"Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission—to be of service to them whenever they require it."—St Francis of Assisi

HSW

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LABOURING THE POINT

It was six months ago, in March, that the news was first leaked, "The Labour Party are going to promise to ban bloodsports at the next election". The rumour resulted in a feverish commotion usually reserved for the election itself.

The media pounced on the story, and presented it inside and out and from all possible angles as the bloodsports issue passed through all its stages—from sub-committee to Home Policy Committee; Home Policy Committee to Executive Committee; and finally to a vote.



Rent-a-mob march at Penistone

The hunting clan, meanwhile, prepared a veritable fog of the most enormous tales and grossly exaggerated claims in an attempt to scare the Labour Party and confuse the issue. On the latter point they needn't have bothered—the issue was to become confused of its own accord.

The original intention of the Home Policy Committee was that the following bloodsports be abolished—foxhunting, hare-coursing, beagling/hare hunting and stag hunting, and that a commitment to abolish these be made in the next election manifesto. (There were seven other recommendations concerning animal welfare issues. Needless to say these less controversial topics were not picked up by the press.) However, there was never any intention to ban angling or shooting.

The hunting bodies, in their wisdom, decided to ignore this last fact and set about mobilising forces. By scaremongering tactics they threatened that shooting and angling were under fire and frightened many of their number into writing to MPs, Labour Party Candidates and the Prime Minister. The letterwriting campaign was thoroughly organised. The BFSS (British Field Sports Society) and Coursing Supporters Club wrote to their members and the hunt-orientated magazines plugged away at their readers.

Undoubtedly many letters were written, undoubtedly most were against the ban but then it's the old story—people don't generally write in support of a motion or event, only if they have a grudge or complaint against it.

The media was absolutely swamped with letters and articles by the hunters but as one HSA member put it, "if nothing else, at least all the hunts' arguments have been exposed". The result is not impressive. The strength of the hunters' arguments can be gauged from their necessity to exaggerate out of all proportion.

Typical of their argument about lost jobs was a view put to Kevin McNamara by one of the rain-soaked lobby of protestors from local Humberside hunts, John Bladon, who breeds pheasants in a big way, ". . . it's not just jobs like mine that are at stake. What about British Leyland that makes the Land Rovers so many sportsmen use? What about the people who make wellington boots and anoraks?"!!

No self-respecting Labour Party candidate is going to be taken in by that sort of nonsense, nor the claims that farriers would be out of business, racing would suffer, that horses would be sold or slaughtered or that, as showjumpers, we would be lost without hunting. The list of sufferers is endless—saddlers, grooms, riding school staff, hunt servants, game-keepers, gun and cartridge makers, feed manufacturers, stalkers, horse breeders, hay and corn merchants, vets, German tourists forming pyramids in the sand, Uncle Tom Cobley and all.

Perhaps it's because the BFSS have taken so little interest in the proposed ban that these people are driven to such lengths. Certainly the BFSS has allocated only £10,000 of a £¼ million 'fighting fund' to counter the present threat against hunting. This is even less than they spent on expenses for meetings last year!

Whatever the reason, we have seen and heard strange happenings.

In Penistone, in the recent by-election, the local hunts were actually seen to demonstrate! Taking a leaf out of our book they marched through the village streets shouting "save our country sports" and other offensive slogans. Labour still held the seat—although with a lower majority.

The farce goes on:

"There is no more blood in hunting than in rugby or boxing", Lt. Col. Higgon, joint master of the Pembrokeshire Hunt.

"Killing a fox is a lot quicker than killing a lamb in a slaughterhouse" Howard Jones, joint master of the Tredegar Farmers' Hunt.

"Hunting is just like huge dogs jumping on a mouse", Duke of Beaufort.

The old chestnut that foxhunting is "necessary" for fox control is adequately disposed of by the two following quotes,

"Hunts manage foxes as well as kill them. They are preserved for sport", Marcus Kimball, Chairman of the BFSS.

". . . over the past 150 years the fox population has grown", Major Humphrey, secretary Quorn Hunt.

On the basis of the old arguments—"loss of jobs", "interference with rights", "matter for conscience, not legislation", "there are worse evils in the world" etc etc—that have cropped up again in respect of the manifesto, you could excuse *all* the evils long ago abolished.

But are they really relevant arguments? After all you can bet your plimsolls that if hunting is banned they won't stop riding. They will almost certainly turn to drag-hunting (the sport of hunting a pre-laid false trail). This would involve all the same jobs, hounds and horses as hunting and point-to-pointing and cross-country events would be just as popular.

The arguments that hounds must be put down if hunting was abolished is, in any case, hypocritical. Hunts put down hounds as soon as they pass their peak, after six or seven seasons and before that if they are not 'satisfactory' dogs.

One final example of the absurdity of the hunters' threats.

