

WellBeing International

WBI Studies Repository

6-1974

(No. 28) – Is Ritual Slaughter Really Humane?

Humane Information Services, Inc.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.wellbeingintludiesrepository.org/rephum>

Recommended Citation

Humane Information Services, Inc., "(No. 28) – Is Ritual Slaughter Really Humane?" (1974). *Report to Humanitarians*. 20.

<https://www.wellbeingintludiesrepository.org/rephum/20>

This material is brought to you for free and open access by WellBeing International. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the WBI Studies Repository. For more information, please contact wbisr-info@wellbeingintl.org.



REPORT TO HUMANITARIANS

Number 28 — June, 1974

EDITORS:

Frederick L. Thomsen, Ph.D.
Miss Emily F. Gleockler

published quarterly by

Humane Information Services
Incorporated

A NON-PROFIT NATIONAL HUMANE SOCIETY
FOR THE PREVENTION OF ANIMAL SUFFERING

4521 — 4th Street South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

Dues and Contributions Tax Deductible

No humane problem is more important than the slaughter of food animals. This involves more potential suffering by more millions of animals than any other single treatment or mistreatment of animals.

The wisdom of our choices of alternative approaches to this problem and the success achieved in implementing the programs selected depends on having adequate factual information about this highly technical process. For far too long we have been accepting the "conventional wisdom" in our inadequate and frequently futile efforts to deal with slaughter problems. This has led to differences among humane societies and humanitarians about what should be done. This is a field of humane work, above all others, where we should stick together in meeting the formidable array of opposition to slaughter improvement. But we can't do that unless we obtain and agree on the facts. What is needed, above all else, is more factual light on the subject. We can't make intelligent decisions without adequate facts.

To many humanitarians, details about a disagreeable subject like slaughtering methods are best swept under the rug. The average humanitarian is likely to say, "Oh, I just can't bear to hear about such things." And that is a principal reason why so much slaughter still is inhumane. If we do not understand the problem, we will not take effective action to solve it. It is not enough that a few officers of humane societies understand; the individual members also must understand if they are to make intelligent choices of alternative programs offered by the different societies.

RITUAL SLAUGHTER

The slaughtering of food animals to produce meat religiously acceptable for consumption by Jews and Muslims is by what is technically known as "carotid section", the severing of the carotid arteries. The Jews call it Shechita, or Shehita. The revealed holy book of the Muslims, *Quran*, describes the process by two technical terms, Zabah and Zokak (cutting and draining the blood). It is commonly referred to as "ritual slaughter" and "kosher slaughter".

"Kosher" literally means "fit", and applies to any food including meat processed in conformance with the Jewish dietary laws.

The slaughter methods used by the Jews and Muslims are similar, although the Muslim method uses several cuts in severing the vessels in the neck of the animal instead of the single clean cut under the Jewish method. Muslims in the United States are said to accept kosher meat. Although slaughter by Muslims is not important in this country, in the world as a whole it is more commonly practiced than Jewish slaughter.

The term "humane slaughter" as ordinarily used implies that the animal has been rendered unconscious and insensitive to pain before being shackled, hoisted and cut or stuck. But orthodox Jews and Muslims claim that their method, by which the throat is cut while the animal is conscious, also is humane.

NOT ANTI-SEMITISM

In some of the largest population centers such as New York City it is difficult for the gentile consumer to purchase non-kosher-slaughtered meat except pork. Many Jewish people will buy only kosher meat, so the trade caters to this demand. No signs are encountered in butcher shops saying that the meat sold there is non-kosher, because most gentiles do not care. Another reason why only kosher-slaughtered

meat must be sold to the gentile trade. These conditions combined result in a volume of kosher slaughter much larger than otherwise would be required to satisfy the demand for kosher meat by the Jewish population. The humaneness of kosher slaughter hence is a matter of rightful concern to gentiles as well as Jews. "Religious freedom" that permits followers of one religion to observe its customs but denies those belonging to another the same privilege is not freedom, but tyranny. For any Jew to say that gentiles have no right to question the humaneness of the method of slaughtering the meat they are forced to buy is like a gentile saying the Jew should not be allowed to buy kosher meat. Sticklers for religious freedom cannot have their cake and eat it, too.

Is Ritual Slaughter Really Humane?

meat must be sold to the gentile trade.

These conditions combined result in a volume of kosher slaughter much larger than otherwise would be required to satisfy the demand for kosher meat by the Jewish population. The humaneness of kosher slaughter hence is a matter of rightful concern to gentiles as well as Jews. "Religious freedom" that permits followers of one religion to observe its customs but denies those belonging to another the same privilege is not freedom, but tyranny. For any Jew to say that gentiles have no right to question the humaneness of the method of slaughtering the meat they are forced to buy is like a gentile saying the Jew should not be allowed to buy kosher meat. Sticklers for religious freedom cannot have their cake and eat it, too.

Humane Information Services is as free of religious prejudices as it is practically possible to be, and there is no religious purpose in offering this article. We have leaned over backwards to present the Jewish viewpoint of Shechita slaughter in the words of a Jewish authority. Anyone who thinks he detects religious prejudice or anti-Semitism in this article is prejudiced himself.

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

In *Report to Humanitarians* No. 27, issued in March of 1974, there appeared an article entitled "Pre-Slaughter Handling for Ritual Slaughter". In this article it was shown that there are two alternative ways of approaching the problem of ritual slaughter. The first is to assume that the ritual cut itself is painless, and that the ensuing rapid loss of blood from the severed carotid arteries produces almost instantaneous unconsciousness. This is the claim made by Jews and Muslims who have attempted to explain and justify their method of slaughter.

If this claim is correct, then the only problem involved in making ritual slaughter humane is to invent and obtain the use of humane equipment for positioning the animals for slaughter. At present, in kosher slaughtering plants the animals are shackled and hoisted while conscious, and the throats of the suspended animals then are brought into position for the ritual cut. This whole process of pre-slaughter handling or positioning for Shechita is conducive of extreme pain and suffering.

These inhumane pre-slaughter handling methods have no religious justification whatever, but are merely for convenience and efficiency. Yet, as in the ritual slaughter exemption contained in the federal Humane Slaughter Act, the whole process from beginning to end is included, and is defended by those in the Jewish community who object to any requirement for humane positioning of the animal.

The Council for Livestock Protection, Inc., which was established partly to deal with this problem, appears to have been operating under the assumption that the claims made by the Jews that slaughter by carotid section itself is painless are correct, and hence that attention must be given only or mainly to the development

well-planned and executed project leading to the development of such equipment and methods has been under way at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, under the auspices of the Council.

Some other humanitarians and humane organizations in this country, although they have never to our knowledge attempted to scientifically refute claims that carotid section while the animal is conscious is itself humane, appear to believe that the only satisfactory approach to the problem of kosher slaughter is to repeal or have declared unconstitutional the ritual slaughter exemption in the present state and federal humane

slaughter laws, and to pass laws in other states requiring that all animals be made unconscious before shackling, hoisting and cutting. That is a big order!

If carotid section itself does produce substantial pain and suffering, regardless of how the animal is positioned for the cut, the development of proper positioning equipment would not make kosher slaughter humane. It will be better to find that out now than later, after more money has been spent on the assumption that carotid section is painless. It would be putting the cart before the horse to plan a program based entirely upon an untested assumption.

If, on the other hand, examination of the basic question provides reasonable assurance that carotid section while the animal is conscious does not cause significant pain, then any who have been holding back their support of the Council's program or advocating alternative approaches because of their doubts of this basic assumption, could get behind the Council's program wholeheartedly.

But there is still another reason for pursuing the point at this time. The so-called humane methods of rendering the animal unconscious before shackling and hoisting in many cases may be far from painless. Examination of the central question of the humaneness of the carotid section itself may throw much-needed light on these aspects of conventional "humane" slaughter.

And, if the evidence supports the Jewish claims that carotid section is painless, it might be that the positioning equipment developed for use in connection with the ritual cut could also be suitable for use for non-ritual slaughter in plants and states where ritual slaughter is important, and hence facilitate the passage of humane slaughter legislation in these states.

