyhound racing and ask them to boycott it. Collect signatures for the petition to abolish greyhound racing. Write to Greyhound Action if you would like a petition form and/or anti-greyhound racing leaflets. Try to do something for Greyhound Awareness Week. Send a donation to help the campaign to protect greyhounds from suffering. A few lucky dogs are saved. Contact your local animal sanctuary or dogs home if you can offer an ex-racing greyhound a loving home.

GREYHOUND ACTION, P O Box 127, Kidderminster, DY10 3UZ
E-mail: greyhoundaction@i.am

YOU MUST BE JOKING

- Why Anti-Hunt Protesters Refused to Sign MoD Hunting Agreement

If you heard about ground-breaking agreements hammered out between hunt saboteurs, huntsmen and police recently, don't believe what you read in the papers!

At the end of December various right wing, pro-hunt newspapers printed items on the 'code of conduct' set out by up-and-coming Wiltshire MoD policeman PC



Steve Coppard, the newly appointed hunt liaison officer. This 'working agreement' discussed by local representatives of the HSA (Pewsey Vale Hunt Saboteurs), the League Against Cruel Sports , the Royal Artillery and Tedworth Foxhunts, would, PC Coppard told the press, save the MoD (and the taxpayer) money which is currently spent policing the foxhunts on Salisbury Plain. 'Lengthy consultation and liaison' had produced a code of conduct for hunt protesters, he claimed "which everyone involved agreed was the way forward." The pro-hunt press lapped it up; at last those nasty saboteurs had seen sense; in future if any protesting had to happen at all it would be nice and inoffensive and, if ever an individual protester stepped out of line by actually causing any inconvenience to the hunt, the saboteurs would 'police themselves' by banishing the offender from their ranks.

Of course, the truth was somewhat different. While PC Coppard had already press released the news of the meeting as blueprint for future anti-hunt policing, while implying that agreement to the code was on the cards, in actual fact the meeting was the first time sabs had been asked to discuss the policing of hunts in the area. When the local sabs, who were obviously interested in the subject since it is invariably they that become the victims of over-zealous policing, arrived at the meeting they found that instead of any discussions taking place, PC Coppard had already drawn up the 'Code of Conduct for Persons/Groups opposed to Foxhunting' - In fact, PC Coppard had had some help with the drawing up of the code; the Countryside Alliance and Master of Fox Hounds Association had already met with the Mod Police to 'advise' them on the specifics of the code and, as a result, the Code of conduct presented to the sabs and the LACS was just a *tad* biased towards the hunts!

Paragraph three of the Code stated "**Do not attempt to interfere with the hunt, engage in any form of sabotage be it direct action or subtle tactics (i.e. use of whips, horns, sprays, shouting/yelling or the use of your vehicle in any manner to obstruct/cause nuisance to the hunt);**" while another section six related to situations were the hunt would be allowed to dig out foxes which had sought refuge under ground. "**In the interests of safety should an injured fox be required to be dug out and humanely destroyed a 50 metre exclusion zone will be in force.**" (This would not only prevent sabs from disrupting and stopping a dig-out, it would also prevent organisations such as the LACS from filming the incident. There would also be no way badger groups could check that it was not a badger sett that was being illegally disturbed.)



Once sabs set eyes on the code they and the national HSA immediately branded it laughable and refused to take part in any future discussions in the matter, as did the LACS.

As far as the dig-out section was concerned, saboteurs saw this as an attempt by the hunts to widen the circumstances in which this could take place, and so improve their chances in getting a 'result' (read 'kill') at the end of a day's hunting, rather than have to go home empty-handed. In fact, up until August last year it was illegal to dig out any foxes on Ministry of Defence land and the hunt managed to bully the Defence Estate Services, and the Labour government, into allowing it for the current season. (After the election the Government declared there should be no digging out on MoD or Forestry Commission land - in September Elliot Morley MP also said there would be no cubhunting on MoD land; that same week as an article appeared in The Field magazine reporting on a days "autumn-hunting" with the Royal Artillery Foxhunt !)

No-one concerned with animal welfare can accept that the hunt, of all people, have the right to decide whether a fox is injured (if it was, it should be treated by a vet, not dug out and killed). Besides, surely the Countryside Alliance and the Masters of Foxhounds Association have assured the public time and again that a hunted fox is "either killed by a quick nip to the back of the neck or he gets clean away".In that case, a fox which is dug-out after being hunted should never be injured! How conveniently these peoples' lies are forgotten when it suits them.

