

COMPASSIONATE



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Beauty Without Cruelty

Is a way of life
which causes no creature
of land, sea or air,
terror, torture or death.

AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS



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BWC Centres

Members will be pleased to know that two new BWC Centres are being started at Calcutta and Varanasi. Also that the existing Centres are being reorganised. As of April 1993 the Directors of the BWC Centres are :

Bangalore: Mr. Sudershan Kumar
Bombay: Mr. Hiren Kara
Calcutta: Mr. Himanshu Shah
Delhi: Ms. Kamala Shastri
Madras: Mr. S. Chinny Krishna
Surat: Mr. Mafatbhai Virchand Doshi
Varanasi: Dr. C. V. Agarwal

We appeal to our Members in these cities to please come forward to help spread the movement. Those who are interested in actively participating should please write to BWC at Poona and we shall forward your letter to the concerned Director so that you can be locally contacted.

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A Compassionate Judgement

Pritish Nandy

Though it escaped notice by the national press, a land mark judgement was given recently in the Tis Hazari courts by Subjudge C K Chaturvedi. This judgement (in the case Maneka Gandhi vs MCD and NDMC) will, hopefully, force government bodies in India to stop their unethical treatment of animals.

Mrs Gandhi, who courted both fame and criticism during her brief stint as environment and forests minister in the V P Singh and Chandra Shekhar governments, is best known for her commitment to animal rights issues, which won her last year the very prestigious Lord Erskine Award. She had filed two celebrated cases some time back: one against the Idgah slaughter house in Delhi and the other against the municipal bodies to prevent them from killing (for no explicable reason) thousands of street dogs every year in the brutal fashion.

While the Idgah case is yet to come up for its first hearing in the high court, almost a year later, the dog killers have been stopped by the Tis Hazari court within weeks of the case being heard.

The judgement will (now) make it possible for you and I (as citizens) to take to court all such cases where government bodies (for no earthly reason) brutalise and kill animals under the pretext of providing us a civilized existence.

That is why it is so important.

You can use this judgement to stop cruelty against animals in your city. If you do not have the time yourself, call an activist body and tell them to take up the case on your behalf. The law is now there to help you. Thanks to Subjudge Chaturvedi of the Tis Tis Hazari courts.

Central to the case (Maneka Gandhi vs MCD and NDMC) was the question: Is it the job of the government of India to be killing dogs at all?

The municipalities say Yes. Mrs Gandhi said No.

Mrs Gandhi went one step further and charged the government officials with deliberately misleading the people and claiming that street dogs are killed in our cities to prevent rabies. She said no evidence exists to suggest a direct (or for that matter, indirect) nexus between killing dogs, the dog population in a city, and the incidence of rabies.

In view of this, she urged the court to stop the killings and proposed that more scientific methods of dog and disease control be introduced if that is indeed the intention of the municipalities.

Mrs Gandhi raised eight crucial questions in her case.

- ▶ What purpose did dogs serve in cities?
- ▶ What kind of dogs are killed?
- ▶ How are they killed?
- ▶ Does the killing bring down the dog population?
- ▶ What effect does the killing have on the incidence of rabies?
- ▶ What can the government do instead?
- ▶ What is the cost benefit ratio of any alternative solution to both over population and the spreading of rabies?
- ▶ Is such killing legal.

Each point was argued out clearly.

Let us look at the arguments in brief.

What purpose did dogs serve in cities?

Nature has allotted to the city dog the role of scavenger. Its specific purpose is to keep garbage, city rats and other rodent and non-rodent pests in check since they do not respond to human control. It is the chowkidar of the poor slumdweller, the unsalaried watchman of the community.

What kind of dogs are killed?

Sick and rabid dogs are never caught by the municipalities because the people sent out to catch them are all untrained Class IV employees who are not going to risk their lives catching dogs with a communicable disease. Nor are they likely to tire themselves out searching *nallahs* and other dark places where sick dogs hide during the day. But, since they are paid per dog caught and killed, they have to fulfil a daily quota.

So these municipal dog catchers catch only those healthy, happy dogs that are owned or fed by poor people working as servants or *dhobis* or streetside vendors who cannot afford to keep their dogs in the small tenements they crowd. The healthy, happy dog having received only affection from humans all its life, is not distrustful and can be easily caught.



