

The Tenri Hell-hole.

Shown on T.B.S. (Tokyo), 4th June 1992. Channel 4, on "Let's meet at three."

This video can only give a limited view of the actual misery of this hell hole. We cannot sense the prevailing smell of decay and death. We cannot hear the pitiful sounds, the pleas for help. Animals are stacked in cages or tied unable to escape from their own urine and excrement which oozes out all over the ground. Anyone entering is forced by the filth to wear knee-high rubber boots. The animals silent skeletons all fester near to death, eaten away by ticks, fleas, scavenged by hunger and thirst waiting for the food and water they crave but cannot get. Now and then a scream of pain, a wail of despair or a last feeble whine.

The iron bars and chains are outward symbols of this torture because for these pathetic innocent creatures there is no escape - only a slow lingering death. Side by side with the living is a mountain of black plastic bags spilling out the rotting carcasses of those that have mercifully died. A mountain is exactly what it is. How many years have passed, how many bodies? The stench of the living dead and the dead mingle. Dog eats dog - remnants of hair and bone litter the ground. Fights break out as the prisoners struggle to grab these grisly remains.

There are two prefabricated structures. One is the old man's house - filled with rotting good refuse and bedding - within this there is yet another minute room crammed with cats. Here he sleeps apparently. The second prefab is filled from wall to wall, floor to ceiling with cages, each one containing three or four dogs. The cage space has shrunk by half as putrid faeces drop from the top cages onto the occupants below, and again on those below them. Hairless frenzied animals, food-less and water-less, their paws and claws gripping the bare mesh. These tortured creatures are boarded by the old man for a crazy old woman who visits periodically. He doesn't feed or water them between her visits. This insulated shack becomes a furnace in the summer.

Who or what has created this nightmare? The gaoler, a senile and feeble torturer crawls out of his hut. He can hardly walk - one wouldn't trust him with the care of one dog let alone the eighty dogs