(See RITUAL SLAUGHTER, page 2, column 1)

June, 1974

REPORT TO HUMANITARIANS No. 28

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
St. Petersburg, FL
Permit No. 5675

HUMANE INFORMATION SERVICES, INC.
4521 - 4th Street South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705
Address Correction Requested

BASIS FOR THE CLAIM
THAT CAROTID SECTION IS PAINLESS

The best description and defense of the Jewish method of slaughter which we have read is in an article by Bernard Homa, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., chairman of Shechita Committee, which appeared in a 1971 symposium on "Humane Killing and Slaughterhouse Techniques" conducted by the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, of England. This symposium is the best overall analysis of the technical aspects of the subject that we have been able to find. Yet no references to it are found in discussions of the problem in this country that we have heard or read.

"To the orthodox traditional Jew," says Dr. Homa, "the method of Shechita is a divinely ordained command, given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The reference to Shechita will be found in Deut. XII, 21, '...Thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the Lord has given thee, as I have commanded thee...', implying an earlier command given to Moses. According to Jewish law, the animal must be alive and healthy and have suffered no injury at the time of Shechita, otherwise the meat is Trefah--it may not be eaten...The laws of Shechita are very complex and take up many sections of the Jewish legal code...

"The method of slaughter (Shechita) consists of a single rapid cut of the neck by means of a knife of adequate length, roughly twice the width of the animal's neck, set to exquisite sharpness, more acute than any surgical knife, with a perfect edge, free from the slightest notch or flaw and minutely examined for any unevenness immediately before the slaughter of each animal. The one swift movement of the knife, which causes no pain, and takes a fraction of a second, cuts through the soft structures anterior to the cervical spine, severing, among other tissues, both carotid arteries and jugular veins, the main blood vessels supplying and draining the head and brain.

"The Shechita cut made with a knife of perfect sharpness is absolutely painless. The animal remains perfectly still at the time of this momentary cut, which would not be the case if there were any pain. An animal that is hurt would demonstrate this immediately by kicking. It is well known that when one cuts oneself by a sharp knife or razor blade, no pain is felt at the time and the person only becomes aware of it either by the sight of the blood or when the edges of the wound are rubbed in any way, so that Shechita

Humane Information Services will send a receipt for dues or a contribution in the amount of \$5.00 or more, or in a lesser amount if the sender so requests, or if same is received in cash, by money order or from a foreign country. Otherwise your cancelled check will serve as a receipt. All dues and contributions are tax deductible.

To: Humane Information Services, Inc.
4521 - 4th Street South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

RETURN COUPON

☐ I wish to receive future issues of *Report to Humanitarians*.

☐ I do not wish to be kept on your mailing list.

☐ My name and address on the reverse side are correct.

☐ My name and address on the reverse side are not correct and should read as follows:

☐ I wish to become a Patron Member and enclose annual dues of \$ (\$5.00 or more) .

☐ I wish to become an Associate Member and enclose annual dues of \$ (\$1.00 to \$4.99) .

☐ I wish to continue my membership and enclose \$.

☐ I wish to make a contribution and enclose \$.

does not cause any pain...
"The main blood supply to the brain is through the carotid arteries, and the severance of these blood vessels brings this supply to an immediate halt. Furthermore, the rapid bleeding from these arteries, as well as from the jugular veins, caused by the Shechita cut, produces a sudden substantial fall in blood pressure throughout the body...this is of great importance in determining whether any blood can still reach the brain by any other route...

"Apart from the two large carotid arteries supplying the brain, there are two much smaller vessels, the vertebral arteries, which pass along the spinal canal and are, therefore, not severed during Shechita...In the case of some animals, especially ruminants, before reaching the network of blood vessels at the base of the brain the vertebral arteries...join up with branches of the carotid arteries. The significance of this is that when the carotids are cut through during Shechita, the blood from the vertebrals, which in the case of bovine animals would otherwise go to the brain, follows the line of least resistance and merely flows out from the cut ends of the carotids, so that virtually none of it reaches the brain. In other words, because of the special anatomical relations of the blood vessels to the brain in ruminant animals whereby the blood from the vertebral arteries normally reaches the brain mainly via the continuation of the carotids, the blood supply to the brain from the vertebrals as well as from the carotids is in fact halted as a result of Shechita...The blood pressure in all arteries beyond the Shechita cut... falls to zero on severance of the carotid arteries through Shechita.

"The effect of all this is that the brain is immediately deprived of the vital oxygen and glucose and this results in rapid unconsciousness...It would appear probable that the time after Shechita when consciousness disappears would be even less than two seconds...The convulsive movements that commence 20-30 seconds after the Shechita cut are automatic; i.e., they are in the nature of reflex actions due to anoxia, the lack of oxygen in the brain, and they would occur even if the animal had been previously anaesthetized--but as I have already shown, the animal is completely unconscious. It is largely because of the spurting of the blood and the subsequent convulsive movements of the unconscious animal that some people have described Shechita as barbaric...

"From what I have been saying I think we can now conclude with absolute certainty that the animal suffers no pain whatsoever from the act of Shechita for it is evident: (1) that the Shechita cut is painless; (2) that the severance of the large vessels in the neck produces almost immediate unconsciousness because of the special anatomical relations of the vessels in ruminants whereby the total blood supply to the brain is completely and immediately halted; and (3) that as the animal is immobile after the cut, there is no rubbing of the edges of the neck wound and so no pain can be felt even if there were any short period of consciousness.

"The Shechita cut is therefore, in itself, a form of stunning because its effect is to produce immediate insensibility from which the animal does not recover. Shechita is therefore a most humane method of slaughter."

FACTS WHICH HAVE CAUSED
QUESTIONING OF THE
FOREGOING CLAIMS FOR SHECHITA

These claims for the humaneness of Shechita which have been so clearly and fully stated by Dr. Homa are accepted by some humane societies, physiologists and veterinarians, but rejected by others. Dr. Homa quotes from a statement in the *New York Times* of April 24, 1967, by Patrick B. Parkes, of The Humane Society of the United States: "No informed person or organization, and certainly not The Humane Society of the United States, regards the accepted Jewish practice of Shechita as inhumane." The Federal Humane Slaughter Law, passed in 1958, and nearly all state laws specifically declare that ritu-

These views that the Shechita cut and its aftermath are painless are in marked contrast to those held by others, including various humane societies. Dr. Homa states: "No practice has been so unjustifiably reviled, misrepresented and condemned as has the Jewish method of slaughtering animals." This opposition, he says, has been "mainly based on sheer ignorance of physiological phenomena, fortified by the exploitation of sentimentalities and emotionalism combined with an intolerance of minority rights and still with a large element of anti-Semitism.

But there is more than emotionalism anti-Semitism behind the questioning of the claimed painlessness of Shechita. This questioning has centered on the two basic points raised by Dr. Homa in the foregoing section: (1) the length of time required for unconsciousness to ensue following the Shechita cut, and (2) whether or not the actual cut, made while the animal is still fully conscious, is painless.

TIME REQUIRED
FOR LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Regarding the first of these propositions, the questioners have noted that animals have been observed to regain the feet after being cast and cut, and the walk away. This could hardly occur if the animal were unconscious.

It is possible that such instances occur when the cephalic stumps of the carotid arteries (the ends of the cut arteries nearest the brain) are immediately sealed after the cut, by retraction within their own external connective tissue coat. The greater resistance of the brains of young animals to the effects of anoxia would permit them to make maximum use of the remaining cerebral blood supply.

Such instances argue strongly against the claim that unconsciousness is practically instantaneous for all animals.

These lay observations are strengthened by more scientific evidence that has accumulated. Sheep under anaesthesia have clamps placed on their carotid and vertebral arteries, which could be occluded at a time or in combination. Films taken show the animal grazing normally after both carotids and one vertebral artery have been occluded a few minutes before; when the second vertebral supply was cut off the sheep fell unconscious after ten seconds, and recovered completely when the clamps were released.¹⁾

1) "Humane Killing and Slaughterhouse Techniques." A symposium held January 20, 1971. Published by the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, 230 High Street, Hertfordshire, Potters Bar 582 England.

But the clamping of the carotids does not simulate the section by Shechita, cause some of the blood may remain in circulation of the brain after clamping but tends to drain from the vessels after section, in the absence of possible sealing of the cephalic ends of the carotids.

