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POLITICAL ANIMALS: A Study of the Emerging Animal Rights Movement in the United States

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(continued from preceding issue)

IV.

Strategies and concerns
OF THE MOVEMENT

ACTIVISM / COMMENT

While the concerns and goals of the AR movement extend to all areas of humankind's contact with the nonhuman world, they center mainly on three areas: the intensive and painful methods of raising livestock for slaughter often referred to as "factory farming" or "agribusiness," the use of live animals in research (vivisection), and the protection of marine and furbearing animals. To varying degrees, activists also oppose hunting, rodeos, dog racing, zoos, and circuses. In each of these cases, groups within the movement have questioned the necessity and degree of suffering inflicted on animals and the number of deaths that have resulted from such practices.

In the area of research on animals, organizations repeatedly call attention to the volume of unnecessary and cruel experiments. Mobilization for Animals (MFA) points out that in the U.S., 1,724,000 birds, 23,000 sheep, 700,000 rabbits, 46,000 pigs, 85,000 primates, 500,000 dogs, 20,000,000 frogs, 190,000 turtles, 61,000 snakes, 51,000 lizards, 200,000 cats, and 45 million rats and mice were used for laboratory experimentation in one year alone. As MFA stresses, these animals were "burned, poisoned, starved, irradiated, surgically mutilated, stressed, kept in solitary, deprived of sleep, and kept in restraining devices for long periods of time." [22] AR groups emphasize not only the waste of animal lives in these experiments but also the economic costs to taxpayers which totals as much as four billion dollars a year. The following studies and their corresponding costs are commonly cited: \$500,000 to determine the reasons why monkeys clench their jaws in anger, \$525,000 to study the differences between the vomiting systems of cats and dogs, and \$102,000 to compare the effects of gin and tequila on Atlantic fish.

Factory farming is subject to the same kind of criticisms from AR groups since hundreds of millions of sheep, pigs, and cattle and several billion poultry animals are raised and slaughtered each year for food. However, what the AR movement has directed its attention and attacks toward is not numbers and statistics but inhumane practices and the institution of factory farming itself. AR organizations have helped to expose the painful and cruel processes that are required to produce meat and have made these

facts known to the public. Veal calves, for example, are confined for their short lives of thirteen to fifteen weeks in dark stalls less than two feet wide and only four and one-half feet long, fed a liquid diet of vitamins and growth stimulants, and chained to prevent them from exercising--all so that the flesh of these anemic animals will remain tender and pale.

Through the efforts of the movement, the public is also beginning to realize that chickens do not lead an idyllic life roaming about country farms but that they are de-beaked, crowded into small pens, and have most of their natural instincts suppressed. Even publications like New Scientist recognize that the dairy cow "leads a hell of a life," since it is usually pregnant nine months of every year, milked twice a day for nine months, and both pregnant and lactating for six months. [23]

The cause to save the lives of whales and seals is especially strong because traditionally it has been one of the goals of the larger, wealthier, and older humane organizations. Moreover, the public has displayed a great willingness to support this effort for a number of reasons: the amount of publicity generated on the subject, the emotional attachment to baby seals and the awe of giant whales, the corresponding revulsion to pictures of sealers and whalers clubbing or harpooning defenseless animals, and the fact that any benefits derived from activities like whaling and sealing are only incidental and usually unrelated to the well-being of most people. The protests against trapping, rodeos, and greyhound racing are usually motivated by similar factors: the suffering of animals, the lack of its necessity, the existence of alternatives, and the glorification of and delight in the products and process of pain (*Schadenfreude*). "Behind facades of an inoffensive glossy gambling arena," declares United Animal Defenders, "lies the well-hidden truth of organized crime and gross exploitation of animals." [24] Such exploitation assumes many forms, including the deaths of about eighty percent of the dogs which are unable to meet training requirements, the underfeeding of the trained dogs in order to make them chase the jack rabbits, and the brutal death of the rabbits which are torn apart by hungry canines during the training sessions.

