

To the Editor:

Reading about "the new device that shocks barking dogs" in your July 26 issue I thought for a split second that it had to be a joke. Then I remembered the case of one of my neighbors who keeps two very big collies in her 6-square-meter concrete-covered "garden."

Several years ago she bought the dogs for her children who by now have outgrown their toy. The dogs are never taken out because it is *urusai* so the only activity those huge animals have is running around in circles and barking all day.

In the end, pressure from the neighbors' complaints having become too strong, the lady simply took them to a doctor to have their voice cords cut. So now the dogs behave just as before but all you can hear is a ghastly cough.

Any device or method to keep or prevent a dog from barking is ultimate perversion and compels me to make two points:

1. The dog is one of the oldest domesticized animals and was bred I don't know how many thousands of years ago to be a useful companion to man and fulfill several tasks, mainly hunting, searching, or guarding.

From this in-bred sense of duty, especially the duty to watch, barking is inseparable, it is the very nature of dog to bark when he is aware of something unusual (except in some very rare exceptions where police dogs for special tasks are trained not to bark).

So taking away a dog's voice is leading the whole idea of "dog" ad absurdum. Then why not go to the department store and buy one of those doggie dolls which even come in pink and that you can wind up and have dancing around until you're tired of it.

2. On the other hand,

Japanese suburban neighborhoods are indeed extremely noisy with all those nervous little yelps. Why all those dogs when there is no space and also nobody here really likes them.

But if dogs at all (because you gotta have a dog when you got your own house) — why are they kept the way they are: on 50-cm-long leashes, tied up to the rain pipe or squeezed into tiny bird cages? Rarely taken out for exercise, rarely getting enough attention?

To the Editor:

Enters S.Z. of Tokyo (Aug. 3 or 4): Peacock? Tiger? Scorpion? Jellyfish? Calling man (himself included) "a unique and perverse animal," this dragon spits his venom upon God and all those who fear and love Him.

Why should we not talk about God? Are we not free anymore? And why is the honorable Editor of this paper not free to permit his readers to write about any topic, provided the parties engaged behave gentleman-like?

In my native Yorkshire I've never heard anybody abusing his fellow creatures like that! Sitting in a crowded train like we are, one has to behave decently. The closet is at the end of the corridor, Sir! Don't soil your pants so to oblige your fellow travelers to bear the stench for the rest of the voyage.

But then, there are some patent mistakes inflicting misery upon our reasonable minds:

1) Having stated that "God isn't a subject to be discussed or talked about in this column," why then do you write precisely

READERS' FORUM

It Had To Be A Joke!

Dogs are very active, curious animals so all the stored-up energy must go somewhere. If he's kept in a way that runs counter to his nature, it is no wonder that he builds up a neurosis, becomes aggressive and barks hours on end for the slightest reason.

If the increasing number of dogs in Japanese big cities starts to be a problem, why not put a tax on them as other countries have long since been doing? Or, if you have to give

Sweeping The Stars With His Tail

about God?

2) Quoting "a long article" you have authored about the same subject, you don't mention neither the time nor the place of its publication, or is it still an unborn baby?

3) Why do you criticize people who "convert," i.e., see their own mistake and change their course of life, nevertheless you try to "convert" us to atheism?

4) Why do you call Buddhism and Jainism "the two great major religions of India"? Isn't Hinduism, at least numerically, the most important religion of India today?

5) Why is "nonviolence" a prerogative of Buddhism? Was Gandhi a Buddhist? Are all Vietnamese, Cambodian and Sinhalese Buddhists today peaceful?

What I want to say, — Mr. S.Z. — you are welcome in the wagon and I'll give you space to sit down putting my luggage in the rack. You are an unbeliever? Fine! I'm a Kirishitan, little behind the times, they say. That's my business. Don't crush my shoulder. Not all the benches belong to you, not all the air. Some people don't like

proof of a parking space before you are allowed to buy a car, why not introduce a similar system for acquiring dogs in cities? There are several less cruel ways for a long-term solution to the pet problem.

A. VETS — MIZUTANI
Minoo, Osaka

P.S. A week ago a cute little 3 months old Japanese-type dog, apparently mistreated before, came into our garden and decided to stay. Because we already have a big dog we'd like to give him to a friendly family. If interested please call 0727-21-4682. The strange thing about this dog is that we never heard him bark.

smoking; I don't care. Just try to behave nicely. Many of us love God, that's why we like to talk about Him. Just remember this. The way you are talking, you're never going to succeed in converting us to your dragonlike opinions.

A.F.V.
Nishonoomote City
Tanegashima

India Also Has Islamic Population

To the Editor:

Your editorial titled South Asian Solidarity (Aug. 5 or 6) mentions in the fifth paragraph "India, which mainly comprises Hindus and Buddhists, and Pakistan, an Islamic nation, have fought three wars..."

Allow me to draw attention to the fact that the population of India is now around seven hundred eighty million and a full twelve percent of it is Muslim. This makes India a land with one of the largest Islamic populations in the world. The Buddhist population is around one percent.

SANDIP K. TAGORE
Osaka