As far back as 1961 a comprehensive study of the physiological effects of slaughter by section of the carotid arteries was made by a Swiss scientist, I. Levinger, of the University of Zurich. He obtained EEG (electroencephalographic) records following carotid section in unanaesthetized sheep. Although in two seconds the EEG began to show activity typical of the effects of hypoxia on the brain, the sheep did not collapse for eight or ten seconds. This timing has suggested to some scientists that the effects of carotid section on the ability of the animal to stand are similar to the effects of occlusion of the carotid arteries by clamping, but that the EEG changes begin earlier after section than after clamping.

In 1963 a similar study of Shechita slaughter was conducted by Cornell University.²⁾

2) Nangeroni, Louis M., D.V.M., and Kennett, Paul D.; "An Electroencephalographic Study of the Effect of Shechita Slaughter on Cortical Function in Ruminants." Department of Physiology, New York State Veterinary College, Cornell

HUMANITARIANS ENTER THE LIONS' DEN

*The National Conference on the
Ecology of the Surplus Dog and Cat Problem
Chicago, May 21-23, 1974*

When humanitarians met with veterinarians, some of whom advocate pound seizure and oppose low-cost public spay clinics, not to mention with American Kennel Club (AKC) officials who defend registering puppies produced by the puppy mills, they were figuratively entering the lions' den. And the rather surprising thing is that they came out of the melee unscathed. In fact, one prominent national humane society officer called it one of the most inspiring experiences of her life!

For decades a sort of undeclared war has been waged between significant elements of the humane movement and of the veterinary profession.

One of the first and greatest causes of this friction between veterinarians and humanitarians was a spin-off of the antivivisection movement. Veterinarians have been unable to understand the complete and total opposition of so many humanitarians to what has come to be known as "pound seizure". The vets, like medical doctors, see the millions of dogs and cats being destroyed in shelters and pounds, the while medical and veterinary schools and laboratories have been forced to buy pet animals from dealers who may have stolen them from loving owners, or from specialized breeders supplying the laboratories. Proposals for "pound seizure" have given rise to some of the greatest

upheavals in humane circles, turning mutual concern for animal welfare into bitter enmity among humane society directors who differ in their viewpoint on this subject, and between humanitarians and the medical and veterinary professions.

Recently this enmity again has been brought to a head, or at least to the point of another confrontation, by the wave of enthusiastic support by humanitarians for so-called low-cost public spay clinics, which most of the veterinary profession opposes with equal determination. The veterinarians view any publicly or humane-society-supported animal surgery or treatment facilities as a threat to the private practice of veterinary medicine, an entering wedge for socialized veterinary medicine. Many humanitarians consider this to be a narrow, selfish policy which ignores the great need for controlling the surplus production of puppies and kittens, a placing of money above public humanitarian needs.

Many humanitarians look upon veterinarians as money-grubbing, commercially-minded parasites preying upon the gullibility of pet-owning animal lovers. Because of the lucrative private practice of treating pet animals, which any veterinarian seems able to build up in a short time, farmers are said to encounter great difficulty in obtaining the services of veterinarians for the treatment of livestock on farms. Some humane society officers and directors report great reluctance on the part of veterinarians to offer occasional or part-time services in filling the needs of animal shelters to care for badly injured animals which are brought in by their ambulances, inspect animals for disease when received or made ready for adoption, and provide technical guidance to improve shelter sanitation, euthanasia and other operating conditions and practices.

By and large, these antagonisms have been most evident among the members of the smaller societies operating animal shelters, and the officers and members of national and regional humane societies having strong antivivisectionist leanings.

The big-city societies, particularly those operating animal control programs for municipalities and counties, have sufficient income to employ full-time veterinarians, so find less need for volunteer services by private-practice veterinarians in the community. Their boards of directors frequently are composed in large part of businessmen and community leaders and fat-cat contributors who have little real identification with the humane movement; rather, they are more closely identified with the professional element of the community, which includes the veterinarians. This lack of knowledge of humane problems and inability or unwillingness of directors to give more than perfunctory attention to the real problems of the society places the manager or executive director in a position to run things pretty much as he pleases, so long as he can avoid controversy and the highly emotional public discussion of complaints which occasionally surfaces. Above all, he wishes to avoid "rocking the boat". Since veterinarians generally constitute a significant public and political influence in the community, and may serve as vital supporters in case trouble should arise, the manager

the latter is placed on the board of directors, and some occupy the position of president. This gives the practicing veterinarians of the community an excellent vantage point from which to head off such distasteful things as demands for the establishment of public or humane-society shelter spay and neuter facilities.

There is another considerable segment of the humane movement, not necessarily a part of the "big-city machines", which is highly supportive of the veterinary profession. This is composed of the fond pet animal owners who take their Fidos and Pootie Cats to the vets whenever they so much as sneeze, and look up to their vets as animal medicine men whose every word on any subject dealing with animals is law. They venerate their vets as does the neurotic hypochondriac her "personal" physician. To these people the vet becomes an authority on any animal welfare problem from the choice of a remedy for fleas to the replacement of laboratory animals by mathematical models, although in reality the vet may have no more idea of what a mathematical model is than his adoring customer.

Among the national humane societies, attitudes toward these veterinary-humane relationships are as varied as their principal constituents. The antivivisectionist and neo-antivivisectionist societies are likely to view with great suspicion anything emanating from the evil "veterinary experimenters". They feel no need for communication or sharing of knowledge and programs with the vets. At the other end of the rainbow, as would be expected, has been one of the large national societies, supported and perhaps controlled in great part by the big-city societies, and the state federations of local societies frequently associated with it formally or in spirit.

In the middle have been a considerable number of local, regional, state and national societies which believe that there are areas of mutual concern among veterinarians and humanitarians, which can best be approached in a genuinely cooperative spirit, yet without genuflecting to the opposite side in dealing with those problems where there are obvious conflicts of interest. If we can't agree on everything, we should be able to agree on many important matters of mutual interest, and work together for the improvement of animal welfare.

Humane Information Services (HIS) is one of these in-between organizations. We bow to no veterinarian or veterinarians' organization as being the ultimate authority on any animal welfare problem merely because it involves some "technical" aspects. We recognize that there are some inevitable conflicts of interests between veterinarians and humanitarians, between humane societies and veterinarians' associations. For this reason we oppose having veterinarians on the policy-making boards of directors of humane societies, just as we would object to giving such authority to pet supply merchandisers or manufacturers of veterinary pharmaceuticals. We know of no humanitarians, per se, on the boards of veterinary societies. But that does not mean that the factual knowledge and opinions of veterinarians bearing on any of the society's operating

We believe in maximum practicable consultation and communication between veterinarians and humanitarians, between veterinarians' associations and humane societies. But to be most effective this must be in the spirit of give and take, not that of doctor and patient, of teacher and student. Both groups must be willing to listen objectively and open-mindedly to the facts and viewpoints presented by the other, and not get "mad" if the discussion sometimes becomes heated. Above all, it must be based on respect for each other's viewpoints, even though obviously in some cases influenced by different self-interests.

We believe that HIS does, and we will continue to indulge in much more frank discussion of these interdisciplinary relationships than the other societies in this middle group. We do not get mad when some veterinarian refers condescendingly to our "layman's" analysis of the decomposition chamber, which we believe is far more scientific than any pronouncement on the subject by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). Likewise, we hope the veterinarians will not get mad if we occasionally seem reluctant to salaam in their presence.

Veterinarians, like humanitarians, seem to differ greatly among themselves in their attitudes toward humane societies, humanitarians and humane problems. We have talked with some who are so lacking in knowledge and perception of the pet surplus problem to claim that it would cease to exist if the humane society shelters would turn over all their unwanted animals to the medical laboratories. We know others who are just as dedicated and knowledgeable humanitarians as anyone we have met in the humane movement.

Obviously, many of these highly diverse elements in both the humane movement and the veterinary profession are sadly lacking in the willingness, ability and facilities to communicate with each other. Without communication there can be no meeting of the minds. The amount of good that is being done in behalf of animal welfare could be substantially greater if all of these groups and intra-groups could meet together frequently for frank discussions of their mutual problems and possible solutions. This would benefit not only the animals, but also the vets and their organizations and the humane societies.