How are they killed?

The dog responds to affectionate calls, nears, is seized upon cruelly, thrown to the ground, grabbed by tongs, dragged for yards, and then thrown into a truck – usually breaking their limbs in the process.

Often the tongs, which are long, curved scissors with space between the curving blades, kill the dog while it is being caught. In all cases, the dog starts bleeding profusely, usually breaking a leg or a rib or both. This bleeding carries on till (3 to 7 days later) when it is officially murdered.

In the meantime, it is kept in an airless, unlit, dirty cell with other such dogs. None of them are fed or given water. (In fact, no one has even looked at the dog food allowance of Rs 2 per month because they know the money is never going to be actually spent!) Most dogs die of hunger and thirst and suffocation before they reach the executioner.

The few that do not are eventually dragged off to the chamber, tied down and electrocuted. Normally 440 volts are used, as against the international norm which is double – to ensure instant death. Here, 440 volts is insufficient to kill the dog. So the wretched animal is doused with water and repeatedly prodded with an electric rod. It takes many hours to die.

Sometimes, to avoid the trouble of catching dogs and keeping them, the corporations strew poisoned chappatis on the road. Dogs eat them and writhe in agony for 12 hours before they die. In smaller municipalities, they are thrown into pits and buried alive or shot, injected

with strychnine or simply clubbed to death.

You and I as tax payers are funding this brutal massacre.

Does the killing bring down the dog population?

Never.

Every year, from 1980 to 1990, 50,000 dogs have been killed by the Delhi

municipal authorities. You have paid for these 50,000 murders with your taxes. Yet Delhi's dog population, estimated at 150,000 in 1980, remains exactly the same in 1990! Which means there has been a dog for dog replacement.

It is as if the dogs of a city decide what the food capacity of that city is and then stay at that level, no matter how many we brutalise and kill. Will they increase if we do not keep killing them? No. In no Indian city are cats caught and killed and yet the cat population never increases beyond the original numbers in spite of the fact that they litter more frequently.

What effect does the killing have on the incidence of rabies?

The chart of Delhi (released by the municipalities of Delhi) shows no connection between the number of dogs killed and the incidence of rabies. In fact, oddly enough, the more we kill street dogs, the more cases of rabies we appear to have!

From 42,543 dogs killed in 1980, the figure has increased (almost steadily, year by year) to 78,584 in 1989. During the same period, the number of rabies cases has increased from 61 to 253. In other words, the 60 per cent increase in killings has resulted in a 400 per cent increase in the number of rabies cases recorded!

Moreover, a report published by the Rabies Control Programme officials clearly states that 50 per cent of the people suffering from rabies have been bitten by their pet dogs, not street dogs.

What can the government do instead?

Many things. The very first step would be to educate people through TV on the importance of giving their pets anti-rabies shots. This alone would bring down rabies cases to half.

Also, if the municipalities gave essential information about treating dog bites through cinema slides and TV, people would know how to cope, what to do. There are some simple ways to treat such wounds – like washing the bite with soap and water.

The second step would be to make rabies vaccines for dogs available to the poor. The local government in Delhi (for instance) has allocated only Rs 2 lakh for anti-rabies vaccines when their own rabies control incharge insists that such vaccines must be made available (ideally free) at all government veterinary hospitals. People would bring in their community dogs for immunisation in that case.

The third step Mrs Gandhi recommends is simplifying the procedure for licences. There are 60,000 pet dogs in Delhi. Less than 1 per cent of them have licences because of the difficult procedure involved. She has proposed that all dogs that go for rabies vaccination be issued licences in the hospitals itself, cutting out the silly red tape.

She has presented the copy of a secret report sent to the Delhi administration by the manager of the slaughterhouse, where he confesses that the indiscriminate killing of stray dogs serves "no purpose whatsoever". He points out (in the report) that as soon as the street dogs of one area are killed, their space is filled with an equal number from another area – which makes it much more dangerous for the local population.

