



JAPANESE APATHY

It is awesome to realise that in Japan there are only two animal protection groups. With a population of around 140 million, the membership of these two groups is around 4,000. And as you can imagine, these groups are overwhelmed with the problems created by a society that doesn't give a damn.

Britain passed its first Animal Protection Law in 1822. Japan's only animal protection legislation was passed in 1974 and is totally inadequate and unenforceable.

Japanese activists describe the law as the "colander legislation". It's got so many holes that it's worthless.

Something has to be done about animal welfare in Japan. The situation there is out of control. Animal protection societies from all over the world are receiving desperate pleas for help from activists in Japan who say the plight of animals there is beyond belief.

In recent newspaper reports, it was revealed that 10,000 animal corpses were found dumped in a river in Nose by a pharmaceutical company. The resulting public outcry had nothing to do with the fate of the poor animals which had been tortured in experiments. No, they were worried about the pollution.

And the man who dumped the dogs was arrested, the company left to continue its grisly and horrific work. There are no laws at all to protect animals enduring vivisection in Japan, the groups there tell us that they have only limited information on the terrible fate which awaits animals in laboratories.

3,000 animals are destroyed on a daily basis in Japan. More than one million abandoned cats and dogs roam the cities and surround terrified, starving, causing damage to people and property.

It's important for us all to remember that the people on the front line in Japan are - for the most part - Japanese activists. Thankfully, there are a few dedicated and enormously brave English women leading the battle to bring in laws for better conditions.

But it will give you some idea of the problems when we tell you that they have pleaded with us not to reveal their names in case their working permits are revoked.

REGISTER YOUR DISGUST

We know you will be distraught as we have been in this office on reading the information. And we've merely reported just a snippet of the material which we have wept over.

Please write to the Japanese Ambassador in Canberra and tell him of your disgust and fury over the treatment of animals. The address is: Japanese Embassy, 112 Empire Circuit, Yarralumla, 2600. Telephone: 06 273 3244

AFA gave the information to the Hinch program which showed the Tenri segment recently. The story will shortly be published in a national magazine as well.

But we must do more than that. Ask your workmates to join the protest. Deluge the Japanese Embassy with letters and phone calls. Our Japanese

friends say that the huge protest coming from America and the UK is beginning to have an effect. Already some of the dogs at Tenri have been mercifully put down and those that can be helped, found homes.

AFA cannot let this situation go unresolved. Japanese companies are responsible for so much destruction of our old growth forests in Australia. The insensitivity of the Japanese people has been well documented in their treatment of whales and dolphins.

It seems that the international animal protection movement must drag Japan into the 20th Century one way or another.

Next year, if it is possible, we will send our Co-ordinator to Japan to visit with the Japanese activists and see first hand the situation. AFA has told the two Japanese groups that we will support them all the way. Some of the donations which are sent into our office in response to this newsletter will go direct to Japan.

The words of a Japanese journalist who filmed the atrocities at Tenri sum up the situation in that country.

"There is no organisation, no-one, nothing in Japan that will put a stop to this pattern of cruelty. For every animal that dies, there are others to take their place. I appeal to those abroad to highlight the hidden shame of an affluent country.

"Please help us save countless innocent animals from a similar fate."

You bet we will.