Hunt saboteurs will never sign up to anything that allows the killing of animals for the convenience of the police, the hunt or anyone else. As long as there are bloodsports, there will be hunt saboteurs.

For more information on the HSA and sabbing, write to: HSA, PO Box 2786, Brighton BN2 2AX or phone 01273 622827 and leave a message on our 24 hour answer-phone.

GUEST FEATURE

PIG PRODUCTION

A report by The Friends of Animals Under Abuse (FAUNA)

From 1st January 1999 sow stalls were banned in Britain. However pig flesh imported into this country will come from pigs born to sows kept in these cruel stalls. Unfortunately farrowing crates are still legal in Britain.

In intelligence and awareness, pigs are the equal of dogs. On farms the animals are treated like machines. Their sole purpose is to produce as much as possible, as quickly and cheaply as possible. The more animals farmers can cram into their buildings, the more money they can make.

Most farm animals today live inside factory farms, where they have no fresh air, no daylight and no freedom to move around.

SOW STALLS - now banned in Britain



Previously in Britain, over 500,000 pregnant sows were kept imprisoned in narrow crates called sow stalls. It was how they spent their entire pregnancy - sometimes chained to the ground with a heavy collar around their necks or a strap around their stomachs. They could never walk or exercise, they couldn't even turn around. All they could do was take one step forward and one step backwards.

As they were not being fattened for meat, they were fed only a maintenance diet - just enough to keep them alive. They ate for only a few minutes per day, but in the wild around 90% of their time would have been spent constantly foraging with their snouts. Imprisoned in stalls, all their natural instincts were rendered impossible and confined sows suffered severe displacement behaviour. Because of boredom and frustration, they would spend most of their time chewing the bars in front of them and rattling at their chains. The sows were prevented from performing any natural activity and deprived of doing anything other than stand up and lie down in discomfort on concrete. In Winter they were frequently cold, in Summer they could suffer from heat-exhaustion. They were often hungry, permanently uncomfortable and extremely bored. Breeding sows were kept confined in stalls for their whole 4 month pregnancy. They would spend 41 weeks of every year in stalls and the rest in farrowing crates. Farrowing crates are still legal in Britain.