The report recommends that MCD should constitute a unit in each zone that will maintain a record of the dog population, and that each dog in the zone should be brought to one spot and both sterilized and immunised with the anti-rabies vaccine. Then, they should be taken back to their zones and set free. The report stresses that this is the only way to reduce both rabies and the



dog population. The same solution has been endorsed by the WHO Expert Committee on Rabies in their 7th report.

She has urged that the government's existing facilities (and resources) could be deployed in a manner that neutering would become central to the control of dog population and rabies instead of killing and referred (in this context) to the San Mateo example where all pet holders have to sterilize their animals unless they have a specific breeding permit. Such permits are given only when the total city population is below the specific number allowed. Over 40 cities in America are about to emulate the San Mateo model.

(Last year San Mateo County, California, passed a precedent setting legislation requiring people to sterilize their dogs and cats unless they obtained a breeding permit which would be given only if the population was under the specific number allowed. Within six months after the San Mateo Ordinance more than 40 cities across America, starting with Washington and New Jersey, have started working on the same legislation.)

What is the cost benefit ratio of any alternative solution to both overpopulation and the spreading of rabies?

Both the secret reports circulated internally to the Delhi Administration gives the cost benefit analysis of a mass dog vaccination programme.

The total amount spent on post-bite treatment every year (in government hospitals alone) is Rs 1.3 crore. Number of man-days lost is 2,20,000. The government report has computed the loss and compensation at Rs 5 crore. Post-bite injections of working animals comes to another Rs 2 crore. Compared to this annual loss of Rs 7 crore, a mass

vaccination and sterilization operation would cost only Rs 48 lakh for a three year period.

Are these killings legal?

Such killings are violative of the Constitution of India (Article 51-A(g) occurring in Part IV-A of the Directive Principles of State Policy) and the law passed by Parliament in 1960 on the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

This is the basis for the 200 page argument that Mrs Gandhi and her lawyer took to Subjudge Chaturvedi in November last year.

At the very outset, the judge gave an interim ruling stopping the MCD and NDMC from catching and killing dogs till the case was decided.

Yet, despite this ruling, the MCD went of a rampage in Vasant Kunj killing over a hundred dogs. Mrs Gandhi prepared a contempt petition. In the meantime, the lawyers went on strike.

Finally, on December 16, 1992, the order was handed down.

What Mrs Gandhi asked for was

- ▲ the authorities be restrained from indiscriminate and brutal killing of street dogs
- ▲ a more specific way be adopted to tackle dog population and eliminate rabies
- ▲ the authorities be instructed to cooperate with voluntary organisations for animal sterilization programmes
- ▲ the iron tongs method be replaced by the loop and sack method and the poisoning through strewn chapatis be stopped
- ▲ more humane treatment be assured to dogs in captivity.

The MCD admitted to their crimes but insisted that they had no money to implement any other means. They confessed to using strychnine in poisoned sweets and announced in court that they

would like voluntary bodies to come and train their staff in more humane behaviour.

The NDMC lawyer (on the other hand) went on a different track and insisted that dogs did not come under the purview of "wild life" and were (therefore) not protected by cruelty laws. He added that the function of the NDMC was to improve human environment and since it could not differentiate between vaccinated and unvaccinated, sterilized and unsterilized dogs it had no option but to kill them all!

The judge dismissed the argument as "unmaintainable".

He observed: "A reading of matter in this suit discloses that it is not merely a question of law to be followed but a whole question of how a "life" is to be treated, and need for fashioning law in the grooves of compassion. The crux of the matter is under what circumstances a 'stray dog' is to be caught and destroyed and whether being a stray dog alone is enough to lose life. It requires no great learning to appreciate that dogs or animals are not encroachers on earth. There is no question of eliminating them."

The lawyers of the NDMC and MCD then moved an application that the case was non-maintainable as it fell under the case of abetting public nuisance section 91 of the CPS. This was again rejected.

The judge then asked the NDMC and MCD to file their proposals of what they could do before he passed the orders. The MCD's written proposal said that, while in principle they agreed that there should be compassion, they sought exemption when the animal was "ferocious", or showed "wild



behaviour"! The NDMC opposed compassion for "dangerous" dogs.

(Of course, neither of them explained what they meant by ferocious, wild or dangerous.)

The judge ordered that the MCD and NDMC constitute a committee to consider the modalities of taking the help of voluntary agencies in training their dog catchers and supervising their dogholding operations, in rehabilitating healthy dogs and in controlling the population.

