"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

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UNACCEPTABLE

The Unacceptable Face of Conservation

By John Bryant

The Wildlife and Countryside Bill, probably one of the most ponderous chunks of legislation ever undertaken by a Government, ended its tortuous journey through the House of Lords at 8.15 p.m. on the 30th March. The Bill has survived three readings, a Committee stage lasting a marathon eight days and a Report stage of three. It survived over 800 attempted amendments moved by members of the House but prompted by pressure groups as diverse as the RSPB, the Ramblers Association, the N.F.U. and the League Against Cruel Sports.

One might be forgiven for thinking that a Bill which had recieved so much attention and debate would have emerged at least as a document commanding fairly general approval from all quarters. Not so! The Bill left the Lords and entered the Commons with only a little less scorn poured upon it than was when it first saw light of day — such is the conflict of viewpoint between those, who for one reason or another, have some axe to grind in our green and not so pleasant land.

The trouble with the Bill, is that it attempts to produce compromises on issues upon which there can be no compromise. If one wishes to ban mugging, one simply makes mugging a criminal act. One dosn't bring in a law which says mugging is not allowed unless its necessary! And this is what happens in this Bill. It purports to protect wild places, animals, birds and insects from mugging but then writes in circumstances and provides licences which permit wholesale mugging even of endangered species.

British Parliaments rarely make moral decisions — and usually settle for the easy way out by accepting frustrating compromises. Thus we are in danger of writing a law which forbids the killing of otters but allows for them to be hunted and driven from their habitat, and forbids cruelty to badgers but permits destruction of their setts.

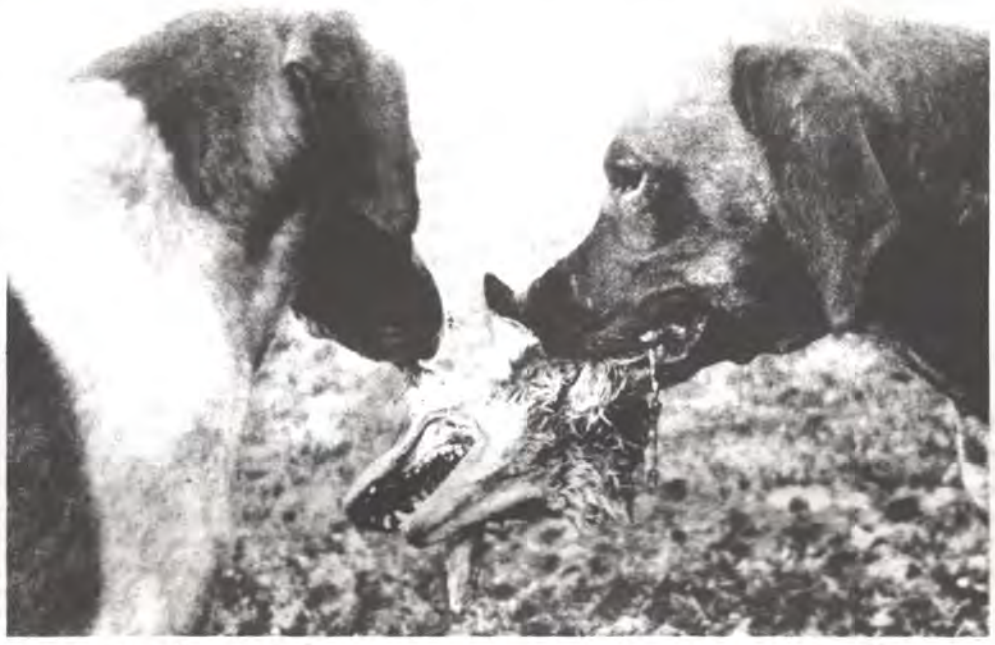
In an attempt to incorporate at least a few teeth in this gummy Bill, the League Against Cruel Sports has sent a 30 page brief to every Member of Parliament, asking for twelve amendments. These include the banning of airweapons against any live creatures, the banning of all snares, the protection of badger setts and of course the abolition of hunting with hounds.

During attempts to improve the Bill in the House of Lords, wildlife found the support of two notable champions, Lord Melchett, who as opposition spokesman showed himself to have a superb grasp of the Bill's intricacies, and of course our evergreen campaigner for animal rights, Lord Houghton. Due in no small part to their efforts, the Government was defeated on several amendments, notably an amendment to ban the shooting of wildfowl on Sundays. The argument that bird-watchers should have at least one day per week to study fowl without twelve-bores and punt-guns exploding all over the place, won the day. "Big deal!" you might say, but this simple and modest amendment has caused blood sportsmen all over the country to throw fits of rage and Michael Heseltine for the Government, has promised to try and reverse the amendment during the Bill's career in the House of Commons.

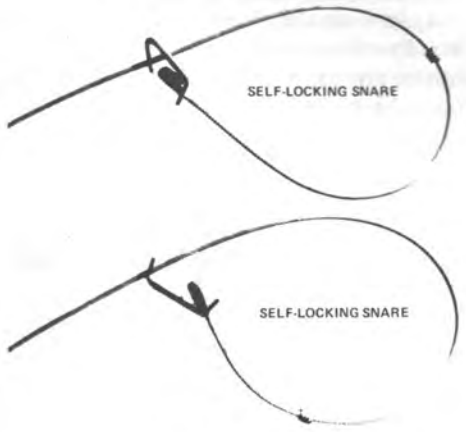
We have to hope that the bird shooters in the Commons have the same level of intellect as their pals in the Lords. For instance the Earl of Swinton arguing against Lord Melchett's appeal for Sundays to be a day free from shooting wildfowl for the sake of bird watchers, said, ". . .as far as bird-watchers are concerned, I think it would be easier for them to see the birds if they were disturbed and flying around, having been put up by a shot, than all tucked away in the reedbeds and marshes."

Such rivetting and inspirational argument was not at all rare in this great debate! We all know of the oratory skills of Lord Houghton but even he must have felt like giving up when after a passionate speech appealing for the abolition of catapults as weapons against birds, he was met with the following question from Lord Hale, "My Lords, is the noble Lord suggesting that there is moral fervour involved in the proposal to bring little children before a juvenile court for playing conkers?" As one can imagine debate on that particular amendment died at that moment!

From an animal rights point of view, the only encouraging thing about the Bill is that the Government has accepted the principle of incorporating some 'welfare' content into what is generally accepted to be a 'conservation' measure. A clear indication of this is the proposal to abolish on cruelty grounds, the self-locking snare. This no doubt reflects some official reaction to the recent dramatic increase on fox-snaring due to the high price of their pelts in Europe. It has been estimated that more than 100,000 British foxes are being snared annually to satisfy this sick trade and notable fox hunters have expressed concern at this high level of mortality which threatens their 'sport', Because of this and public concern at large numbers of cats and dogs falling victim due to 'saturation snaring' of many areas, the Government has decided to ban the pelt-hunter's favourite snare — the self-locker.







However, the Government has failed to realize that rather than give up their gory but lucrative business, the pelt-hunters will simply convert to the free-running snare. The difference between the two types is that the self-locker is designed to strangle its victim to death (thereby saving the trapper the bother) whereas the free-running snare is meant to hold the victim and strangle it repeatedly to the point of unconsciouness but not death. If the Government has its way and only the self-locking snare is banned then not only will it *not* lead to a reduction in the numbers of foxes killed but will actually result in an increase in cruelty due to the snared foxes suffering repeated strangulations instead of one, and then having their brains beaten in and even possibly being skinned alive.

Distinguishing between the two types of snare in the hedgerows will be difficult, and downright impossible when a fox is caught in one — the differentiating mechanism being hidden deep in the fox's fur. Therefore enforcement of a law which only abolishes one type will be a farce. These arguments almost prevailed in the Lords when some notable Tory Peers voted against the whip, but the reform was narrowly lost. There is real hope that a better result can be obtained in the Commons and the L.A.C.S. has included a strong plea on this issue in its brief to M.P.s.

So hopefully, out of this morass of legislation, it will be possible that a few useful gains may be won. If not, then all we shall have is the record of some 'gems' in Hansard including the following 'confession' from the Earl of Onslow, who when describing a 'good hunting country' in which there are 'special reserves for foxes' "...those areas are very carefully conserved for lunatics such as myself to go leaping across other people's fences and chasing them after hounds",

Well he said it. . . !

A snared fox with abdomen constricted to a few inches.



DESERVING FOX

A fox was given "another chance" after it had taken refuge in a farmers egg store while being pursued by hounds near Porthmadog in the West Country. The farmer, Arthur Roberts, said afterwards "fair play, it had got away from the hounds and deserved another chance."



Dear MAIL-BAG,

I hope all true conservationists will rejoice in the fact that under the Government's Wildlife and Countryside Bill now before the House of Commons, a new offence has been created. The Bill will make illegal the use of any mechanically propelled vehicle for the immediate pursuit of dormice, red squirrels, and hedgehogs!

The Society for Hunting In Towns and Streets (S.H.I.T.S.) is pledged to fight this proposal to the bitter end and at the Society's Annual Dinner last week, its Chairman, Sir Willie Brown-Smelling M.B.E. told the members and guests; "People just do not understand that we are conservationists. Since the decline in hedgehog numbers we have not been killing any. Of course S.H.I.T.S. members pursue hedgehogs in their vehicles but we swerve away at the last moment – unless of course it is a poor specimen or is injured in some way. And may I once again point out, that contrary to the wild allegations by antis, the notches on my steering wheel are not hedgehog kills. They are simply a record of little boys I have given lifts to!"

Sir Willie, received roars of "hear, hear" when as the final toast he proposed 'My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you . . . . . the S.H.I.T.S.'

Yours Anon.

Dear Sabs,

You people are great! you have been on both our major national television networks. You have given us Americans much heart. We haven't even banned the damn leg-hold trap yet. Of course, we have an incredibly immoral society and the massive National Rifle Association to contend with.

Please send me (sea mail) your magazine, so that we may keep up with your excellent activest activities.

David Shalek, Connecticut, U.S.A.

Dear HOWL,

The RAT PACK is a revolutionary concept in the battle for Animal Liberation. Unlike previous anti-vivisection campaigns for young people, the RAT PACK will NOT be a stuffy, patronising dictate to young people, full of boring words and dull designs, allowing only a minimum of participation from the very people it is supposed to attract. The RAT PACK will be a grass roots campaign co-ordinated from BUAV HQ and aims to encourage the FULL participation from all its supporters throughout its complete range of activities. Together we will organise demos, publicity stunts, discos and street leafleting.

Area Contact groups will be set up throughout the country to help organise local activities. We intend to hit hard at universities, polytechnics and colleges – because as a result of our actions we will publicise the scientists who are using animals in their labs and furthermore, expose the experiments taking place and demand an end to them through the educational authorities. Can you afford to miss this exciting new campaign? Annual membership £2.00

Write for details today!

RAT PACK, BUAV, 143 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON WC2H 0EE.

Kim Stallwood

Dear Sabs,

I refer to the latest edition of HOWL in which you mentioned Shane Kind, who had been sent down for three years for breaking into a tannery, and asking for people to write to him. This I did offering to send him books, articles etc. to keep him up to date on the 'animal front' only to receive back a rejection slip saying:

"Dear Ms Whitlock,
It is regetted that I must return your correspondence with 061 Kind. Unfortunately, Prison Rules do not allow for correspondence between inmates and pen friends".

This annoyed me intensely as I hardly considered I was writing to ask Shane to become a "pen friend". I suppose if the letter had been worded as though I knew him personally it would have been O.K. Is there any other way around this?

Keep up the good work,
Carole Whitlock.

This is just one of many letters that were returned for similar reasons. As for a way around this 'rule' all we can suggest is Carole's idea of wording the letter as though you know Shane. Ed.

COURT REPORT

Four sabs, Kev Chapple, Richard Groves, Michael Greatorex and Paul Myerson, were each bound over to keep the peace at Newmarket Magistrates Court in February, each for one year and in the sum of £100. Paul, who pleaded not guilty to conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace was also ordered to pay £81.56 witnesses expenses.