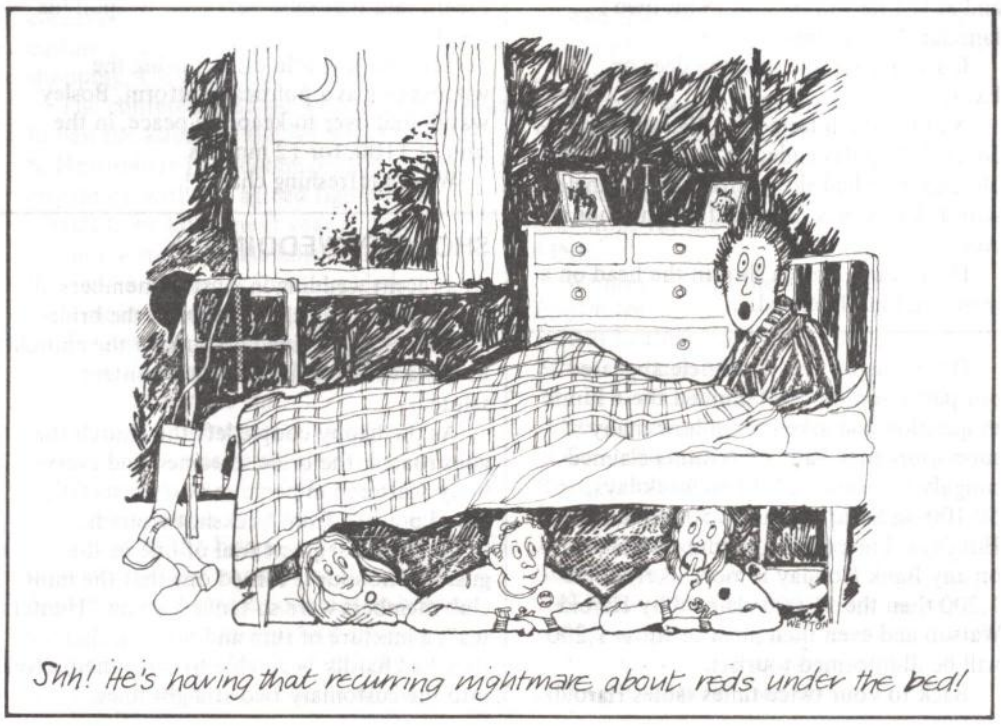
Various claims have been made that between 250,000 and 1 million people regularly follow hounds. This averages at a *regular* attendance of between 750 and 3,000 hunt followers per hunt!!

How often do you see more than 150 people at a hunt?

What, then, is the current position?

The BFSS have submitted a document defending their case to the National Executive Committee. It is full of the irrelevancies above and attacks on hunt sabotage.

The League Against Cruel Sports and the HSA have also submitted reports to the NEC exploding the usual myths.



Shh! He's having that recurring nightmare about reds under the bed!

I'LL SHOW YOU MINE IF . . .

At the Isle of Wight Coursing Club sabotage in January a sab took a picture of a courser. The courser objected and demanded the negative. The sab told him he would send it to him . .. and the courser promptly gave the sab his address!

A BIT OF A STUPID STUNT

Daredevil motor biker Eddie Kidd planned to leap his bike 100 feet over an open cage full of 20 lions at the Marquis of Bath's Longleat safari park. This silly stunt was due to take place an hour before feeding time on August 6th. In case he fell in the cage, it was due to be ringed by marksmen—presumably prepared to put him out of his misery. The initial request by the RSPCA to get the Marquis, an ageing hippie, met with a stubborn refusal. However, public opinion finally won the day and the event was called off.

Meanwhile, security at the park was being looked into after a chimpanzee used an 8ft pole to vault across a moat and attack the head keeper.

It is certainly true that some members of the Labour Party are pro-hunt. Others would be defending rural constituencies with small majorities and are afraid that any anti-hunt legislation may tip the scales adversely.

One or two others, including the Prime Minister, are evidently against bloodsports, but don't have the courage of their convictions. Mr Callaghan's plea that fox-hunting and beagling be excluded from the manifesto is not logical. It's hardly likely to attract pursuers of these 'sports' back while commitments are still in evidence against other forms of hunting.

Other MPs will have no views on hunting but should have enough sense to realise that those hunt supporters who continually threaten to withdraw their vote from Labour would, in all probability, not have voted Labour anyway!

The remainder, the majority, will be anti-hunt through and through, threat or no threat.

So far the Labour Party have made it official Party policy to condemn bloodsports and reform other laws concerning the treatment of animals. This is a great advance and is largely due to the work of individuals in the party and the League Against Cruel Sports.

However, it is not enough. Until a *manifesto* commitment is made the recourse must be through the easily-blocked and unsatisfactory Private Members Bill system. A manifesto measure would be a different matter and would proceed under different rules. Unlike the Hare Coursing Bills, it would be difficult for the BFSS to stop a Manifesto Bill.

Eric Heffer, MP, who, together with Joan Maynard, is the prime mover behind the anti-hunt proposals, was also responsible for the deletion of a clause that would have included the issue in the manifesto. This was, apparently a standard procedure, and he claims that he still intends to get the anti-bloodsports policies made manifesto issues.

Mr Norman Atkinson, MP, however, tells us, "The current position if that a commitment will be given in favour of the banning of hare coursing and stag hunting, but foxhunting will probably be left to a 'free vote' in the House of Commons".

It remains to be seen who is right. The issue is, as we said, confused; even some of those present at the meetings are not sure what will happen. In the long term, though, the commitment is obvious. From the policy approved by the NEC, "The Labour Party intends to outlaw cruelty to animals wherever it may occur".

You can't get much clearer than that!

A DATE WITH BEAUFORT

On April 8th this year approximately 98 sabs from all over the country converged on a meet of the Duke of Beaufort F.H. at Hawkesbury Upton, Glos.