PIGS IN THE WILD

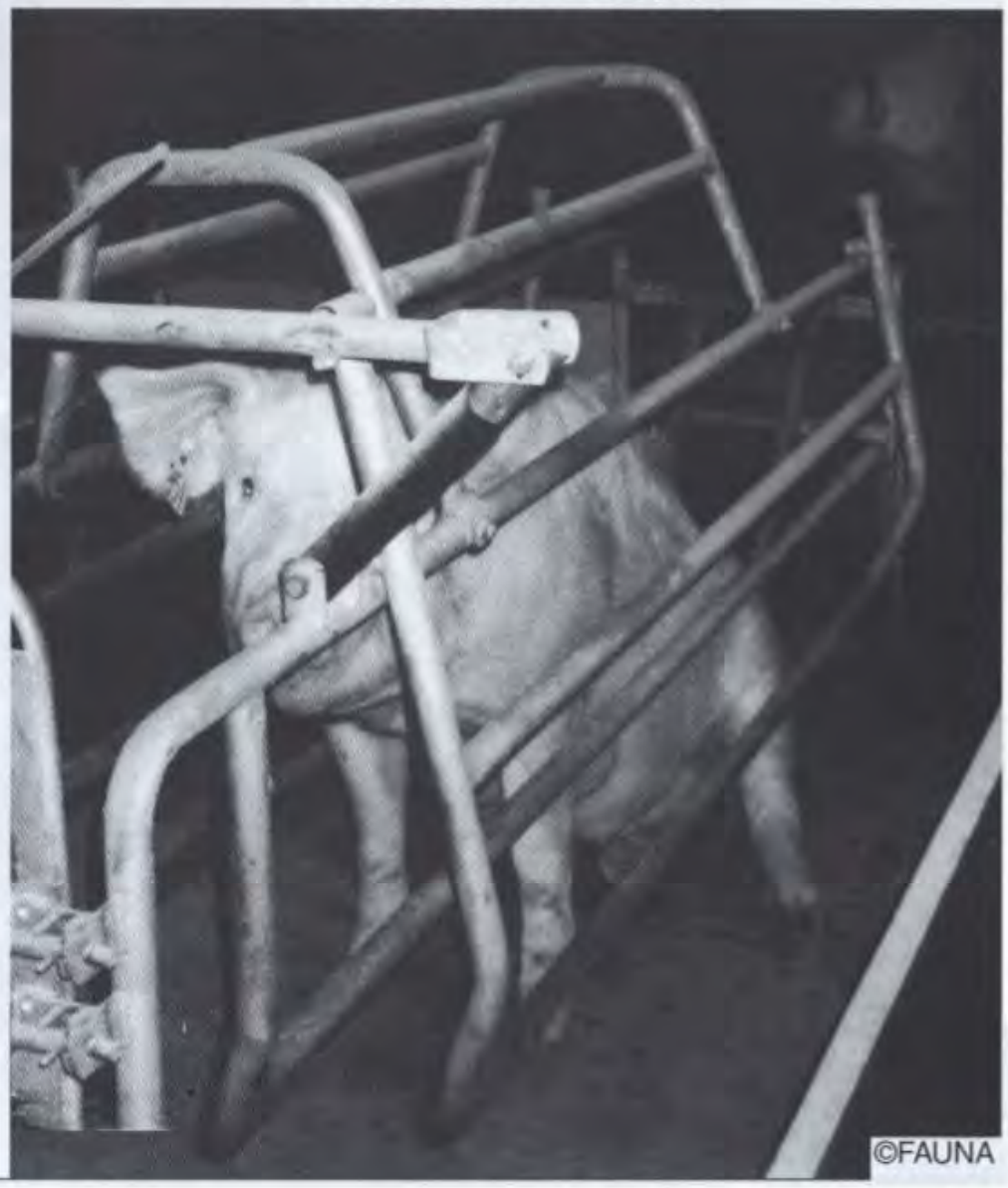
Naturally in the wild, pigs are woodland animals. They have an insatiable curiosity and spend much of their time, rooting around in the soil, wallowing and exploring. They are very social animals. In their natural environment, pigs live in family groups, often with all the different families coming together at night to share a communal nest.

In the past, farmed pigs were allowed some freedom, but nowadays commercial pig production has resulted in 80-90% of pigs being intensively kept, confined indoors. In particular, it is the life of the mother pig that is causing the greatest concern.

BREEDING SOWS - the future

Before the new legislation to outlaw sow stalls, breeding sows spent their entire lives imprisoned in crates, in an unending cycle of pregnancy, giving birth, lactation and confinement. Even though pregnant sows won't have to endure the terrible confinement of sow stalls, it is feared that instead, they will be kept in the same dreadful conditions as those used for fattening pigs. They still won't experience fresh air, or daylight. At least 66% of a breeding sows life is spent pregnant. She will produce 2.5 litters per year and in her short lifetime give birth to over 80 piglets. At around 4 years of age, she will be slaughtered and end up in sausages etc. Her natural life-span is around 15 years.

FARROWING CRATES



GUEST FEATURE



When the time comes to give birth (farrow) the sows are put into a type of crate known as a farrowing crate. The crates prevent them from doing anything except stand up and lie down. The crates purpose is simple - to prevent the sow lying on her piglets. The crate frustrates the sow's basic right - the right to be able to turn around. She is surrounded by a metal frame from top to toe, below a metal floor, perforated to allow the dung conveniently to be trampled through, and above, bars to prevent escape. Farrowing crates are extremely uncomfortable for the sows and can cause chronic damage. It is in these metal frames that most sows must bear their young.



For the sow, giving birth is a frustrating experience. When about to give birth, the sow instinctively wants to build a nest for her piglets, but she can't, she's surrounded by the metal bars and concrete floor. Had she been free, her instinct would have directed her to collect material for a nest in which to bear her piglets and build up the sides with her feet. But in the barren metal world of the farrowing crate, this instinct gets distorted. Having no nest to build, her nest building movements are unfulfilled and so they get stuck in endless repetition - the sow will anxiously sway back and fore, stamping her feet. It's called 'stereotyped behaviour' - a symptom of extreme frustration.

The sow is forced to give birth to her piglets on a concrete floor or metal grid. The metal frame of the crate prevents the sow from mothering her young, consequently her maternal instincts are cruelly denied. She's unable to get close to her babies and cannot even nuzzle up to them. The piglets have their ears tagged, their tails cut off, their teeth nipped off with pliers and they are castrated within hours or days of being born. No anaesthetic or pain relief is used.