Again, the problem is institutional

rather than specific, so that the attacks of the movement are necessarily multi-dimensional. A few institutions under protest in addition to factory farming and research laboratories include NASA, the cosmetic industry, restaurants, and the U.S. military, which has subjected animals to the effects of atomic fallout, chemical and biological toxins, and neutron bomb radiation. The number of products which at least partially involve animal suffering is lengthy as well: candles, camera film, soaps, cosmetics, drugs, shoes, coats, and food, to name a few. To combat these institutions and practices and to effect political change, AR groups have utilized and advocated a host of strategies and tactics which can be divided into six overlapping types: educational and informational, political (strictest sense), direct action, legal, public protest, and private alternatives. A brief overview of these actions is necessary to understand both the direction of the movement and the structure of AR groups whose form and function are often closely interrelated. However, the nature of such actions along with the deep divisions over strategies and tactics will become more evident with an examination of specific organizations and their philosophical and political differences.

Educating the public and disseminating information on animal issues is the first and most important tactic used by AR groups and therefore needs to be examined in some depth. This fact is aptly expressed in Animalines: "Among the myriad of approaches utilized by the various organizations, the common denominator is the belief that knowledge is the ultimate liberator." [25] Moreover, this belief is put into practice by all but a few of the organizations which confine their approaches to direct action for animals and which could be said to educate the public indirectly through these actions.

Among the most common forms of information are pamphlets, newsletters, and magazines which AR groups distribute to their members and to the public. While this literature is usually filled with statistics, descriptions, and pictures detailing animal abuse, they often contain practical advice about "cruelty-free" products, alternative diets, and the location and dates of educational events and demonstrations. This material is usually the product of long hours of research, and despite many of the differ-

MICHAEL W. FOX

The flutes of paradise are silent
 Scattered like broken bones
 Amongst the refuse of this age
 That has no history and no sense
 Of the sacred or the whole,
 Even though we have great power
 Over Nature, atom and the genes of life.
 We keep animals captive in the zoo
 And call it conservation.
 There is no place for them,
 Displaced by people, cattle
 Raised for meat.
 What once was paradise
 Is now a mined, deforested, poisoned
 And industrialized wasteland.
 What is the point when greed and need
 Become synonymous and ignorance
 Is seen as lack of know-how power.
 There is no why, no wonder
 Mystery, reverence and no way
 Back to Paradise.
 Until the flutes of Pan are found
 And heard again throughout the land.

ences within the movement, there is a great deal of information sharing between organizations which frequently distribute and rely on the literature of others. The strict task of a number of organizations is, in fact, to compile and disseminate data to other groups and interested people.

Somewhat paradoxically, the media is one of the movement's greatest potential weapons and yet one of its biggest enemies at this time. The media, magazines in particular, has in effect legitimized animal research, sport hunting, and food industries through repetition--that is, they have called attention to the glories, products, and conveniences derived from these institutions so repeatedly and to such a degree that they have near universal acceptance. The means of these practices are seldom questioned. In almost every issue of Time, Newsweek, or Reader's Digest, for example, one can find mention of animal experiments which, it is claimed, in some way contributed to the stockpile of knowledge or stories about research scientists receiving awards and making discoveries. Television commercials make animal products into a kind of art, and the news and educational programs highlight ani-

mal research. On the other hand, these same programs frequently poke fun at animals and animal behavior. "CBS Evening News" anchor Dan Rather once ended the show smiling as he reported that "after years of testing, scientists have bred 'bare chickens' having no feathers. Before the 'bare birds' will be promoted as replacements for regular chickens, they will have to be tested for taste.[26] Even when humorous, these kind of remarks perpetuate existing attitudes.

AR groups, however, are beginning to use the media for their own messages. Organizations occasionally appear on radio shows in the larger cities, and activists frequently call in to national programs like "The Larry King Show" to voice their concerns. Famed show host Bob Barker, the only animal activist to regularly appear on radio, was recently fired from his job at KABC because his material was too serious for the show and because doctors protested his discussions of anti-vivisection. For a year and a half, Barker had spoken on laboratory abuses and other issues. Cleveland Amory, head of the Fund for Animals, frequently speaks on talk shows as well.