The charges arose after a sab had been assaulted at the National hare coursing event at Swaffam last October. The two coursers charged with assault were later tried at Cambridge Crown Court, but Kenneth Alsop and Thomas Day were discharged when the Judge entered a plea of not guilty on Day's behalf and accepted Alsop's agreement to be bound over for one year.

Justice continued to creep along its nebulous path when Trevor Scott, who was a prosecution witness against Alsop and Day, refused to be bound over by the Court under the 1361 Justice of the Peace Act and was sent to prison for seven days for contempt of Court.



Trevor Scott before being led away.

Having served seven days for contempt Trevor has waived the Binding Over order, but this need not necessarily have been the case. He could have been sent to prison for anything up to six months for contempt, or he could have been confined until his contempt had been purged i.e. until he agreed to be bound over.

A BIG DICK FINED FOR ASSAULT!

Andrew Smith, a senior civil servant with the Dept. of Agriculture and Fisheries, of South Lodge, Glenbrae, Falkirk, his daughter, Lorna Smith, and son, Derek Smith, Andrew Crowe of Crownerland Farm, Linlithgow and Malcolm Dick of Main Street, Kirknewton – all members of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Hunt have all lost their appeals against conviction for being very naughty people, especially with regard to their treatment of hunt saboteurs. (See HOWL 16).

These paragons of virtue were arrested after shouting, swearing and waving sticks in a threatening manner as a group of sabs sat in a mini bus waiting for the meet to move off. One sab was struck by the pacifist with the stick. Lord Wheatly, sitting with Lords Dunpark and Kincraig deplored the way that these anarchists had taken the law into their own hands and acted as 'self-appointed vigilantes'.

Each anarchic vigilante was fined £400 (total fines being £2000) for charges of breach of the peace and assault.

BREACH OF THE PEACE FOR A CREMATION

H.S.A. members Robin Smith and Lindsay Norris were each bound over to keep the peace for two years in the sum of £200 after an anti fur trade demo in Manchester. Both denied the charge.

The demo, which the prosecutor conceded had been both "perfectly proper and peaceful" came to a head when they reached a furriers in the city centre. A fur coat had been carried hoisted on a pole and daubed with red paint at the head of the march. As the demo reached the furriers the coat was set alight as a protest.

SHOOTING TIMES Comic Cuts

BEE-STLY NEWS

Have you ever wondered what hunters do when they get home at night? Douglas Leslie, a British Field Sports Society representative provides a useful insight in a recent Shooting Times article, when he recalls a late friend called Charlie Hobbs . . . "He, it was, who indulged in the improbable, but no less entertaining sport of bolting mice from the skirting boards with bumble bees. This was carried out much on the same lines as ferreting, and I can remember to this very day the excitement, the din and the laughter, all to the accompaniment of huge jugs of hot punch which always seemed to be a feature of the occasion. The hazards were increased and multiplied by the fact that everything took place by the light of lamps and candles, and usually after a pretty handsome supper! With the exception of Charlie, who handled the bumbles, having collected them from the garden and popped them into match-boxes, all others present lay on the floor armed with rolled up papers or magazines. When the mice bolted you took a biff at the nearest one to you, and if the biff was inaccurate the mouse generally made good its escape under the dining room door! A simple sport for simple people."

Well, you said it Douglas.

GREEN GRASSED

The editorial of Shooting Times of December 1980 claims that field sports have been brought into disrepute.

James Green of 45 Queen Street, Ryhope, Sunderland who, until recently was a member of the British Falconers Club was brought before Sunderland Magistrates Court last November on a summons issued by the RSPB. Green pleaded guilty to stealing two peregrine falcon chicks from their nest. The chicks had already been marked by officers of the RSPB. Green was fined £500 and ordered to pay £50 costs.

Shooting Times urged anyone who has information of anyone stealing such birds from the wild should report the matter immediately, but, they say, if you do this you won't really be 'informing'. No of course not. "Not in a derogatory sense, but in a positive step towards safeguarding the future of legitimate and enjoyable sport."

VIPERS v VULPES

A new twist to the "foxes kill lambs" story appeared recently in Lea MacNally's column in 'Shooting Times'. He quotes a letter from a Mr. Henderson, head stalker on Black Mount Forest, in Scotland: "My late father was head stalker on Kinlock Forest, Sutherland, for 20 years from 1928 until his retirement. He also kept some sheep, and every summer lost several lambs and an occasional ewe due to adder (viper) bites on the muzzle. That was the price they paid for mere curiosity, investigating a coiled up adder."

Wonder when the BFSS are going to organise adder hunts to deal with these "bloodthirsty pests".

WINDBAGS

"There is far too much apathy now concerning pollution. Shooters can help. I am constantly amazed how many sportsmen leave their spent cartridge cases all over the place as unsightly ammunition for antis, a snub for the farmers whose hospitality they are abusing and *potential hazards to wildlife."*
(Rusticus – *Shooting Times*)

"On March 24th last year, my mother won first prize in a raffle organised to raise money for the Atlantic Salmon Trust Appeal. The prize, a week's salmon fishing in New Brunswick, Canada."
(Jonathon Fryer, *Shooting Times*)

DOG FIGHTING

Although dog fighting is supposed to be illegal in this country, a book on the subject is regularly advertised in 'Shooting Times' – 'Nathan, a Pit Fighting Dog' by D.B. Plummer and is available from West Dorset Nets, 80 North Allington, Bridport, Dorset. Tel. 0308 23576.

A.L.F. NEWS

Animal Liberation Front activity has been on the increase since the new year, with a large number of beagles and other dogs being rescued up and down the country from pet stealers, breeders and research establishments. Unfortunately several activists have been arrested and face heavy fines if convicted (see appeals). However, the A.L.F. remain determined to step up their efforts against the perpetraters of cruelty.

The publicity they have generated has been remarkable with regular features on T.V. and radio and in newspapers and magazines.

In mid March around a 100 activists demonstrated outside the kennels of one of the main dealers in stolen pets for vivisection. Two mongrels were rescued and extensive damage was caused to the kennels. One of the buildings used to house stolen animals before being sold for research was virtually demolished. Six demonstrators were arrested on breach of the peace and criminal damage charges.

The dealer, a Stewart McGill of Eagle Kennels, Swinderby in Lincolnshire, has subsequently stopped advertising in local papers for unwanted animals, and the publicity has prompted a number of people who gave him their pets to pester him for details of what happened to them. Should any of our readers wish to contact Mr. Mcgill he can be reached on Swinderby 204.



A.L.F. member with a liberated beagle.

In early April a number of activists were arrested and detained following the successful liberation of 10 beagle puppies from a reseach breeding establishment and again face heavy fines if convicted.

Apart from the aforementioned setbacks there have been many other successful raids with no arrests, and at least one dog rescued from labs at Sheffield University has been reunited with its rightful owners.

APPEAL

Funds are *urgently* required to meet the legal fees of the solictors representing the activists. Please send whatever you can afford to Box 190, c/o Peace News, 8 Elm Avenue, Nottingham. Make your cheques or postal orders payable to A.L.F.

Ministry of Aggroculture

It seems the Ministry of Agriculture in Cornwall has been resorting to harassment of local farmers and land owners who are opposed to the killing of badgers.

On one occasion officials called on an elderly farmer in his eighties at 11.00 p.m. ordering him to keep his dogs in the next day without offering an explanation as to why. The following morning dozens of snares were set on his land without permission. When the farmer's son-in-law asked the Ministry for an explanation he was told only one snare had been set by mistake. Officials have even trespassed onto his land to gas badgers without bothering to serve notice of their intentions.

All this has prompted a local badger expert Ruth Murray, who has been campaigning for their protection, to demand a top level enquiry into the Ministry's conduct in Cornwall.

SAVE OUR STAGS NEWS

The best news of the season was the literal washout of the Quantock Staghounds' Point to Point that was held in March. Due to torrential rain a great deal of much needed money was lost to the hunt. For once the Gods seem to be with us.

With still no Saturday hunting we have only been able to arrange one major hit since January. On Easter Monday some eighty saboteurs attended the meet from Low Trow Cross, which is interesting because that is in the middle of Exmoor. It would appear that fearing the success of the sabs on the Quantock Hills, they went running off to the Devon and Somerset Staghounds country in the vain hope of losing them. Without luck, because for most of the day the sabs kept up with them and on a number of occasions hounds were pulled away by some very fine horn work. It was not until very late in the day when most of the sabs had lost contact that the violence started and then only because the police, who incidentally had been very helpful, also lost contact with the hunt. The troubel started because huntsmen were seen on L.A.C.S. land and when saboteurs tried to get them off they were chased back to their cars by hunt heavies, who then blocked the road with their motor-bikes and began attacking the sabs' vehicles. Most of the damage was to the van belonging to Phil Shore's Brighton Group, but luckily no one was hurt. The hunt ended at 7.10 p.m. and there was no kill.

The last meet of the Quantock, which was held at Crowcombe, was attended by Steve Brimble and two other saboteurs from Luton. After trying for over three hours to prevent a kill luck ran out and they were all treated to a taste of West Country tradition. "The most revolting part", said Steve "was when the Master, Walner Robbins, washed the stags heart in a stream. It make me feel sick".



Mandy Dawes and Maralynn Jones.

Two members of the S.O.S. Committee and Bristol H.S.A. Maralynn Jones and Mandy Dawes, are absent with official leave, having signed on as crew members with the conservation ship Sea Shepherd 2. They sailed from Scotland at the end of April and will spend a year at sea fighting the Russian whalers in the Bering Sea and American sealers in the Pribilof Islands. We wish them well.

The S.O.S. Committee are laying plans for a grand-slam against the Quantock Staghounds on Boxing Day this year, if any of you are interested in giving a hand, then please get in touch.

Finally, to each and everyone of you who came to help us out . . . THANK YOU.

Ian Pedler, Save Our Stags, Guernsey Ave., Broomhill, Bristol, 4.

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.

ONLY ROTTERS?

Go to any meeting of Hunt Saboteurs and you will be visually assaulted from all sides by assorted sentiments inscribed on tin badges. Trite little messages ranging from the vulgar to the inappropriate proclaim the wearer's opposition to just about everything – leaving the causal observer feeling totally inadequate in the face of such a tide of contention.

I am no student of badgeology but I have always been bemused by certain offerings and one in particular that has always struck me as being quite extraordinarily banal is "Only Rotters Hunt Otters". It seems to be unique in that whilst other blood sports have generated whole series of 'anti' badges, this is the only one (as far as I know) in its section. A dearth of rhyming and alliterating words presents obvious problems to the slogan-smith, made worse if anything now that the former otter hunters have turned their attentions to mink and coypu.

But do we have to give otter hunters the status of "Rotters"? Do we have to use schoolboy words just because they rhyme? Must we debase our cause by using paltry little epithets to describe those who hunt – those who assume the right to kill for fun! Hunting of any kind is an abomination; and while I would not choose to distinguish between one blood sport and another it does, nevertheless, seem to me that there is something singularly perverse about otter hunters. Having brought the otter population of England and Wales to near extinction, their attentions have now turned to mink and coypu. This last is a retiring little herbivour, marooned in the fenlands of Eastern England far from its original home, and causing some consternation to the Anglian Water Authority by its habit of digging away at the banks of manmade irrigation and drainage channels.

If you have been lucky enough to observe a coypu without disturbing it then you will know that its main characteristic is a permanent and persistent itch – and it is therefore preoccupied for most of its waking hours with simply scratching itself whenever and wherever the elusive itch appears. It has another characteristic which brought forth a bitter complaint from a correspondent to the "Shooting Times". It seems that it is not fun to hunt! It does not run fast enough and it does not put enough effort into fleeing from the hounds! From this we can deduce that a prerequisite for having "fun" is that the quarry should run (or swim) for its life, and from this we can further deduce that there is, in every otter hunter, a demonic lust that defies description – a noxious malevolence that puts him apart from humankind. A hideous perversity that alienates him from all creatures. A noisome malignent depravity that makes him insensible to anything but his own pathological craving to kill some creature that has caused him no provocation and done him no harm. Put all that on a tin badge in letters four feet high and I'll wear it!