As the banner carrying antis lined the roadside at the meet they were greeted with the usual verbal abuse. Police, TV and press were prominent.

After some delay the huntsman took his hounds deep into the thick wooded vale country, perhaps in the hope that since only one road circled this large area contact with HSA members would be kept to a minimum, but with 90 odd sabs running about the fields and woods it's difficult *not* to keep in touch with hounds! One sab was spotted running round a field with the pack in tow harking to his horn, for all the world like a modern day pied piper and another is reported to have intercepted a hunted fox and removed it bodily from the line. Each time the pack was split a deputation of two riders was sent to retrieve the hounds, usually with little success.

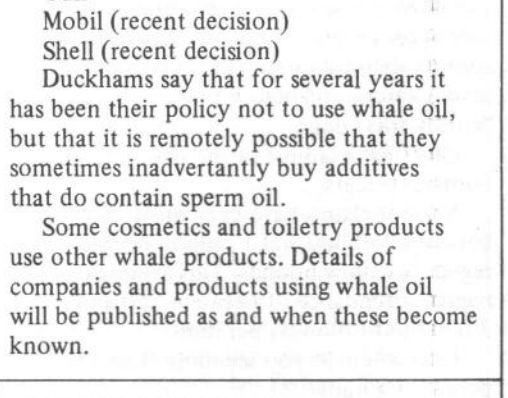
By 4.30 pm the pack hadn't caught a thing, but hounds weren't to be denied, and on a hillside close to the road a young fox, later found to have been shot earlier in the day, was produced by the now dismounted huntsman.

The situation was tense—hounds milling at the huntsman's feet, the fox held above his head, hunt supporters lining the roadside and about 20 sabs, realising what was to come, moving in to retrieve the fox and prevent it being mauled by the pack. Above the scene sat the Duke, completely unmoved, like a general surveying his troops.

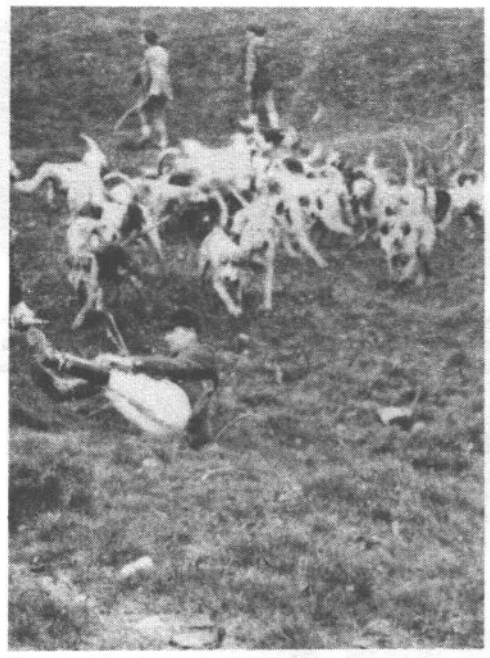
The inevitable happened—the fox was thrown above the pack and seen to fall amongst the gaping jaws. It was a deliberate move to snub the antis but a move later to be regretted. With feelings running high a successful attempt was made to snatch the fox from the hounds at which point hunt followers and riders started to attack saboteurs. Four riders were parted from their saddles (including Anthony Kershaw, Tory MP, who was seen charging sabs, kicking them where he could), several hunt supporters hurt and at least 3 riders 'blooded' with the partially torn carcase of the fox.

We have since learnt that Kershaw put pressure on the police to retrieve his riding crop, which was lost in the heat of battle, and at least one member from the NE has received a visit by local CID about the matter.

Footnote: A member in Brighton and another in Birmingham received visits from CID in the week before the demo warning them not to attend under threat of being arrested for 'action likely'! One wonders who put the pressure on on that occasion?



The Duke of Beaufort whips a sab but a hunt heavy moves in to spoil his fun.



Oops! The huntsman falls over and hounds move in for the kill!



The fox that was thrown to hounds

COLD FISH

Deputy head of the neuro-chemical pharmocology unit of the Medical Research Council, Dr John Kelly, has discovered that fish, like other animals, create chemicals in their nervous systems which control the passage of pain. He says, "This may not be conclusive proof, but it is good evidence that fish experience pain like other vertebrates."

This research was commissioned by an independant panel on angling and shooting set up by the RSPCA.

The National Angling Council commenting on the findings said it would reserve judgement until the full report from the panel was available and added that until real scientific evidence was produced "we will continue to go along with the opinion that fish, as cold-blooded creatures, do not feel pain".

IGNORANCE IS NO DEFENCE

We are constantly being told that hunting people are fully au fait with country matters, it seems however that this does not extend to the law of the countryside.

The BFSS in an official leaflet "No Hunting—No Deer" states, "The deer is the property of the owner of the land on which it stands and it is he who decides whether any animal shall live or die"; and in the "Field" magazine, "The deer on Exmoor are the property of the owner or farmer on whose land they happen to be. He is entitled to deal with them as he thinks fit."

These views are somewhat at variance with Common Law which says that a wild animal (and deer *are* wild) has *no* owner whilst alive. It is only when they are dead that deer become the property of the owner or tenant, according to the terms of the lease.

OIL FOR AN OIL, TOOTH FOR A TOOTH

Owners, drivers and mechanics of sabmobiles, and indeed all motor vehicle owners may be interested in the following information regarding whale oil in some motor vehicle lubricants.