Another group which has seemed to stand even more aloof from humanitarians and humane societies than most veterinarians, and to address themselves almost entirely to their own rather narrow (at least to humanitarians) interests, is composed of the breed societies and kennel clubs for dogs and cats. The strongly adverse reactions of humanitarians fighting the battle to reduce the numbers of surplus or unwanted pets to the activities of puppy mills, pet shops and backyard breeders seem to have finally elicited a constructive response on the part of some elements in the purebred trade who may or may not have been moved by the fear of legislation and other restrictions on their operations.

In any event, and regardless of possible motivations, the American Kennel Club, a federated organization of local clubs representing indirectly a total number of breeders, fanciers and showers of dogs which dwarfs the membership of humane societies by comparison, has undertaken constructive steps designed to meet the barrage of criticism directed particularly at what many consider to be the too indiscriminate registration of purebred dogs entering the pet trade. It seems designed, also, to bring improvement in breeding, sanitation, protection against disease, and unsatisfactory merchandising practices. HIS intends to have an article about this program in *Report to Humanitarians* as soon as the needed facts become available.

Even the pet food industry has not been free of criticism by humanitarians, in part based on claimed deficiencies of the products sold to pet owners by means of hard-sell TV advertising which some consider to be far from truthful, and in part

HUMANE LEGISLATION DIGEST

Furnished by our sister society

National Association for Humane Legislation, Inc.

675 Pinellas Point Drive South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

The truth of the oft-reiterated contention of the National Association for Humane Legislation (NAHL) that frustratingly little progress will be made in obtaining important humane legislation until the humane movement completely revises its approach has again been demonstrated in the current Congress.

The humane societies, including their legislative arms, continue to go their individual ways in formulating the legislation proposed to the Congress and in their efforts to obtain passage of the bills after they are introduced. The humane movement simply is not large enough for such a division of effort to be successful. Much of the desired humane legislation is anathema to politically-important groups, or appears to be of little consequence to the members of Congress. To overcome this opposition and apathy requires that the entire humane movement must agree on legislative priorities, and then conduct a united, coordinated and all-out program to obtain passage of the bills decided on. The only exceptions to this rule are minor bills to which there is no significant opposition from outside groups, which will involve no consequential appropriations, and which the Congress may decide to pass as a sop to those seeking more controversial legislation. But passage of such minor legislation will not accomplish our important humane purposes.

A good example of how these principles work in practice is furnished by the Bayh-Anderson trapping bill, and the Gunter bill which would require the use of humane handling and slaughtering practices in foreign plants which export meat to the United States. The Gunter bill was introduced at the request of NAHL. These are by far the two most important humane bills which have been before the present Congress.

At a meeting of humane society representatives called by the National Association for Humane Legislation early last year, it appeared to have been unanimously agreed that priority would be given to these two bills, and that a united effort would be made to get them passed by the 93rd Congress. But subsequent to that meeting some of the society representatives who had been present maintained that they did not understand that this action carried any commitment to concentrate on these bills. There has been very little subsequent communication among the societies present at that meeting, much less those who failed to attend it, with respect to a continuing promotional program in behalf of the bills. The Gunter humane slaughter bill, for example, has been mentioned a few times by the societies that participated in the meeting, but with no aggressive backing from most of them.

THE GUNTER HUMANE SLAUGHTER BILL

In the course of these events it became quite apparent that the big stumbling block in the way of passage of H.R. 8055 (and its companion bills in the House, H.R. 10755 and H.R. 11473) is the position taken by the U. S. Department of Agriculture that the proposed Act would constitute unfair trade discrimination against foreign countries exporting meat to the U. S.

The National Association for Humane Legislation has researched the wording of the various laws relating to this problem, and presented to Congressman Gunter what it believes any reasonable person would accept as evidence that the USDA's claim is lacking in merit. NAHL later will publish a complete refutation of the USDA's position. But in any event, bills disapproved by federal government agencies are passed in every session of Congress. One of these was passed a few weeks ago.

The point we wish to make here is that no other society of which we are aware has made any effort to deal with this stumbling block to passage of the Gunter bill, and in fact most of the other societies seem to have taken for granted that the bill has no chance for passage and recently have made no effort of any kind with which we are familiar.

BAYH-ANDERSON TRAPPING BILL

Like the Gunter bill, the Bayh-Anderson trapping bill has languished in Committee while environmental and humane organizations have been arguing with wool growers and Western Congressmen about proposed predator control reform legislation.

THE TULE ELK BILL

on H.J.R. 204 and related measures designed to establish a wildlife refuge for tule elk. Last September the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation held hearings, but we have heard nothing about any subsequent action. When even such a harmless and desirable measure becomes lost in the shuffle, humane legislation has come to a pretty pass, indeed. Perhaps we simply have not run across any subsequent action taken. NAHL receives and reads daily the *Congressional Record*, not an easy task when you are as busy as we are, so it might have missed something. If so, NAHL will appreciate word from some member.

BEAGLES IN DEFENSE EXPERIMENTS

The Senate voted June 4 to bar the Army from using beagle puppies in chemical warfare tests. "There are plenty of other animals they can use," said the sponsor of this measure, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey. A bill introduced in the House by Representative Les Aspin, of Wisconsin, would prohibit the use of dogs in experiments involving chemical and biological weapons. But the experiments against which all the fuss was raised were to test gases resulting from airplane fires and accidents, which may not be banned by any of these measures.

MARINE MAMMALS

The Marine Mammal Protection Act, so widely heralded when passed, is turning into another poop-out. To NAHL, its most important feature was designed to end the annual slaughter of hundreds of thousands of porpoises, possibly the most intelligent and one of the most cooperative of all animals. These porpoises die when they become entangled in tuna nets. In order to allow time for the development and adoption of new types of nets and methods of fishing which would end this unnecessary slaughter, West coast tuna fishermen were exempted from the provisions of the law for a period of two years. As the deadline of next October approaches, the Secretary of Commerce has devised an interpretation of the law that would completely nullify its original intent. This is only one of several efforts to weaken this very desirable law. If you wish to protest these proposed new regulations, you may write to Robert M. White, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 6001 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, Maryland 20852. Representative Louis Frey, Jr., of Florida, says he will introduce a bill to block adoption of these new regulations. Expressions of opinion on this would be useful to Representative Frey.

ANIMAL BIRTH CONTROL RESEARCH

The controversial bill which includes authorization for funds for animal control research, H.R. 11873, was amended and passed by the Senate and has been sent to conference with the House, which acted earlier, according to the Society for Animal Protective Legislation.

* * * * *

But while the Congress has been too occupied with watergate and related matters

tage of the preoccupation of the media the public to move some special-interest legislation through the channels with fanfare but slick success. One of these is H.R. 11537, which would in effect transfer veto power over wildlife projects on federal lands to state game and fish commissions and their friends, the organized hunting lobby. This bill, although opposed by the federal departments concerned with the administration of the government's vast land holdings in the West and by environmental groups, went through the same House of Representatives whose members have been saying that there seems to be little hope for the Gunter bill because it is opposed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture! Then it reached the Senate Commerce Committee with a dissenting vote. Soon it will come up for a vote in the full Senate. Unless the Senators quickly are flooded with mail from their home states asking them to support the bill by sending it back to Committee, the bill soon will be law, a monument to the large numbers of people who will actively to promote hunting, and the expertise of their organized lobbies. Apparently humanitarians would rather be excitedly about things which are completely unattainable than to take intelligent action with respect to things that can be done now.

FLORIDA GREYHOUND TRAINING BILLS

At the instigation of the National Association for Humane Legislation, companion bills were introduced in the Florida Senate by Senator William M. Gillespie of New Smyrna Beach, and in the House by Representative Roger H. Wilson, of Pine County. These bills would ban the use of live animals, including rabbits, in the training of racing greyhounds.

A representative of NAHL attended committee hearings in both the Senate and House. The Senate Committee approved the bill without change, and it subsequently was passed by the Senate. The House Committee amended the bill to give more for greyhound trainers to learn how to comply, and further weakened the bill. Both the Senate and House bills were placed on the crowded House calendar, which they were not brought up for vote and possible amendments from the floor. So, the bills died on the House calendar.