David Hough

ORKNEY SEAL CAMPAIGN
by Dave McColl

In October 1980, David McColl and Martin Mathers from the Sea Shepherd Fund teamed up with two newly acquainted H.S.A. members, Clive Swinsco and Alan Reekie to travel up to the Orkney Islands in an attempt to protect the grey seal pups, 2000 of whom were destined to be shot in the forthcoming month.


Two members of the Orkney action team.

Leaving Glasgow late one evening, we travelled overnight to catch the ferry to Orkney at noon the following day. With us we took an Avon inflatable with a 25 h.p. engine, and the dye and sprays for rendering the seal pelts commercially valueless. Because of our actions, the quota of 2,000 pups was not reached and the hunters were reduced to travelling to islands that were off limits in an attempt to both find seals which hadn't been sprayed and reach their individual quotas. This was the first year the so-called traditional hunt was significantly disrupted.

Many groups critised our actions saying the smell from the dye would cause the mothers to desert their pups because they wouldn't recognise their scents. How wrong can people be? The dye is odourless and more importantly, the mothers locate their pups by sound, not scent, as has been proved on numerous occasions, not least by the Canadian Government who used the spraying of seals for over 25 years to check on migration routes.

With the knowledge and experience gained from our first action against the hunt, we intend returning to Orkney again this year but we need your support both morally and financially to purchase more Avons and other essential equipment. Last year was a low profile raiding campaign, but the media reacted with over three weeks constant coverage. It is hoped this year's campaign will be one of direct confrontation with the hunters to focus a great deal more attention


Bluecoat seal pup

on this senseless massacre. The Sea Shepherd is not prepared to sit back and allow this unnecessary, uneconomic and wasteful slaughter to go on. With constant pressure we believe we can shut down this hunt within two years.

If you can help either financially or physically in the 1981 campaign to Save the Seals write to Dave McColl, Sea Shepherd Conservation, 3 Rosehill Torrance, Glasgow.

Dave McColl is a guest speaker at this year's H.S.A. Annual General Meeting.

JANUARY MARCH

Sunday January 25th saw the first major anti bloodsports march through the streets of London.

Originally organised by the South West London H.S.A. group, eventually national H.S.A. and the League Against Cruel Sports became involved. Despite being unable to publicise the event through forthcoming national mailouts because of a lack of time, the grapevine managed to muster well over 800 antis from the main H.S.A. areas.

With a friendly police escort and a sunny sky the march left Hyde Park to wend its way down Park Lane, past the Bunny Club (appropriate?) where Victor Lownes, Playboy boss at the time, was recuperating from a hunting accident, down Piccadilly where chants of "red coats out" changed to "fur coats out" everytime one was spotted.

Michael Clayton, editor of "Horse & Hound" was seen outside Canada House sneakily counting heads was greeted with chants of "Clayton out" as the march entered Trafalgar Square.

Speeches varied from "stick with the politicians" to "don't have faith in *any* politicians." Several speakers attacked the royal family for their unrelenting participation in blood-sporting activities and all advocated militancy.

On the whole a successful, but cold, rally. There was talk of another one next year, not necessarily in London. A small hunting village was suggested, a thousand antis in one of those could cause a few upsets. Hunters beware!



CHOPPER COSTS

There have been numberous fatalities involving wildfowlers in the Solway estuary, Dumfries, in recent years. The latest, in January, involved 3 men. Two were rescued from the sea by a naval helicopter called out by the coastguard. The pilot delivered them to a hospital, then took four hours to recover the body of the third man.

This expensive air sea rescue service is financed by the tax-payer and we fail to see why this situation should be allowed to continue.

If these people are so intent on killing wild birds that they fail to notice the tide coming in the cost of recovering their corpses by helicopter should be met by WAGBI (Wildfowlers Assoc. of Great Britain & Ireland).

INDECENT DISPLAYS

Tunbridge Wells MP, Patrick Mayhew expressed support for the 'Indecent Displays (Control) Bill recently, when he said that he was opposed to "the rising flood of indecent material on public display", Strange then for him to be seen sharing a stirrup cup at the opening meet of the Eridge F.H. last season.

DOUBLE STANDARDS

Poachers operating under the cover of darkness have been decimating partridge flocks in the North West and selling their victims to restaurants and hotels. Paradoxically some of the most vociferous condemnation of these thugs has come from another bunch of thugs – a local wild-fowling club, whose chairman, Frank Jones said; "...these criminals who are probably on the dole are killing precious wild fowl purely for money."

For the individual partridge in the sights of a 12 bore shotgun however, it makes no difference whether their executioner happens to be a poacher killing for money or a wild-fowler killing for fun!!

ROAST MEET

Sad news for anyone who's ever been to watch the Old Surrey & Burstow F.H. at their Boxing Day meet at the Felbridge Hotel, East Grinstead. The place was almost completely gutted by fire in February when an ox that was being roasted for a wedding reception, caught fire.

SWAN HIT BY C. SPRAY

The National Research Council has awarded a £50,000 grant to Aberdeen University lecturer, Dr. C. Spray, who is planning to study the reason for the increasing number of swans losing their mates. A worthy cause one might at first consider. However Spray's university college professor, George Dunnitt has applied to the Scottish Office for licenses to kill 28 swans on the island of South Uist, one of the Western Isles.

At the time of going to press we haven't heard of any decision being made. Knowing how touchy the Scottish Office is over adverse publicity, (Orkney seal cull etc.) perhaps a letter to them would be in order.

GROUP NEWS

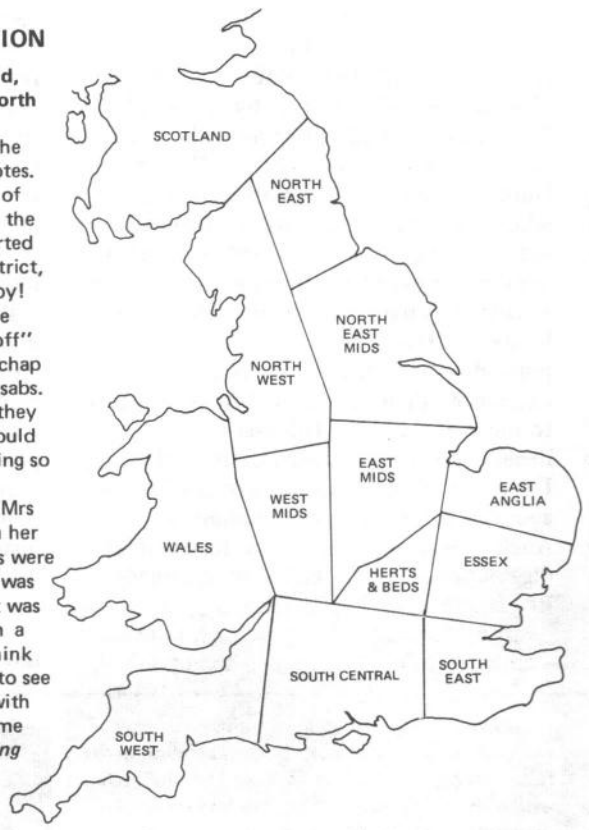
NORTH EAST MIDLANDS FEDERATION

Once again groups from **Doncaster, Sheffield, Northallerton, York, Bradford, Leeds** and **North Lincs** have had a busy end to the season.

The hit against the Catterick Beagles at the Castle Arms, Snape; produced some great quotes. The pack was formed in 1930 for the benefit of the officers of Catterick army Garrison (*not* the local farmers please note!). Today it is supported by all ranks stationed in the Garrison and District, as well as civilians. How times change old boy!

Thirty odd sabs sprayed antimate on the ground around the hound van delaying the "off" for an hour while the police arrived. One old chap claimed the antimate smelled better than the sabs. Joint master Major Smalley asked; "Why are they not doing their work on a Saturday?" One would have thought he would have been pleased seeing so many camoflage jackets around.

"It got very tense around 1.00 p.m." said Mrs Diana Kell, who has run the Castle Arms with her husband David since last July. "The saboteurs were blowing bugles and whistles and one of them was on his hands and knees spreading antimate. It was incredible and very sad because it was such a beautiful day. There was no violence, but I think some of the demonstrators were just waiting to see if any of the hunt people would get upset with them. The saboteurs were mostly young, some with long hair and *a lot of them were wearing jeans.*"



The village constable, PC Ken Galloway, was unavailable for comment, it is believed he was under heavy sedation after seeing all those jeans.

Major Smalley said afterwards; "They did not get what they were after which was a punch-up and a jolly good scene." In fact one sab was hit across the forehead by a follower and one hare was killed.

There was excellent coverage in the Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale Herald amongst other papers.

A week earlier the York & Ainsty (North) F.H. and Airedale Beagles were both hit successfully. Neither made a kill.

February was a hectic month. On the 7th a Landrover was driven through a group of sabs on a path as they were leaving the driver's land. One sab who had been hit by the Landrover naturally lost his temper and punched in the driver's perspex window. Out jumped the driver all ready for battle with broken perspex in hand. Fortunately the sabs reached the road safely. Joint master of the Badsworth F.H., Fred Firth "had heard of the incident" but "the man in the Landrover was not a hunt member." Later on in the day sabs were blocked in by heavies but they just sat tight until the police arrived. Five days later car tyres were deflated at the Badsworth Hunt Supporter's Club annual dinner and dance by "people who were not members of the H.S.A."

On the 14th sabs were punched by supporters at a joint meet with the Colne Valley and Ecclesfield Beagles, the attack resulted in a black eye, cut nose and bruising. There were no hares killed. The local H.S.A. issued a warning, following this assault, that action would be increased against hunts which offered violence and that local H.S.A. recruitment would be stepped up.

One of the strangest arrests in H.S.A.'s history occurred on February 28th. A **Doncaster** sab picked up a dead fox that was being worried by two hounds on the roadside. He planned to photograph the carcase and give it a decent burial. A number of hunters claimed it had been knocked down by a car and said it was their fox and demanded its return but it was placed in the back of the group's mini bus instead. Further down the road the van was stopped by police and the sab arrested on suspicion of theft for refusing to hand the dead fox to the hunters. *He was told he may be accused of stealing the mangled carcase,* and was detained in a police cell for over an hour. One of the joint masters said "I do not know anything about it." It would be hard to imagine anyone admitting involvement with anything quite so stupid.

The sab, Frank Hughes, was due to appear at Market Weighton police station on March 28th but was told at 4.00 p.m. the previous day that "no action is to be taken against you." We do not know what happened to the evidence.

Sabs from **Manchester** joined local ones to hit the Colne Valley Beagles in March. Yorkshire police arrested six sabs who weren't doing anything. This was doubtless a result of the local football match being postponed, leaving footloose police officers raring to go. 20 to 30 of them ran across fields in pouring rain all day after the hunt and sabs. The pack was taken off the huntsman for 1½ hours until the sabs were cornered near a railway line.

North Lincs H.S.A. have had a busy end to their first season, going out on average twice a week right up to the last day. Unlike the beginning of the season when local papers showed great novelty interest in the sabs, coverage has been zero except when Louth sab Trevor Scott refused to be bound over at Cambridge Crown Court. He appeared as a police prosecution witness against two hare coursers who had beaten him up, along with another sab from **Oxford** at the Isle of Ely coursing hit back in October last year. Trevor spent a week in Bedford Prison for his trouble, but succeeded in avoiding a £250 two year binding over order. (See elsewhere this issue.)

In April, after the season had finished Louth Young Farmers Club organised a pram race in which the local sabs entered a team. H.S.A. propaganda was prominently displayed and the whole event was filmed for local showing and featured the sabs quite extensively. A certain amount of 'gamesmanship' took place at the start of the race resulting in the sabs limping past the finish line on 3 wheels in fifth place. Ironically the winner's father had rammed a sabmobile earlier in the season and had been forced to foot the repair bill!

SOUTH EAST FEDERATION

Brighton and Worthing H.S.A. has been the most active group along with **W.A.P.S. (Wild Animal Protection Society)** from South East London.