These are the specific orders which now stand as law in the Union Territory of Delhi:

- Whenever MCD or NDMC decide to destroy healthy dogs, which are found without collars, it will make it a practice to issue a public notice under Section 399(2)(b) of the MCD Act in such a manner that people in the area have sufficient advance knowledge. It will also inform interested voluntary agencies so that they can associate themselves with equipment or manpower to ensure that the dogs are caught without causing unnecessary pain or hurt.
- Whenever MCD or NDMC decide to destroy diseased dogs, it must follow the procedures prescribed by the Animal Welfare Board under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.

- The competent authorities under the MCD should genuinely entertain a reasonable suspicion of the dog suffering from rabies before it is caught. Veterinary surgeons must corroborate these suspicions before the animal is killed.

- Killing in public should be avoided. Dogs must be taken away for destruction.

- Sterilization and vaccination programmes must be extended with the help of voluntary bodies.

- The public should be educated through TV and radio about their responsibilities and duties under section 099(1)(3)(4)(5) and the necessity of vaccination and sterilization.

- The MCD should also provide regular facilities at various animal hospitals, on particular days, by public notice where people can get their dogs vaccinated.

- MCD and NDMC must be scientific in their treatment of dogs so that cruelties are avoided and the animals are dealt with compassionately.

- The NDMC must also observe these directions unless the provisions of the Punjab Municipal Act are contrary.

In short, this means:

- The municipalities cannot pick up any stray dogs without confirming whether they are rabid or not.

- Their own doctors are not sufficient, voluntary agencies must be consulted.

- They must involve voluntary agencies throughout the procedure – from catching to killing.

- Before going to any colony for killing street dogs, the municipalities will have to inform each house there – not just by newspaper ads but through fliers; voluntary agencies will have to be informed also – well before the dog catching vans arrive.

- Sterilization programmes have to be extended.

- Veterinary hospitals must have vaccination facilities and give notice of the same.

If you find the municipality in your area not following this procedure, take legal action. Or call your nearest voluntary agency and persuade it to take legal action on your behalf.

If that fails, and you are just a compassionate couch potato, at least write to 'People for Animals' at 517 Arun Chambers, Tardeo, Bombay 400034 (or you can call 4948003 and ask for Mridula Gupta) or, if you are nearer Delhi, write to the Ruth Cowell Trust that Mrs Gandhi runs from A-4 Maharani Bagh. Be precise. Take down the number of the dog catching van, note the exact time when it came to your area without first informing everyone, and what exactly it did. That is the least you can do to stop this mindless cruelty funded by the very tax you have paid as an Indian citizen.

Courtesy : THE SUNDAY OBSERVER

"Sir, so long as even a dog of my country remains without food, to feed and take care of him is my religion, and any thing else is either non-religion or false religion."

— SWAMI VIVEKANAND

Luckiest Dog of India

"Kovva" is perhaps the luckiest stray dog in India. While other of his ilk are hunted by dog catchers, the lean, emaciated and ugly Kovva has caught the fancy of a woman tourist at Kovalam who is taking him to Germany as her pet. Only two months ago, Kovva was leading a dog's life, miserable and unwanted. Driven away by visitors, Kovva had been wandering on Kovalam beach, fighting over stray dogs for food.

The rape of dawn

Gemma M D'cunha

She was born in the cosy nook of a little grotto in the vicinity of the colony. Her mother felt it was the nearest thing to shelter, on that drizzling monsoon morning. The rains were heavy last year, so it was not surprising that her mother often abandoned her, and her three other siblings, to forage for food. The ultimate result was that she was left alone, barely a week after birth. The elements had taken away the siblings, and the dog van took away her mother. How she survived was a near miracle!

The nameless black stray made the best of life. Meal times were at the dust bin, and she quenched her thirst at the cesspool of water left behind after the rains. And so the weeks turned to months, and she barely grew up on spindly legs, supporting a weak emaciated body. Living was okay as long as she was left to herself.

She had tried to befriend passerbys on the pavement, but a mean kick in the ribs put paid to future attempts of tail wagging. She was suspicious and it was better to be this way. Discretion was the better part of valour, she decided. We saw her now and again, named her Blackie with the soulful eyes, and generally ignored her presence.

