

PERCEPTION

By Jim Hughes

In the human physic, there are two realms, actual facts and perceived facts. The perceived facts can get so imbedded into the mind that all of the actual facts to the contrary will not change that perception, even when seen with one's own eyes. Our dogs do not care if we paint the kennel or not. It makes no difference to them, either way. But, it certainly makes a huge difference to John Q. Public. And TV news commentators are a part of John Q. This magazine has preached to the choir for five years now. I have preached to the choir for 50 years; dang it! if it don't beat all, but the choir ain't listening.

We have lost the war. This war we have been raging against the Humaniacs of the world has been lost. We know that the message being delivered to the newspaper and television media personnel are, in the most part, outright, vicious lies. But John Q. has heard it so often, and with no rebuttal from our side, that he now believes that all puppy breeders are bad, somewhat lower than a child molester. We must take our message to the public at school fairs, county fairs, church functions, political rallies, PTA meetings, etc. Anywhere that sells booth space. Business Expos are an excellent place to display your kennel. But people, we must have something to talk about. We must put our best foot forward and that is not the old status quo.

If you plan to save this dog breeding business, you must:

1. Get legal. Get a license, ALL licenses, USDA, State, County business, tax number etc.
2. Paint your buildings, fix your pens, wash your windows, repair your equipment, fix your hair, paint your face, take a bath. Look the part of the professional image you must present to old John Q. Public.
3. You must groom your dogs. They must look professional also. And socialize them. Give them some attention. It will be hard for the H.S. to convince a judge that you are abusing a well groomed, well fed, healthy, friendly little ball of energy.
4. Invite your public officials to inspect your facilities. Get your Veterinarian to write you a clean bill of health. Publically display any clean inspection reports. Have your Sheriff stop in and make him aware of the harassment the H.S. is sending out to all breeders.
5. Post NO TRESPASSING signs at every entrance to your property.
6. Allow no strangers onto your property until you have identified them, but then make them feel welcome and that you have nothing to hide.
7. Make sure that you have a Lawyer already aware that when you need him, it will be on a minutes notice. Pay him a retainer if he needs one.
8. Volunteer to help at your local humane shelter. Get to know those people and become friends with them. "Know thy enemy". Many of these people don't even know you are the enemy.
9. Join your local breeder club. If you do not have one, form one. We, here in the Midwest, have many, too many, but the east coast has almost none. Most of the kennel raids take place on unlicensed, unorganized, east coast breeders.

10. Re-educate yourself. Change your thinking. Imagine yourself as John Q. Public. You know nothing except what the Humane Society tells you. Accept the fact that the public now expects you to raise your dogs in scrumptiously clean, well lighted, good smelling conditions. Somewhat like a retail Pet Shop.
11. Post a bulletin board with pictures and letters from satisfied customers. Resolve, within reason, any customer complaints before they hit the courts or the media.

If you refuse to adjust to the new way of thinking that H\$U\$ has forced upon you, you either need to get out of the business or you will be forced out, either by raid and confiscation or by legislation. Senator Durbin is too busy right now selling Obama ideas to the public, but he has a new Pups Bill ready to spring on Congress. As soon as he gets the time, he will introduce it and fight for its passage. Just look what Ed Rendell has done to Pennsylvania. People in power can and will make your life miserable. Those of you who think you are immune to USDA inspections because you only sell through the internet will find that the new bill was written with YOU in mind.

My crystal ball tells me that this bill will pass, even though we will fight against it. It will then become the duty of USDA to inspect these new licensees, but because of lack of manpower, they will be unable to do the job. Because of our current economic distress, they will not be allowed to hire more inspectors SO, guess what, the H\$U\$ WILL VOLUNTEER TO DO IT FOR THEM.

Am I being overly pessimistic? Possibly! But I find that the concerns I am voicing today are the same ones that I was voicing 20 years ago. The difference is that the enemy has gotten stronger, more determined, and better financed over the years. Sure, we win a battle, but the threat of next year is always hanging over us. We wear out, and we are just trying to make a living but they have a CAUSE and the zeal to pursue it to completion.

Shape up breeders, big brother is watching you!!!