A reporter from the New York Times, out with W.A.P.S. on a Jorrocks hunt (Old Surrey & Burstow F.H.), was told by a redcoat; "They're scum, absolute scum" and "They're anarchists who are just bent on disruption." Presumably describing his fellow hunt supporters at the time!

The Pevensey Marsh Beagles followed a pre sprayed route from one meet and half the pack were taken from the hunt with sab horns.

On the 28th of February the two groups joined the **Mid Sussex H.S.A.'s** new members' "Beginners Day" against the Crawley & Horsham F.H. Other sabs brought the total to about 70 against the hunt's 70. The hunt stayed deep in the woods all day, much to the chagrin of the supporters. The sabs went in on foot, followed by American A.B.C. News and Southern T.V. who stayed with the sabs throughout.

A fox that had been dug out headed straight for a group of sabs with the hounds in close pursuit and actually ran between the legs of one sab who recovered from his suprise quickly enough to spray its brush, at the same time another sab called the hounds back enabling the fox to escape.

One supporter threatened to "release his dog" on the sabs. Being ignored he went to his van, banged on the side, shouted "come on boy — get them" and proceeded to imitate a dog barking!

A small group of sabs were attacked by supporters carrying drain rods. Three sabs were left limping with cuts and bruises, those responsible later deflated a sabmobile's tyre, another sab was hit by a rider in front of a film crew.

Hunt master C. Hardy-Gillingham admitted that "Tempers flared on both sides at one or two points but I think it stopped short of any harm." He said of the Antis; "There were a lot of them. They were led by a couple of, I suppose, professional saboteurs and the rest I think are youngsters out for an afternoon's entertainment. They did cause quite a problem, they made it more difficult." No fox was killed.

Police said that "although there was a clash between the hunt and saboteurs no offences were committed."



".....although there was a clash between the hunt and saboteurs, no offences were committed".

60 sabs went on to hit the Surrey & N. Sussex Beagles arriving just in time to spot a hunted hare. They managed to intervene with spray before the pack who were only 2 or 3 minutes behind, reached the sprayed area, when they did all the scent had gone and they lost the hare. The hunt decided to call it a day an hour later.

The following week 50 sabs hoped to stage a banner demo at the Southdown F.H.'s meet at Chailey Heritage, a hospital for physically handicapped kids.

Worthing H.S.A. had previously met with a police superintendant of the Lewes area concerning the renown Southdown violence. He promised "effective policing" and seemed genuinely keen on preventing violence. Several police cars and four mounted police kept sabs away from the Heritage on the day. The sabs followed the hunt sabbing it when possible, but ran into mounted police at every turn who were very aggressive and threatened arrest for "action likely" (spraying). They also turned sabs off common land and footpaths whenever they were near the hunt. They also threatened to arrest anyone seen spraying near a police horse for "assaulting a police officer." The hunt was eventually lost in sleet and gales up on the Downs.

Of the four police horses (the entire Sussex mounted force!) at least one has been donated by the Southdown Hunt.

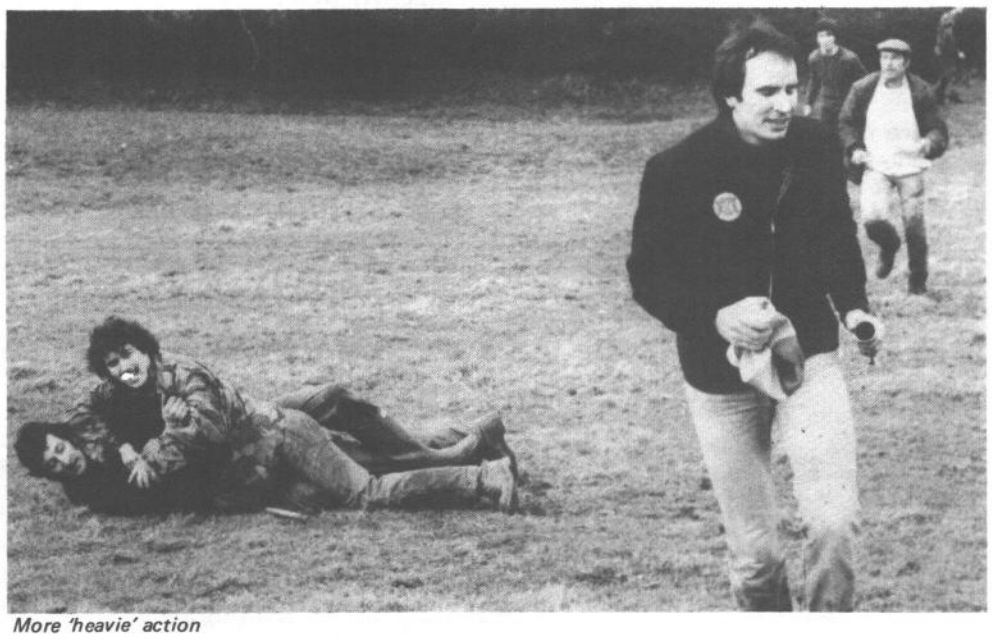
One sab hitching to the meet was given a lift by an East Grinstead policeman he knew, but was told to get out and find his own way there as soon as his purpose was known.

In March **Worthing** sabs saved several hares from the Surrey & N. Sussex Beagles by the use of high pitched squeals.

On the 14th 50 sabs from various groups combined to hit the Surrey Union F.H.'s 30 riders and supporters. No kills, although three sabs had a shotgun fired at them in the woods! An Australian T.V. crew out with the group managed to get some good footage, especially of a supporter threatening them with a spade. (Postscript — an ex-H.S.A. Committee member now living in Australia phoned up a month later to say that we'd just had 15 minutes of prime T.V. time down under.)

On the 21st the Old Surrey & Burstow were the target. The pack split, one half rioting after deer, the other ran through well sprayed fields. Later on the whole pack was holloaed out of a wood and ran single file through a well sprayed 3ft. gap in a fence. One sab was ridden down and others were attacked by supporters, one carrying a baseball bat. The landowner called the police who took four names "for trespass" (a civil offence!) but other sabs avoided them thanks to a friendly farmhand's warning.

Mid Sussex and others hit the Chiddingfold, Leconfield & Cowdray F.H. on April 11th. The hunt could only muster 7 riders. At the meet one supporter stood in front of a sab's car to stop it moving off and was mistaken for a sab trying to stop a hunter driving away resulting in the local bobby promptly arresting him!



More 'heavie' action

The hunt spent all day in a forest, so the supporters went home fed up. A fox was lost within 30 seconds of hounds picking up its scent due to the sabs' calls. The hit was so successful the hunt packed in at 2.45 realising any more proper hunting was off.

Unfortunately 2 hounds were run over. The kennelman swore to "fill in" one sab whose address he knew and later that day he spotted the sab cycling home, he swerved in front of him and jumped out of his car. The sab tried to pedal off but the chain snapped (gulp!). So he ran over to a car that had also been stopped, gave them his camera and said; "Take a picture of me getting beaten up." The car drove off. Fortunately the kennelman was only verbally abusive.

Meanwhile other sabs crossing fields on their way home impressed an anti-"anti" farmer so much that he invited them in for a drink.

The new contact for the **Wisborough Green** area was 'kidnapped' on one hunt. He was offered a lift by a woman driver. When he asked to be dropped off by the assembled 'field' she drove on past waving to supporters. Despite holding the passenger door open he was eventually deposited 3 miles away!

'Sportsmen' welcoming a new sab.



HERTS & BEDS H.S.A.

Once again the South Herts Beagles and Enfield Chace F.H. have been the main targets for the H.S.A. groups from **Luton, North Herts** and **North London.** Within ¾ of an hour at one beagle meet the pack was so split up by sab horns that the hunt had to stop as they only had 5 beagles left with them and it took 50 minutes for them to regain the rest. A 6ft. square farmer threatened to eject sabs from his land — they didn't argue! Recently vacated hare forms were sprayed. There were no kills.

Six unmarked police cars prevented effective sabbing of one Enfield Chace hunt in March. Sabs were told if they didn't give their names and addresses they would be arrested (for spraying antimate). **North Herts** sabs refused to comply and were *not* arrested. **Luton** sabs simply remained in the woods throughout. Later on the terrier men unsuccessfully attempted to run a group of sabs down.

On March 28th the West Lodge Harehounds' 40 hunters were faced with 50 sabs using aerosols for dispensing anti-mate. The disruption was so successful that there was a typical disgruntled attack by two heavies, one armed with a stick. Two horse riders charged sabs several times. One horse rolled over on top of a sab but luckily both the horse and sab were OK, the rider ran off!

Although 28 police officers arrived on the scene they couldn't do anything due to a point of law, Sgt. Cotgrove of Saffron Walden police said "we do not get involved with trespass. The owner of the land is quite at liberty to remove the offenders himself but the only way we can intervene is if an assault is committed or they become unduly violent, and that did not happen while we were present. They were not there to steal. *They were there purely as trespassers and the police have no powers to deal with that.*"

Interesting!

The owner of the land in this case was John Bates who claimed he'd seen one man "running around with a video camera filming the entire proceedings, and he also had a toy pistol that he was brandishing." Added to this, the fields had just been sprayed with liquid nitrogen, all of which was trampled underfoot, causing "scorching" and a considerable amount of damage, "I had to create damage on my own crop trying to get them off" said Mr. Bates. It seems odd then, that Mr. Bates is quite happy to allow all those hunters with their hounds to rampage over his newly sprayed land, especially as they "rarely catch a hare" according to Field Secretary Murray Sterling.

Luton H.S.A. raised over £100 in a street collection in January (toy pistols were not used!)

The **Students Association for the Protection of Animals (SAPA)** of Wall Hall College is now into its second year of sabbing, they held an Animal Rights Day at college and undertook a street theatre in Watford. Students have sabbed local beagle packs despite being 'bound over' for disrupting a foxhunt last October (see HOWL 17).

EAST MIDLANDS H.S.A.

The **East Midlands** group now has a Landrover and has been hitting the Quorn, South Notts, Meynell & South Staffs and Blankney foxhunts. The Blankney's terrier man has been spotted using C.B. radio.

Following a meeting with the master of the Meynell, David Meynell, earlier in the year no violence or damage to property has been caused by their supporters. A letter was sent to all the members of the hunt's Supporters Club informing them of the H.S.A.'s aims and beliefs and urging them to refrain from voilence, the letter was signed by David Meynell himself. The Meynell used to be one of the more violent hunts in the group's patch. Will the supporters be able to keep it up though? Episode 2 will be in about four months time!

On one Meynell hit Phil Drabble, a T.V. broadcaster on programmes such as "Badger Watch" and "In The Country" came roaring up behind the sabs who were on a private track, with his horn blaring, it isn't known whether he mistook them for hunt supporters.

On February 14th five sabs were doing the Belvoir when they were stopped by a police car for over an hour while the constable insisted that he knew they got paid, didn't care about animals and would be arrested for spraying etc. When told he would be reported for bias he tried to snatch the ignition key but only succeeded in bending it cutting his finger in the process. One of the sabs eventually managed to sweet talk him into cooling down.

Later on the same day a familiar Range Rover was spotted driving on the wrong side of the road past a line of traffic followed by a royal blue Granada Estate accompanying a mounted *Prince Charles* on the grass verge. The sabs were tailed by his body guards until Charlie Boy was 'out of harm's way.'

Leicester H.S.A. have been joined by sabs from **Kettering** on occasions to hit the Fernie F.H. and the Westerby Bassets. They also organised a demo against HRH Charlie Boy when he paid a civic visit to the city. They're planning several fund raising events for the summer and hope to have a Landrover by next season.

Chesterfield H.S.A. managed to smash their minibus up on the way back home from the HOWL 17 'fold-in', of all things, but have still managed to go out sabbing most week-ends. Several flag days have been organised so they should have their minibus repaired by next season.

Sabs from **Rugby** have been hitting the Pytchley and Warwickshire foxhunts with some success.

WEST MIDLANDS H.S.A.