The following companies use whale oil in some of the formulations in their product range, particularly automotive transmission oil and cutting and quenching oil used by the engineering industry:

Burmah-Castrol (this company has admitted using an average of 1000 tonnes of sperm oil per year)

Esso (still using sperm oil in cutting and gear oils).

It is suggested that readers avoid *any* of the products marketed or manufactured by these companies. Letters to the companies informing them of your decision and the reason for it would be useful.

The following companies have stated that sperm oil is no longer used in any of the products marketed or manufactured by them:—

BP (recent decision)
Total (recent decision)
Gulf
Mobil (recent decision)
Shell (recent decision)

Duckhams say that for several years it has been their policy not to use whale oil, but that it is remotely possible that they sometimes inadvertantly buy additives that do contain sperm oil.

Some cosmetics and toiletry products use other whale products. Details of companies and products using whale oil will be published as and when these become known.

GAME BIRD!

An 80 year old activist with the Irish Council Against Blood Sports was telephoned at 1.30 am by hare coursers and told that she was going to be "got" after her article on Park Coursing* had appeared in the media. (Unable to enter a meet on her press pass she and a colleague obtained information and photographs by lying on their stomachs in a hedge.)

After the telephoned threat she told the anonymous caller "Thank you for warning me but in future please don't ring before 9am as you'll wake others in the house"!!

**Park coursing—Irish form of hare coursing, where boxed hares are released in an enclosed area. These hares may be coursed more than once in a day.*

GO TELL IT TO THE DEER

The author of a BFSS booklet on hunting states, "Even in its last few moments a stag is often not frightened at all but just angry and vigorously attacking the hounds which have brought him to bay. If his end comes by hunting he will run through his familiar country in a way he has often run before, and at last he will be shot in his own familiar surroundings."

It's a pity no one told the deer on Exmoor.

A hunt which lasted for 3½ hours and covered 35 miles ended in death for a 5 year old stag who had the misfortune to tangle with the Devon & Somerset Staghounds last April,

Death came with a shot in the head on a main road in Minehead.

ONE TIMES TWO

As reported elsewhere the Labour Party has been threatened with a massive loss of bloodsportsmen's votes if they add the ban on hunting to their Manifesto. Part of this 'massive' loss is expected to come from the 6 Cumbrian fell packs which, according to a recent article in the Lancs Evening Post quoting Harold Watson, Secretary of the Lunesdale, command "16,000 supporters" between them.

On the night that the article appeared our person-on-the-spot phoned the 6 hunts in question and asked them how many supporters they had. All 6 hunts claimed roughly the same—23-30 on weekdays, 50-100 on Saturdays and 150-200 on Bank Holidays. Thus the maximum number out on any Bank Holiday is more likely to be 1,200 than the 16,000 claimed by Harold Watson and even then most of those 1,200 will be ill-informed tourists.

Back to your twice-times tables Harold.

BOUND FOR TROUBLE

When a hunter on the normally reasonable Heythrop F.H. lost his cool and threatened a sab with a whipping he got a firm ticking-off from the master.

At this Bosley, the hunter, became so angry that the same evening he visited one of the sabs, the son of a local vicar, and punched him on the nose. (Instead of protesting the vicar subsequently insisted his son ring up Bosley to "apologise" for disrupting the hunt!) Bosley then went on to the home of HSA Treasurer, Sue Hough, and together with his side kick not only threatened Sue and two other sabs with a beating but threatened to kill Sue's dog.

All this led to the hunter being summonsed to Woodstock Magistrates Court in June.

Bosley, in muddy trousers, claimed in court that the sabs had thrown stones at his horse, jumped on him and attacked him; that he and "his man" only visited Sue's house for an apology and that Betty (the dog) nipped his leg, so he "might" have kicked her". He claimed he had always been friendly with local sabs but in the next breath said that sabs were paid to spoil his sport.

After he was told off for using the witness box as a political platform, Bosley was bound over to keep the peace, in the sum of £100, for 12 months.

What a refreshing change!

SHOTGUN WEDDING!

At a recent wedding in Austria members of the local hunting club, to which the bride-groom belonged, lined up outside the church to fire a volley in a traditional hunters salute.

As the happy couple left the church the guns roared, the bride screamed and every-body scattered in panic as two guests fell, blood pouring from buckshot wounds.

At the subsequent trial of one of the guard of honour it turned out that the hunt club members were so tanked up on "Hunters tea", a mixture of rum and hot tea, that they had hardly been able to form themselves into the customary two straight lines.

BOOKS

Animal Law *by Godfrey Sandys-Winsch,* published by Shaw & Sons, London £4.90.

Here is an entirely new book for all who want to know what the law says about animals. Previously all aspects relating to this broad subject were contained in no fewer than 140 Statutes and statutory instruments and had to be collected from almost as many sources.

The author has managed to collate all the relevant material covering topics ranging from 'what kind of traps can I use' to the keeping of dangerous wild animals, without losing any of the essential facts associated with this subject. Animal Law is fully annoted with reference to existing cases and over 60 Acts of Parliament and Statutory instruments.

Practitioners in law, police, local government and those who wish to know more about the rights of animals will find this book invaluable.

