

For those leaving their pets to be killed, there are not even any "intake procedures" the way things are handled presently, due to the fact that the pet owner does not directly contact the institution which kills the animals. The administration in charge probably leaves the gathering of animals to private contractors, thus failing to even make effort to keep the intake small and accepting no more than what is necessary to satisfy the animal welfare law. Consequently, the whole process works against the counseling of pet-owners, but obviously it is also due to the ignorance of the JAWS' members in charge who even think that "there is no such thing as intake procedures". As a matter of fact, the animal welfare law stipulates that pet-owners must keep their pets until their natural deaths, therefore, the law also implies the necessity to counsel those pet-owners who want to dispose of their animals and to counsel them in order to not accept animals disposed of for superficial reasons. It must be decided case by case which reason is substantial, and in this manner "intake procedures" are held, at least, if we insist on this point. To establish this minimum condition everywhere is one task which people with concern for the plight of animals could tackle, but in this case it seems to have been neglected altogether. In connection with leaving the euthanizing again with the administration, suitable "intake procedures" should be (re)established - the Tokyo situation could also act as an example here, however, it should be aimed at training the staff with a manual and thus improving the system (the manual should be compiled by knowledgeable animal welfare people). Besides, in difficult cases the counselling of pet-owners could be conferred to animal welfare groups, which condition should be insisted upon. After all only a Rescue Center, which does not kill can be said to live up to its name. This holds true for centers run by animal welfare societies as well as public "animal welfare centers", "animal love centers" etc. which we reproach with suggesting wrong images. Where animals are killed, this should be said clearly and not between the lines (shamefully?) like it is done in most of the JAWS information material. To make the scandal public is the first step towards reform. A Rescue Center which actually shelters animals and finds them new homes will soon be generally appreciated not only among those who are looking for a place where their own animals could find shelter in times of need but also among people who want to cooperate or donate money.

In short, an offensive is needed in order to improve the overall situation. Those who have been euthanizing animals in good faith thus far shall be thanked; if they still set their personal priorities there they could certainly work as volunteers in the Hokensho and at the same time keep an eye on the conditions prevailing there. But in case these people only want to engage themselves in humane killing in the very premises they have used until now, such sentimental reasons should not be taken into consideration because - as mentioned already - even killing for pity gives animal welfare a wrong image altogether; those who stick to it because they are convinced it is the best might go on following their conviction in private. However, they should be aware that they could get in conflict with the animal welfare law!

Apart from the case I quoted in the Mainichi Daily News, the general public has the impression that JAWS promotes euthanizing rather than protecting the animals. This is particularly true where the latter would request activities. It seems that the so-called mini centers run by some concerned, but not always very consequent activists only serve to improve this image while not being considered models of what JAWS' activities should be like.