Sabs from the **Wolverhampton Poly, Birmingham University, Aston University, Cannock Chase and West Midlands H.S.A.** groups have been hitting fox and hare hunts all over the West Midlands, including the Atherstone, Croome & West Warwicks and North Warwickshire foxhunts among others.

The continued pressure on the Albrighton Woodland F.H. by various H.S.A. groups has produced some early results (see elsewhere this issue).

The **W. Midlands H.S.A.** has spent over £1300 from funds this year on sabbing, a good reason for all those non active members in the area to help with fund raising.

The group has been helping in their local community by using the group's mini bus to take kids and mentally retarded adults to various functions.

Charges of breach of the peace against thirteen of the group's members have been dropped. However, one of the members, Paul Woods has been charged with causing actual bodily harm after an alleged spraying incident.

The group's new chairperson, Nick Johnson took part in a Radic Mercia phone-in programme with the Warwickshire F.H. joint master, Steven Lambert. Nick put our case very forcefully.

An all female hit against the North Warwicks F.H. was very successful, the hounds were taken off the huntsman, then some nifty driving foiled the pursuing heavies.

The group at **Birmingham University** held another successful sponsored pub crawl, while the **Aston University** group have been raising money by putting on bands in the campus.

On March the 11th the Midlands Anti-Bloodsports Campaign was launched in Birmingham city centre by Miriam Hollis and Nick Johnson. Films were shown to a well attended meeting and questions were answered. The object of the Campaign is to bring people from the fringe and outside the anti-bloodsports movement into a more active role. Further meetings have already been arranged.

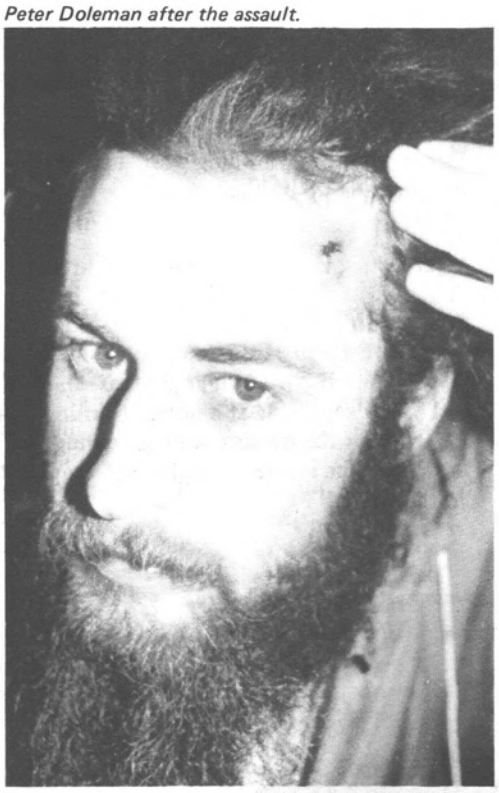
The **Stoke-on-Trent H.S.A.** has been getting down to some hard recruiting and has been out on numerous occasions. They are hoping to raise enough money during the summer to buy some sort of group transport.

SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION

Sabs from **Christchurch, Portsmouth, Southampton, Bournemouth and Ringwood** have had a busy season primarily against the New Forest and Hursley Hambledon foxhunts. The **Southampton** group have been firing cap guns to imitate whip cracks.

In January Peter Doleman was chased by a New Forest hunter whilst split from the other 6 sabs; "He galloped into me, blocked my path, then coaxed his horse's head around and finally the 'bit' struck my forehead. Then he rode off leaving me dazed and with a bleeding gash in may head." The assault was denied by the hunt.

Peter Doleman after the assault.



On St. Valentine's Day (Feb 14th) 10 sabs staged a sit-in at an earth in which a fox hunted by the New Forest had taken refuge, blocking every entrance, but patrolling police officers forced the sabs to leave so that the diggers could get to work on the 3ft. deep earth to enable them to shoot a defenceless dog fox.

On the 28th 19 New Forest enclosure gates were wired up. Forty sabs were shadowed by motorbike police who insisted that the sabs were responsible (keepers had freed the gates before the meet). The hunt claimed that the gates have to be left open for fire engines and ambulances (and useless riders?).

The **Aldershot H.S.A.** have been attracting a lot of police interest. On one occasion there were 4 police motorbikes and 2 vans following 10 sabs on an Aldershot Beagles hit. This was probably prompted by the 30 sabs out against the hunt 2 weeks earlier. 12 motorbike police were out at the anniversary meet of the beagles which had seen 150 sabs in 1980. Sabs only put a token force of 40 into the field this year.

The **Hampshire Anti Bloodsports Council** represented all groups in the area at a meeting of the New Forest Verderers Court following allegations that the H.S.A. was a bunch of "wealthy cranks" hiring mercenaries who should be fined £50 for sabbing hunts in the Forest under a new bye-law being proposed by a Mrs. Jean Cree. **H.A.B.C.** secretary Elva Adamson proposed the banning of foxhunts from the Forest instead.

Hunting was in fact stopped in the Forest during March and April by an entirely different source — foot & mouth disease.

NORTH WEST FEDERATION

Sabs from **Manchester, Bolton, Mersyside** and **Preston** have been going out regularly and report "very few arrests or injuries" this season.

In January 50 sabs including some from **Sheffield** and members of the **Northern Animal Liberation League** hit the Holcombe hunt, using horns and shutting gates. The hunt claimed one hare was killed in the 25 miles ride.

A month later Deeside Police were called when beaglers claimed that sabs were "annoying their dogs." Five sabs face possible charges.

In March the Cheshire F.H. were highly secretive as to whether HRH Charlie Boy was appearing at their annual cross-country ride due to successful demos in recent years. During last year's demo Charlie had to take refuge in a hut and miss the prize-giving ceremony. One of this year's organisers admitted; "He (Prince Charles) has enjoyed previous visits to Cheshire although his weekend last year was marred by demonstrators." Aren't we rotten to him?

April saw the third annual "March against Bloodsports" through the streets of central Bolton in which many leaflets were handed out. The March organised by the **Society for the Abolition of Bloodsports (SABS)** was joined by **NALL** and **Animal Activist** members.



SCOTLAND

Elgin sabs report the formation of a drag hunt at Keith, Grampian.

Dundee sabs have been hitting the Fife F.H. and have taken part in radio debates with the hunt's master.

Further south the **Central Scotland H.S.A.**, mainly based around **Stirling University**, has been teaming up with the **Edinburgh Vegetarian** and **Animal Liberation** organisation to hit the Linlithgow & Stirlingshire F.H. They have been joined by the **Clydeside H.S.A.** on several occasions when they haven't been hitting their own Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire F.H. with sabs from **Glasgow.**

The Linlithgow has been 'phoning up van hire companies claiming to be the police and advising them not to hire to the sabs. Some of the smaller hire companies have received veiled threats that their mini buses could be damaged if seen with sabs inside at hunt meets.

Sab activity has netted good press coverage and two television spots. Billy Wolfe, a well respected Scottish National Party member and father of Clydeside H.S.A. committee member Patrick Wolfe, wrote an extensive article for several Scottish papers about his "incognito" day out with sabs against the Linlithgow & Stirlingshire F.H. (L. & S.) in February. He witnessed sabs being searched by police simply for spraying antimate on the ground, the police believed hunt lies that the sabs were carrying unspecified "offensive weapons." He saw sabs jostled into fences by riders and was accosted himself by an apoplectic rider yelling "I am gentle folk, what are you?" This 'gent's' cronies jeered, taunted and threatened Mr. Wolfe and later the 'gent' thumped the top of Mr. Wolfe's car. He left the meet, having undertaken no actual sabbing himself with a very clear view of the violent behaviour simmering away under every bloodsporter's skin and the biased backing they receive from certain sections of the police. In the article he urged readers to attend meets and give their moral support to the sabs, and to urge farmers & landowners to ban hunting or at least allow sabs clear access. The Saturday following the article saw the largest turnout yet against the L. & S. with 45 sabs forcing the hunt to pack up by 2.30.

The L. & S. threatened sabs with a paid force of heavies to "give them a good send off" for the last meet of the season. Undeterred by this intimidation the hunt's 60 supporters and riders were met by 80 sabs, all coming from Scotland with the exception of 3 from **Newcastle** and 4 (including one RSPCA council member!) from the Sea Shepherd renovation team on the Clyde (see elsewhere this issue). The pack was completely split but the police managed to turf all but 15 sabs off private land — the 15 were subsequently surrounded by hunt Landrovers and chased into the woods by stick wielding heavies. No kills though and a good finish to the season.

There have been six arrests of sabs all told this season, mainly for 'breach of the peace'. **Stirling** sociology student Kenneth Park was fined £100 by Linlithgow Sherriff Court after admitting conducting himself in a disorderly manner at a L. & S. meet by shouting through a megaphone. The sabs have made several complaints against the police and have charged two huntsmen, it now remains to be seen whether the Procurator Fiscal will take the cases to court.

In February **Clydeside** sabs picketted the "51st State" restaurant in Sauchiehall Street. The owner, Grant Forrest, rides with the Renfrewshire F.H. Sab Clive Swinsco commented; "This form of objection and protest is aimed at drawing the public's attention to the fact that prominent people in this city are involved in bloodthirsty and sadistic pursuits not 12 miles from where we are now." There was good TV coverage of the banner demo inside the restaurant.

NORTH EAST H.S.A.

The H.S.A. groups in the North East have been busy hitting their local hunts most weekends.

On the 11th of March in Newcastle city centre a large demo was organised against the Canadian seal cull by Eric McNaughton of the Sea Shepherd and was well supported by H.S.A. groups in the area. Letters of protest were handed into the New Bridge Street Offices of the West German Consul, whose country is the world's largest importer of seal pelts.

The **Cleveland** group's treasurer had to put an awful lot of work into securing a couple of flag days in Stockton and Billington because the police opposed their application on the grounds that they didn't have enough men to ensure their safety.

SOUTH WEST FEDERATION

The **Cornwall H.S.A.** has been hitting the West Penwith Harriers where there have been occasional pushings and threats to "bash faces in." Spraying has been effective as has fox soil and bedding against the Western F.H., where the kennel huntsman's son was heard to say; "there's a good load of scent today." A fox was seen leaving the area that day with the hounds still sniffing the false scent.

The master of the West Penwith F.H. confronted one sab and said; "If you tear up another photo of me and stuff it in my hat in my car I shall call the police." The sabs had no idea what he was talking about. (Sounds like a fellow redcoat practicing witchcraft.)

Exeter and Bristol H.S.A. groups combined to do the Tiverton F.H. in February. The Silverton F.H. has also been hit a few times. At the Perridge House meet an irate host, Capt. Paul Studholme, remarked to the master "If you see any antis on the place kick their backsides for me" (his own kicking days presumably being over). Over-enthusiastic car followers have been creating as much disruption as local sabs by mistimed interventions.

On the 14th of March 9 sabs from **Exeter & Yeovil** hit Avon Valley Beagles. After being "heavied off" the sabs stayed in their van making four successful circuits around where the hunt was casting the hounds, on the fifth time around having just past the hounds there was an almighty crash as rock "the size of a football" was thrown through the side window hitting a sab on the shoulder. The van had to pass several more threatening heavies before reaching Totnes police station where the police were totally unco-operative. No action has been taken by them.

The Exeter and Yeovil group van after the incident.



ESSEX FEDERATION

The **South East Essex H.S.A.** have teamed up with the **East London H.S.A.** on several occasions to hit the Essex Union F.H. January saw 50 sabs out on one hunt. As soon as the hounds were attracted by sab horns three riders tried to push female sabs off a public footpath into a ditch and whipped other sabs. Predictably hunt master Tim Asplin denied any confrontation had taken place, even though one of those involved was his huntsman. "Everybody enjoyed themselves. We rode a long way and had quite a few things to jump. That is what the majority of people who go hunting are interested in."

A lone policeman arrived at 2.40 p.m. to say that he thought the sabs had protested enough. They should go home and if he saw them again using horns and sprays or "just following the hunt" he would take them in for breach of the peace. As sabs departed they saw him enter a local house with an empty egg box never to re-emerge. The sabs were also accused of poaching pheasants!