NAUGHTY BITS

Lord Egremont's fallow deer herd at Petworth, Sussex is providing the ingredients for Chinese love-potions via . . . their naughty bits! The macabre trade is a by-product of the estate's culling programme, deer warden, Richard Price, said, "Each deer penis fetches from 50p upwards, depending on size and condition. A good size one, measuring 24 inches, would fetch a couple of pounds".



Lord Egremont

Any offers . . . do we hear 12½p?

PELT UP

Hunters have been expressing great alarm at the rise in the number of foxes killed by lesser mortals using snare, trap or poison in a bid to make a quick buck by selling the pelts for up to £20 a time.

Usually the hunters resort to the 'conservation' argument—ie that these pelt dealers are unaware of the damage they're causing and that the only true conservationists in this world ride with registered hunt packs and belong to the BFSS. However one or two hunters have accidentally let out the true reason for their concern which is of course the growing number of unenjoyable 'blank' days which they've been getting since the pelt trade increased.

Tony Jackson, editor of Shooting Times, echoes these fears. In his Turnstone column of 15.12.77 he reassuringly states, "I very much hope that the fashion for wild fox skins very soon passes or that (wishful thinking) dealers who buy the skins might consider the long-term results of their trading . . . unless the activities of these pelt pursuers can be curbed, in certain areas some hunts may find their fox population drastically reduced".

One need not be surprised then to note that he doesn't accept adverts from nasty people who deal in fox pelts but only from nice people like Mr. King who only deals in rabbit, hare, mink and stoat skins.

RABBITS, HARES, MINK AND STOAT SKINS BOUGHT
Air dried or salted.
Top prices paid.
G. A. KING & CO,
8 Westgate Street,
London, E8.
Telephone: 01-985 6486.

What a pity that no one's told Mr. Jackson about Mr. King's ads in 'Sporting Gun'.

FOX SKINS WANTED
TOP PRICES PAID.
G. A. KING & CO,
8 Westgate Street,
London, E8.
Telephone: 01-985 6486

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

"One must realise that few antis give a cuss in hell for animals. He or she is basically ignorant of the countryside and is more hellbent on providing an arena for class conflict than in motives of altruism."

"These people (saboteurs) are not interested in wild animals. They want to further their own political aims."

(Reference: Tony Jackson, Editor, Shooting Times; Colonel Peter Kerr, President, League Against Cruel Sports—SW Branch!)

Déjà views

Over 80 National and local newspapers carried items and letters over Labour's plans to ban bloodsports in the months of June and July alone. The hunters were quick to take up the cudgels, or pens in this case, and rose to even greater heights of prosaic garbage. Typical of their outpourings were these two letters—classics of their time.

From farmer Phelps of Glos. writing to the Times:

"I do not care for bloodsports but I dislike even more the untutored politician's interference in the countryside . . . still more do I dislike hypocrisy. This proposal is not concerned with cruelty to animals. And yesterday, for that reason, I joined the British Field Sports Society, the company of sportsmen, even fox-hunters, being preferable to the company of hypocrites".

From Margaret Cormack writing to the Northants Evening Telegraph (whose Editor, incidentally, is a member of WAGBI):

"In this historical hunting country, hundreds of Labour people support the hunts, *even* (our emphasis) ride to hounds themselves. The thrill of the chase can still be a working man's pleasure. Labour now hunts out the working people who appreciate the finer things of life. Labour—with the Union's aid—have created a world of materialism and devotion to self."

POLLING THE PUBLIC

A recent item in Shooting Times complained bitterly that the League against Cruel Sports new opinion poll on bloodsports wasn't being fair to the 'sporting' fraternity. "Whilst we are assured that the poll was conducted in areas representing the entire country, one must express some surprise that not a single person from the 750,000 who shoot, 200,000 who follow hounds and the millions who fish has raised this matter with us."

Perhaps they would find the poll carried out for the 'Daily Express' more gratifying.

The question "Do you think bloodsports such as foxhunting and hare coursing should be made illegal" was asked.

46% of Tory voters said "Yes": 45% "No".

63% of Labour voters said "Yes": 27% "No".

When will these naughty Polls get the answer right?!

KIND GESTURE

The South Devon hunt withdrew from the Newton Abbott carnival procession after anonymous phone calls and letters to carnival organisers warned of an anti demonstration. Mr Claude Whitley, hunt master, decided to back out fearing someone could be injured. How kind of him to think of the antis!

FORUM

FORUM is designed specifically for individual members to express an opinion about subjects that interest them and the views expressed therein do not necessarily reflect those held by the Association.

Beware of the dog

A further good reason for abolishing fox-hunting recently came to light with the publication of a paper by veterinary microbiologist, Diana Sard, in the *New Scientist* (20.4.78). In her paper 'Time to eliminate the hydatid' she points out that hounds are a principal host and carrier of the parasite *Echinococcus granulosus* which causes hydatid disease.

The number of people suffering from the disease has not declined over the past twenty years despite improved health conditions and according to official statistics it kills fifteen people every year and many more, nearly 100, cases are discovered every year, often in children. Since this is only the official record many more people may be hosting the parasite without being aware of the fact.

For those unfortunates who develop the disease the effects are unpleasant to say the least. The parasite attacks key organs such as the kidney and brain as well as the bone, often developing into enormous cysts, and in some cases leading to the patient's death. Attempts to remove the cysts have meant, in approximately 10% of the cases, that the patient has not survived the surgery.

