

SWITCHBOARD

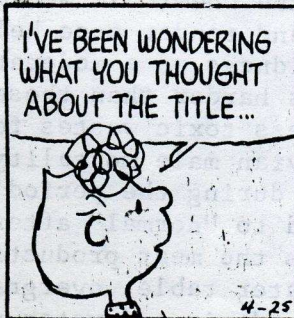
FREE

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COMMUNITY SWITCHBOARD
24 Ryerson #309, 868-0113
one block north of Queen, one block east of Bathurst

Community Switchboard offers a forum and research facilities to those concerned with analyzing the need for basic social change and establishing an alternative social system, economically and ecologically sound, whose principles of small-scale technology, self and co-operative employment and human-scaled social units will contrast with those of the corporate state. Anyone who shares these goals is invited to contact the Switchboard to discuss means of working together towards achieving them.

OFFICE HOURS: The Switchboard is usually open Tuesday thru Saturday afternoons. Spontaneous visits are always welcome, but visitors wishing to verify the office being open are invited to phone in advance.



March 15-Protest Canada-U.S. NORAD agreement by rallying outside NORAD hq in North Bay (bus \$25, call TDN 535-8005) or forming a human chain in Toronto at noon between the US consulate and PC headquarters (call ACT 960-2ACT).

March 14-ACT coffee house 139 Robert St. 7 pm-free talk on military use of lasers with chemistry prof John Dove, 9 pm-coffee house, poet Nicholas Power, open set \$3.

March 17-Against Free Trade Review, entertainers and speakers, 8 pm Massey Hall, \$5. Info 534-3523.

ANIMALS' FATE INTERTWINED WITH OURS

Our society's treatment of animals is inseparable from its treatment of the environment, the poor, the aged, prison inmates and Third World populations. All living organisms are seen as useful to the extent that they can be bludgeoned into serving the dominant social classes; when they can do so no longer they are cast aside and encouraged to expire as quickly as possible. Animals suffering in modern superfarms and laboratories are victims of the same exploitive system as Third World peasants starving while their countries export food. It is therefore essential that animal rights (or species rights) be included in any vision of basic social change, and that activists make a lifestyle statement by reducing or eliminating consumption of animals (as meat or leather) and by boycotting products known to use animal testing in research.

A U.S. group, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, has published a pamphlet showing that vegetarianism is in our own interests as well as the animals'. It points out that 1.2 million Americans died in 1984 from diseases related to meat consumption, that the saturated fats and cholesterol in meat causes heart attacks while the chemicals weaken human defenses against disease and render once helpful drugs useless, and that the kidneys of a moderate meat eater must work three times harder than those of a vegetarian to deal with excess toxic wastes found in meat. During WW2, Scandinavian male mortality rates dropped 34%, a world record, during the period meat was unobtainable and returned to "normal" afterwards. The pamphlet also accuses the meat production industry of destruction of the water table, overgrazing, soil nutrition depletion and air and water pollution. A chicken slaughterhouse can use 100 million gallons of water (enough for 25,000 people) in a single day. Processing plants dump millions of pounds of grease, carcass dressing and intestinal waste into our sewer systems and rivers.

The old-fashioned, unreliable and costly nature of animal testing methods is also discussed. Tests on one species cannot be accurately applied to other species; extensive animal testing showed Thalidomide safe, but after it caused 15 thousand children to be

born with severe deformities more sophisticated non-animal tests showed Thalidomide dangerous to the development of the fetus. Tris, a fire retardant used in 20 million children's sleeping garments, remained on the market 1½ years after non-animal research methods identified it as a cancer-causing agent because researchers waited for results of animal tests. \$2 billion tax dollars spent on animal research have not found a cure to cancer or any other major disease.

A Toronto group, Ark II (542 Mt Pleasant Rd #103, 487-4681) has circulated a list of alternatives to the use of animals in experimentation. These include:

- use of highly accurate mathematical and computer models to predict the functions of human systems.
- use of tissue cultures from cells and organs to produce reactions and effects similar to those in intact bodies.
- tests with bacteria cultures and protozoa, whose reactions are at least as similar as animals' to those of humans.
- identifying drugs and chemical substances through gas chromatography and mass spectrometry.
- study of fetal development and drug effects on the fetus with bird and reptile eggs.
- genetic engineering to provide insulin of a much purer type than that heretofore available using animals.
- use of audio-visual guides and aids as teaching aids instead of demonstrations on animals.
- literature research to eliminate repetitive testing.
- elimination of irrelevant, cruel and trivial tests.
- radioimmunoassay (saturation analysis techniques using radioactive elements similar to those in the body.
- quantum pharmacology, which utilizes quantum mechanics, an understanding of molecular structure, and computerization to explain drug behaviour via molecular properties.
- use of mechanical models for safety testing and teaching.
- practising microvascular surgery techniques and testing side effects of chemicals, drugs and pollutants on the human placenta, usually discarded after childbirth.
- clinical and epidemiological surveys using human volunteers, clinical case studies, autopsy reports and statistical analysis instead of unnaturally confined animals for more accurate observation of environmental factors related to human disease.