The Essex Union has kept its meets secret to avoid the sabs. It has only been attracting 20 riders midweek (so much for the B.F.S.S.'s claim that "millions" go out hunting in the U.K.)

Most **London** sabs join with surrounding sab groups each week. Many have been involved with the regular Sunday demos at the East End's notorious Club Row pet market. Sick and diseased animals are sold there, often to vivisection outlets and much trade has been lost due to the well publicised demos.

The "Horse & Hound" Ball at the Grosvenor Hotel was picketted by banner waving sabs.

IRELAND

There were many black garbed Catholic priests at the 56th National Coursing meeting at Clonmel, Co. Tipperary where 64 greyhound bitches were competing for £4,000 and a Waterford Glass trophy. A 60 strong picket was mounted by the **Irish Council Against Bloodsports,** with members travelling from Cork, Dublin and Limerick. Organiser James Graham alleged that some hares were being coursed 2 or 3 times at single meetings in direct contravention of Irish Coursing Club rules, this regularly happens at enclosed live hare coursing meetings, Eire is the only country in Europe to still practice this barbarity. Hares are often transported from one coursing ground to another.

The antis were joined by Father Padraig O Saorai, a parish priest from Dublin. Of his partners in cloth he said; "They are too bound up in the Church teaching that animals are a thing put here for man's use. The Church, of course is completely man-centred." An opinion shared by far too many Church of England vicars too.

Havoc Hunt Havoc Hunt Havoc Hunt

A teacher from Grantham, Brian Martin had a horrifying experience last February when a hard hunted fox sought refuge at Lea Road Railway Station, near Gainsborough. Dozens of hounds swarmed onto the platform killing and partially eating the unfortunate creature at his feet. It was almost ten minutes before the hunt servants arrived on the scene. Mr. Martin shouted to one of them "I hope you're proud of yourselves" to which one of them replied "I am", then nonchalantly picked up the mutilated remains and walked off.

A spokesman for the Grove & Rufford F.H. said it had been "impossible to stop the hounds from following the fox onto the line". They had been forced to dismount and follow on foot for about three quarters of a mile.

In a letter to Sir Peter Parker, chairman of British Rail, the Leauge Against Cruel Sports (LACS) demanded that B.R. take action. It was pointed out that a test cased law relating to the duty of an authority was to prosecute when an offence had been committed. Should that authority fail to do so it may become the duty of a third party to take action against that authority.

No reply has yet been made!

An incident where the Royal Rock Beagles hunted over the Wirral Way, a Mersyside Country Park, in contravention of the Park's bye-laws has been slammed by a local nature lover, Mrs. Harrison, who said: "This exhibition of senseless persecution went on all afternoon and I was subjected to offensive abuse when I objected to one of the 'gallant' gang". She pointed out that it was ludicrous to create a 'protected' area, "only to have a group of cowardly rural vandals destroy its sanctity".

Mr. Harvey joint master of the R.R.B. regretted that Mrs. Harrison had been upset but said they had gained permission from the Park Rangers to hunt. "It is, after all, a country park and those who worked so hard to bring it into being wanted it to reflect the countryside through which it passed". He hoped permission would not be withdrawn as they had only been on the Park a few minutes.

Wirral Borough Council admitted allowing the hunt to cross the Park but not to hunt, and have said: "In the light of this latest incident, the Council's practice will be reviewed most closely in the event of a similar application being made to the Council next year".

A new found love of hunting led to the death of a Mr. Alan Butler at Redbourne Common on Boxing Day. Another member of the Aldenham Harriers told a Coroners Court that the deceased was an "inexperienced rider" but seemed to be coping. The horse that Mr. Butler was riding had fallen in a ploughed field, rolled over and possibly kicked him. A doctor attending the deceased believed that it was probably the fall which proved fatal. A verdict of misadventure was recorded.

One of the oldest and most liked residents of Hannington near Swindon probably suffered a heart attack and died during a Vale of the White Horse F.H. outing. Mr. Harold Hedges, 77, and known for his anti hunt views was seen remonstrating with a hunt servant, it is thought over a right of way. Swindon police said that the incident was under investigation but it was "unlikely any proceedings against hunt members would be taken".

Angry residents of Kirk Ireton in Derbyshire have hit out at the Meynell & S. Staffs F.H. for wrecking parts of their village, claiming that about seventy hunt members' horse boxes and followers ploughed up grass verges, turned wet ground at the entrances to fields into quagmires and their car followers held up a milk tanker for over an hour and completely disregarded public in the area.

Chairman of the hunt Capt. P. Drury Lowe said he hadn't been present that Saturday "but there was no law against people riding on the road. Any damaged wet ground would heal better than if it was dry".

An elderly widow was terrified when she saw her garden full of hounds at Elworth Sandbach last January. Another elderly lady had been forced to lock herself in an outside toilet for refuge. Allotments were trampled and hedges battered as the fox bolted parallel with the main electrified Manchester – Crewe railway line.

Mr. Hunter of the Cheshire Forest hunt said they had apologised (the residents say they didn't receive an apology) and done all they should have under the circumstances. "Good manners are the most important thing and we have discharged this responsibility". He also claimed the hounds were never out of control!

After a complaint of horse manure littering the road and footpath at Linton last February, the master of the Puckeridge & Thurlow F.H. advised people to go out with a shovel and use it on their gardens. Manure had been dropped near a notice warning of a £20 fine for the owners of dogs fouling the footpath. The master thought the complaint "rather trivial".

Hounds running through the gardens.



A motorist, Mr. Peter Leslie, who would have been 42 last February was killed in a collision with a van carrying army hunting beagles. Mr. Leslie of North Bradley near Trowbridge died instantly. The army van driver was treated for fractured ribs and cuts, and his passenger for head injuries. The 29 hounds which were being transported to kennels were trapped inside for over two hours, but miraculously escaped serious injury.

A motor cyclist on his way home from work was thrown from his machine when a pack of hounds leapt over a fence onto the road directly in front of him. He regained consciousness four hours later in a hospital bed suffering from neck and shoulder injuries. Joint master of the Hursley Hambleson F.H., Michael Poland said the usual warning signs used to signify that a hunt is nearby were not displayed!?? He was "relieved that no hounds had been hurt".

A double tragedy was averted when a hare changed direction from Salt Moor to Harslake Moor last November. As hounds from the Illminster hunt crossed the Bridgewater Lane a passing motorist ran into them, but thankfully none of the hounds were injured and the hare escaped.

A fox with three hounds in pursuit were killed when struck by a car on the A38 (a dual carriageway) near Little Eaton, Derbyshire last year. After the accident hounds belonging to the South Notts F.H. milled around on the road holding up traffic and had to be shepherded to safety by police, passers-by and hunt followers. The fox broke covert from a wood situated a matter of about 100 yards from the road which the hunt were drawing.

The Cheshire Forest F.H.'s entire pack narrowly escaped being burnt alive when fire swept through a farm building next to their kennels. The hounds were saved by estate manager Joe Hunt who was walking his dog nearby.

Members of the Essex Farmers F.H. got a bit carried away when a motorbike belonging to one of a group of teenagers apparently scared a hunt horse. The hunters some 50 or 60 riders, charged at the youths cavalry style, lashing out with crops and whips. Three of the boys ended up in hospital for treatment to head wounds.

Mr. Calderbank, joint master of the hunt sail, "Two boys had picked a fight with a member of the hunt and the conflict was entirely personal, not involving the hunt". To his mind the whipping was "a complete story" made up by the boys. No arrests were made.

The South Notts F.H. denied responsibility for the serious injury of a pet pony and a horse last year, when they were chased by hounds onto the A6 near Cromford in Derbyshire. The incident was witnessed by a Mr. Ian Barton who was working in his garden shed when he heard hooves thunder by and looked out to see a pony get knocked down by a lorry. The horse had run a different way but encountered the same fate.

Bill Strawson joint master of the hunt was adamant that the "hunt was in no way involved" when he spoke to the local paper. However, a couple of days later the hunt offered compensation to the owners of the animals.

An 86 year old widow watched in horror as her cat was torn to pieces by hounds of the Oakley F.H. last February. Mrs. Churchman's 18 month old cat had given her comfort and companionship until its painful death.

Lakeland hunt supporters heard secretary Peter Caddy say the hunt had to count the cost of killing 53 foxes last season. Six hounds had died, 3 in a rock fall, 2 in falls from a crag and another on the road.

A Mrs. Gilbert of Penhurst saved a fox last January when she put herself between it and hounds as they raced through her garden. She watched twenty hounds and three huntsmen on horseback trample shrubs and bushes along her drive. She became so enraged that she picked up a stick and warded off the hunt until the fox escaped and attacked one of the riders.

Tim Lyle senior master of the hunt, the West Kent, said: "It was merely a matter of hounds straying into a garden and huntsmen collecting them!"

The former Mayor of Yeovil, District Councillor John Cruddas, who unsuccessfully proposed that the Council should enforce its bye-laws on Ham Hill Country Park, (owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, alias HRH Charlie Boy, and leased to the Council) effectively preventing fox hunting over the Park, had his home vandalised in the run up to the vote in full Council. Windows were smashed and red paint was daubed on the property warning; "Lay off the hunt".

Undeterred Mr. Cruddas intends to take the Council to court following the defeat of his motion in an effort to force the Council's hand.

HORSEWHIPPING

Showjumping fox-hunter Harvey Smith angered spectators at a horse show in Leicestershire when he was seen whipping his horse excessively for twice refusing a fence.

HOPE FOR OTTERS?

A donation of £800 has been made by ex-Beatles Paul McCartney and George Harrison towards a fund to build an Otter sanctuary at a secret location in Gloucestershire. Other celebrities supporting the project include Spike Milligan and Daphne Neville who are joining forces with Kit Williams, the painter, in an attempt to raise £50,000 towards the scheme.

The Nature Conservancy Council's latest report (14th Jan. 81) revealed that the number of otters in England and Wales may have dwindled to between 70 and 100 individuals.

The hills are alive

The forces of reaction and progress are once again in combat. This time it's over whether hunting should be banned on the Hereford/Worcestershire Clent Hills country park.

Successful sab activity against the Albrighton Woodland F.H. at their traditional Boxing Day meet backed up by strong feelings of indignation from walkers upset by the churned up state of the footpaths left in the wake of the hunt's horses and Landrovers led to the County Council's country parks officer, Richard Graves, writing to the hunt stating that: "The County Council cannot put itself in the position of acting as hosts to scenes as those which took place on Boxing Day with the unfortunate involvement of the hunt saboteurs. I appreciate that the spectacle of the hunt gives pleasure to many of our visitors but clearly my main objective is to provide the public with access to and quiet enjoyment of the countryside".

He was particularly concerned about the "Congestion of overstrained car parks by bringing in horse boxes and followers" the potential danger to walkers by large numbers of horses being ridden at speed and the possibility of considerable damage to the ground, and has asked the hunt to keep away from country parks in future!

The hunt's reaction so far has been - tally ho, "we'll keep on hunting". Joint Master Cherton Pauli said; "we meet at the Clent Hills only 5 times in the hunting season and *it is the policy of the National Trust, which owns the parks, to support and encourage hunts where they are traditionally established*",

The management committee have so far fallen into line with this reactionary approach. They have side stepped a decision by agreeing to meet members of the hunt to discuss a code of ethics. This follows a committee meeting in February at which pro hunt and anti sab sentiments were the order of the day. The Chairperson, County Councillor Peter Fallows, claimed that the "real villains" were the sabs because they were causing a disturbance. Wyre Forest Councillor Mrs. Jean Munslow said; "it would be a sad day for England if we saw people's sports being abandoned because of a few hysterical people who want to disrupt it".

West Midlands sabs have requested a similar meeting with the committee and have invited Fallows and Munslow out with them to experience our side of the story.

At the time of going to press there had been no reply from them.

ENDANGERED

'Friends of the Earth' members staged a protest against the continuing trade in endangered and vunerable species of wildlife last March, by dumping a ton of bones outside the Dept. of the Environment. Britain's import policy is directly contributing to the slaughter of millions of rare creatures for luxury and ornamental products.

