Compiled by Elaine Walton and Dean Smith

LIBEARTY CAMPAIGN COMES TO THE UNITED STATES

The World Society for the Protection of Animal's (WSPA) Libearty Campaign to rescue bears is expanding to the United States this winter after many successful accomplishments in Europe.

The goal of Libearty is to develop projects that protect bears worldwide. It includes rescuing bears that have been abused in entertainment or for sport, improving the living conditions of those who are legally confined for various commercial reasons, and the conservation of their natural habitats.

A 1992 investigation in Japan uncovered the selling of bear gall bladders in bear parks, where they were living under distressing conditions. Since then the sale of bear parts has been prohibited and living conditions for the captive bears have been improved. Libearty has also been working hard to create legislation to ban this same threat in other countries involved with black market animal parts.

Libearty is also campaigning to ensure that all bears are listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species Agreement (CITES). The group has had sanctuaries built for bears that had been confiscated or rescued and given them medical attention until they had recuperated before releasing them into a protected wooded area.

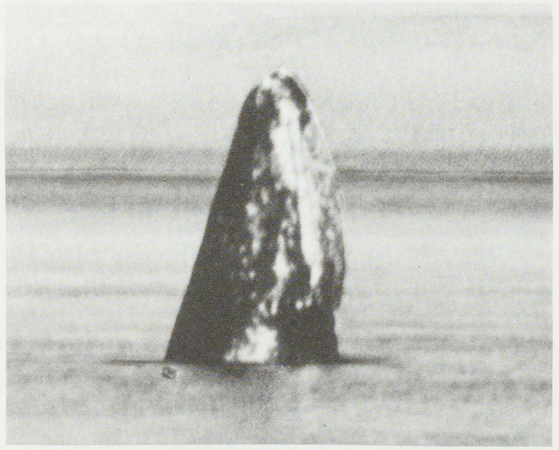
Due to hunting, poaching and the destruction of several bear species' habitats in the U.S., bears have come under an increased threat. This has led WSPA to organize the Libearty Campaign in the U.S. Already working with local conservation groups, Libearty and its campaign will also help individuals get involved more directly in the welfare of bears.

For more information or to get involved in the Libearty Campaign, please contact WSPA at 29 Perkins Street, PO Box 190, Boston, MA 02130 or call 1 (800) LIB BEAR for membership information. ■

OLYMPICS IN NORWAY, NO WAY

This month the Winter Olympics are being held in Norway, a country which refuses to comply with International Whaling Commission decisions against killing whales. A boycott of all Norwegian products and travel has been called for. You can write to the Olympic Committee and let it know that you will not be attending because of Norway's continued whale killing.

Write to Gerhard Heilberg, President, Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee, Elvgt 19, PO Box 106, N-2601, Lillehammer, Norway. You can also write to The Prime Minister of Norway, Grohariem Brundtland, c/o Ambassador Kjeld Vibe, 2720 34th Street NW, Washington, DC 20008. ■



TAKE A BITE OUT OF WILDLIFE CRIME

This past summer Rep. Richard Lehman (D-CA) introduced a bill that will strengthen the government's hand in fighting wildlife crime. If passed, H.R. 2360 will create the position of "Assistant Director for Law Enforcement" within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The measure sounds insignificant but the results could be profound.

According to the introduction to the bill:

The illegal trade in wildlife products is becoming increasingly well-organized and commercial, and is often associated with other criminal activities such as narcotics, money laundering, weapons dealing and tax fraud.

As a result of the increased activity in wildlife crimes and inadequate enforcement mechanisms of USFWS, a number of significant problems have developed:

- Wildlife populations are in danger
- While legal and illegal trade is increasing, the percentage of wildlife shipments being inspected is decreasing
- The percentage of wildlife shipments inspected that are in violation of wildlife protection laws is increasing

Under the present system, USFWS has eight regional administrative regions with no direct control from the central office. In addition, the law enforcement division is grossly underfunded. When appointed, the new "Assistant Director" would be in a position to oversee regional divisions and bring more attention to the law enforcement arm of USFWS. This new direction and oversight could bring increased funding and more effective enforcement procedures to the law enforcement branch.

What You Can Do:

You can help end the illegal trade of wildlife by writing to your Representative, asking her/him to co-sponsor H.R. 2360. In addition, ask your Senators to propose a companion bill in the Senate.

(Ed. Note: It is very important for you to ask that the bill be amended to allow for the inclusion of *any* experienced law enforcement officer as a candidate for the position. Presently, the bill only allows those who have *wildlife* law enforcement experience to apply, of whom 95% are sport hunters.) ■

COMPASSION FOR NONHUMAN CREATURES RESTRICTED BY THE VATICAN

The Vatican has proclaimed that humans should not love animals or contribute money toward their welfare when it could otherwise be spent on humans. This proclamation is included in the newly published edition of the *Catholic Catechism*, the book that defines the church's position on Catholic church laws.

Also proclaimed, in the last two lines of clause 2417: "Medical and scientific experiments on animals, if they remain within reasonable limits, are morally acceptable since they contribute to caring for or saving human lives."

How do these proclamations represent the teaching of love and compassion that all persons have been taught to follow in order to glorify God?

What you can do:

Please contact your Archdiocese for the addresses of your Bishop and the Vatican where you can write and express that care and love toward human and nonhuman animals are true to the exemplary teachings not only of Christians but also of other religions. If you are not Catholic but would like to become involved in this issue, contact your respective religious leader to discuss what you can do regarding the Vatican's discriminatory action against animals.

For a guideline of how you can bring compassion for animals into your religious community, contact the International Network for Religion and Animals at PO Box 1335, North Wales, PA 19454-0335, (215) 699-6067. ■