by Gary Moffatt

The Women's Day fair at Jorgenson Hall last Saturday afternoon offered the combined ambience of a medieval fair, a 20th century political rally and the Black Hole of Calcutta --the huge crowd present attested to the need for such gatherings of the social change movement to be held periodically, and hopefully in larger locations than this one. The organizers are to be commended both for putting on the event and for taking a sufficiently wide definition of women's issues to enable so many social change groups to be represented.

As usual at such events, I left with my pockets stuffed full of various fliers and free handouts. It later occurred to me that one way of providing an indication how many different groups were represented would be to summarize what I had picked up. These leaflets of course represent only a small cross-section of the many groups that were present, and it should not be implied that they are either more or less important than the others.

The Coalition Against the Return of the Death Penalty, Toronto chapter, is urging all who support continued abolition of the death penalty to write their MP, and to join the coalition to help plan further action. Early introduction of a bill to bring back capital punishment is a strong possibility. Contact Jake Friesen, 60 Lowther Ave. 922-6128. An accompanying pamphlet points out that the murder rate has dropped since executions were abolished (2.70 to 2.53 per 100,000 population 1977-82) and that two-thirds of all murders are committed in a rage against a family member or close acquaintance; executions do not prevent violent crime.

OPIRG, the Ontario Public Interest Research Group, has a list of publications on energy and environment, occupational health and safety, agriculture and food, nuclear proliferation and militarism, government, housing, microtechnology and underdevelopment as well as resource centre titles and files and audio-visual materials. 2 Sussex Avenue (Innis College) #301, 978-3032. OPIRG is also offering practical training in all stages of radio production in conjunction with a regular program on CKLW (Tuesdays 11 am) and CIUT (Mondays 12 pm.)

The Litton Campaign is seeking volunteers for leafletting, office work, fundraising and research. Phone 466-5415 to leave a message.

DAWN Toronto is a support group for disabled women from all backgrounds. There are over one million disabled Canadian women, of whom almost 93% are unemployed and 66% live

on incomes of under \$5,000 a year. DAWN sponsors affirmative action to help these women increase control of their own lives, and to increase public awareness. Call Joanne 466-2838 or Carolyn 535-2055.

The Eritrean Relief Association seeks to draw our attention to the war in Eritrea, the longest armed struggle in modern African history; Ethiopia is attempting to subjugate the 3.5 million people there with the aid of Soviet napalm and U.S. diplomatic support. A monthly newsletter is published. 923-5867.

Workers at Superplastics Limited in Mississauga, mostly Punjab-speaking men and women) are striking for improved safety conditions; the company refuses to recognize their union, violence has been done to several picketers and police policy is to arrest the picketers instead of those who commit the violence. Supporters are asked to join the picket line 6:30-8:30 a.m. Monday to Friday, provide financial aid and boycott superplastics products.

The Sri Lanka-Canada Aid Committee is protesting Canada's continued making Sri Lanka its largest per-capita aid recipient despite aerial bombing of Tamil civilians. Ten thousand people have been killed, many more maimed and imprisoned, by Sri Lanka aided by Israel, Britain and the USA. 925-3019.

The Afro-Caribbean alternative secondary school, 2327 Dufferin Street, encourages its students to take pride in their own culture and develop economic ventures along co-operative entrepreneurial lines. Anyone over 16 who has dropped out or is dissatisfied with present school programs is invited to call; the school is not segregated. 789-3810. The York Board of Education's refusal to provide daycare space is making it necessary to turn many young women away; donations needed.

The Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association urges groups and individuals to lobby for a directly-funded childcare system and a new system of parental leave (most working parents cannot afford daycare, which costs \$4-8,000 per year per child.) Those wanting a hearing before the upcoming Federal Task Force must apply before March 15. Information: Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare 766-4691.

Canadians Concerned: About Southern Africa urges supporters to send protest letters to Bata International, 59 Wynford Drive Don Mills, write local MPPs or MLAs to support removal of South African wines and spirits from all outlets, write MPs to demand total sanctions and boycott all South African goods. Box 6468, Postal Station A, Toronto M5W 1A0.