

HUMANE SOCIETY of CANADA

Protecting Animals and the Earth

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24th March 2006

Rt. Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
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Dear Prime Minister Harper,

We are writing on behalf of the millions of Canadians who share our views about the protection of animals and the environment.

On the eve of a massive global protest that continues to harm Canada's economy and reputation, The Humane Society of Canada is urging both you and Premier Danny Williams to implement a program to buy back licences to end the seal hunt and promote ecotourism. To underscore our commitment in this regard, we have enclosed a cheque in the amount of \$ 10,000 to be used for the creation of a federal fund for this purpose.

More than ever before, Canadians know that the seal hunt is one of growing international concern. The Humane Society of Canada promises to enlist the goodwill of Canadians and other members of the global community to match dollar for dollar the amount of money pledged by the federal government to buy back licences from sealers and to stimulate ecotourism. No more boycotts, no more harm to the Canadian economy, no more global protests. We believe that it's a good deal for the people of Canada and it's a good deal for animals.

The tremendous global interest and the millions of dollars raised to end the seal hunt is proof positive that people will pay to see seals in their natural habitat. Nine out of ten Canadians already support the protection and not the killing of wildlife. Whale watching generates more than \$ 1.2 billion worldwide, and a single African elephant contributes over \$ 1 million in ecotourism revenues throughout the animal's lifetime. Carefully structured ecotourism generates significant income across a wide range of economic sectors and improves the lives of people and animals.

Humane Society of Canada for
the Protection of Animals and the
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As the attached chart indicates, our message is simple. When it comes to killing seals the numbers just don't add up. You could not find any clear thinking businessman or woman who would invest a single dollar of private money in Canada's seal hunt. So why should the rest of Canadians continue to watch their hard earned tax dollars going to support this failing industry?

We know that you would be only too happy to end the annual seal slaughter but only if you are asked to by the Premier Williams. This was underscored recently when you granted the full authority of the Office of the Prime Minister to Premier Williams to speak on behalf of all Canadians concerning the seal slaughter.

For more than three decades, the seal hunt sanctioned by politicians using our tax dollars has cast a long shadow over our international reputation and the slaughter continues to lock the people who kill seals into a seemingly endless cycle of economic despair and brutal violence. Over the past 35 years, I have worked across Canada and in over 95 countries around the world. No culture in the world encourages the slaughter of a young animal in front of the animal's mother.

We believe that the only sure path to the revitalization of the region is to lay a strong foundation based upon economic diversification. The sustainable non-consumptive use of wildlife through carefully structured ecotourism is one element of that foundation. Thriving businesses have shown that Canadians and tourists from around the world will support ecotourism and that they are prepared to pay for it.

We believe that you and Premier Williams have the wisdom and the foresight to end the annual cycle of violence that harms people and animals and bring to a close the protests which have plagued Canada for more than three decades. Boycotts of fish products, tourism and even the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver are going to cost Canadians hundreds of millions of dollars. Every time a seal pup is killed, the shockwaves are felt across the country. The seal hunt is a bad deal for the people of Canada and it's a bad deal for animals. A single telephone call from Premier Danny Williams to your office could change all of that.

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The Humane Society of Canada's proposal is built on the Canadian model which provides subsidies to industries in transition, crop shortfalls, and to those who find themselves out of work and subject to other economic disparities. For example, during 2005-2006 alone, the people of Newfoundland & Labrador will receive more than \$1.5 billion in tax dollars from the rest of Canada to help them. Why can't we help just a little more by raising the money to buy back their sealing licences and end the seal hunt for good?

We need new solutions to an old problem and we share your views and those of Premier Williams that people living in Newfoundland & Labrador need more jobs and more hope.

In our view, forcing them to "make do" by engaging in the brutal killing of seal pups provides neither. For the sake of Canadians and animals, we are willing to work with all interested parties to bring an end to the violence and killing; and we hope they are willing to become a part of this "made in Canada" solution.

We are proposing the creation of an intergovernmental taskforce to create the framework and mechanisms to establish and manage a federal fund to buyback sealing licences and launch new initiatives to promote ecotourism and we are offering to lend our expertise to such a process.

We are aware of your own personal concern for the well being of people, animals and the environment and look forward to your response to our proposal.

Awaiting your reply, I remain, yours sincerely,



Michael O'Sullivan
Chairman & CEO