The same month a further 350 species of wild fauna and flora were added to the endangered list at an international wildlife conference in New Delhi.

BANGER CLANGER

Thanks must go to the unknown joker in the typesetting department of the Daily Mail who forced Andrew Alexander, the Mail's political sketch writer, to write the following apology: "In my recent " (pro-hunt) "article there appears a passage: *'Few of the opponents of fox-hunting seem to know much about sausages.'* What I actually wrote, which was erroneously transcribed (not by me) was, believe it or not: *'Few of the opponents of fox-hunting seem to know much about foxes.'*"

BLOCKED VOTES

On Thursday the 23rd of April, the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, held their Annual General Meeting at which the following resolution was proposed.

> "This Society condemns the practice of hunting animals with hounds. In particular, it condemns participation in these activities by members of the Society as being incompatible with the Society's objects to prevent cruelty to animals and to encourage kindness in their treatment".

Weeks before the Meeting the S.S.P.C.A. made certain claims in the Press that anti-blood sport campaigners had infiltrated their Society, by joining as Members with the sole purpose of voting the resolution through. They also took the unprecedented step of mailing their Annual Report (normally only available at the A.G.M.) to all Members, enclosing with it a letter urging Members to vote against the resolution and stating that if it was passed it would cause mass resignations, loss of income, restriction of activities and reduction in the Inspectorate. The whole tone of the letter implied that Mrs. Norma Wright, the proposer, was a troublemaker whose intention was to cause nothing but harm to the Society.

In place of the resolution they requested Members to vote for the following counter-resolution.

> "Whereas the opinion of some members of the Society is that the control of predators by hunting is not compatible with the objects of the Society, in view of the greater suffering which can be involved in alternative methods of predator control, the Society's policy should continue to be to leave the decision whether to participate to the personal judgement of members".

On the day of the Meeting one could easily have been mistaken for thinking one was attending a British Field Sports Society's annual outing as the majority of those present were from the local Hunts.

The Meeting was due to commence at 2.45 p.m., but was held up while membership cards were checked, and the Meeting commenced about one hour later. A dozen or so Members who had received their membership receipts after the 31st of March were refused the right to vote because, according to the Chairman, a new computer system had been introduced a few months previously, causing a holdup in the processing of membership applications. He said, "a line had to be drawn somewhere". There were also claims by some Members that their receipts had purposely been dated after the 31st of March. One of the worst cases was a girl who had travelled all the way from the north of Scotland with the intention of voting for the resolution at the meeting.

There was more confusion and bewilderment later, as Members wondered whether or not it was an Animal Welfare Society's Annual General Meeting which they were attending, as the Guest Speaker spoke of how good intensive farming was, how good the battery cage was for chickens and how all farm animals had benefited from intensification!?. Sharp and loud questioning followed and finally a halt was called with the Guest Speaker and S.S.P.C.A. Committee looking rather embarrassed.

The Meeting then turned to the Resolutions in question and after they had both been proposed and seconded the Chairman asked for comments from the floor. This turned into a lively and vociferous affair with all control being lost by the Chair. After thirty minutes of claim and counterclaim the Chairman asked for voting to be taken in regard to the two Resolutions and refused to listen to shouts of "unconstitutional" and "the Meeting's been fixed". The vote on Norma Wright's Resolution was lost by 139 votes to 35. From the size of the vote against it can be seen which side had been guilty of infiltration.

The counter-resolution by the S.S.P.C.A. Committee was overwhelmingly approved. After further amendments to the constitution and rules were quickly proposed, seconded and approved, the Chairman hurriedly closed the Meeting.

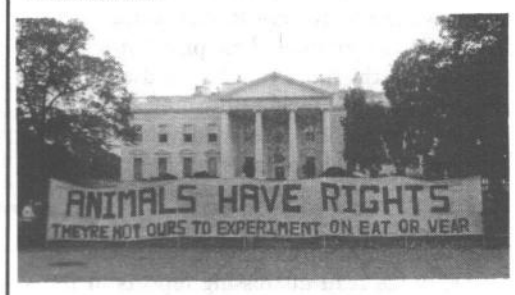
Members of television, radio and Press were present and the whole farcical proceedings were recorded.

Although the first round has been lost to those who take pleasure in chasing wild animals, you can be sure that the battle has only just begun, and will continue until this Society, a Society supposedly against all cruelty to animals amends their ridiculous policy.

FOREIGN NEWS

AMERICA – The giant cosmetic company, Revlon, has made a grant of $750,000 to the Rockefeller University aimed at finding an alternative to the Draize test. This follows pressure from all over the world.

Following the election of Ronald Reagan as President of the U.S.A., an American magazine 'Combat Handguns' ran an editorial claiming: "Happy days are here again with the election of Ronald Reagan so far as gun owners, shooters and hunters are concerned. Reagan, a long time National Rifle Association member is opposed to any anti-gun legislation . . ." Three months after taking office he was shot and seriously wounded. Ironic isn't it?



CHINA – Has agreed to accede to the Washington Convention controlling the trade in endangered animals and plants, it is hoped the move will influence the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand to join.

FRANCE– Opposition to staghunting is growing in France with the formation of a French equivalent to the H.S.A. In some areas local mayors have outlawed the hunters from their territories and when the hunted deer find refuge in villages the residents often refuse access to the hounds. Some 700 stags, 300 roe deer and 250 wild boar fall victim to the chase every year.

INDONESIA – Three children who were on board a passenger ferry which sank last February were saved by dolphins who pushed the boys towards the safety of a lifeboat after their father had thrown them off the burning ship.

JAPAN – The entire Japanese Cabinet declined an invitation this year from the Emperor to join the annual imperial duck hunt because of pressure from conservationists. The hunt was suspended in 1972 in the face of mounting criticism only to be resumed again in 1977.

TANZANIA – Mr. F. Lwezaula, Game Director of Tanzania has said the country is losing the battle against poachers, depite 220 game scouts patrolling the bush. "There has been a record increase in poaching activities which cannot be tackled without more people, vehicles and weapons" he said.

ZIMBABWE – To cries of "tally-ho" and the amazed stares of black tribesmen in rural villages, 60 jodhpured riders bound through the African bush on a drag hunt, symbolising a return to peace following the seven year guerrilla war. The hunt is based at a hotel in eastern Zimbabwe, a resort area. Field master and hotel manager Roy Meiring said: "We're trying to revive a sport the whites brought when they first arrived".

ROYAL ROUND-UP

HRH Charlie boy met Lady Diana Spencer when he came to shoot over her parents' land. Although they share a common interest in the countryside and bloodsports Lady Di unfortunately doesn't ride. Poor old Charlie!

Prince Philip, who is now the international president of the World Wildlife Fund, was at the centre of a row over the slaughter of hundreds of grizzly bears in Canada to keep Britain's guardsmen looking smart on parade. The Defence Ministry claims alternative synthetic materials are "unacceptable" to the Brigade of Guards.

Many of the hats are due to be renewed just before the Royal Wedding, when Prince Philip will drive to the cathedral past ranks of bearskin clad guardsmen.

The new security fence surrounding Prince Charles's country seat in Gloucestershire designed to keep out unwanted visitors, collapsed during the first high winds of March. Denied his privacy he decided to visit the local Beaufort F.H. point to point to console himself.

Pheasants slaughtered by members of the Royal Family were being sold in local shops around Sandringham in Norfolk earlier this year, presumably to subsidise the family budget.

During Charlie Boy's recent visit to New Zealand he couldn't resist the opportunity of terrifying a few wild animals. He flew in a helicopter with "sky herders" as they swooped low over stampeding deer to accomplish a "live" catch with a net fired from an improvised airborne gun. The deer are caught to harvest their velvet.

DASTARDLY DICK

Sir Richard Newton Ryecroft master of the New Forest F.H. had an unhappy weekend in February when he fell off his horse in the morning and lost his hounds for over an hour. Later the same evening at the hunt's fancy-dress ball the blustery baronet was involved in an altercation over a winning raffle ticket before he discovered his was the wrong colour. All together now, aaaahhh. The same month Sir Richard, who is a member of a Hampshire badger protection society, supervised the digging out of a fox from a badger sett.

Sir Richard (far right) at the dig.



Photographed by hidden saboteur

SWINGS & ROUNDABOUTS

What was thought to be a step towards a total ban on commercial whaling earlier this year, when the Russians annouced that their fishing fleet in the Far East had ceased its whaling operations has turned out to be false!

It was claimed the move was part of the USSR's 11th Five Year Plan which includes extensive nature conservation schemes, but Whale preservation groups in Washington DC discovered via a senior source in Moscow that the news was untrue. As to why the statement was made nobody knows.

As if that wasn't bad enough Japan has succeeded in pressurising Brazil into reversing its decision taken last year to impose a whaling ban off its Atlantic coast, even though the Brazilian government stated last July that; ". . .the national conscience opposes the killing of Whales regardless of deriving economic and social benefits".

This isn't the first time Japan has used her economic power to protect its whaling interests, the same tactic is employed every year at the International Whaling Commission to influence the voting of member nations!

Meanwhile investigations instigated by Greenpeace into the illegal whaling activities of Taiwan who were killing 'protected' whales and selling them to Japan for human consumption, has led to them abandoning all future whaling forays.

"CAPITAL HOUND HUNT"

An almost toothless old fox was hunted by the Silverton F.H. in February for 11½ miles in a "capital hound hunt of 2 hours 28 minutes before being killed" (report in Shooting Times). Who times these things to the last minute? And how much damage could a toothless old fox possibly do?

KITE KILLERS

Gamekeepers in Sussex are suspected of being responsible for the deaths of four Red Kites, now very rarely seen in this country. The birds died as a result of eating poisoned bait in the form of dead animal material, probably put out to kill any possible predators of the hand reared pheasant population, whose fate will be sealed later on in the year by the shotgun brigade.

The RSPB have threatened to prosecute if evidence can be found in any future incidents, and have appealed for corpses of birds of prey or other birds or animals found in suspicious circumstances as well as poisoned bait to be collected and reported to them.

BUGGED BUNNIES

A Government sponsored investigation into the reason for the decline of the Hare population, costing £25,000 has been launched. Hares are being fitted with tiny electronic 'bleepers' to enable researchers to track their movements.

Ironically the team of biologists involved in the project are based at the Game Conservancy Council – an organisation whose sole purpose is to ensure there are plenty of 'game' animals around for 'sportsmen' to kill!

At a time of austere Government cut-backs in essential services this is an outrageous waste of tax-payers' money, and we urge all our readers to write to their M.P.s asking them to raise this matter in the House. If a survey is to be carried out then it must by undertaken by *indepedent* researchers!

Waterloo Cup

For the first time in three years the annual 3-day hare coursing championship, the Waterloo Cup, was run at Altcar, near Liverpool, in February this year. 1979 and 1980 had seen shortened two day events due to lack of hares. There was no such shortage this year, several box type traps were spotted in nearby woods and we have it on record that hares are deliberately introduced into the area six months before the event.

Work commitments again only allowed the sabs one day to choose from. Unfortunately the day chosen was Friday, the last day, not knowing there were only seven courses out of the original 64 left to run that day.

To counteract our efforts the coursers not only moved the coursing arena from the Withens to the Lydiate, so undoing much of the benefit of the early morning beat by sabs, but moved the start forward 1½ hours. BFSS Public Relations Officer, Dick Tracey later claimed broken glass and nails had been strewn on the Withens. This was never substantiated. Even though it may seem like a good way to prevent coursing from taking place it would not be used by any genuine sabs unless they were completely certain of being able to pick everything up afterwards, so removing any danger to wildlife.

Large numbers of police were drafted in from all over Lancashire. Police leave was cancelled in the Ormskirk Division and Altcar village hall was turned into a makeshift police station.

1000 coursing spectators were present on the Wednesday but support had dropped somewhat by Friday. Nine hares had been killed on the Thursday. James McWilliam, Waterloo Cup secretary admitted; "of course I am worried the demonstrators might disrupt the event."