The AR movement is also beginning to use sympathetic celebrities and TV personalities to further its goals, and they have been especially helpful in fund-raising drives. Angie Dickenson, Burgess Merideth, Doris Day, and Henry Fonda, among others, have supported the Fund for Animals, while Dick Cavett has served as a board member and Gretchen Wyler serves as the Fund's Vice-Chairman. Psychologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has several prominent psychologists in its organization, and Beauty Without Cruelty utilizes the services of Loretta Swit and Gretchen Wyler as well. Wyler, a well-known actress, is perhaps the most influential voice among celebrities. She has been an officer in many humane societies, vice president of Beauty Without Cruelty, and director of the American Fund for Alternatives to Animal Research. In a speech to the Action for Life Conference in 1982, she related her profession to politics: "I once optioned a play to be produced, and there was a song that said, 'to convert someone, you must make him your friend.' I believe that is right. And I firmly believe that the success I have had in actually doing things politically to help animals was a result of that theory. In 1967, I founded an animal shelter in a little

New York town. How? By playing the political game." [27] Celebrities were also involved in the successful fight to secure legislation in California that permits senior citizens in public housing to keep pets. There is one recently formed group specifically composed of celebrities fighting for animal rights, Actors and Others for Animals, headed by Earl Holliman.

The AR movement occasionally but increasingly receives attention from the national newspapers and magazines. The publicity it receives, however, is generally detached and critical, since it is usually the result of specific and controversial actions or demonstrations. Frequently, activists are depicted so as to conjure up an image of an eccentric group of emotional vegetarians parading in plastic shoes and synthetic clothes and wanting to turn back social progress. Articles are quick to point out that AR activists debate such topics as whether cockroaches have rights and whether shrimp should be eaten. The movement is often cast into the same league with the International Society to Stop Continental Drift, and it was given the Radical Chic award in 1976 by Atlantic Monthly writer James Fallows, who declared that, "even in their headiest moments, animal partisans must realize that the fight cannot make much difference." No more than Luddites could turn back the Industrial Revolution will Peter Singer make us into vegetarians." [28]

Sadly, columnists like Ann Landers exercise much influence over public opinion in the area of animal treatment. Landers, who has commented a number of times on animals and experiments, responded in September, 1983, to a reader who wrote, "You would do a tremendous service if you exposed the horrible torture of helpless creatures and put a stop to it," with the following words: "A great deal of propaganda, accompanied by heartbreaking photographs, has ignited a campaign to halt the alleged cruelty to animals in research laboratories. But before you get out your crying towels (and check-books), folks, here are the facts." [29] Apparently, the "facts" of the public's leading "moral philosopher," which included "surprise inspection visits" to research centers and medical schools, progress in veterinary medicine, and standards that require the quarters of animals used for experiments to meet space specifications, be air conditioned, and kept

clean, were enough to convince the reader, who apologized for her "mean letter" several weeks later.

Aside from these problems with the media, some of the larger AR groups have placed expensive full-page ads in newspapers with national distribution to protest such practices as the Draize test. The movement has also organized successful letter-writing campaigns to protest actions like the military's use of animals in its wound laboratories. A final informational technique is still in its formative stages: the use of films to depict animal abuse. The most widely acclaimed motion picture in this regard is "The Animals' Film," a documentary directed and produced by Victor Schonfeld. This feature-length film is the first to fully explore the mistreatment of animals from individual pets to institutional exploitation in factory farms. It also examines the emerging international animal liberation movement and contains footage of raids on laboratories. The film, according to Schonfeld, is designed to "provoke and unsettle, to offer alternatives and to inspire activity and change. Our objective was to take the issue of human use of animals and to put it on the map of social and political issues that are really important for people to grapple with." [30] A prize-winning documentary devoted exclusively to animal research issues is Marie Carrasello's "Tools for Research."

"Perhaps the greatest obstacle the animal rights activist faces in convincing the

public of the importance of animal rights," asserts George Cave of Trans-Species Unlimited, "is the years of homocentric conditioning to which the average person is exposed." [31] Throughout the country, AR groups and animal welfare organizations have been seeking to correct this situation through educational efforts at three levels in particular: early childhood, college, and law school. Many young children express a strong sentiment against eating meat when they learn it is derived from animals, but they are usually forced to do so by their parents. Similarly, children who are not educated properly about humane treatment of animals develop certain undesirable traits as they age. A study by Robert M. Sanders, M.D., suggests that "behavior in childhood of

cruelty to animals operates as part of a behavioral spectrum which reliably predicts violence and criminality in the adolescent or the adult." [32] Humane education programs for young children are generally the work of S.P.C.A.'s and Humane Societies. The Humane Society of the United States, for example, has a division of its organization which is devoted to such tasks as providing new curriculum guides for children from pre-school to sixth grade, and the American S.P.C.A. offers free or inexpensive books, brochures, and posters on animal topics to schools. Organizations are also joining with educators to introduce literature on humane matters to libraries and scouting troops.