At around 3 weeks old, the piglets are taken away from their mothers and fattened up for meat. As soon as the piglets are removed, the sows are fertilised again on what's appropriately described as the 'rape rack'.



PIGLETS

Piglets are prematurely removed from their mothers at around 3 weeks old. They are put in dark windowless sheds and either kept in cages called 'piggy boxes', or enclosed pens called 'flat decks'. In 'flat decks', the piglets have to stand on a metal slatted floor, crammed in with around 20 other piglets. In 'piggy boxes', they are kept on the wire mesh of tiered cages, 8 piglets to a cage. They resemble battery-hen cages. It is an idea borrowed straight from the poultry industry and for similar economic reasons. It also has similar problems - In the wild, piglets are playful, but in the confines of a cage, play turns to fights. Farmers don't like pigs using up energy which could make meat, so to reduce the animals activity, they're kept in the dark. As they grow the pigs are moved to the fattening house.



FATTENING PIGS

At around 10 weeks old the pigs are transferred to the fattening house and kept in boxed rows of concrete pens, each pen containing around 25 pigs. These pens are often referred to as 'sweat boxes'. From 10 weeks to slaughtering, the pigs are kept in these pens with concrete walls and floors, some floors are entirely slatted and no bedding is given in case they eat it. Here the pigs are kept in grossly overcrowded, filthy conditions. One man can feed 1500 pigs in an hour with a controlled dose of liquid feed. It's designed to be convenient for the farmer with no regard for the animals' welfare. Some farmers cram so many pigs into each pen that there isn't enough room for all the animals to lie down or feed at the same time.

In confined conditions fights often break out and pigs will attack each others' tails and ears, so to suppress aggression, they're again kept in the dark.

AS WITH ALL FARM ANIMALS, PIGS MEET THEIR DEATH AT AN EARLY AGE. At around 5 months old, as if they haven t suffered enough, they are subjected to the nightmare of being LOADED onto lorries, TRANSPORTED to the SLAUGHTERHOUSE and brutally KILLED - THAT S ANOTHER HORROR STORY . . . . . .

For more information contact:
FAUNA, P.O. Box 156, Cardiff, CF5 5YD
Tel. 01222 569914

HOMES WANTED

An animal sanctuary in Gloucestershire is closing down and is desperate to rehome animals.
If anyone could supply homes for dogs, feral cats, geese, sheep, cockerels, ferrets or pigs then please phone Gary & Helen on 01594 861158



Nanook, one of the dogs looking for a home

HOW TO TRACE ANIMAL ABUSERS

This is a brief guide to how to find out who's who in your area.
A good start is your local library or even better a large city library. In the reference section you will find industry yearbooks which will list, for example, all abattoirs in the 'Meat Trades Journal'.
In the fortnightly trade magazine 'Poultry World' you will find loads of information about the intensive poultry industry.

Vivisection labs can quite often be traced through books such as 'Longmans European Research Centres.'

Individual experiments can be traced (although you will sometimes have to search in more obscure journals) through books like 'Current Research - Biological Sciences" or even easier on the internet. You can search a huge medical database at the site

www.healthgate.com/HealthGate/MEDLINE/search.shtml

Finally Companies House hold the details of over 1 million companies and the details of any of these can be ordered on microfiche for only £3-50. It will list directors, profit, history and much more. Companies House microfiches are a doddle to obtain.
Companies House are based at:
Cardiff - Crown Way, Cardiff CF4 3UZ Tel. 01222 388588
London - 55-71 City Rd, London EC1Y 1BB Tel. 0171 253 9393
Birmingham - Central Library, Chamberlain Sq, B'ham B3 3HQ Tel. 0121 233 9047
Leeds - 25 Queen St., Leeds LS1 2TW Tel. 0113 233 8338
Manchester - 75 Moseley St., Manchester M2 2HR Tel. 0161 236 7500
Edinburgh - 37 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2EB Tel. 0131 535 5800
Glasgow - 7 West George St, Glasgow G2 1BQ Tel. 0141 221 5513

☆STAR LETTER☆

Sir,
A substantial number of domesticated animals and most laboratory animals are bred for a purpose. If these various purposes cease or are abolished, as the anti-hunting and anti-vivisection lobbies suggest, the number of individual animals bred will diminish correspondingly.
Should we deny these the gift of life, any more than we deny it to the unborn infant? Is it better to have lived and suffered than never to have lived at all?

