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Public Lands Subcommittee Of The Interior And Insular Affairs
Committee Of The United State House Of Representatives
Washington, D.C. April 19, 1971*

TESTIMONY OF

MRS. VELMA B. JOHNSTON

BEFORE THE

PUBLIC LANDS SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

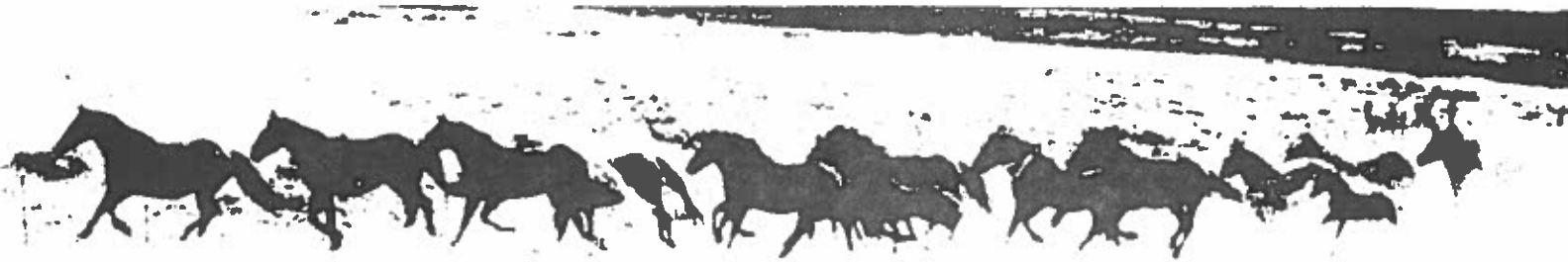
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OF THE

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

APRIL 19, 1971



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MUSTANGS AND BURROS

140 Greenstone Drive
Reno, Nevada 89502
April 19, 1971

To the Chairman and Members of the
Public Lands Subcommittee of the
House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee
Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen:

I am here today to testify in support of H. R. 5375, introduced by the Honorable Walter S. Baring, Congressman for Nevada, to require the protection, management and control of wild free-roaming horses and burros on public lands.

My name is Mrs. Velma B. Johnston, and I am also known as Wild Horse Annie. I am an executive secretary, a widow, and reside at 140 Greenstone Drive, Reno, Nevada.

For twenty years I have been involved in the struggle to obtain protection, management and control legislation in behalf of the wild horses and burros of our country, and in this connection I spearheaded the successful drive for legislation to prohibit the use of airborne and mechanized vehicles for the purpose of capturing and killing these animals on public lands. The bill, Public Law 86-234, was signed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in September, 1959.

I serve as president of the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros, with headquarters in Badger, California, and am a member of the Special Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Advisory Committee, the establishment of which was authorized by the Secretary of the Interior in September, 1968. The appointment was made by Boyd L. Rasmussen, Director of the Bureau of Land Management, and I am currently serving my third year in this capacity.

My oral testimony will be given within the time allotted to me, and is substantiated and enlarged upon in my written testimony, a copy of which is handed to you today. All information is abundantly documented and the material is in my files. In some instances, however, copies are included in the written presentation.

In addition to the three-member Congressional delegation from my state, namely Senator Alan Bible, Senator Howard Cannon and Congressman Walter S. Baring, who support this and similar legislation, I also have the support of the Governor of Nevada and the Chief Brand Inspector of Nevada, and copies of their letters are included in the written presentation.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before the eminent chairman and members of this committee today.

Very sincerely yours,

Velma B. Johnston (Mrs. Charles C.)

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MIKE O'CALLAGHAN
GOVERNOR

THE STATE OF NEVADA
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701

April 6, 1971

Mrs. Charles C. Johnston
140 Greenstone Dr.
Reno, Nevada 89502

Dear Mrs. Johnston:

Nevada has an estimated one-half of all the wild horses in the United States. There have been past abuses of our wild horses, and reports still come to us of abuse incidents.

However, Nevada has been a leader in attempts to protect these representatives of our Western heritage. The first state legislation to protect wild horses, the prohibition of airborne and mechanized roundups, was enacted in Nevada and used as a model for federal legislation which followed.

More legislation is needed to protect the wild horses. I urge passage of the federal wild horse legislation before Congress, S. 1116 and H.R. 5375.

Sincerely,


Mike O'Callaghan
Governor of Nevada

MO'C/RS/nt

MIKE O'CALLAGHAN
GOVERNOR

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
350 CAPITOL HILL AVENUE - P.O. Box 1209
RENO, NEVADA 89504
TELEPHONE 784-6401

LEE M. BURGE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 9, 1971

Mrs. Velma Johnston
140 Greenstone Drive
Reno, Nevada 89502

My Dear Mrs. Johnston:

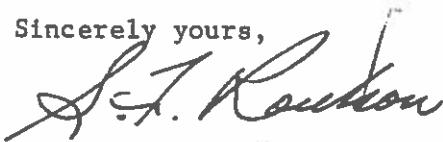
As you are aware, my tenure in my present position will be coming to an end very shortly, as the position has been eliminated.

No doubt my well publicized sympathy to your worthy and unselfish activities in behalf of the preservation of the "Wild Horses" has been a factor in my job being eliminated.

Nevertheless, my prediction that unless forceful preventive action is taken, in the very near future that very noble animal, the "Wild Horse" will, within ten years at most, survive only as history.

My hopes and prayers for your success in whatever endeavor you undertake for the preservation of the West's Great Heritage, the "Wild Horse".

Sincerely yours,



S. F. Routson, Supervisor
Livestock Identification

SFR:ed

INTRODUCTION

For the second time in a little over a decade, I come before a Congressional Committee in our Nation's Capital to plead for enactment of legislation to protect, manage and control the wild horses and burros of America.