Colleges and law schools are increasingly offering courses that either include or are devoted to ethical and legal questions about animal rights. Many of these courses have led to the formation of student AR organizations which have in a few cases conducted laboratory raids to rescue animals. In law schools, students are often exposed to the complexities of the statutes governing animals, and until 1983 a journal called the Animal Rights Law Reporter covered many animal issues and litigation. At Marshall Wythe Law School in Virginia, for example, attorney Peter Lovenheim recently spoke to future lawyers on the need to establish more legal precedents in the animal protection field and welcomed them to join the growing organization, the Animal Legal Defense Fund (formerly Attorneys for Animal Rights).

A great amount of the interest in AR issues in post-secondary education is due directly to the increased attention which

philosophers have given the topic. In addition to the writings of Regan, Singer, and others, major moral and political theorists like Rawls, Nozick, and Gewirth have addressed the subject at least peripherally in their works. To secure a firm place for the issue of AR in education, philosophers and educators have a large amount of work to do, because courses like "Rabbit Production and Slaughter" are multiplying as quickly as courses to protect animals.

Finally, the AR movement is elevating the level of its educational tactics through more effective communication with existing activists and potential supporters. Richard Morgan, coordinator of MFA, has published In Love and Anger: An Organizing Handbook for Animal Rights Activists which is "to provide the basic information to engage in this struggle, to move from feeling and ideas, to understanding and analysis, to direct action, to end animal suffering." [33] In Love and Anger is a manual that gives practical advice to the activist about where, when, and how to prepare for rallies, hold meetings, find information, and recruit people. The handbook has great potential, for as activist Marcia Pearson has noted, "As many of us have come to the animal rights movement from civil rights, anti-war, women's or environmental movements, we may well have carried our organizational skills with us from other forms of social action: but to date nothing has addressed itself directly to the animal rights movement." [34]

Organizations like the American Anti-Vivisection Society print guides for student action and outlines for ethics-in-experimentation courses, and in September, 1981, the "World Charter of Students in Favor of Violence-Free Science and Biology" was proclaimed in Brussels, Belgium, as well. One of its proclamations and goals concerns "the right and opportunity to study and practice a non-violent science." [35] In summary, then, it may be said that the educational and informational tactics of the AR movement have accomplished much for animals but that they must be perfected and altered because the public attention which the movement generally receives and often seeks (a) concerns individual incidents like gross mistreatment of a number of animals rather than institutional problems, (2) focuses on companion animals and endangered species and not the largest number of mistreated animals, (3) deals with

public actions while ignoring private abuses, and (4) results in an initial upsurge of interest which subsequently declines when it is not capitalized on.

Closely related to the educational and informational strategies employed by the AR groups is public protest which assumes two main forms: demonstrations and boycotts. Over half of the AR groups engage in at least one form of protest each year, and of those which do take part, the majority are involved in both demonstrations and boycotts. Most of these groups participate in such activities about five times a year, and the average number of participants is approximately fifty, although it ranges from ten to several hundred or a few thousand at the very largest multi-group rallies which occur once or twice a year. These national and international events, like World Day for Laboratory Animals, require extensive coordination between groups and usually help to cement the movement together as a result. The chief aims of demonstrations are usually to receive public attention, heighten awareness, and to point out certain abuses; therefore, public protest can be distinguished from direct action as being mainly representative or symbolic rather than directly beneficial to animals. The demonstrations normally consist of speeches, chants, and banner or sign waving, although activists occasionally turn toward more visible and creative activities like using huge, inflatable animal balloons to attract attention to the plight of kangaroos and whales or burning psychologist Edward Taub in effigy. A recent, growing trend at demonstrations is to incorporate non-violent acts of civil disobedience, particularly sit-ins. The boycotts which are directed against corporations that experiment on animals or use them to make products generally consist of a coalition of diverse organizations. The campaigns to boycott Burger King and McDonald's each have over 170 organizations in their coalitions.

