

having such a law." Complaints against the hell-holes are referred to the sanitation department, which also takes no action. Local authorities employ such brutal methods to catch and kill stray animals that people turn their pets over to the collectors, whom are viewed, ironically and incorrectly, as preferable alternatives to the dog pounds.

So in this hell-hole, as in all the other hell-holes in Japan, the animals, silent starving skeletons, covered by fleas and ticks, occasionally muster a cry of despair. They sit in cages, cages upon cages, covered in each others' feces and urine, out of reach of water or food, joined continually by more and more doomed dogs and cats abandoned to a senile old man by humans who callously abandon their unwanted possessions and so tightly close their eyes.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Our activist friends in Japan believe that outside pressure is the only hope for improvement, that this affluent country must have this shame brought out into the light.

Call and write Ambassador Takakazu Kuriyama, 2520 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20008-2869; (202) 939-6700.

Companion Animals

Candlelight Vigils were held in 287 cities on August 22, 1992, for **Homeless Animals Day**. The purpose of the Day and Vigils was to call attention to the tragedy of dog and cat overpopulation and the killing of 12 to 17 million animals a year in the United States as a result. Attendance at the Vigils varied from small to hundreds, and was sponsored by the **International Society for Animal Rights (ISAR)**—whose national Vigil in New York was attended by 500 people. ISAR sent proposed proclamations to 50 governors, 33 of whom signed the proclamations which called upon citizens to provide humane care for animals by having them spayed and neutered to prevent overpopulation and killing. In 1993, ISAR plans more vigils, along with a symposium on dog and cat overpopulation, at which Ed Duvin will be keynote speaker (see related story on page 20). For further information: ISAR, 421 South State Street, Clarks Summit, PA 18411; (717) 586-2200. ■ **Concern for Helping Animals in Israel (CHAI)** is excited to announce that Dr. Andre Menache (CHAI's veterinary representative in Israel) was successful in lobbying Knesset member Avraham Poraz to introduce a bill into the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) that would ban the use of strychnine poisoning as a means to control unwanted and stray dogs and cats in Israel. Please ask your legislator to write the Knesset members rather than writing yourself (letters from individual Americans will not have impact on Israeli legislators because we are not members of their constituency, but letters from American legislators will because our legislators vote on U.S. funds sent to Israel). Also ask your representatives and senators to sign onto Rep. Tom Lantos' (D-CA—and also one of CHAI's Advisory Board members), "joint letters" to Knesset members. Their addresses can be found on page 47. For further information, contact CHAI, PO Box 3341, Alexandria, VA 22302; (703) 658-9650. ■

A Massacre in the Liberty State...

For the past 59 years, Hegins, Pennsylvania, has hosted the Fred Coleman Labor Day Pigeon Shoot. People gather from all around for the massacre of 6,000-8,000 birds who have been bred or captured for the "event"—a glorified, maniacal canned hunt—and one which even most hunters oppose.

This year, in September, the shooters and shoot supporters were met with more than 1,500 demonstrators—114 of which were arrested for disrupting the slaughter in a variety of ways and freeing pigeons.

And the state pays dearly for the protest. This year, the day of the shoot cost the state \$250,000 in overtime alone as the state troopers had to be called in to oversee the "festivities."

For those unfamiliar with the shoot, here's how it goes: Thousands of birds are trucked into Hegins and crated. From there boys at the "tender" young ages of 8-12, honored with the title of "trapper-boys," grab the birds and stuff them into

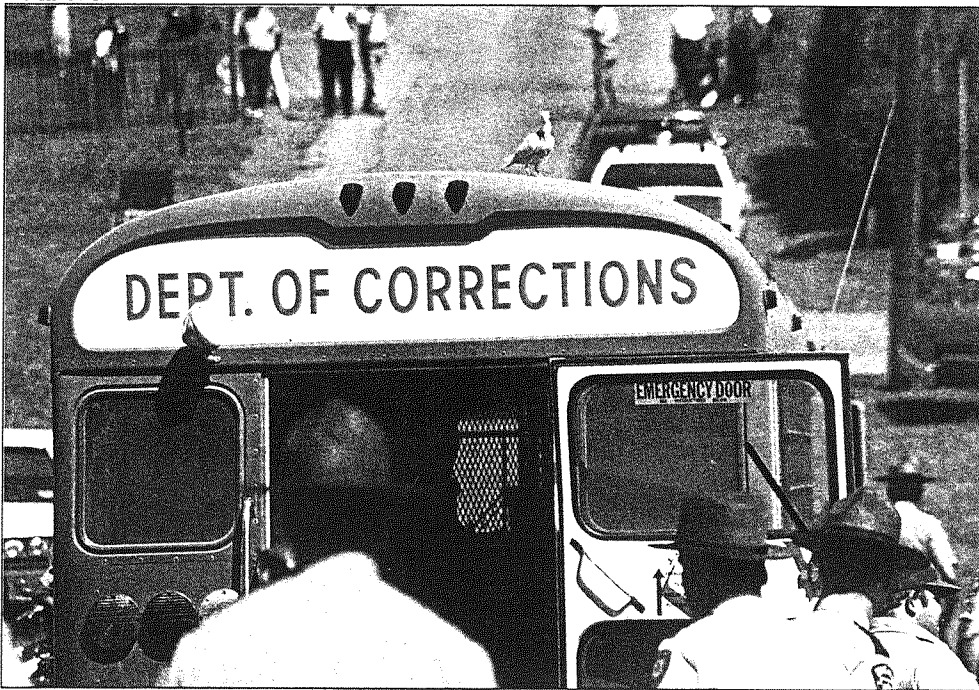
instantly. Others have their feet or a wing shot off, and some fly, fatally wounded, into the woods. Birds left bleeding and flapping on the field are grabbed by the young "trapper boys" who either wring their necks, stomp on the birds' dying bodies, or whack their heads on sharp objects. God willing, these actions kill the birds before they are stuffed into bags with other birds who have met the same violent end.

Throughout the constant crack of shotgun fire is the sound of crying children, terrified by the horrors they were forced to witness and by the angry dialogue between protesters and shooters.

Despite the inevitable carnage, hundreds of birds were saved during the shoot and those who remained at the end of the day were purchased by the activists and freed—but not in Hegins.

The time to fight against cruelty—justified under the banner of "tradition"—is now. Though the number of protesters is growing each year, the slaughter must not be repeated in 1993. Write Pennsylvania's Governor and demand that he outlaw live bird shoots. Tell him that if he does not, the next time vacation rolls around, you'll choose to visit Hawaii. Tell him to choose freedom over

MITCHELL FOX-PETA



During the arrests of protesters at last year's pigeon shoot, a lone bird found its way to the bus that would cart activists to jail—an eloquent tribute to the activists who spent the day saving hundreds of birds and bringing the massacre to the attention of a nationwide audience.

the cages on the field. When the shooter yells "pull!" out comes, not a clay pigeon, but a breathing, warm-blooded, sentient creature often too stunned to fly, and is usually shot on the ground. If the shooters aim well and can still see the birds well enough after consuming copious amounts of alcohol, they hit their mark. Some animals, a select few, are killed

slaughter for the Liberty State—and ban the shoot. ■

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Protest letters should be addressed to Mr. Robert Pobash, Hegins Park Association, Hegins, PA 17938. Also: Gov. Robert P. Casey, Main Capitol Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120.