Victims of widespread exploitation for use in commercial products such as pet food and fertilizer, blamed for every adverse condition that prevails on our range lands, including domestic overuse and abuse, pushed further and further into areas devoid of water and forage by man's encroachment on their habitat, removed by various means from public ranges zealously coveted by the domestic livestock industry for the grazing of its own profit-producing animals and by the hunting and related interests that bring money into an area through sale of licenses, ammunition and sportsmen's accessories in pursuit of target animals, they have become one of the most relentlessly and ruthlessly hunted of the animal species.

On July 15, 1959 I gave testimony before a Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives, strongly supported by protectionist groups throughout the land, which led to the enactment of Public Law 86-234 (sometimes referred to as the Wild Horse Annie Law) prohibiting the use of aircraft or motor vehicles to hunt, for the purpose of capturing or killing, any wild unbranded horse, mare, colt or burro running at large on any of the public land or ranges. Enforcement of this, the only existing regulation in their behalf, ranges from lukewarm to nonexistent, depending upon the degree of influence of the vested interests upon officials in whose hands the enforcement of the law lies.

Enactment of the Wild Horse Annie Law climaxed ten years of effort to inform the public of the widespread harvesting of wild horses during the decades when they were rounded up by the hundreds of thousands through the

use of airplanes and mechanized vehicles and shipped to processing centers for slaughter and conversion into commercial products. Since the only requirement at the slaughter houses was that the animals be delivered ambulatory and in quantity, mutilations caused by the ruthlessness of the pursuit were -- and are -- of no consequence.

And it climaxed ten years of struggle against the powerful forces aligned against any effort to curtail the slaughter -- forces comprised of the domestic livestock industry, the target animal industry, the pet food manufacturers and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management -- custodian of the public lands -- your lands and mine -- which looked upon the commercial harvesting of the animals as an expedient means of range clearance to make more forage potential available to the vested interest groups. From an estimated two million at the turn of the century, their numbers had been reduced to an estimated 25,000 in the late 1950's.

Even though the burros were not commercially exploited, they fared no better than the horses, and claims of overpopulation and possible competition with other fauna led to systematic extermination programs. In addition, would-be Nimrods have found them to be ideal for target practice.

The signing of Public Law 86-234 by President Eisenhower in September, 1959, should have been the happy ending to the story. It wasn't.

EARLY RECOMMENDATION FOR MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Included in my testimony before the Judiciary Committee was a recommendation that a management and control program be adopted, and I quote from the Congressional Record of July 21, 1959:

"Because so few of the animals are left, it is now that we should not only pass legislation for their protection, but plan for their control as well, so that there will never again be an excuse for the mass extermination programs as heretofore."

The recommendation was not followed, nor was provision made for enforcement of the Public Law other than on a local basis, and it is an accepted fact that in most instances there is a curious reluctance on the part of local officials to enforce a law that might not be the most popular among their more vocal constituents, resulting in a tendency to pretend it isn't there and maybe it will go away.

(Later in this report, documented instances of the foregoing will be brought out.)

DEFINITION

There does not seem to be any disagreement as to the definition of a wild burro, but this is not true in the case of the wild horses, or mustangs, as they are sometimes called. I use the terms interchangeably in order to avoid a too repetitive use of the words "wild horse", and for the definition of my use of the word "mustang" I go back to its origin, the Spanish word *mesteño*, meaning "strayed . . . wild". Oftentimes, however, there is a deliberate attempt by opponents to circumvent protection efforts by denying that there are any mustangs left in the wild. In endless debates on semantics, they refer of course to a bloodline determination and a traceable descent from the mounts of the Conquistadors, the first horses brought to the mainland of North America.

To avoid any misunderstanding as to the species of animal in whose behalf we are meeting here today, I submit for the record three almost identical determinations, and their sources:

FROM REPORT NO. 833 of the House Committee on the Judiciary, dated August 11, 1959:

"The quoted words (wild unbranded horse, mare colt, or burro running at large on any of the public land or ranges) clearly define the horses and burros protected by this provision. The word 'wild' refers to horses or burros existing in a wild or free state on public lands. The language used is broad enough to apply to any horse or burro existing in a free or wild state on public land or ranges, and this plus the requirement that they be unbranded is sufficient to differentiate these horses from horses whose ownership can be traced to some individual. It should be noted that this classification does not rest upon the origin of the horses in terms of bloodlines or similar technical limitations."

FROM A NEWS RELEASE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR DATED DECEMBER 27, 1962

WHEN IT DESIGNATED A WILD HORSE RANGE IN SOUTHERN NEVADA:

"Only one generation is needed to change a domestic bred horse to a wild one."

DEFINITION (continued)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE JURY BY THE HONORABLE PIERSON M. HALL, UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE, SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES, PRESIDING ON JULY 5th and 6th, 1967, IN U. S. DISTRICT COURT IN RENO, NEVADA, IN THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, PLAINTIFF, vs JULIAN GJICOHEA, ART COOK AND TED BARBER . .

for alleged violation of Public Law 86-234:

"As used in these instructions and as used in the statute, the term 'wild unbranded horse' means any horse existing in a wild or free state which does not bear a recognized and registered brand, regardless of the bloodlines of such horse. It is sufficient to justify a conviction if you find that the defendants used an airplane to hunt for the purpose of capturing or killing one wild unbranded horse, even though that horse may have been running with branded animals. Wild means living free and uncontrolled in a state of nature in the open on public lands."

(This case will be summarized later in this testimony as an example of circumvention of the intent of Public Law 86-234.)

WHY FEDERAL LEGISLATION INSTEAD OF STATE LEGISLATION?

It has been frequently brought out that legislation providing protection, management and control should be enacted on a state-by-state basis.