People catch the disease in two principal ways, firstly by eating the eggs of the worm on flyblown food. Secondly, they may pick up the parasite by touching the fur of dogs. Dogs and sheep are the main carriers of the parasite and in many respects the cycle is indeed a vicious circle, for the dog may pass the parasite onto the ground which is then picked up by grazing animals. The animals in turn are slaughtered and the meat eaten by dogs who pass it back to the ground and also to humans.

The reason why hounds constitute a major carrier of the parasite is that, unlike the abbatoirs and knackers yards in the public sector, the private abbatoirs of hunt kennels are not subject to official regulations regarding the sterilisation of meat and offal used to feed hounds. In fact, the author points out, kennel staff may even pick out a cyst as a treat for a favourite dog.

It is therefore not surprising that a high rate of infection amongst dogs found in counties characterised by frequent and widespread hunting. Hence in Powys and Dyfed, more than 75% of the packs were found to be carrying the worm. Moreover, in these same areas, a high rate of infection was found amongst the local people. Studies of even healthy people indicated that as many as 90% showed signs of previous infection with the parasite.

The conclusions to be drawn from this discovery are of course obvious, providing, as it does, further evidence of the actual dangers of hunting, not only to the fox and farm animals but also to the misfortune to live in areas where this barbaric practice is carried out.

Dr. Sue Easton
(HSA member)

The following extract from an article in the Northumberland Journal about the work of the huntsman with the Braes of Derwent F.H. illustrates the conditions found in hunt kennels:

"The rest of the morning and part of the afternoon may be spent collecting fallen stock from farms and preparing it; The larder where the carcases are cut up and stored is like the set for a Hammer film. A great empty barn, the ceiling almost as high as the stench, its walls are hung with darkening carcases while others lie on the floor waiting to be skinned.
The leggy black sort of Lakeland terrier that has followed us round the kennels finds a decaying sheep's head and attacks it with ardour".

SHEPHERD DEFENDS FOXES

In an article in the Sunday Times (21.5.78) John Barrington, a Scottish shepherd, claimed that it is largely untrue that foxes kill young lambs.

He says that foxes are a friend rather than an enemy to the shepherd because voles, one of which can eat 50lb of grass a year, form a major part of its diet.

He also states that on the rare occasion when a fox does kill lambs (as distinct from carrying off the bodies of lambs which are already dead) it is as a result of human interference—such as the killing of the creature's mate.

PIFFLES

"Could not WAGBI better use a Fighting Fund, and any other available revenues, to begin (or continue) purchasing small areas of wetland or game bird coverts for setting aside as sanctuaries for wild birds? Such activities provide public proof that shooting interests can be beneficial to wildlife. They also, of course, make for better shooting." **(Shooting Times 1.6.78)**

"I saw a bank angler at the local trout water recently . . . He wore a string vest, had a handkerchief knotted on his head and was fishing a gigantic lure on a shooting head line which went splashing down. His lunch and spare gear were on the bank in a supermarket polythene bag and sheltered under a huge green umbrella. This man was no doubt enjoying his sport, was happy and comfortable and was breaking no fishery laws, but to my view his noble quarry deserved better. Royalty should not be dispatched with a pitchfork!" **(Shooting Times 11.11.76)**

"One item, from a Yorkshire moor, was as well shot, photographically, as were many of the grouse depicted. The commentator refrained from these irritating snide remarks about aristocracy and privilege, but the news reader could not resist the remark that it had 'been a sad day for the grouse'. A pity he had not thought to mention that it had been a sad day for many people in Ireland, Portugal and other parts of the world where people kill their fellow men—not to mention all the beasts and fowl that had been slaughtered that day to provide us with food. It is a sad world; but it would be even worse for the grouse if they were not shot at all." **(Shooting Times 4.9.75)**

"Worst of all, this very Government, with canting hypocrisy, proposes to rob legitimate sportsmen of their legitimate sport, while actively supporting terrorists who rape and murder nurses, teachers and missionaries with appalling brutality in Rhodesia. So often such atrocities are perpetuated against those very people who fought for our freedom in the last war. **(Shooting Times 27.7.78)**

"So now with another grouse shooting season at a close, what can the moor keeper do to help maintain the good health of his birds throughout the coming winter months?" **(Shooting Times 15.12.77)**

Wail of woe

In 1977 6,500 tonnes of sperm whale oil was imported into Great Britain—the equivalent of 1,200 whales. When Janet Fookes MP asked the Environment Secretary, (20.4.78) if he would take steps to ban the imports of sperm oil into this country Denis Howell replied that "The sperm whale is not listed in either of the appendices to the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. For this reason, there are no grounds for imposing a ban on the import of sperm oil under the Endangered Species (Import & Export) Act 1976.

That's the Government's stance!

Most of this sperm oil is utilised by the leather tanning industry. Director of the British Leather Federation, Mr Reake, said that they would "continue using sperm oil even if the Ministry of Agriculture were to declare the sperm whale to be endangered."

That's the industry's stance!

During five days in July the fate of the whales was discussed by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) at the Mount Royal Hotel in London. (The function of the IWC being to decide how many whales can be killed economically each year and to act as a buffer between public opinion and the whalers.)

The discussions were, as usual, hampered by political wrangling—the Japs threatened trade sanctions on the Panamanians when they were actively seen to support a stop to the killing; and side steps—how the conservationists were threatening the culture of prefab-dwelling, supermarket-shopping, TV-watching Eskimos!