Unfortunately for Blackie, she came on heat too early. It was one of those quirks of nature. A few nights ago, there were almost continuous high pitched whelps, snarls and barks. In the morning I went to investigate. I found her tiny frame covering under a tiny space of the compound hedge. Her feeble yelps were hoarse because of over straining of the vocal chords. Ranged round her were five or six large mongrels.

Besides baring their fangs and fighting among themselves for supremacy, they were making vicious attempts to dislodge her from her place of protection. She looked so vulnerable and frightened.

Her eyes seemed to ask "Why am I being singled out for this over attention so suddenly?"

I got hold of a string and a couple of boys to help. I would keep her in an outhouse room for some time. But on seeing the string she fled with the mongrels in hot pursuit. She couldn't decide which was the lesser evil. Perhaps she recalled the scene of her mother. We completely lost sight and track of her.

Then last night, there was a low moaning with what sounded like whelps of protest. The feeble noise was emanating from the lonely stretch of 'maidan' behind the house. There was also a great deal of barking and sounds of fierce fighting.

With the first faint streaks of light colouring the sky, I wended my way to the field. Blackie lay in a ditch. She was bleeding, but it seemed that she was dying of hunger and thirst also, having been on the run for days. She was oblivious of the presence of the watchful mongrels, seated around, and appeared to be waiting for the end. I watched her close those soulful eyes.

As I walked heavy of foot home-wards, I could only think, and think of the horrors of child abuse. A deathly chill over took my being as I proceeded. With the suffocation of dawn, what hope was there for the fulfillment of the day, let alone tomorrow?

Courtesy : MAHARASHTRA HERALD

Slaughter Run

Vinu Abraham

When men's minds are poisoned by hatred, they can be more lethal than the most venomous reptile. And more savage than the beasts of the jungle. The crazed gang of political goons which went on a killing and burning spree at Parassinikkadavu snake park-cum-zoo in north Kerala on February 11 proved just that.

The few reptiles and animals that survived the carnage now live in mortal fear of the two-legged predator. They refuse to eat as they nurse their grievously hurt bodies and minds. A wild cat snarls at visitors; two of its kind were burnt alive by the marauders. The human hand which used to feed and beckon them suddenly raises visions of brutal killers.

Yet another animal cowers in his home, benumbed by the savagery of it all. T M Kunhikannan, the 53-year-old night watchman of the park, used to pride in his role as the guardian of the little wildlife kingdom. But today he seems to hate himself for not being able to save his loved ones. He is haunted by the desperate cries of the dying birds and animals. He had so lovingly tended like his own children over the last four years.

He better not visit the park-cum-zoo, the largest of its kind in the country. The devastating sights and smells would break his heart. As it would of any normal being. The campus is one extended museum of horror. Charred remains of monkeys, mice, birds, and king cobras litter the place. The air is thick with the stench of decaying and burnt flesh. Even a week after the carnage, the carcasses were left untouched and the park was thrown open to the public. Purposely so. The park authorities want to put on exhibit the horror committed in the name of politics.

There had been bloody skirmishes between the cadres of the two parties during the run-up to the election to the governing body of the AKG Hospital. Things came to a head after a bandh was called on February 10 and 11, the day of the election. MV Raghavan's foes had other ideas: since he was beyond their reach, they would wreak vengeance on his pet project. Raghavan happens to be the President of the Visha Chikilsa Society, a charitable organisation which runs the park and an ayurvedic hospital on a 10-acre campus at Parassinikkadavu, 18 km from Cannanore.

Normally on night watch, Kunhikannan had been posted on special duty that day. He was in the kitchen when the assailants arrived. "I heard murderous screams and frenzied footsteps all round. I thought they would stone the buildings and cages and go away. But the sound of cages being torn apart and roof being pulled down made it clear that worse things were happening," he says.

His face contorts in anguish and the voice trembles as he recalls the pillage over the



Victim of two-legged predators. *The Nilgiri Langur*

next one and a half hours. "I could hear the wails of the animals and birds which were being burnt alive, beaten or stoned to death. I could see flames and smoke all over. I could not respond to the cries of the beautiful creatures I had fed, petted and talked to..." the voice trails off. The attackers had got away unchallenged: they had smashed the telephone and ensured that no SOS went out.