It is our position that the wild horses and burros are a part of our national heritage, belonging to all the people of America, inhabiting the public domain that also belongs to all the people of America, and their welfare should become the responsibility of an agency that represents all the people of America, by an Act of the Congress that represents all of the people of America.

These animals exist in States whose wide expanses of open range provide grazing for the domestic livestock industry and the habitat for target animals.

Being neither an edible nor a trophy animal, the wild horses and burros are considered intruders by both powerful interests. Lacking a loud voice in their behalf, they are treated as the most expendable of the inhabitants of our public lands.

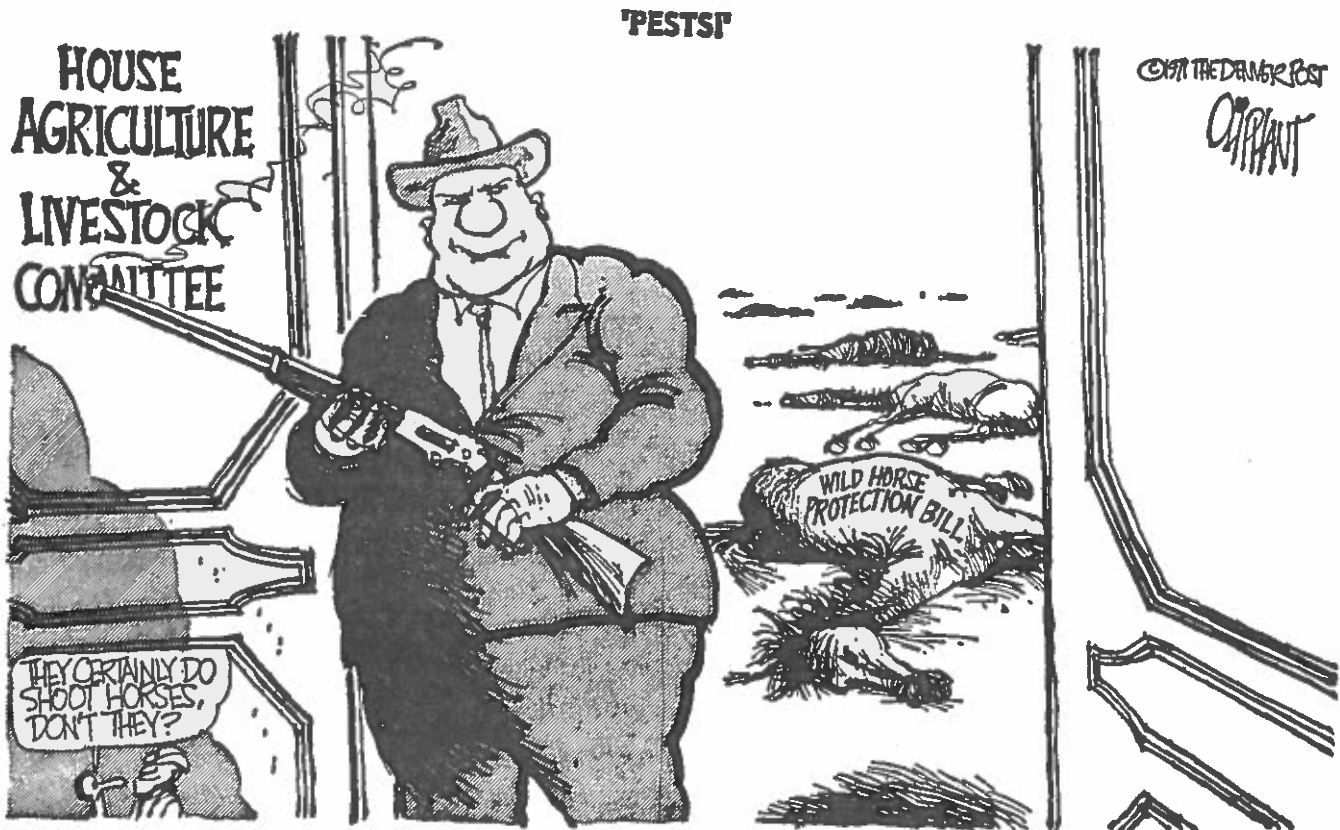
Committees identified with our public land resource in the separate state legislatures are, for the most part, made up of a majority of individuals whose interests and sympathies lie with the vested interests. Measures aimed toward benefiting the wild horses and burros are of secondary interest at best and have slight chance of getting out of those committees in states where domestic and target animals abound, and where the wild horses and burros struggle against overwhelming odds in their efforts to survive.

On the following pages are examples of current state legislative efforts.

WHY FEDERAL LEGISLATION INSTEAD OF STATE LEGISLATION?

COLORADO

Senate Bill No. 27 introduced earlier went down to defeat, and the Denver Post in its edition of February 9, 1971 carried a dramatically conceived drawing by Olyphant. It shows a portly, self-satisfied-appearing individual, standing beside an open door on which is lettered "House Agriculture & Livestock Committee". In his hand is a smoking rifle, and outside the door lie dead horses labelled "Wild Horse Protection Bill." From a pipe-smoking individual in the drawing comes the comment "They certainly do shoot horses, don't they?" And the drawing is captioned "PESTS!".



---THE DENVER POST
TUESDAY FEB. 9th 1971

WHY FEDERAL LEGISLATION INSTEAD OF STATE LEGISLATION?

NEVADA

A bill designed to compliment Federal Legislation was introduced during the current session of the legislature. Hearings were held before the Public Resource Committee on March 24, 1971, and on March 30, 1971 Senate Joint Resolution No. 27 "memorializing the Bureau of Land Management to protect and preserve wild mustangs and burros" was introduced.