Yours faithfully,
PETER D. ROSSDALE,
Rossdale & Farmers
(Veterinary surgeons),
Beaufort Cottage Laboratories,
High St, Newmarket
Suffolk CB8 8JS

The Times 31/12/98

IN THE NEXT ISSUE . . .

WE FIND OUT WHAT THE FARMERS OF TOMMORROW ARE BEING TAUGHT TODAY



VIVA

WE INVESTIGATE THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL. Spending Millions of tax payers money on horrific experiments



©PETA

PUPPY FARMS
- A report from the front line





CAPS

A REPORT ON THE STATE OF BRITAIN'S ZOOS

Smile please, you're about to be nailed

Over the past few years covert videoing has given incredible results with two exceptional examples being the harrowing footage of the beagle puppies inside Huntingdon Life Sciences and more recently the Chipperfield Circus case. Both photos shown are stills taken off covert video footage. The boundaries are limitless, it's amazing the damage that can be done to our enemies, with video cameras. Here is a brief guide to the different methods and a few tips:


pin hole camera

If you plan to video covertly, tape over the red light on your camcorder that lets people know you're videoing. Similarly turn off the "beep" function that comes on when you start recording. People talk more openly when they don't think they are on camera, so you may need to employ other means to disguise the fact that you're videoing. For example, you can try lowering the camera below eye level and video from the hip. If it's only the sound you need (and this will be more often than you think), you can even point the camera to the ground or put it under a coat.

In the bag

Buy a cheap shoulder bag, preferably the same colour as the camera lens, cut a hole in one end, tape the frayed edges over to the inside of the bag so they don't fall over the lens. Tape the camera into position with duck tape or camera tape (foam can be good to hold it there as well), make sure you can see the viewfinder easily from above, with the zip open, to make sure all is working OK. If you have one, put an external clip microphone through another hole or under your shirt.



Then practise a lot ! One of the most difficult parts of covert videoing is getting the image horizontal, so have a go and play it back to see if you've got it right. Also, test how near to the subject you need to be to achieve good sound quality.


Not just any old tie, this one's got a pin hole camera hidden in it

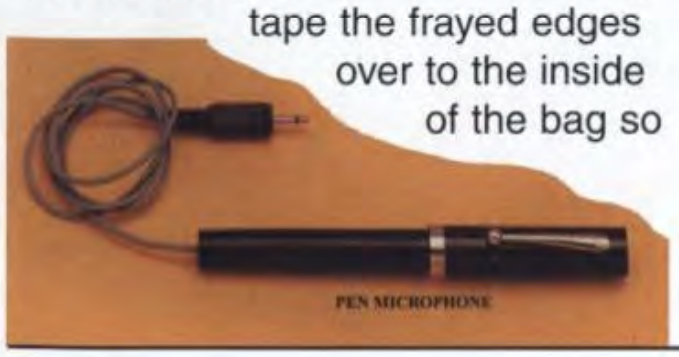
Pinhole cameras

There is much hype about the tiny concealed cameras known as "pinhole" cameras. Of course these are impressive, but most people can't afford them as they start at £150 a day for hire. The alternative, low-tech methods described above have produced as many startling results as the more sophisticated up-market equipment. If you have the money, however, and the necessary technical expertise, it is a great option. What you need is a small camera lens (you can now get them the size of two matchstick heads with exceptional wide-angle-quality), which then connects to a small Hi8 recorder the size of a personal stereo. Attached to this is a clip mic and a battery (usually large). Then you need the whole kit in some kind of vehicle (a jacket, an animal carrier, a hat etc.). You can normally get a complete kit with jacket from a specialist shop. But the equipment is not easy to use, so you'll need to practise a lot. Dont forget to account for practice time when you're working out how many days you need to hire the kit for.


Mobile phone with camera and audio transmitter

A good start in looking for the equipment mentioned is Exchange & Mart and Camcorder User.

Remember the techniques suggested are not for someone else to try, they are for all of us to try. Never say you can't, because you can.





Remember, animals that are suffering do not care how much we feel sorry for them - their only only concern is that we do something to end their suffering.