Today the park presents a picture of desolation. The creatures which survived, most of them injured, sulk amid the ruins of what once their tranquil habitat. The park had more than a hundred snakes of twenty-three species. All but a python and two rat snakes were butchered. A number of endangered species also figure in the casualty list of animals. Seven starred tortoises were reduced to ash heaps. A Nilgiri langur, gravely injured in the attack, died two days later in its cage. Of the four pangolins, only one can be seen peeking out of its hole. The fate of the other three is not known. Only six of the thirty crocodiles can be seen nursing their wounds. All the thirty-two white mice were torched. The two porcupines lie seriously wounded. "Most probably they will die" says Chandran, the chief demonstrator, pointing to the blood oozing from their bodies.

The attackers were so vicious that they burnt alive two of the three wild cats and butchered every bird and one hundred and seventy of the two hundred rabbits. The decaying carcasses of white storks, painted storks, peacocks and eagles are still strewn around. Two lion-tailed monkeys survived. But Raju the male, has a nasty wound on his right hind leg. His mate, Pooni is distraught as she moves about the cage with much effort.

The burning shame certainly scalded the collective conscience of the state. There

was much spontaneous breast-beating, cutting across political and class lines. It indeed was a revelation that **beasts** in human form stalk the state which prides itself as the most literate and the most progressive in the country.

Courtesy : THE WEEK

Animals are not Books!

The story alongside is good reason enough for **Beauty Without Cruelty** to strengthen its stand against animals being kept in captivity. It is not the first time (and it will not be the last time either) that innocent creatures have been brutally killed within the walls of an institution which claims to protect its inmates - caged under the pretext of conservation, education or research.

Respect for life is what is totally missing. Some institutions in India have now started Pet Clubs & Libraries. Children are encouraged to enrol as members and borrow animals for a couple of days or a week, much the same way as a book. The authorities are obviously unfit to even keep animals because they do not know the basic fact that shifting animals from one environment to another, leave alone the assorted handling, causes deep, irreversible psychological damage to the poor creatures. Those who have loved and kept dogs or cats like family members in their homes can easily visualise the trauma the creatures must undergo in having to some how constantly adjust. Countless animals, birds and reptiles are being put through this cruelty so that particular park authorities can make money.

BWC appeals to all parents not to subscribe to such animal libraries. Remember it is not only psychologically bad for the animal, but also for the child who just about forges a bond with a loving creature, only to have it be broken when the animal is returned.

Please Help!

Meat is Murder

1993 began with the 30th World Vegetarian Congress being hosted by India. Ironically, a month later the American fast food beef burger corporation, McDonald's were given clearance by the Empowered Committee for Foreign Investment to establish themselves in our country. Twenty of the chain's restaurants will be developed and operated primarily through a joint venture between a McDonald's subsidiary and Indian partners. The proposal envisages a total investment of \$ 40 million. A spokesman of McDonald's from Chicago has stated that they won't be serving beef! To **BWC** all animals are sacred so it matters little whether it is meat of cows, bulls, buffaloes, sheep, goats, pigs, fish or chickens. It will represent the carnage of millions of innocent lives, in all probability animals specially bred to be killed and converted into meat burgers. Those who agree that Meat is Murder, should please write a letter of protest to our Prime Minister.

"List of Honour"

The demand for our "List of Honour" booklet is growing. As the 1993 edition will

be published soon we are once again approaching manufacturers, particularly multi-nationals whose soaps, shampoos, cosmetics and perfumes are not included, to fill up our Cosmetic Research Questionnaire. In this respect we request help from our Members. If you have a contact with any company which manufactures cosmetics and toilet preparations please write, to **BWC** so that we may request them to respond to our Cosmetic Research Questionnaire.