S. J. R. 27

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 27—COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC RESOURCES

MARCH 30, 1971

Referred to Committee on Public Resources

SUMMARY—Memorializes Bureau of Land Management to protect and preserve wild mustangs and burros. (BDR 2134)



EXPLANATION—Matter in *italics* is new; matter in brackets [] is material to be omitted.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Memorializes the Bureau of Land Management and other federal agencies having jurisdiction over public lands and animals thereon to protect and preserve wild mustangs and burros.

- 1 WHEREAS, The preservation of wild mustangs and burros is of great
2 concern to this legislature and to the people of the State of Nevada, since
3 these animals are a vital part of our heritage; and
4 WHEREAS, Most of these wild horses and burros are on the mountains
5 and ranges owned by the United States Government; and
6 WHEREAS, Such animals are within the direct jurisdiction of the Bureau
7 of Land Management and within the indirect jurisdiction of other federal
8 agencies; now, therefore, be it
9 *Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of Nevada, jointly,*
10 That the Bureau of Land Management and all other federal agencies
11 which have jurisdiction over public lands and the animals thereon take
12 every reasonable action and do every appropriate thing to preserve and
13 protect wild mustangs and burros under their jurisdiction; and be it fur-
14 ther
15 *Resolved,* That the legislative counsel prepare and transmit copies of
16 this resolution to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
17 Representatives, the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, the
18 Director of the Bureau of Land Management and to all members of the
19 Nevada congressional delegation.

On April 9, 1971 the resolution was defeated by a vote of 11 to 9.

The outcome of the State effort is typical of what is to be expected from the vested-interest-dominated State Legislatures, whose attitude is succinctly expressed in the headline of the Nevada State Journal of April 10, 1971: NEVADA MUSTANGS LEFT TO FEND FOR THEMSELVES.

WHY FEDERAL LEGISLATION INSTEAD OF STATE LEGISLATION?

NEVADA

Another attempt was made on April 12, 1971 to revive the measure, and it, too, met with defeat by a vote of 11 to 9. Strong opposition to enactment of the measure was launched by a member of the Public Resources Committee, himself one of the major livestock operators in the state, and a man who has been the subject of severe criticism by members of his own industry and the land management agency for his operation methods. He expressed the fear that the Bureau of Land Management would take the range away from those ranchers who improved it--yet it is a matter of continuing concern among range management experts that in many instances poor domestic livestock grazing practices through overuse of the potential continue to devastate and rape the public land resource.

The term used "take the range away from" implies claim of ownership, a common attitude among the profit-seeking users of the public lands, but let us never lose sight of the fact that those lands belong to us, and any use thereof by vested interests is on a permit basis, or a lease basis only.

NEVADA (continued)

Another bill introduced into the Nevada Legislature to designate the mustang as the State's official animal was killed, in spite of public support that generated more interest than any other piece of legislation before the lawmakers, including abortion, prostitution and welfare. In defense of that bill, and the animal it would honor, its sponsor, State Senator C. Clifton Young, delivered an address to the full Senate which, in the words of veteran legislators, is a classic in legislative annals.

Nevada Mustang has fantastic bag of tricks

(EDITOR'S NOTE: State Sen. Cliff Young, R-Reno, is admired as one of the most entertaining and persuasive speakers in Nevada government. The following are remarks he made on the Senate floor March 22 on a favorite subject.

By SEN. CLIFF YOUNG

Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the motion. This is the bill, of course, that makes the Mustang the State animal for Nevada. Over the years I have divided bills into three categories, good bills, meritorious bills and bills with extraordinary merit. I have concluded after some time that this bill falls clearly within the latter category a sort of legislative hole-in-one.

There is something about the name "mustang" that has a glandular effect on many of our citizens. It seems to increase production of hormones, I notice, most particularly in the stockmen, youth, and even newspapermen, all affected by its mystic spell.

I introduced this bill first out of respect for a very fine woman, Velma Johnston, also known as "Wild Horse Annie." At that time, Mr. President, I thought it was only an ordinary bill. After she testified on it I was convinced that it was a meritorious bill. And

about two weeks after that there was testimony before the Federal, State, and Local Governments Committee by the opponents of the bill and at that time I realized that truly this was a meritorious bill with extraordinary qualities.

Let me give you the reasons why I arrived at that conclusion. Some of the testimony indicated that this noble animal is really more ferocious than a mountain lion and can only be approached with safety in a vehicle. Another witness testified that its reproductive capacity is such that if not controlled it could shortly denude the State, and there wouldn't be enough food left for a jackrabbit. A third witness testified that there are no mustangs, which led me to conclude that perhaps they're invisible when they perform these depredations.

All these qualities taken together, the fact that it is more ferocious than a lion, capable of denuding the landscape and perhaps move with a phantom-

like skill results in the conclusion that perhaps here at last we have a military weapon that can be put to great use in Vietnam. I think it has more destruction potential than the Vice President's golf club. Can you imagine what would happen if some of these mustangs were taken by helicopter to Laos or Hanoi? The Ho Chi Minh trail would soon become impassable. Pandemonium would rage near Hanoi. I can almost see the telegrams now going to Paris telling the envoys to stop "horsing" around and start seriously negotiating for peace.

Another witness testified that there are no mustangs at all. We have in our midst a man equally at home in the saddle or in the seat of high finance. I am hopeful that sometime during discussion he can reaffirm the fact that there are indeed mustangs and thereby forestall a traumatic impact upon the youth of our country. To say that there are no mustangs would be like saying there were no pioneers,

no 49'ers, no stage coach riders, no Buffalo Bill, no Kit Carson. We have had hundreds of letters from interested boys and girls and because of this I hope that the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee will be able to refute this statement and reassure the youth of our State.

