REPORT TO CONGRESS ON THE EXTENT AND EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM ON ANIMAL ENTERPRISES TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Signed: Assistant Attorney General Sheila Anthony
Eugene Branstool, U.S. Department of Agriculture
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Prepared by: Responsible Pet Owners Alliance (http://www.responsiblepetowners.org)

The Department of Justice and the Department of Agriculture have examined the phenomenon of animal rights extremism in the United States, from its origins to the present. This report conveys the findings of this study.

All extremist animal rights groups are believed to be associated with each other by leadership, membership, or both.

Many advocates of animal rights oppose all ways in which animals are confined and utilized by humans, whether it be for food, clothing, servitude, or household pets.

The term "animal rights extremism" includes all acts of destruction or disruption perpetrated against animal enterprises, and, increasingly, individuals. It appears that the willingness of animal rights extremists to employ violent and destructive methods against certain targets remains strong.

By the early 1970's, the animal welfare movements were being dramatically transformed by the emergence of an "animal rights" agenda. Concern for protecting animal welfare became eclipsed by the philosophical imperative that animals, like humans, possess certain fundamental and inalienable rights, and therefore should be treated as equals.

The cause of animal rights soon became a mainstream "single issue" movement, in some instances displacing the agenda of traditional animal welfare societies and in others fueling the proliferation of new organizations.

In recent years especially, animal rights extremists appear to have become more willing to repeatedly and systematically victimize individuals and their personal property with varying degrees of harassment, intimidation, and property defacement or destruction. They have demonstrated an increasing willingness to engage in more militant and costly activities.

In addition to the FBI's investigation of Animal Liberation Front (ALF) as a terrorist organization from 1988 through 1990, and the ultimate enactment of the Animal Enterprise Protection Act, federal authorities have responded to animal rights extremism by launching a number of grand jury investigations of major incidents. Some of these currently are ongoing.

Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is believed to have a very loosely organized membership of 100 or fewer militant activists who are willing to inflict large-scale damage or destruction on behalf of their cause.