* * * * *

Other bills passed or defeated during the 1974 session of the Florida legislature, which has just ended, (1) prohibit actual or attempted killing, maiming, maiming or disfiguring livestock (passed); (2) prohibit taking, killing, molesting, mutilating or destroying marine turtles (passed); (3) prohibit the importation, for sale or use, of certain primates without a permit (passed); (4) provide for appointment of animal health councils by boards of county commissions and for custody, care and disposal of neglected animals (withdrawn); (5) prohibit release of captured birds to be shown (passed); (6) increase penalty for exposing poison in street or yard (not passed); (7) prohibit abandoning a domestic animal to die (not passed); (8) broaden the prohibition against killing or injuring the animal of another (not passed); (9) facilitate painless destruction of injured animals (died on House calendar); (10) prohibit late animal euthanasia (withdrawn; see page 5, column 1, of this Report); (11) prohibit cockfighting (passed by House, died on Senate calendar).

The National Association for Humane Legislation is confident that several of the bills that died on the calendar this typical last-minute legislative shuffle could have been saved by effective lobbying during the last few weeks of the legislature. NAHL is a national society and cannot devote sufficient time to lobbying in any one state to be effective. There is real opposition to a bill. State humane organizations have little knowledge of lobbying methods. Labor unions and all kinds of business and financial interests have the money to professional lobbyists. Humane societies do not, but can perform these services.

Euthanasia Survey Develops Appalling Facts

When Humane Information Services began its survey of euthanasia methods, we were motivated by the growing difficulties involved in obtaining supplies of sodium pentobarbital and by the frequent requests received for more definitive information about the effects of the decompression chamber. But as we have gone deeper and deeper into the facts relating to these different methods of euthanasia, and have had more opportunity to observe the various methods as they are used in different shelters and pounds, we have been appalled at how little is really known about them, and how ineptly the methods are applied in actual practice.

We have asked different veterinarians and physiologists pertinent questions about the effects of different euthanasia methods, rarely receiving satisfactory answers. The plain fact of the matter is that nobody knows what we really need to know in order to insure that the millions of dogs and cats that are "put to sleep" in shelters and pounds throughout the country each year really receive a humane death. We have uncovered materials in the musty files of the professional journals which apparently have not been taken into account by veterinarians in making very positive pronouncements about some of the methods. Humanitarians have been even more guilty of reaching positive conclusions and making very assertive statements about methods which even the best informed find difficulty in appraising.

In view of this condition, Humane Information Services has been very chary of making any recommendations regarding the best methods of euthanasia. We do not yet know enough about the subject, and we do not believe that anyone else does, either! Once established, such a recommendation by a leading humane society is hard to withdraw or override.

The way in which a given method or agent is used for euthanasia may be even more important than the relative merits of the method or agent itself. Properly-administered injections of sodium pentobarbital are generally taken to be the most humane method of euthanasia, but we have seen this method used so ineptly as to be much worse than knocking the animal in the head with a mallet. Advocates of rapid decompression gravely aver that it, too, can be inhumane if the equipment is not working properly to produce a very rapid reduction in ambient air pressure. But we have concluded that perhaps the deficiencies of this method are due partly to a too-rapid reduction in pressure, and have found some veterinarians who agree with this. No work has been done which can furnish satisfactory evidence of how the decompression chamber should be operated to produce best results. And we continue to obtain evidence in the field of misapplication of other methods. A method may be good in itself, but be unsuitable for general recommendation or adoption if it encourages inept administration.

Our conclusion from all of this study and field observation is that nobody really knows what is needed to be known about this subject. We intend to continue to give it intensive study. We ask our members to be patient, and not expect us to send them brief instructions on how to best put animals to sleep. As soon as we really know what we are talking about we will issue detailed descriptions and instructions.

The foregoing facts explain why Humane Information Services did not approve of a bill which was introduced in the Florida legislature, both Senate and House, making illegal the use of any method of euthanasia in shelters and pounds not approved by the Panel of the American Veterinary Medical Association, which published its report in 1972, or by another national humane society, or by the Florida State Board of Veterinary Medicine. This bill, if it had become law, would have prevented the testing or use of new methods which may be developed that would be superior to

sister society which is not tax exempt and hence can engage in legislative activity, persuaded the sponsors of this bill in both the House and the Senate to withdraw it. As soon as we can reach some more definitive conclusions regarding euthanasia, NAHL will be glad to work with these progressive members of the legislature in developing legislation which would be helpful.

One of the most frequently-encountered obstacles to improvement in euthanasia is the extreme emotionalism which any discussion of this subject seems to arouse. The very thought of killing many millions of dogs and cats each year is enough to horrify any but the most hardened. The natural reaction is to "strike back" at anything and anyone concerned with the slaughter. The writer was attending a convention, and took the hotel elevator to the floor where the meeting was held. The elevator operator observed the convention badge on his lapel and could not restrain herself from literally hissing, "So you're one of those hypocrites who claim to love dogs and cats and then kill them by the hundreds!"

People who feel so strongly against killing are likely to be against any method, and specifically the one actually being used in their local shelter or pound. Anyone trying to find a better method may be viewed as an "animal experimenter", particularly if the indignant person is an antivivisectionist.

HIS walked right into a situation of this kind during a test of nitrous oxide, which had been suggested as most humane by a prominent and very dedicated humanitarian in New York. She had tried this gas, which is commonly used for anaesthesia by dentists and in surgery, and reported to HIS that it is apparently very humane. Although the gas is expensive, HIS always has taken the position that cost should be given a very low priority in evaluating alternative methods of euthanasia. So, we transported our portable box to a Florida shelter, obtained a donation of a large cylinder of the nitrous oxide gas from a distributor for Chemetron Corporation, and expected to test the gas for euthanasia to see if the results were similar to those reported to us. This was not an experiment, since we already knew the properties of the gas, its effects on animals, etc. What we wished to find out was how long it took for the animal to "go down", whether there were any untoward manifestations as are experienced with other gases used for this purpose, how much gas would be required, the loss of gas incurred when animals were put into and removed from the box, etc. The physiological effects of the gas have been determined in countless medical experiments which we were not seeking to duplicate, being concerned only with the practical problems involved in this specific application.

At this particular shelter, euthanasia is performed by injection of sodium pentobarbital, which is done by a peace officer who comes to the shelter several times per week and is paid so much per animal. Our observation of the performance of this part-time shelter worker indicates that it is far from up to our humane standards. But the peace officer, when he found what we planned to do, ordered the box off the premises and threatened to put in jail anyone conducting any euthanasia "experiments" in the county. So, arrangements were made with a shelter in another county.

The tests were nearly ready to begin when certain ladies who are members of the second society, alerted by members of the other society who had in turn been fed misinformation by the peace officer, threatened the manager with loss of his job if he permitted the tests to continue. Fortunately, the manager stood his ground, and the tests proceeded. No animals suffered because of the tests. The results will be reported later as a part of our series on euthanasia.

interfere with improvement in euthanasia. Work in this field is at best disagreeable, and gets any individual or organization doing it more brickbats than praise or contributions! For decades prior to the time when Humane Information Services began its work in this field the subject of euthanasia was swept under the rug by humane societies generally. There was little or no mention of it in the news bulletins and other publications of either local or national societies. The only real study of the subject apparently was that made in 1962 by a committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association for the Mary Mitchell Humane Fund, of Boston, which was seldom heard of again in humane society circles. Since HIS began its series of articles on different methods of euthanasia, other societies have been giving increasing attention to the subject. We are not trying to claim credit for any of this much-needed activity, but we do ask the forbearance of our members, such as the lady who wrote that we seemed to be too much preoccupied with death, and asked why we couldn't devote our energies to less disagreeable and depressing subjects than euthanasia and slaughter. We can only say that much of the cruelty to animals in this world is found in connection with the death of the animal, and our purpose is the prevention of cruelty, not making people happy by feeding them a lot of sentimental tripe about animals which makes enjoyable reading.

PET SURVEY EVOKES INTEREST

The pet ownership survey reported in our last issue was the object of approving comments from more readers than we had expected. A number expressed interest in conducting such a survey in their own communities, and requested the forms and instructions.

Before running these off on our offset press we would like to be sure that no other requests will be coming along later. In any event, we have been too busy on emergency projects to prepare and mail these kits. So, you now have time to let us know if you want in on this survey. And to those who already have written, please be patient. We will get to it just as soon as possible. And thank you very much for your interest and willingness to cooperate.