Another reason I think the bill has tremendous merit is the amount of publicity generated by this noble animal. All the deer, antelope, and chukars in the State, and indeed even the Fish and Game Commission itself might disappear overnight, and there would be scant mention of it in the papers the following day. Yet half a dozen mustangs get caught on a snow-swept ridge and the publicity is tremendous. Mustangs have been featured in National Geographic and Life Magazines, New York Times, Christian Monitor and other publications. I don't want to give you the impression that all of the great newspapers are for the mustang. There is one

Nevada Mustang has fantastic bag of tricks

in Northern Nevada in Elko County which apparently supports a contrary position. I happened to see one of its editorials which indicated that possibly this bill was introduced as a result of the ecological madness that is sweeping over the country. The editor referred to a "hammer-headed, scrawny, runt" in his column. I trust he was referring to the mustang and not the introducer. The mustang has the potential to generate more news than George Miller and the Welfare program and we have to admit that there has been a remarkable job in this field. Most important, I think the mustang as a State symbol means something to the youth of our State. You have received many letters and I have received hundreds of them. One in particular stands out and I would like to read a portion of it to you. It is from a little girl in the 8th grade. She says, "Dear Sir, I have been thinking for a while and thought I

might ask you if you could do something about the killing of wild mustangs." She then expresses her support for mustangs and concludes, "I have often told my brother to stop sniffing glue because it isn't fair to the horses."

Seriously though, there is a lot to commend the mustang as a State animal. It stands as a symbol of an indomitable fight for survival. About 50 years ago there were nearly a million mustangs; its numbers are now down to about 15 or 17 thousand. They have been chased by mechanical contrivances from the air and on the ground, they have been pursued by well-fed horses carrying well-fed riders. They have been shot, corraled, made into dog food and pushed into the most arid and hostile portions of our environment. And still they continue to fight on. Their record stands as something that even their arch rivals cannot match. They have done it all without federal aid or subsidy.

Mr. President, the very

mention of the word "mustang" has a unifying effect. Even the people who are protesting treatment by welfare authorities have used it as a rallying point. I am convinced that with a mustang as our State animal a new spirit of harmony will prevail in Nevada. I can see liberals and conservatives, polluters and ecologists, lawyers and the non-lawyers, welfare rights protesters and the Nevada Taxpayers Association, and even Wild Horse Annie and Nevada stockmen going down the road together in a new spirit of unity and harmony. For these reasons, Mr. President, I hope that we will vote down this motion and then agree to make the mustang our State animal. Before we vote I would like to prevail upon the distinguished chairman of the Finance Committee to give us his observations on the merits of this bill and, in fact, indicate whether in his opinion mustangs still exist in the State of Nevada.

WHY FEDERAL LEGISLATION INSTEAD OF STATE LEGISLATION?

OREGON

A bill introduced into its current session of the legislature resulted in the introduction of Senate Joint Memorial 6, memorializing Congress and Secretary of Interior to place wild horses under protection of United States Government by creation of refuges or by other appropriate means. The resolution was adopted, but only after protective legislation complimentary to Federal Legislation failed to emerge from Committee. Most observers believe that the resolution is an attempt to placate the immense public opinion generated by the proposed state legislation, and of course they are correct. The public is delighted.

SJM 6

[2]

1

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 6

2 To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States
3 of America, in Congress assembled, and the Honorable Secretary of
4 the Interior:

5 We, your memorialists, the Fifty-sixth Legislative Assembly of the
6 State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, most respectfully represent
7 as follows:

8 Whereas the wild horse is an animal symbolic of a colorful and historic
9 chapter in the story of the West; and

10 Whereas the number of wild horses in this country has declined from
11 nearly two million in 1900 to approximately 17,000 at the present time; and

12 Whereas the esthetic value of wild horses on public lands is a public
13 asset that requires governmental protection; now, therefore,

14 **Be It Resolved by the People of the State of Oregon:**

15 (1) The Congress of the United States and the Secretary of the Interior
16 are urged to place wild horses under the protection of the United States
17 Government by the creation of refuges or other appropriate means.

18 (2) A copy of this memorial shall be transmitted to the Secretary of
19 the Interior and to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

WHY FEDERAL LEGISLATION INSTEAD OF STATE LEGISLATION?

ARIZONA

Senate Bill 161, passed by the legislature and approved by the Governor on March 31, 1970, to be immediately operative, provides for an owner, lessee or permittee user of the public or private rangelands to take possession of and dispose of in any manner he sees fit, with the barest minimum of requirements, any unbranded stray animals.

This, of course, means wild, free-roaming horses and burros, and in effect declares an open season on them, exactly the opposite of protection measures, with passage no problem because it is an anti-wild-horse-and-burro measure.

SPECIFIC INSTANCES OF FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW 86-234

Earlier in my testimony I referred to the enforcement of Public Law 86-234 as ranging from lukewarm to nonexistent. On the following pages are condensations of documented instances of such lack of enforcement. It will be noted that they took place for the most part in my own state . . . Nevada . . . not because Nevada is the only state where they have occurred, but simply because that is my home, I have access to records that I would not have in other states, and I have many friends -- fellow Nevadans -- who keep me well informed as to what is going on in the vast uninhabited areas. It is their involvement, as private citizens, in an attempt to see the law enforced that these instances come to my attention.

An exception to the Nevada documentation, however, is a particular incident in the State of Wyoming of which I have knowledge, reported in the Casper Star Tribune of September 17, 1968:

"An Afton pilot, Barlow H. Call, was killed and his son seriously injured Monday noon when their aircraft collided in mid-air 63 miles northeast of Rock Springs south of the Red Desert. . . . Richard Randall, 43, of Rock Springs, who was a passenger in the father's plane was in 'fair' condition at the hospital. The Calls were under a federal contract to hunt coyotes and herd wild horses (the underlining is mine) in the area. Randall was riding 'shotgun' in the Barlow Call plane. He is an employee of the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife."