The conference ended with the agreement to ban the killing of the Sei whale in the S. Hemisphere (not commercially viable anymore), with the agreed figure of all whales to be killed next year at 16,047, excluding sperm whale kills in the N. Pacific—this figure is to be decided at a meeting in December.

The last day also found a 70,000 signature petition, deploring the whale slaughter, in the Hotel's waste tip.

That's the Commission's stance!

While the talk was going on a group of demonstrators stood quietly outside the hotel waving an occasional banner. The leadership of the Friends of the Earth (FOE) seemed blissfully unaware of the mounting frustration and seemed content to become part of the establishment and ask ever-so-politely if the IWC could stop killing whales. On the final day some of the demonstrators, realising the futility of demonstrating in conventional fashion, invaded the conference which resulted in symbolistic red ink being thrown over the Japanese delegates and the meeting being halted by smoke bombs. The demonstration was denounced by FOE!

And that's where we should stand. On one hand the activists—like Greenpeace who are out there combatting the whaling fleets on the high seas, on the other the talkers. We've learnt through our own campaigning that talking gets you nowhere, as an article in New Musical Express expressed—the only hope for the whales is THE FRONT LINE.

We must not let the whales down!

Footnotes:

British Leather Federation: 9 St. Thomas Street, London SE1

The British Commissioner to the IWC is Julian Kelsey who can be found skulking in Great Westminster House, Horseferry Road, London SW1.

Sole importers of sperm oil: Highgate & Job, 60 Murray Street, Paisley, Strathclyde.

APEX the 150,000 strong white collar workers union has now adopted opposition to the use of sperm whale oil in this country as official union policy.

POACHERS PARADISE

Throughout Britain an estimated 25 per cent of the roe and fallow deer population have disappeared and in some areas, wild deer herds have been completely wiped out. The cause of this appalling epidemic—the poacher.

Not the country poacher of folk lore, but a new breed of violent, ruthless and very professional killer who will use all manner of weapons against our six species of deer, including wire snares, the silent crossbow, shotguns and most horrific of all, lurcher dogs.

The reason for this slaughter is money. Poachers can obtain anything from £65 for a roe deer up to £150 for a full grown red stag. The meat (called venison) is taken to big cities like Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, London and sold "via the back door" to unscupulous hoteliers with no questions asked. Also, much of it is sold through European outlets to end up as expensive meals for French and German gourmets.

The full horrors of this terrible trade are best summed up in the words of the poachers themselves, like 21 year old Geoffrey Battams from Leighton Buzzard, who was jailed by Bedford Crown Court for killing 180 deer at Woburn Abbey. He stated at his trial "one day I went to the park and my dog pulled down a buck. I pulled it to the side of the road and cut its throat, but it kicked me so I ran the car over its head to finish it off." He also claimed that "my dog is able to kill the smaller ones but needs some help with the larger ones. I do that by breaking their necks or cutting their throats to stop them squealing." Poacher David Woodhouse, who has killed over 200 deer in the last two years using dogs described a typical nights slaughter . . . "We arrive at the scene about midnight and hang about to see that there's no one around and then we use lamps to show the dogs the deer. Once the dogs have got their teeth into a deer, we have to get there quick and hold its jaws shut to stop it making a noise. Then we break its neck or slit its throat."

The same disgusting scenes are repeated in every county of the land night after night. Deer are found wandering entangled in snares, others are blasted with shotguns, injured, escape and limp around with jaws blown off, blinded or peppered with buckshot.

At the moment the only protection that these animals have under the law is the totally inadequate Deer Act 1963, which makes the maximum fine for a first poaching offence a derisory £20 and also condones the use of shotguns for the killing of deer. The situation was shown up recently when Steven Richards was fined £40 by West Somerset magistrates for helping to kill three deer. After paying the fine he was still £32.50 in pocket. As for shotguns, apart from the poacher, and the farmer anxious to protect his crops, the only people who still regularly use a shotgun on red deer are members of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds, who from time to time organise deer drives to cull, principally, surplus hinds as hunting alone does not seem able to kill sufficient. When approached on the subject, the hunt maintain that these drives are the only effective method of deer control and claim that all wounded deer are always followed up by hounds and accounted for.

Deer Bill '77

To help put an end to the poacher Lord Northfield introduced into the House of Lords on January 25th last year his Deer Act 1977 which would have:—

1. Made it an offence to sell venison except to a licensed game dealer.
2. Raised the fines to £500 and ordered the confiscation of all equipment, including vehicles.
3. Given greater power to the police to search, on land where deer carcase are stored and to arrest on suspicion of poaching.
4. Banned the use of shotguns for the killing of deer.

To quote Peter Bailie, Chairman, British Deer Society,

"From the outset, The Northfield Deer Bill met particular opposition on two counts. First, the Devon and Somerset Staghounds, represented by the British Field Sports Society, disliked the section aimed at curbing the prevalent widespread poaching. A re-drafted, though less effective, provision was eventually agreed. Secondly, the Devon and Somerset Staghounds and the National Farmers Union objected to the proposals dealing with the use of shotguns on deer. The former because of their deer drives (which would have had to end) and the latter (NFU) demanded the almost unconditional right to shotgun all species of deer, however inefficient and cruel this might be. Again a very one-sided compromise was reached. On the day that Lord Northfields Bill was in the Lords (Jan 25th) in the House of Commons Mr. Jasper More (Conservative M.P. for Ludlow and vice-chairman of the BFSS) presented no less than three Deer Bills, covering ground already covered by Northfield's.