PLEASE FORGIVE US!

Our unanswered letter file has grown and grown and grown, to become almost an apparition of nightmare proportions. It haunts us constantly. Every day we resolve to get at it without fail the next day--then some emergency arises which takes all of our time until our next good resolution!

The trouble is, we receive so many letters asking questions or requesting help or making suggestions which cannot be answered just by anybody. Since we do not have a flock of technical experts running around the office, these letters generally wind up in poor old Doc's incoming file, where they may stay for long periods while he is away on a field trip or working on some non-postponable project. Then when he gets to the mail, he may select letters having a time priority, and the remainder may be left in the box until the next time, moving farther toward the bottom on each such occurrence. All very inefficient, we'll grant you--but necessary if you are to receive a reply from someone who knows the answer. Emily answers a great deal of mail relating to her departments, but does not attempt to keep fully up to date on questions such as animal control ordinances and euthanasia.

So, please be patient. We'll get to that letter yet! And we always read the incoming mail promptly and carefully--what you say has attention paid to it, even if

RITUAL SLAUGHTER—FROM PAGE 2—

University, Ithaca, New York. (We are indebted to Argus Archives for a copy of this report.)

EEG recordings prior to and following carotid section were made on four rams, five calves and two goats. For the rams, unconsciousness was apparently complete in from 3.3 to 6.2 seconds following the cut. The five calves became unconscious in from 4.4 to 6.9 seconds.

However, the high degree of variability among these individual animals in the length of time required for unconsciousness to ensue, in relation to the very small number of animals tested, points to the probability that the true range of elapsed time for these species is considerably greater. Since, from a humane standpoint, we are concerned mostly with the upper part of the range, it appears safe to say that for some animals it would require ten or more seconds following the cut for unconsciousness to ensue. This appears to be in not too great disagreement with findings of British scientists elsewhere referred to in this article.³⁾

³⁾ Baldwin, B. A., Ph.D., B.Vet.Med., M.R.C.V.S., Agricultural Research Council, Institute of Animal Physiology, Babraham, Cambridge, in a paper entitled "Anatomical and Physiological Factors Involved in Slaughter by Section of the Carotid Arteries", which was presented at the 1971 Universities Federation for Animal Welfare symposium on humane slaughter.

DOES ANIMAL SUFFER PAIN WHILE CONSCIOUS?

As Dr. Baldwin (see previous citation) observed, "The question of whether the animal is suffering pain during the period of consciousness (during and following the cut) is not so readily appropriate to objective experimental investigation."

The mere fact that the animal may be conscious does not necessarily mean that it is suffering pain. Observations made of sheep subjected to carotid section while standing, and which did not collapse for eight to ten seconds, indicated no struggling or obvious signs of pain preceding the collapse. Only three of the eleven animals used in the Cornell experiment struggled immediately following the cut.

At the UFAW symposium, Dr. Linzell took exception to Dr. Homa's statement that a large cut with a very sharp knife would not be painful. He had experienced such a cut from an instrument called a microtome which was "very painful". He said that he frequently had to place catheters in the carotid artery and jugular vein of animals and had great experience of the distribution of nerve endings in the skin of the neck of goats, sheep, cattle and pigs. Dr. Linzell said that if a local anaesthetic was not used, animals gave every evidence of feeling pain anywhere in the neck.

Since the EEG recording measures consciousness, not pain perception, it and other methods that have been used in attempts to measure stress in animals probably cannot furnish any definitive evidence about pain during and following the Shechita cut. It may be that in the future recordings of nerve cell activity would make this possible.

H.I.S. CONCLUSIONS

We fully realize that the lay reader who has managed to wade through this barrage of conflicting religious belief and physiological findings may well ask, "Why does HIS subject us to this mental and emotional ordeal? Why not just tell us its conclusions?"

The answer is that if we did that, we would merely be adding our conclusions to those of a great many others who have been making very positive statements on a subject about which they know little and have no objective evidence. One person who is experienced in packinghouse operations, in reviewing a draft of this article, stated: "I am firmly of the opinion that ischemia of the brain occurs within four seconds."

consciousness. Only EEG recordings can do this. So, such personal observations are meaningless. If we at HIS are to gain any acceptance for our own conclusions, we must present at least a brief summation of the scientific facts on which they are based.

These conclusions are:

(1) Any method of slaughter other than shooting cannot be entirely humane. Electrical stunners must be accurately placed and be of sufficient voltage to produce a strong current through the brain. Yet, slaughtermen have been observed in many cases misapplying the electrodes. Dr. Greenwood Wilson at the UFAW symposium estimated that about 30 percent of the hogs slaughtered in the United Kingdom after presumably being made unconscious by electricity actually had the electrodes applied in the wrong way. And the electrical method of making the animal unconscious may not work well in connection with sheep, because the electrodes may not fully penetrate the long thick wool. It is used, rather than the captive bolt pistol, because of its greater speed and lower cost.

This is only one of the methods used in this and other countries which have humane slaughter requirements which actually may be considerably less than humane.

In short, the use of these "humane" methods represents as a whole a great improvement over the old systems in use before the humane requirements became law, but they are still far from perfect. The term "humane" as applied to slaughter in commercial plants is a relative term. Much more work needs to be done to reduce the degree of suffering involved even in "humane" slaughter.

(2) Although it is not completely painless and humane, as claimed, the method of Shechita used in Jewish slaughter probably is no more inhumane, on the average, than the methods used in non-kosher slaughtering, if the animals are in an upright position when the Shechita cut is made, and if they are positioned in a manner to avoid the creation of undue stress.

(3) As actually practiced now in kosher slaughtering plants in this country (see *Report to Humanitarians No. 15*, March, 1971), the pre-slaughter handling and positioning methods are extremely inhumane, causing great stress and suffering.

(4) It would appear from the information available regarding the Connecticut research project sponsored by the Council for Livestock Protection that the major equipment which has been tentatively designed would provide relatively humane positioning of the animal. This equipment, it appears, would keep the animal in an upright position until cut, thus reducing stress in pre-slaughter handling, the length of time intervening between the cut and loss of consciousness, and the likelihood that the edges of the wound will rub together.

Use of this equipment would eliminate the major objection to the method of Shechita. The Council for Livestock Protection is to be commended for the excellent work done on this program to date, and deserves the moral and financial support of humanitarians for the completion of this program.

(5) We recommend to the Council and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station that particular attention be given to the elapsed time between the station on the conveyor where the Shechita cut is made and that in which the animal is shackled and hoisted. This should give sufficient time to be sure that the loss of blood has produced unconsciousness.

We also recommend to the Council and the Connecticut Station that EEG studies of heavy beef animals be made before measurements of the conveyor are finally determined, if it is proposed to use the conveyor for larger beef animals. Such studies would be advisable in any event, since the positioning equipment for large animals already available and now in use in some plants would be an integral part of any plan to make kosher plants humane. Without the EEG records for mature beef animals the necessary determinations on a number of points cannot be made.

distinctly separate issues. Any attempt to treat them as a single religious issue is itself direct evidence of insincerity and a desire to obfuscate the problem. Pre-slaughter handling is not in any sense a religious matter, and humanitarians must resist vigorously any attempt to confuse the issue by making it appear to be a part of religious freedom, as was done when ritual exemption was written into the federal Humane Slaughter Act.

The prejudice, ignorance and intransigence so well described by Dr. Homa as quoted in a previous section has not been solely on the part of gentile critics of Shechita. Orthodox Jews, in their natural sensitivity to anything which they take to be religious persecution or anti-Semitism, have resisted any objective suggestions for the improvement of pre-slaughter handling practices. In defending Shechita itself they have defended with equal fervor everything connected with it, accusing critics of the pre-slaughter handling of being anti-Semitic, even though it has nothing to do with religion and has no semblance of justification on humane grounds, as does Shechita itself.

That leaves the Jewish defenders of Shechita as now practiced in kosher plants in this country in exactly the same position as those gentile humanitarians who have refused to consider objectively the scientific facts about the relative humanness of the Shechita cut itself. A position it is an indefensible position. To attempt to counter proposals for improvement of non-religious slaughtering practices claiming religious prejudice is an admission of guilt to the same kind of prejudice of which the humanitarians are accused.