A third strategy is to stress private rather than public actions. It aims to transform the habits and attitudes of individuals qua moral agents with the hope that these changes will translate into action for individuals qua consumers and citizens. Vegetarianism or veganism, non-animal products and clothing, and tax resistance are several of the alternatives which are advocated. Politics, in this sense, begins not with the

person next to you as Gandhi said but with oneself. Vegetarianism and the use of animal-free products for animal rights activists are very political notions and more than just silent moral protest. Rather, they involve a certain way of conducting one's life. "The non-violent philosophy of Animal Rights begins at breakfast," reads a pamphlet prepared by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. "Becoming a vegetarian means your grocery money no longer supports a system that keeps animals in deprived and overcrowded conditions only to be bludgeoned and bled to death." [36] A number of activists, including Peter Singer and Agenda writer Jane Meyerding, advocate either a token withholding of taxes or refusing to pay certain taxes as a form of conscientious objection to the federal use of four billion dollars a year for animal research. Meyerding finds this kind of resistance to be "both liberating and empowering" for it "gives us an increased awareness of our ability to choose, to reject complicity in actions we oppose, and to devote our financial resources to causes we believe in." [37] Such action has a precedent during the Vietnam War when opponents of the war withheld a portion of their taxes, but it goes back as far as Thoreau's conscientious refusal to support the war with Mexico.

The remaining three tactics--political, legal, and direct action--are treated in the discussions of groups formed specifically to utilize these strategies and to further the goals associated with them. Briefly, political organizations and tactics involve lobbying public officials and distributing well-researched information to them, sponsoring and supporting bills and regulations, identifying the positions and contributing toward the election of candidates for public office, and mobilizing public support on referenda on animal issues. A number of organizations are engaged in efforts to establish legal rights for animals and to bring suits against corporations and individuals who abuse animals. They seek to change the common understanding of property and to protect the more radical activists in the movement who engage in direct action. Finally, direct action is designed to save the lives of individual animals which are endangered. Direct action assumes many forms which are often illegal and destructive and nearly always controversial, including laboratory raids and break-ins, vandalizing fur shops, and preventing the clubbing of seals. Other times it simply

involves rescuing animals from accidental and natural dangers like floods. In essence, the movement depends on all these goals and practices, so that strength and success are contingent, in large part, on a multiplicity and diversity of approaches.

V.

SCHEMATA AND METHODOLOGY

In order to more fully understand the nature of the AR movement, it is necessary to distinguish animal rights from animal welfare (AW) in two senses: the philosophical and political idea and the instantiation of the idea in the form of organizations. The following schema briefly presents an ideal type of an AW organization and the corresponding philosophy and compares it to an ideal type of an AR group and the philosophical position of AR in five distinct but interrelated areas. This composite sketch is based on readings, a survey, and an admixture of information from AW and AR groups.

Ia. AW concerns:

- (1) companion animals and endangered species, whales, seals, some experiments.
- (2) public abuses.
- (3) individual abuses and species preservation.

Ib. AR concerns:

- (1) factory farming and experimental animals.
- (2) private abuses as well as public.
- (3) institutional exploitation.

IIa. AW motivations:

- (1) emotional, ecological.
- (2) sympathy, kindness to animals.

IIb. AR motivations:

- (1) justice, ethical.
- (2) philosophical.

IIIa. AW strategies:

- (1) moderate.
- (2) regulationist, gradual change.

- (3) pragmatic, compromise.
- (4) educational, informational, preventative.

IIIb. AR strategies:

- (1) radical or militant.
- (2) abolitionist, more immediate.
- (3) ideological, more direct.
- (4) political, legal, more positive.

IVa. AW philosophy:

- (1) legal (rights), regulations.
- (2) humaneness, benevolence.
- (3) reducing cruelty.

IVb. AR philosophy:

- (1) moral rights and legal rights with moral force.
- (2) liberties, vegetarianism, alternatives.
- (3) eliminate suffering, inherent value of a life.

