



PUPPY LOVE: Animal Activist Charged in Bomb Attempt," screamed the front-page headline of the Nov. 12, 1988, New York Daily News. Police charged Fran Trutt, an obscure animal-rights activist from Queens, N.Y., with planting a pipe bomb outside the headquarters of United States Surgical Corp., a Norwalk, Conn.-based manufacturer of surgical supplies. Trutt's bomb attempt, the article explained, stemmed from her outrage that the company kills 1,000 dogs every year to demonstrate surgical stapling techniques.

The case created a public-relations nightmare for the animal-rights movement. Though they may be strident in their approach, most major animal-rights organizations work hard to distance themselves from terrorists. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the largest animal-rights group in the United States, quickly denied any connection to Trutt.

But one man came forward to help her out. Henry Spira, coordinator of Animal Rights International, started making calls to find Trutt a lawyer. Then he hopped a train to the Stamford, Conn., courthouse to see if Trutt needed additional help. Talking to her, Spira became suspicious that what he had read in the papers was not the whole story. At his urging, reporters and detectives began digging deeper and found that Trutt actually had been set up: She had been befriended by paid agents of United States Surgical Corp. who got her the bomb, drove her to company headquarters to plant it and later tipped off the police. Their motive: to galvanize public sentiment against the animal-rights movement.

At first, Spira seems an unlikely person to in-

volve himself in this scenario. In a movement often dominated by extremists, Spira makes his mark by consistently favoring dialogue over confrontation. His moderate approach hasn't endeared him to the more vocal members of the animal-rights movement, however. PETA co-founder Ingrid Newkirk calls Spira's approach "hobnobbing in the halls with our enemy."

But Spira doesn't consider his targets to be enemies. To be targeted by him is to be worn out rather than beaten up. Unlike many other activists, the last thing Spira wants is to expose an offending company's practices to the public. Instead, he prefers to open a private dialogue with the company's decision-makers to find a resolution that will help the animals without hurting the company. The negotiations involve compromise, and Spira seldom walks away with an immediate and total victory. What he typically wins are concessions that will markedly reduce or eliminate killing and suffering according to a definite timetable.

"It's an issue of cultural change," Spira says of the effort to promote more humane treatment of animals. "It's not a problem of who's the good guy

