

WORLD GOODWILL

NEWSLETTER

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ANIMAL RIGHTS EXPANDING THE CIRCLE OF ETHICS AND COMPASSION

The Aquarian law is based on spiritual illumination, on intuitive perception and brotherly love which is identification with every form in every kingdom in nature.

Alice A. Bailey

In our world where almost a quarter of humanity has joined the "absolute poor" and where most of that number are under fifteen years of age, many would argue that the campaign for animal rights is, at best, a very minor issue. In this they are wrong.

The critical issues of our time cannot be addressed in isolation — they are interdependent. The gap between rich and poor exists because separative, materialistic values have guided the structures of economic relationships between human beings. It is these same values that have produced a global civilisation which exploits animals and exploits the environment. Progress in creating more humane conditions in any one area of relationships affects all other areas. When a victory is won in the battle to respect animal rights, however small that victory may be, enlightened, life-sustaining values are strengthened in society. And it is these same spiritual values which are needed to end poverty and to protect the environment. In its many different forms the world crisis is a crisis of human values. The well-being of all life on earth depends upon human choice. Will we be guided by the inclusive values of sharing, compassion, justice and goodwill or will it be self-interest and the values of the market place? It depends upon humanity choosing to centre our emerging world society in the temple of the heart.

In this issue of the Newsletter we touch on only a few of the key elements in the relationship between the human and the animal kingdoms. Even so, we hope that we have captured the sense of extreme urgency for change and reform in that relationship.

Love all God's creation, the whole of it and every grain of sand. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light! Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. And once you have perceived it, you will begin to comprehend it ceaselessly more and more every day. And you will at last come to love the whole world with an abiding, universal love. Love the animals: God has given them the rudiments of thought and untroubled joy. Do not, therefore, trouble them, do not torture them, do not deprive them of their joy, do not go against God's intent.

Dostoevsky