Va. AW organizations:

- (1) larger, older, national.
- (2) well endowed, hierarchical.
- (3) homogeneous, wealthy, professional members

Vb. AR organizations:

- (1) smaller, newer, more local.
- (2) need funds, more decentralized.
- (3) heterogeneous, less affluent, diversely employed members.

Several of these areas require further elucidation. First, both AW and AR organizations or outlooks share a common concern for animals, although they differ in the application of this concern. For example, whereas AW is intimately bound with the well-being of companion animals, AR advocates often question whether animals should even be owned or domesticated, although this is not a major point of contention between the two schools of thought. The impetus for joining an AR organization or subscribing to its position is also much different from the motivations for adhering to AW. The International Society for Animal Rights (ISAR) perhaps sums it up best: "The animal rights movement is or ought to be based on a concept of justice that encompasses every sentient being." [38]

AR is decidedly against simply "regulation" of farms and laboratories through laws and standards; it is more "abolitionist" in the sense that its ultimate goal in most

cases is to eliminate factory farming and vivisection. ISAR's attitude again typifies this view: "Regulation of exploitation reinforces the exploitation." [39] Additionally, the idea of moral rights for animals is much more controversial, radical, and far-reaching than legal rights which, when spoken of by AW supporters and the public, usually means regulations or rights held by the owners of animals rather than the animals having standing themselves.

AR focuses on two important aspects which help to raise the status of animals closer to that of humans: the elimination of suffering and the inherent value of an animal's life aside from its usefulness to humans. AW has the less ambitious goal of reducing cruelty. AR, then, has implications that may range from a moral requirement to become a vegetarian to non-interference with nature in some instances. The idea of AR is also tied to an outlook that usually has certain notable political (leftist), social (feminist), environmental, or moral characteristics. In sum, AR is a much more comprehensive concept and is in many ways a more positive, direct, and immediate approach to animal issues than is AW.

With these distinctions and heuristic models in mind, it is possible to understand the AR movement in greater clarity. Again, many of the AR organizations as subsequently classified embody elements of the AW model, but they may be considered as AR groups as long as they have more of the representative features of this model than another. The American Anti-Vivisection Society, for example, has most of the organizational features of an AW group, but its philosophical outlook, strategies, and concerns are more indicative of an AR group. The survey responses to four separate questions which asked groups to classify themselves as either radical or moderate, abolitionist or regulationist, supporters of rights or welfare, and proponents of immediate or gradual change lends credence to the present schema and following classifications. Nearly all the respondents that may be properly called AR groups indicated that they are radical and supportive of rights views. Most are abolitionist, and the majority advocate immediate action, although many

support both immediate and gradual change.

Notes

22. Mobilization for Animals, "Animal Experiments" pamphlet.

23. See for example, Roger Ewband, "The Trouble with Being a Farm Animal," New Scientist 18 (October, 1973).

24. United Animal Defenders, "Greyhound Racing" leaflet.

25. "Education: A Larger Vision," Animalines 2/3 (no date).

26. Dan Rather, "CBS Evening News" (December 27, 1979).

27. Gretchen Wyler, "Make a Fist," speech delivered at the Action for Life conference on April 17, 1982.

28. James Fallows, "Lo, the Poor Animals," Atlantic Monthly (September, 1976): 58-65.

29. Ann Landers, syndicated column, (September, 1982).

30. Quoted in The Animals' Agenda 2/4 (July/August, 1982): 15.

31. George Cave, response to questionnaire distributed by David Macauley (November, 1983).

32. Quoted in The Animals' Agenda 2/1 (January/February, 1982): 15.

33. Richard Morgan, In Love and Anger: An Organizing Handbook (Westport, Connecticut: Animal Rights Network, 1980): 1.

34. The Animals' Agenda 1/1 (July/August, 1981): 20.

35. "World Charter of Students in Favor of Violence-Free Science and Biology," proclaimed at the City Hall in Brussels, Belgium, September 11, 1981.

36. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, "Animal Rights: Why Should It Concern Me?" pamphlet.

37. The Animals' Agenda 4/1 (January/February, 1984): 21.

38. Helen Jones, "Animal Rights: A View and Comment," Society for Animal Rights Report (October, 1981): 3.

39. Ibid.

(to be continued)