(Public Law 86-234 prohibits the use of a plane for herding wild horses.)

I contacted the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in Washington, D.C., for comment on this operation, and received a letter stating that the plane in which the government employee was a passenger was chartered only for aerial coyote control, and that the other plane was in use to round up branded horses running loose on open range land. I view as highly ludicrous any claim that a successful roundup of horses for purposes other than commercial processing

FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

when injuries to the horses is of no concern can be carried on by one pilot simultaneously with the shooting of coyotes from another plane, in such close proximity that it would bring about a mid-air collision.

Furthermore, the best pilot in the world, with the eyes of an eagle, cannot differentiate branded and unbranded horses from the air.

* * * * *

So much for Wyoming. Here are instances occurring in Nevada, in which I have been involved for the reasons set forth earlier.

On February 7, 1967 White Pine County (Nevada) Sheriff Archie Robison and Deputy Brand Inspector S. G. Robinson witnessed the rounding up of five wild horses by a plane piloted by Ted Barber in which rancher Art Cook was a passenger. Both witnesses heard shots from the low-flying plane, and one of the captured horses had eight small punctures from which blood was coming. They later saw a bay horse about 100 yards from the road and his shoulder was a mass of dried blood; it was their opinion that it was too injured to keep moving. Of the five captured horses, the witnesses took pictures from a distance of four to seven feet; they saw no brands. Certain of the credibility of their own eye-witness testimony, strengthened by their pictures of the animals, and lacking a means of impounding the five horses and transporting them elsewhere, the two officials allowed them to be taken to the Goicochea Ranch to be held as evidence.

The two, Barber and Cook, along with Julian Goicochea who jointly with Cook had hired the pilot Barber, were indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for violation of Public Law 86-234. At the trial held in Reno, Nevada on July 5th and 6th, 1967, defendants readily admitted the use of the airplane and did not deny the use of a gun to keep the animals moving and bunched. They claimed, however, that they were their own branded horses, against which there are no regulations as to how they can be captured.

The officials who witnessed the capture, under oath, swore they were wild, unbranded. A witness placed on the stand the second day testified that it

FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

was because of the long winter hair on the animals that no brands were visible and had the officials sheared the horses they would have found indeed that they were branded. At that point, attorney for the defendants produced pictures showing sheared horses and a visible brand. It was claimed that after the animals had been taken to defendant's ranch, the shearing took place and the brands revealed. He was, however, unable to name the sex of the animals he sheared. The capture took place in February. The trial in July. A fresh brand can take on the appearance of an old brand in that length of time.

The Deputy United States Attorney, prosecutor of the case, failed to call in the Nevada State Supervisor of Livestock Identification to determine validity of the witness's claim that you cannot tell if an animal is branded or not until you shear it . . . which the Supervisor of Livestock Identification would quickly have refuted, as the only time shearing is done is when there is dispute of the identification of a brand that an animal with a heavy winter coat carries, and the presence of a brand or lack of it is clearly evident regardless of the length of the body hair. With the pictures of "branded" horses submitted, the jury disregarded the sworn testimony of the two officials and brought in a verdict of "Not Guilty".

* * * * *

On January 20, 1968 I received a telephone call from an individual in California who declined to be identified. An airborne roundup was in progress in Lander County, Nevada, so I was informed, and it was planned to capture about 600 horses, some branded with the identification of the owner of the ranch operation, others wild and unbranded. My subsequent inspection of the certificates which must be issued on animals shipped out of the state for slaughter indicated that 725 horses were transported out of Nevada from that area within the dates given by my informant, of which 469 were unbranded. Their destination for the most part was slaughter houses, one of which is known to be owned and operated by members of the ranch owner's family. No official attempt was made to stop

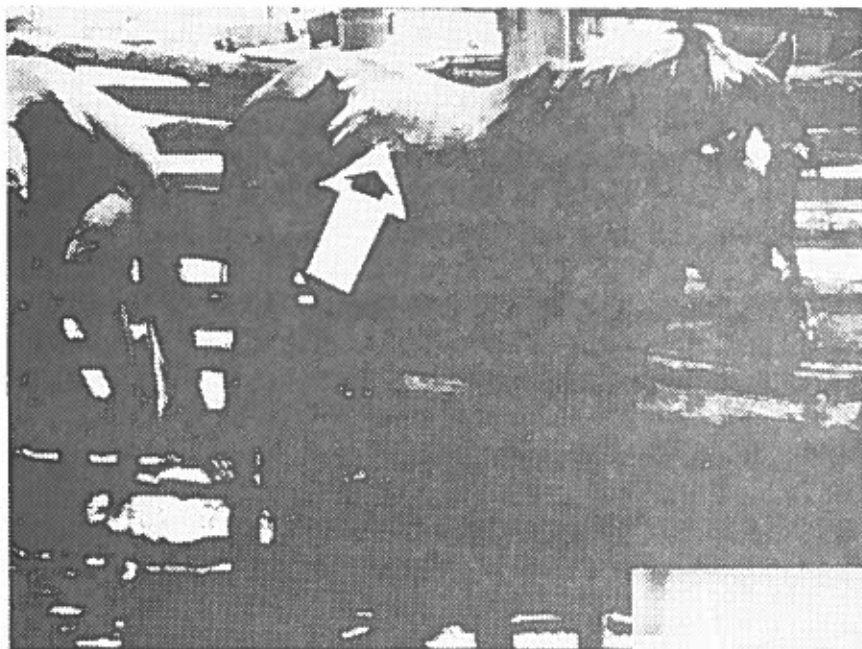
FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

the series of roundups and I called in a private investigator from out of the State. He located witnesses to the operation, but they refused to testify in Court. Oftentimes an element of fear enters into these decisions.