Dr. Homa said in his paper given at UFAW symposium: "It is inconceivable to Judaism, in which kindness to animals is a basic teaching, would sanction anything that is not humane...So the Jews do not require instruction about animal welfare from animal protection societies."

No, they do not require "instruction" but they can certainly benefit by listening with an open mind to those who have been trying to eliminate the pain and suffering experienced by animals as a result of non-religious handling practices in kosher slaughterhouses. We should be able to sit down together and reach mutually acceptable agreements on how to deal with the problem, without the kind of rancor, oversensitivity and disputation about verifiable facts which have featured previous attempts to get something done in this field.

Some humanitarians who have been working to make all slaughter humane have been overly fearful of offending the Jewish community, to the point of frowning on statements such as the foregoing. In the opinion of HIS, such pussyfooting has not accomplished its purposes, and leads to continuation of the same uninformed, emotional atmosphere that has impeded progress in the past. We should meet the Jewish community as equals, able to engage the give and take of vigorous discussion as groups having normal relations, not hypersensitive fanatics unwilling to deal objectively with a mutual problem.

And it is a mutual problem, first because both groups are humane and anxious to spare animals unnecessary suffering, and, second, because gentiles in the area of the country where kosher slaughter is important are forced to eat kosher-slaughtered meat, as previously explained.

Since Jews and gentiles share about half and half the kosher-slaughtered meat, they have an equal interest in how it is derived. Humane organizations, representing these gentile consumers forced to eat kosher-slaughtered meat, have as much right to seek the cooperation of Jews in eliminating the non-humane features of pre-slaughter handling as the Jews do to seek the understanding and compliance of gentiles in preserving religious freedom.

There is no barrier between Christianity and Judaism in this matter, but only between some prejudiced and intransigent Christians and Jews. The only way to rid ourselves of these debilitating prejudices is to discuss them frankly and honestly together. That is what we have tried to

IMPROVEMENTS MADE AT JACKSON POUND

Subsequent to preparation of the article on the Jackson, Mississippi, pound which appeared in *Report to Humanitarians No. 27*, the Mississippi Animal Rescue League has conducted a campaign to obtain further improvements in the operation of the pound, with encouraging success. The aid of the Jackson Veterinarians Association was enlisted, and the Association made recommendations to the City Council about improvements needed. The League inaugurated a publicity campaign to get the City Council's attention to the situation. These efforts seem to be finally succeeding. The Jackson City Council announced that the pound will be taken out of the hands of the City Police Department and placed under the control of the Sanitation Department and a Commissioner sympathetic to the League's program. Just this change of departmental authority and responsibility should help to improve conditions. The new director of the pound seems to be a compassionate man with concern for animals.

Although much remains to be done, the fact that progress is being made indicates that the situation will be radically improved. Another encouraging development is the progress made in construction of a shelter for the Mississippi Animal Rescue League. Probably it will be several more years before it will be possible for the League to have a complete shelter adequate for the size of the area to be covered, and to have a paid staff able to take over from the present volunteer workers. Mis-

issippi and the City of Jackson are far behind the rest of the country in nearly all aspects of animal welfare. But a start is being made. A humane society has been organized in Greenwood which has taken over operation of the municipal pound there and hopes to be able to build a shelter soon.

Many other communities are faced with a similar problem with respect to the city or county pound. There are at least two alternative approaches in trying to rectify these deplorable conditions. The first is the use of public education and pressure on city or county commissions and officials. This is the method being followed in Jackson. Humane Information Services would like to hear from humanitarians in any communities where similar attempts have been made to rectify conditions in the public pound. Please give as many details as possible.

The second approach is to bring suit against city and county officials seeking an injunction to force compliance with the law. Sometimes this is the only recourse, but legal action of this kind is very expensive and not always effective. Humane Information Services believes that it is always best first to conduct a vigorous educational campaign to inform the public and bring pressure to bear on city and county officials. Such campaigns also serve another purpose, to alert the people of the community to animal welfare problems and obtain new members for the local society.

CHICAGO CONFERENCE—FROM PAGE 3—

to attract to pet ownership many who are not in a position or do not have the inclination to provide good homes for the animals. The Pet Food Institute, representing this multi-billion-dollar industry, whose success depends upon capturing and maintaining the confidence not only of pet owners but also to some extent the humane movement, long has sought communication with the latter, through educational publications for pet owners and services to animal shelters.

Obviously, it is greatly to the interest of all of these diverse groups to improve communication among them and attempt to find common grounds for constructive action in behalf of the animals upon which all depend for their existence. Only in the last few years has this effort seemed to really get under way, spurred in some or possibly most instances by a desire to avoid what the groups consider to be actions deleterious to their own interests, or to use one or more of the other groups to gain some benefit. Humane Information Services receives letters from members indicating that strong suspicions of this sort exist. But we believe that it gains nothing to look a gift horse in the mouth. Humanitarians and humane societies, for the benefit of the animals, should welcome the opportunities presented by these developments to establish a more frequent and effective dialogue among the groups. By doing so we will find opportunities for furthering our own programs for animal welfare. Our objectives can be just as self-serving as those of the other groups. Possibly by learning more about each other we will gain understandings which will enable us to see that there may be some merit in the other fellows' positions which we have not hitherto been able to understand. Although we all have sometimes sharply different goals and ideologies, we do have a common bond in that we all are working for the animals, although in differing ways.

Humane Information Services, of course, cannot presume to speak for any of these groups, who might not always recognize their own motivations for taking a desirable action. We have discussed those possible motivations not for the purpose of throwing a monkey wrench into the machinery, but to let the doubting Thomases among our own members know that in expressing approval of these efforts at greater communication among the groups we are not being ideologically kidnapped or led down a blind alley. We strongly believe in can-

anyone takes offense we are sorry, but still resolved to follow our well-known and accepted policy of telling it like it is.

The latest effort to bring these groups together for a better understanding of mutual problems was the National Conference on the Ecology of the Surplus Dog and Cat Problem, held in Chicago on May 21-23, 1974, under the sponsorship of the American Humane Association, the American Kennel Club, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Humane Society of the United States, and the Pet Food Institute. Participation was by invitation only. Dr. Frederick L. Thomsen represented Humane Information Services. Veterinarians appeared to make up the bulk of the participants, and the mechanics of the conference appeared to have been handled mostly by the AVMA. We wish to acknowledge that the AVMA knows how to manage a conference. Everything ran smoothly and on time. Those in attendance expressed practically unanimous agreement that it was a very successful conference.

We have attended many professional and humane conferences, but cannot recall one which offered a better array of well-prepared experts to lead off the discussions of various subjects. Their papers covered a number of subjects of great interest to humanitarians, such as the latest available information about alternatives to surgical sterilization. We will use these papers in preparing future articles in depth on the subjects covered, and are sure that our readers will find these very interesting. The combined papers represent, in fact, a compendium of up-to-date information vital for use in humane programs.

Half of the time of the conference was devoted to presentation of these papers, and the other half to a series of workshops intended to examine and define the problems in greater detail and suggest possible solutions. The workshop summaries and recommendations have been taken under advisement by the steering committee of the conference, and one can safely bet that nothing will be allowed to appear in print which is likely to rock the boat. Meanwhile, participants have been requested to treat the workshop reports as confidential, and we shall observe that admonition.

We must confess disappointment in the results of some of these workshops. No attempt to cover in one afternoon complicated questions coming under the general heading, for example, of adoption policies

CHICAGO CONFERENCE—FROM COLUMN 2—

and euthanasia, can be successful. The result is likely to be a highly superficial smattering of personal beliefs by people generally having little or no expertise or specialized knowledge and seemingly most interested in getting something down on paper which is not too controversial and does not tread upon any of the cherished beliefs of the majority of those in attendance.

The writer fears that he may have become a nuisance to some members of the workshops he attended, as, for example, when one veterinarian present expressed doubts that succinylcholine chloride continues to be in use for "euthanasia". "Surely, no veterinarian, knowing how unsuitable this drug is for such a purpose, would advocate or even permit its use without protest." Old Doc had to inform the gentleman that no less an organization of veterinarians than the U. S. Department of Agriculture, represented right there in the workshop, was using this drug to kill hundreds of thousands of condemned swine, and that a state department of agriculture veterinarian has been visiting shelters and pounds and advocating the use for "euthanasia" of this very cruel drug. Just recently we heard of a veterinarian in Maine who had purchased and recommended it for use by a dog warden. The workshops were replete with similar instances of lack of information and also the drawing of conclusions reflecting the one-sided policies of certain groups, some of whose members seemed more intent upon protecting their own business interests than in setting forth the truth about the humane problems covered.