Membership Development

For the second year in succession Mr. Himanshu Shah of Calcutta has won the **Ahinsa Trophy** for enrolling the highest number of Life Members. Remember, **BWC's** strength lies in the number of members it has. We therefore appeal to each member to enrol at least one life member every year. This way the number of our members will easily keep doubling. Subscription rates: Life Member: Rs.300/- and Annual Member: Rs.30/-

Donations, however big or small, are always welcome and put to good use. Remember, donors are entitled to exemption under Section 80-G of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Form IV (See Rule 8)

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Dated 31st March, 1993

Sd/- Diana Ratnagar
Signature of Publisher

PETITION FOR THE RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

All the industrial nations, like incorrigible rogues, have thrown themselves into the search for new markets without so much as a thought to the global environmental carnage that will eventually push our children and grandchildren to the brink of economic and social genocide, writes Jacques-Yves Cousteau.

Water and air, the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become global garbage cans. Industrial wastes in rivers and seas, oil spills and clandestine gas releases, submersion of warfare chemicals and radioactive wastes, incineration of toxic products, poisoned whorls spewed by factories, the exhaust of our automobiles, pesticides sprayed on a geographic scale—that's how the fluids of life are treated. The blindness that drives our societies to such suicidal behaviour has already had pathetic social consequences.

This century, which is not yet over, is the century of confusion — confusion between instruction and education, pleasure and joy, money and morality, tradition and innovation, individual risk and risks imposed on others, even on those yet unborn.

An interminable succession of absurdities imposed by the myopic logic of short-term thinking will engender tragic prospects for further generations. Such an inexorable mechanism can only be averted by recourse to Utopia. But we must have a fulcrum if we are to use the leverage at our disposal.

We demand that the rights of future generations be solemnly declared so that all human beings may inherit an undamaged and uncontaminated planet. The petition we propose for signature by millions of fathers and mothers worldwide is, in fact, the reasonable of Utopias.

—SANCTUARY FEATURES

Article 1:

Future generations have a right to an uncontaminated and undamaged Earth and to its enjoyment as the ground of human history, of culture, and of social bonds that make each generation and individual a member of one human family.

Article 2:

Each generation, sharing in the estate and heritage of the Earth, has a duty as trustee for future generations to prevent irreversible and irreparable harm to life on Earth and to human freedom and dignity.

Article 3:

It is, therefore, the paramount responsibility of each generation to maintain a constantly vigilant and prudential assessment of technological disturbances and modifications adversely affecting life on Earth, the balance of nature, and the evolution of mankind in order to protect the rights of future generations.

Article 4:

All appropriate measures, including education, research, and legislation, shall be taken to guarantee these rights and to ensure that they not be sacrificed for present experiences and conveniences.

Article 5:

Governments, non-governmental organisations, and individuals are urged, therefore, to imaginatively implement these principles, as if in the very presence of those future generations whose rights we seek to establish and perpetuate.

_____ date

_____ signature

_____ name

_____ address

If you support this petition please sign and send the page to BWC P.B. 18, Poona 411 001, for forwarding to the Cousteau Foundation for adaptation by the United Nations

Animal Rights not Animal Welfare

Since the Declaration of Human Rights,
Rights have come to stand as an Absolute value.
In an age which has so easily dismissed Absolutes,
Cruelty is relative: We argue about where to draw the line.
Cruelty is increased, little by little, because
It is said to be necessary for the "greater good".
Rights cannot be so lightly discarded.

Consider the ferocious animosity between
Fox hunters and their opponents.
This is more than class war; more than town v country.
Both sides stand firm, uncompromising, like Northern Ireland,
Enemies who have inflicted physical pain upon each other.
That pain insures continuing struggle.
The animals become an excuse.
But it began because both sides were defending the "good".
"Hunting is natural, hunting is fun, hunting is conservation."
"Hunting is unspeakable, pointless and ignores the Rights of animals."

In contrast Factory Farming faces
Orderly lobby for animal welfare.
Millions of animals and politicians' promises
of cheap food, are in balance.
Agribusiness throws the occasional carrot,
As long as cruelty, not Rights are the issue.
Out-of-sight, like Victorian asylums,
These animal Belsens are defended as an "evil necessity".
Not natural, or fun, or good for conservation.
As long as people eat meat and investors want a return on capital,
Farm animals can only hope for welfare, not Rights.

John Myhill

Courtesy : NEW LEAVES

HÄGAR
 THE HORRIBLE
 by BROOME
 DICK BROOME

