to save the scrapings. He saw a way to make some amends for the devastation man has wrought on African wildlife. He had friends among the many distinct racial and cultural groups of South Africa. Enough people in South Africa shared his vision, and many gave time, money, land and skills to his Project. The Quagga, South Africa, art, taxidermy, conservation, scientists, hunters, the image of the San people, me, many more; we have all been enriched by our contact with him.

David Barnaby

THE WRITING ON WHOSE WALL?

I sat and watched the Animal Welfare debate unfold on Tuesday Jan 10th and it was just as stated, a Christmas tree for which to hang MP's personal baubles. There were many areas that could have helped improve animal welfare missed. All too many areas are still and seemingly will remain in the grey area. The Duty of Care which seemed to blindly impress so many cannot be fully implemented and will most certainly do nothing to stop the thousands of cats and dogs dumped each year as in most cases people are not accountable for these horrendous actions.

A simple re-introduction of a pet licence endorsed by compulsory micro-chipping would have been at least a step forward in registering pets to their keepers thus making them traceable and certainly give more chance of them being held fully accountable for their actions. Secondly in relation to the Duty of Care many MPs raised the issue that not only the ceasing of physical abuse but mental abuse causing unnecessary suffering is just as important in reducing animal suffering.

All MPs seemed overly reliant on statistics put forward by the RSPCA yet not ONE MP even raised the issue of the well documented effects that public fireworks have on animals. (nor asked for proof of their statistics) Neighbours fireworks indirectly kill and cause unnecessary suffering to thousands of animals a year, yet simply because these MPs apparently enjoy the fireworks our pets, livestock and horses will be forced to endure pain and suffering (25,000 in 2004) making the Duty of Care impossible to uphold. One MP's address saw him comment that 15,000 signatures would be handed in in relation to Pet fairs. A small percentage, considering his Government ignored the 94,000 signature petition we handed in to Downing Street calling for the banning of the sale of fireworks to the public.

The call for Sanctuary Licensing has been without any preconception of the irreversible damage it will cause and MPs, once again, seemingly assume that the RSPCA will be able to cover all areas of rehabilitation and homelessness. This is not the facts. The RSPCA has very limited animal accommodation, choosing in most cases to farm out collected animals to independent sanctuaries. With the number of animals being limited to each sanctuary the loss of even a few will see animals culled in high numbers. Furthermore in the areas of sanctuaries the Secretary of State (on record) stated the RSPCA would NOT take up the role of Inspectorate and inspect sanctuaries once the legislation is introduced. As the RSPCA uses only Sanctuaries they have inspected, will their policies change with new legislation, seeing them, for once, openly trusting Local Authority inspectorate opinion? I sincerely doubt it.

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