Despite strenuous objections from some veterinarians and others, we urged a recommendation to the AVMA that it "reactivate or appoint a new continuing committee on euthanasia to consider new methods developed subsequent to preparation of its 1972 report and to continually review its past recommendations regarding currently-used methods." We do not know if this recommendation will survive the steering committee's gentle hands.

But if these differences in viewpoint and interests did not exist, there would have been no need for this conference and others, hopefully, to follow. Humane Information Services hopes that this will turn out to be only the first of many such efforts to improve communications between and among these groups, both national and local, and to bring a greater adherence on the part of all to objective consideration of all available facts subjected to constructive analysis. We wish to congratulate the five sponsoring organizations on a successful and highly useful conference.

ANIMAL CONTROL SURVEY

One of the projects being conducted by our director of field services is a survey of animal control organizations in each county visited. No statistical information obtained for any one society will be released in a way which would identify it. The figures will be treated as confidential, and used only in county, city or state totals or averages.

We seem to receive more cooperation from public than from humane society shelters. The latter sometimes are suspicious and unresponsive, fearing that the information might be used against them if it fell into the hands of some splinter group of humanitarians, of which there always seems to be at least one in the community.

HIS is not interested in taking sides where such internecine warfare exists. All we want are the facts necessary to implement our animal control programs.

Please cooperate with our field representative if he visits your shelter. He is not a public relations man, but has much practical experience in shelter and pound operation. Our aim is only to help solve problems, not create them. We have only goodwill toward any local humane society, even if you are using succinylcholine chloride for "euthanasia"! We may try to persuade you to use a humane method, but not in an antagonistic spirit. We

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Another animal organization--which appears to be a little jealous of our success--publicly expresses surprise that we should receive financial support "for doing nothing but get out a quarterly report".

Because we do not brag about every little accomplishment in each issue of Report to Humanitarians, which we reserve for constructive analysis of humane problems, even some of our members may get the impression that we are just editorial writers, telling others how they should run their business and not accomplishing anything ourselves. We would be glad to compare actual accomplishments with any other animal society, large or small. But we prefer to let our members pat us on the back. It's more objective. If you get fed up with the compliments in these letters to the editor, we're sorry. But we never get tired of receiving them! Once in a while we give you the exceptional letters that demonstrate your approval is not unanimous. Don't hesitate to let us have it with both barrels! You can't make us mad, even though we may disagree.

THANK YOU!

"You people are doing a darn good job down there, and I don't know any organization anywhere that is doing any better or as good. I hope you have many more years to go of good work like that."--Mrs. Muriel Verizzi, West Hartford, Connecticut.

"Your organization appears to be one of the few, if not the only, humane group with an intellectual appeal. I think this practical and intelligent approach is essential to influencing other people."--Mrs. Dean M. Hasseman, Wayne, Pennsylvania.

"Thank you for your excellent publication. I always read every word of it. It seems to me the most thorough and comprehensive of any report that I receive."--Mrs. Francis C. Rogers, Duxbury, Massachusetts.

NOT HER CUP OF TEA

"I enjoy HIS as is, no expensive format but solid information. The 'folksy' aspect is not my cup of tea, but since spreading information is the purpose, spread information, not a course in literature. Congratulations, best wishes and deep appreciation."--Mrs. Matthew Griswold, Old Lyme, Connecticut.

REPLY:

You will have to blame old "Doc" for the folksiness. Emily is all business. Most readers seem to like our old-shoe style, but, as Emily says, perhaps we don't hear from those who don't. At his age Doc is unlikely to change, so please forgive him for just being natural.

THOSE FLEAS AGAIN!

"That info about brewer's yeast and fleas was worth the dues for a whole year! I have six spayed poodles and a blind cocker, and really need help! Trouble is, they won't eat it in their food."--Mrs. Carl E. Barron, Ocala, Florida.

REPLY:

If any other readers have tried using brewer's yeast for fleas, we would like to hear from them. Emily now gives it to Teddy by placing a tablet of the yeast in his throat. Teddy is a good dog, and swallows it without fuss. Why not try that method with your pets?

WHAT INDIVIDUAL HUMANITARIANS CAN DO

The millions of small turtles sold annually as pets for children are not miniatures, but are the young of animals that can reach a length of nearly a foot when mature. Nearly all of them die slowly of starvation, abuse and lack of care.

But they have time during their short life span to transmit salmonella and the Arizona organism to the children who handle them. This is an important public health hazard. Consumers Union has led humane organizations in a move to have the sale of these pet turtles banned altogether in the United States. This ban would replace a system of certification by public health agencies in the states of origin of the turtles that they are free of these organisms, which has not worked.

The Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C., is considering a complete ban on the sale of turtles as one proposal, and a second proposal that the certification system be improved. Humane Information Services believes that the second of these alternatives would be ineffective in protecting the children's health, and completely ignores the humane aspects of the problem.

We therefore urge our members to write the Food and Drug Administration, stating that you strongly favor the first of the two alternative means of dealing with the public health problem presented by the sale of baby turtles, as set forth in the Federal Register for Tuesday, May 28, 1974. In other words, you favor a complete ban on the sale of these turtles.

Also ask members of your family, relatives and

LETTER WRITING

"Re Report No. 27 about letter writing...writing a letter not always necessary; just a card or note saying 'I am for or against'...I think it is better not to write letters which are too time consuming for them to read and therefore discouraging."--Miss Corey Linden, Middlesex, New Jersey.

REPLY:

Sorry we can't agree. The editor has stood beside the desks of secretaries to legislators while they opened the morning mail and threw the postcards right into the wastebasket without reading them. Some legislators feel that if a person is not sufficiently interested to write a letter, he is not sufficiently concerned to have his vote influenced by what the legislator does. Also, postcards may reflect campaigns by organizations, with the writers not really knowing what the issue is all about. The extra cost of a letter over a postcard is too small to make any difference. The letter can be brief, but should best give reasons. It should not appear to be a form letter or something motivated by a newspaper advertisement. Legislators' and businessmen's staffs are hired to handle the letters, and don't resent them. So, how about another round of letters on the Gunter bill, H.R. 8055 including one to the Secretary of Agriculture (see Humane Legislation Digest, this and past issues).

THAT GREAT OLD MATCHING FUND!

"The enclosed check for \$500 is intended for the matching fund started by a contributor, mentioned in your March Report, which you intend to use (to improve) euthanasia."--(Name withheld on request).

REPLY:

A donation for humane work never went to meet a greater need (see brief article on euthanasia elsewhere in this Report). We will faithfully follow your wishes. And we are so very grateful to both you and the original contributor who started this matching fund.

MEMORIAL FUND

"I like very much the idea of a field man to locate the places using cruel methods of animal disposal as particularly prevalent in the southern United States--so long as in each area where devices are discovered there is immediate effort made to let community leaders know what is going on and have such situations corrected. More important, my mother, the late Ruth Beardsworth Curtis, would have been enthusiastic. I wish to enclose a check for \$50 to assist as a gift in her memory and would suggest that along with the idea of matching funds this kind of memorial fund serves to lessen the misery of the world should everywhere replace the senseless, often tasteless, displays of expiring felines which often send the ones we love into the life beyond.

"Why don't you include a listing of those to whom memorial gifts are dedicated, whether animal or human friends."--Mrs. Melvin A. Horton, Pasadena, California.

REPLY:

While we are on the subject of fund raising, we would like to follow up on your excellent idea. If our members agree, we will include in subsequent issues, as a regular feature, a list of such memorial gifts made during the quarter preceding. Why not help us to get this special feature off to a good start by sending us your memorial contributions. They don't have to be of great value for loved ones who recently passed away. Any animal-lover or member of the family or friend could well be so honored.



We have been asked by several members to print a picture of the editor. We finally had one taken which does us justice!

(Photograph from PREGON en defensa de los animales, No. 76; July-August, 1971; Barcelona, Spain. This publication has about