Nevertheless, the Bill successfully completed all stages in the Lords and was sent to the Commons where, during the Second Reading on July 15th, it was "objected to" by Nigel Forman (Conservative M.P. for Sutton Carshalton). On being asked why he objected, he confessed that he had been requested to by Mr. Marcus Kimball (Conservative M.P. for Gainsborough and chairman of the BFSS) who admitted later that the reason was that the NFU wanted it killed. The full truth about these manoeuvres is unlikely ever to see the light of day, but one thing is known—the BFSS and NFU were very unhappy when it was proved that it was they who killed off the Deer Bill and gave the poachers a free hand."

If you would like more details about deer poaching and information on how to help fight it, then contact: **Ian Pedler, "Save Our Stags", 1, Guernsey Avenue, Broomhill, Bristol, BS4 4SH.**



Banwen Miners F.H. dig out a fox and throw it live to the hounds



COURT OF ST. JAMES CORNER

(by appointment to HSA)

Following the demonstration earlier this year at the Bicester & Warden Hill hunter trials near Oxford, when Princess Anne and her husband were approached by members of the HSA, both Princess Anne and Prince Charles have replied to letters from the HSA requesting a meeting, by saying that they feel no purpose would be served by such a meeting.

Since then Prince Charles has hunted with the Beaufort Hunt but he swore all the local villagers to secrecy because he did not want the HSA to find out!

The Queen herself came under attack during May of this year when she paid about £750,000 for 6,700 acres of grouse moor near Balmoral. Mr Hamish Watt, SNP MP for Banffshire described the Royal Family as 'trigger happy'.

Recent quote from a right royal Charlie; "Speaking as a pheasant I've a few pellets in my backside". It would appear from the way he ignores public nausea at his hunting activities that some pellets may have lodged quite a bit higher!

WHALE LAUGHS LAST

A Dutch whaling ship, weighing 543 tons, capsized recently as it was pulling aboard a giant whale. The Norwegian captain, in true romantic fashion, went down with his ship.

ALL'S FAIR

The first British Dog Fair was held at Hickstead in July—by any standards it was a flop, estimates on attendance ranged between 4,000 and 6,000 for the two days.

Shooting Times, in a run-up to the event were enthusiastic, ". . . it promises to be a great success and well worth a visit . . . the hound section will culminate with a Grand Parade of hounds which has the makings of becoming one of the most representative and spectacular parades of hounds to have been seen".

Sorry to disappoint S.T. the 'Grand Parade' of foxhounds failed to materialise, due, we understand from a supporter of the Brighton & Storrington Foot Beagles, to the presence of sabs at the show. The beagles, however, were rash enough to go on—their moment of glory ended in chaos when all 4 packs mingled in a mad dash towards . . . the sabs horns!

TAKING 'EM FOR A RIDE

Ever thought of giving money to Riding for the Disabled? According to Douglas 'Dug' Leslie, an elderly northern BFSS buffer, "No one does more than Veronica Heath for young people and their encouragement into the way of country sport and pursuits. She does a lot for the wonderful crusade *which travels under the banner of Riding for the Disabled,* (our emphasis) and it'll be no fault of hers if field sports aren't going full steam ahead in another 50 years time".

ANIMAL CHARTER

Although thousands of column inches in the media, throughout the country, have been given to the bloodsports issue as seen by the Labour government hardly any mention has been made of the entire "Animal Charter" of which the bloodsport proposals are only a small part.

The moves include new legislation covering the welfare of domestic animals including increases in dog licences and a ban on the import of exotic animals which seldom survive in the British climate. Tighter controls on factory farming and changes in the regulations covering the transport of farm livestock including moves to slaughter export livestock before shipping to the continent. New laws regulating zoos, wildlife parks and circuses are also envisaged.

Proposed changes in the controls covering laboratory experiments are most welcome. It's intended to try and limit animal experiments to *proven* medical research; to update the Cruelty to Animals Act 1876; to promote the use of alternative methods of testing medicines and products.

The controversial LD50 test (in which a substance is tested on a group of animals to find what dose will kill 50% of them) is under fire. It's also hoped that there will be an increase in inspections by the Home Office and to stiffen the penalties for offenders.

It's estimated that of the 5½ million experiments carried out in 1976—2% were for diagnostic procedures (ie the recent botulism scare); 8% for cancer research; 23% for testing medicinal products and 67% for "other" reasons (mainly commercial products, ie shampoos, cosmetics and "new smoking materials").

LORDS DEBATE HARES

A three hour debate on hare coursing in the Lords on 20th June ended in victory when a majority in the House decided not to accept the recommendation of the Select Committee which came down against the Bill to end coursing.

If Labour returns in the next session it seems likely that hare-coursing, at least, could be banned.

HAVENLY FOOD

The food manufacturers, Gales and Hovis have combined in a campaign to help the otter. For two wrappers and two labels returned to them they send 5p to the Otter Trust in Suffolk and send you an otter booklet and 'Save the Otter' badge.



HSA was well represented at the Animal Rights Day march in London in May. Hon. Sec., Dave Wetton, talks about the our work

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