

From our point of view, the Tenri hell-hole has given us several lessons on how to deal with cases like this in the future and what needs to be done.

☐ Law 105 for Animal Protection needs revision especially on its definition of cruelty which is very vague. It should also give clear cut indication and powers to local authorities on how they should act. In Japan there is a general tendency to reach a compromise solution rather than take legal action which means even a new law might not be used.

Clearly some kind of legislation is necessary to stop animal collectors building up numbers to a stage where they become torturers rather than samaritans. This legislation should give local authorities the power to inspect premises where large numbers of animals are kept and to remove them if conditions fall below certain standards.

☐ International criticism is very effective in pressing for action. Nara acted on order from the Prime Minister's office instructing them to deal with the Tenri case swiftly - which they did. The Prime Minister's office was clearly embarrassed by letters and postcards from overseas animal organisations, as well as letters of protest which reached Japanese embassies - one letter from the Clinton-Gore Campaign Headquarters (which had received some of the protest post-cards) created quite a panic in Nara.

☐ Mass media coverage in Japan was superficial and weak. Either sensationalising the case and getting sympathy for the poor old man with so many dogs or reporting verbatim from the Nara Prefectural Office on what a great job they were doing. No Japanese journalist bothered to check the facts properly and write an in-depth report.

☐ A lot of opinions were aired as to how to deal with the case. In particular the attitudes pro- and anti-euthanasia camps confused the situation further. People's ideas differed as to what was best for animals in the long run.

We would like to appeal to friends of animals in other countries to keep up their pressure on the Japanese Government to bring its animal protection legislation and systems up to international standards by bringing in new legislation for the protection of companion animals, by encouraging schools to include education on animal welfare in their curriculum (since most schools are under direct government control) and to campaign for wide-scale neutering and to provide neutering subsidies.

Thank you all for your efforts and support - without your help many more Tenri animals would have died a lingering and miserable death, unseen and unheard.



Elizabeth Oliver
Director
Animal Refuge Kansai