100 sabs from many areas met at Formby railway station at 9.00 a.m. Some had already been up at the crack of dawn to beat the fields clear of hares as the sun rose.

The heavy police presence, radio linked as it was, meant that sabs were constantly blocked whenever they left footpaths or roads to reach the isolated coursing field. Car drivers were warned that their vehicles would be towed away if left on the roadside. However, caution was thrown to the wind when it was learned that there were only two courses left to be run.

The main force of sabs ran across muddy ploughed fields to reach the woods bordering the coursing field. Again another wall of police officers, some mounted clad in riot helmets with plexiglass visors and others with dogs blocked their way until it was all over. Thankfully there had been no kills all day.

A number of sabs posing as supporters had succeeded in getting onto the coursing field and turned several hares back. Dick Course, Chairperson of the League Against Cruel Sports, was arrested "for having a stolen driving licence" but predictably was never charged. No other arrests were made.

The coursers' attitude was neatly summed up by organiser Gordon Clarke; "We have just come here today for a good day's coursing. We don't mean anyone any harm, we are just here to enjoy ourselves."
FOOTNOTE: It was particularly encouraging to see a letter condemning hare coursing in the Liverpool Daily Post after the event, written by the RSPCA's Executive Director Julian Hopkins.

Help for the Deer

On November 8th last year the new Deer Act came into force, despite the determined efforts of Marcus Kimball and the Devon and Somerset Staghounds to have it killed off. What this Act has achieved is to enable magistrates to impose crippling fines on anyone convicted of deer poaching. It is now possible for a poacher to be fined £1000 for every carcass found in his possession as well as the confiscation of all his equipment, including his vehicle.

There is no doubt that this Act has made deer poaching a very precarious occupation and has gone a fair way to dissuading all but the most determined. This piece of legislation is all the more timely, for the deer of this country are facing pressures as never before. Increasing urban development, holiday makers invading even the remotest of habitat, farmers clearing small woods to increase their production and the re-afforestation of hitherto wild open country.

Daily we read distressing reports in the press of deer condemned to death for trivial reasons, such as the roe deer in Cumbria who wandered onto the Windermere Golf Course and chewed some trees. Cries of "kill" were heard and the Lakes Deer Control Society were called to carry out the sentence. The real reason for the attempted cull was best summed up by Lake District National Park Chief, Ranger Mr. John Wyatt, who said: "The trouble is that some members of the Deer Control Society are marksmen who are keen to have a shoot. If, as the golf club claims, their fences were not very effective then they were not very good fences".

Another problem facing the deer at the moment are the ever increasing number of deer farms which are appearing all over the country. With the price of venison being so high this is a situation that will only worsen. In one respect it helps to cut down the market for poached deer, but on the debit side are the many wild deer that are captured to be used as initial breeding stock. In March of the year a Devon farmer tried to start such a farm in the middle of the Doone Valley on Exmoor and it took the combined efforts of the Devon Trust for Nature Conservation, the Exmoor Society and the Country Landowners Association to prevent the plan. Another idea that some deer farmers had for making money was to amputate the antlers of deer in velvet (this is when the new antlers are growing and are not fully hard. At this time they are covered in a soft velvet, which in fact are thousands of small blood vessels) and to sell them to countries in the Far East, where such things are highly prized as an aphrodisiac. Thankfully the Government prohibited such plans and the deer were spared such needless mutilation.

To try and understand the plight of the deer it is interesting to look at one relatively small area of south west England - Exmoor. The red deer here number about 1000 and have roughly 500 square miles of living space space. Much of it farmland, which automatically means the farmer with his shot-gun anxious to protect his crops. Then there is the disturbance caused by the Devon and Somerset Staghounds, who are out conserving the wild-life three days a week. To this can be added occasional visits to the area by the Quantock and Tiverton Staghounds. Then there is the ever present poacher who is always about for the quick kill and easy money. The deer farmer and his 'live traps' also play their part and if all that doesn't make the average red stag want to up and away then there is the ever increasing program of moorland reclamation to content with. The only bright spot for the deer of this area are some 30 odd sanctuaries which are owned by the League Against Cruel Sports and to quote the Words of the Master of the Devon and Somerset, Mrs. Norah Harding, "make life damned awkward for the hunt", In fact, some of the Leauge's land on Exmoor which is now used for grazing is to be turned into Forestry, to attempt in some small way to off-set the erosion to wildlife habitats that has been caused by the widespread ploughing of the moorland.

So next time you see a deer or read about some problem, think of the dangers they have to face and try to find a way in which you can help. For they need all the friends that they can get.

Nasty case of hiccups

The much heralded opening meet of Britain's newest mink hound pack went off with a whimper rather than a bang. Judging by the amount of publicity before the event we expected many more than the three dozen stalwarts who turned out to hunt with the Tandridge Mink Hounds on their very first meet on May 2nd. An equivalent number of saboteurs were there to greet them including two from Liverpool and two from Luton.

The four joint masters arrived dressed in their spanking new green 'gherkin' uniforms and proceeded to unload the trencher fed pack of 5 six month old pure bred otter-hounds, 1 foxhound and 4 hunt terriers from each of their vehicles.



Huntsman, Derek Yeomans - a little camera shy.

The river chosen for the day was the Eden on the Surrey/Kent border. One hound had to be leashed to stop it wandering away. All the hounds insisted on being humped over fences, rather than jump them and seemed to be totally confused as to what they should be looking for. The leashed hound actually had to be carried into the water after all mink hounds *are* supposed to get their feet wet aren't they? One nameless hunt terrier bitch, flaked out with exhaustion and had to be carried back in a sabs arms, the hunt had left her behind when they did one of their many U-turns on spotting sabs laying trails ahead of them. Hunt supporters resorted to poking in trees with their otter poles in an attempt to dislodge imaginary mink.

At 3.30 p.m., only 2½ hours after the 'off', huntsman Derek Yeomans, the only gherkin to get his legs wet, finally conceeded defeat, with two female sabs spraying only yards ahead, a half dozen sabs marching resolutely towards him from further downstream and another 12 sabs approaching from the hill on his right. He admitted later that his growing anger at this point made him seriously consider throwing the girls into the river.

When he got back to the Royal Oak pub, where the day's sad little business had all begun, he gathered together the tattered remnants of his greatly diminished following (most had slunk off during the afternoon), apologised for this "slight hiccup" which had "obviously come about as a result of their being infiltrated" and promised better security whenever the hunt was organised in future.

The hounds, one of whom, Thrasher, had been sent packing with his tail between his legs by a herd of heifers, were all driven away to their suburban semis (there's no hunt kennels yet) and that was it, day one in the life of the Tandridge Mink Hounds, formed, we are told, to deal with the "escalating mink population" in the area (Shooting Times).

These lovable fluffy puppy hounds didn't get a sniff all day, had given no indication that they would 'give tongue' even if they did by chance discover a mink's scent and in fact spent most of the day smelling the terriers and their human companions for reassurance.

Not a very auspicious start at all.



Could Yeomans be responsible for the 'leak'?

Anglers on the Hook

Following the unanimous finding last year of a three year independent inquiry chaired by the Earl of Cranbrook, that fish feel pain in the same way as other animals, the Council for the Prevention of Cruelty by Angling has been formed.

One of the founders of the Council, William Maxwell-Brodie has said that: "The rules for competition course fishing, which is extremely popular, require that after fish have been 'played' and landed, they should be retained for up to five hours in 'keep nets' often overcrowded, with the water contaminated by carbon-dioxide and chemicals, then examined and weighed before the exhausted creatures are returned to the water. Handling and weighing fish often causes bleeding from the gills, while damage to the delicate epidermis can cause circulatory failure and extensive infection of the skin, leading to eventual death."

For further information about the Council for Prevention of Cruelty by Angling, write to PO Box 14, Romsey, Hampshire, S05 9NN.

SENT PACKING

The West Kent F.H. has until September 1st to find new kennels for its hounds. They are now at the home of former master Richard Thorpe who, despite receiving a nice farewell oil painting on his retirement only five months ago, has told the hunt to bugger off because he wants to convert his kennels for agricultural use.

They're not having much success. Their efforts to buy or rent suitable accommodation have so far been thwarted by cost and objections by various local parish and district councils – the latter on account of the smell, burning waste, additional traffic hazards and the nuisance that would be caused by hounds fouling the highway. Tim Lyle, the present master, is prepared to look after the fifty odd hounds temporarily (in the guest bedroom?) but is desperately searching for a permanent home.

"I really don't know what we would do if we couldn't find somewhere. We will have to face that problem if and when it arises. But hopefully it won't come to that" he said. If it does, suggestions of what to do with his hounds may be sent to Mr. Lyle at Audley End Farm, Fordcombe, Tunbridge Wells.

WE NEED HELP!

We need all the active members we can get but if, for some reason, you cannot come out on sabs due to health or work commitments, there is another way you can join in the active fight against bloodsports.

You can help us through a donation, no matter how small. You can be guaranteed that every penny will go towards our active campaign, since we have no office or staff to cost us overheads.

Please send whatever you can spare, filling in the attached slip if you wish.

To: Hunt Saboteurs Association, PO Box 19, London S.E.22

I enclose my donation of £..... Date.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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BRITISH DEER (TROPHIES) SOCIETY

On page 9 of 'RSPCA Today', Spring 1981, there was an advertisement entitled "If you care for deer join the British Deer Society". (BDS). One of the aims listed was: "The promotion of proper and humane methods of management, conservation and control of deer". Some of the services they offered were: "An active campaign to prevent cruelty to deer, advice, if control is necessary, to ensure that it is available quickly and applied humanely, and advice on obtaining cheap air fares". Cheap air fares?

Yes – no doubt to enable members to attend international exhibitions like the forthcoming World Hunting Exposition, Expo 81, being held in Bulgaria this summer. Its main theme is "the interaction between hunting, fishing and man in our modern society". BDS representatives joined even more fanatical animal killers, members of the St. Hubert Club of Great Britain at a recent film show eulogizing Bulgaria's many hunting facilities – present day 'stock' includes bear, red deer, roe & fallow, wild boar, moufflon, chamois, woodcock, hare, grouse, pheasant and partridge.

The BDS is urging its members to apply for the 130 Expo 81 tour spaces being booked by Selous Hunters, Horsted Keynes, Sussex. (Tel Graham Staples 0825 790834), a firm that can set you up to kill virtually any living thing in the world, with only minor limitations (e.g. American Presidents).

The BDS is also urging its memebrs to subscribe to the hoped for British exhibit at Expo 81 by sending cheques to the World Hunting Exposition, Midland Bank, 86 High Street, Tunbridge Wells. The organisers are looking for £5,000 - £7,000 and have approached Hector Munro M.P. Minister of Sport, to ask for money for the project, but apparently they have been refused.

Besides its involvement with this objectionable Exposition the activities of the BDS clearly show it to be more concerned with the trophy killing of deer than their welfare. It runs courses in practical demonstrations of gralloching (disembowelling) deer, trophy mounting, deer dogs and practical tests at targets. In addition it is involved with deer farming for venison, first prizes in draws or competitions are invariably stalking rifles and many of its practice shoots are carried out on Ministry of Defence ranges at weekends, range staff overtime rates no doubt being financed by the taxpayer.

All in all a highly suspect organisation and certainly not one that should be allowed advertising space in the RSPCA's magazine.

We have taken the matter up with the RSPCA and have asked for their assurance that they have no policy of deliberately excluding H.S.A. ads from the pages of 'RSPCA Today', after all *we* supposedly share the same beliefs on animal welfare. We are still awaiting their reply.

MORECAMBE WISE-UP

An anti shooting campaign in Lancashire led by Mr. J. Stuart of Carnforth, Lancs. over the last couple of years has resulted in the 'freezing' of all shooting rights for three years over Leighton Moss, giving the campaigners time to attempt to raise enough funds to buy it outright. They have also succeeded in getting shooting banned in Morecambe Bay with the result that approximately 100 pairs of Greyleg Geese have returned to the bay for the first time in 20 years.