* * * * *

On July 8, 1969 I learned of a 3-day roundup (July 5, 6 and 7) in the northern part of my own county. Privately owned horses were reported to be among those captured, and the Deputy Sheriff of the area informed me that he had tried all day of the 8th to get authorization from the Sheriff, and additional help, to impound the captured animals. He did not get that authorization in time to stop the loading and hauling to slaughter of 87 of the total of 197 animals captured. A witness to the roundup identified the airplane used, and the pilot. Two adult, wild, unbranded horses, a mare and a stallion, were impounded by the Deputy Sheriff to serve as evidence of violation of Public Law 86-234. The rest were impounded separately pending result of charges that privately owned horses were among them.

Dr. Michael J. Pontrelli of the Biology Department of the University of Nevada, who is directing the first and only comprehensive study of the wild horse on the range, took pictures of the mare and stallion, and these pictures indicate the extent of the injuries they suffered from contact with rocks and other obstacles in their frantic flight from the airplane pursuit. Their backs were riddled with buckshot, the means by which they are kept bunched and running. (See pictures next page.)

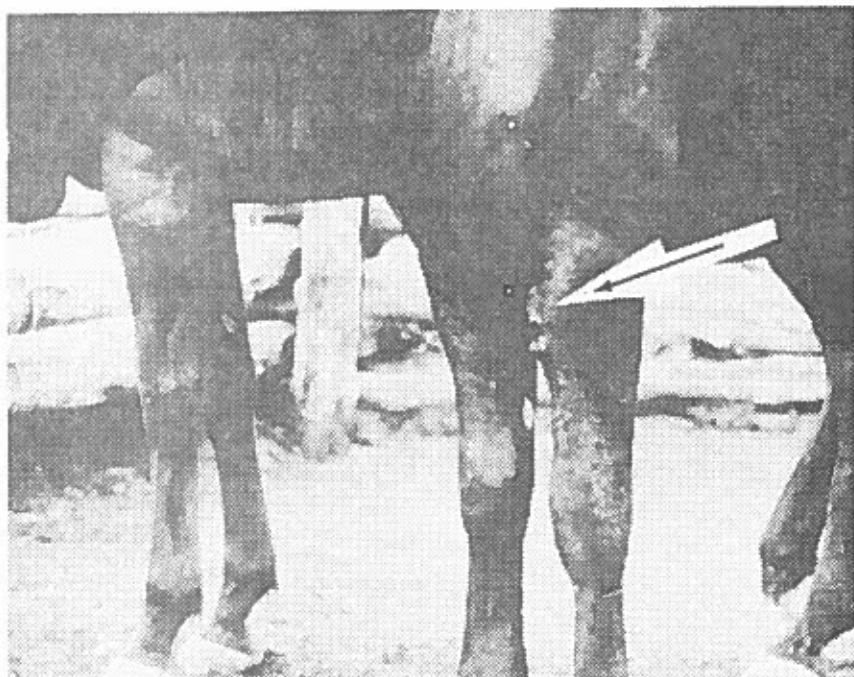


Arrow points to
buckshot-riddled
back of stallion

Buckshot traced
a path across the
animal's face



Note injuries
caused by contact
with obstacles



FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

The mare had recently foaled, but her colt was not with her.

I was present at the interview of the witness by a local newspaper reporter, wherein he stated that it is "common knowledge in the Gerlach (Nevada) area that wild, unbranded horses are being rounded up with airplanes and sold to slaughter houses."

Suit was subsequently brought by the witness against the individual who had had the roundup conducted, for damages resulting from the capture of his own horses in the roundup, and the case was heard on February 2, 3 and 4, 1970. The Judge ruled in favor of the plaintiff and awarded damages in the amount of \$6,340.00. Following are excerpts from the testimony of the pilot:

Q. Well, what brands were you herding that day, or those days that you testified to yesterday?

A. Weren't herding brands. I was herding horses.

Q. You didn't know at the time that you were herding them what brands they had, correct? You can't tell, isn't that true?

A. At the time, that's true.

Q. The only time that you really know what you are herding is after they've been corralled and somebody starts cutting them out, and that's when you find out, isn't that right?

A. I didn't find out then.

Q. When did you find out what type of horses you were herding or whose they were?

A. Before I started.

Q. How did you get the information as to what brands were on these horses before you started herding them?

A. I didn't start herding the horses for the brands that's on the horses.

Q. When you do find out whose horses that you have been herding, when do you find this out, or do you ever find it out?

A. Yes, I usually find out.

Q. How do you get the information?

FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

A. Look at the horses on the ground.

Q. Before or after?

A. After.

Q. Do you use any other equipment when you are flying your plane or herding, rousting horses, like cans or noisemakers on your airplane; do you use these?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Do you use shotguns, pistols?

A. For what, horses?

Q. Well, do you ever do that? Do you ever use it?

A. I did it for many years. It's no secret.

Q. Well actually, if you're going to herd by airplane a band of horses, you have to make a lot of noise don't you, to spook them?

A. No.

Q. Then you have used shotguns?

A. Yes. There's no secret. I've used shotguns. I've gathered several thousands of head of horses.

No charge was ever brought against anyone for violation of Public Law 86-234, in spite of the foregoing. Local officials deemed there was insufficient evidence.

Probably the saddest aspect of the whole rotten operation in these roundups is the fate of the colts. Here is an eyewitness account of conditions in the corral after the horses had been brought in by plane, in that roundup, and loading for shipment was under way: "There were six or seven colts that did not have mothers, nudging each other as though trying to nurse. There were lactating mares with no colts that wouldn't take the stray colts. There was no way to tell how many adult horses and colts were injured or shot."

Usually colts left behind either starve to death or are killed by predators. At least three days had elapsed since the airborne roundup began. It is impossible to determine how long the mares and surviving colts had been separated.

FATLURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

Among the latter was one that is called Lucky. Her mother might have been one of those already shipped. Or she might have been left behind in the hills, too injured to keep up with the others, or she might have died during the chase. Lucky was taken by a Reno family and placed in the care of a veterinarian for treatment. Her left eye was ruptured, whether from shot or impact with something is not known. Suffering from malnutrition and showing signs of pneumonia, she was given intravenous feedings of vitamins and glucose, and antibiotics were administered. Since she was so young, she responded right away. It was evident that she had had no real sustained nursing, and most of the credit for her survival is due to the incredible stamina of the colt itself.

Lucky's story has a happy ending. Different than most that are being written about her kind out West. She has developed into a frisky, intelligent, gentle filly, but . . . she is stunted as a result of her tragic colthood, susceptible to pneumonia and permanently blinded in the eye that was ruptured. She is living proof of the cruel treatment suffered at the hands of those ruthless individuals who commercially exploit her species.



LUCKY at the time
of her rescue.

Note ruptured left
eye.

FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

In December, 1969, I was alerted to a proposed airborne roundup of approximately 300 wild horses in an area about twelve miles southeast of Reno, Nevada, in the Virginia Range. Construction of a corral-trap had begun in October of that year, and the plan was to release about 35 head of freshly branded horses in the area the following January (1970). Later on, I was told, a roundup would be conducted.

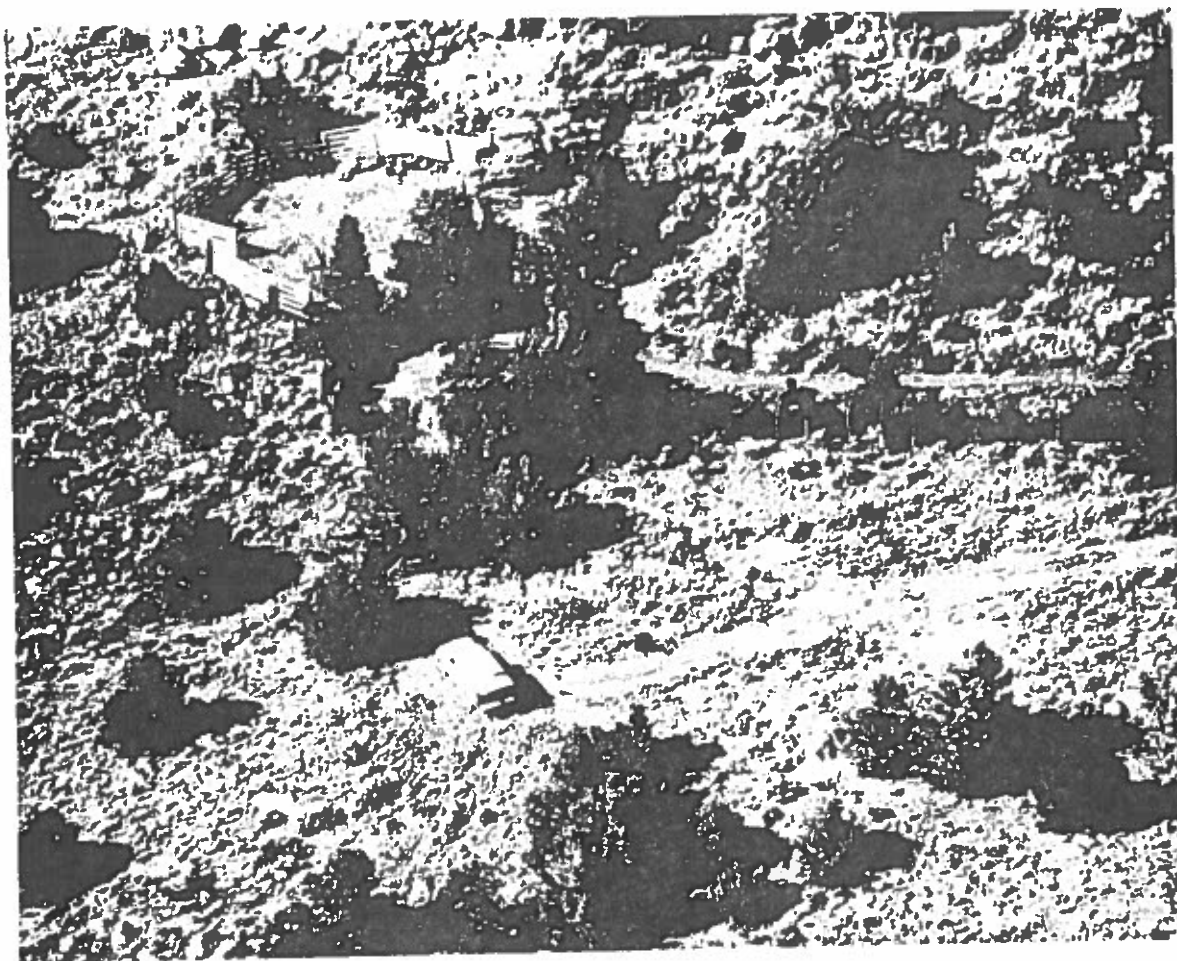
Surveillance was maintained for a number of weeks; the freshly branded horses were trucked to the area and turned out as I was told they would be. Work on the corral-trap continued. Officials of the county were notified of the operation and were standing by to close in. (This is one of the few counties where officials are active in protection of the wild horses.) An Associated Press photographer was in readiness to take pictures of the roundup; every precaution was taken to obtain the necessary evidence to take the individuals into court once the operation was under way. Although private lands were involved in this instance, rather than public lands, Nevada is the only state that has a law prohibiting airborne and mechanized capture on all lands other than public domain, so the operators would be in violation of the state law, were they to capture the wild unbranded horses along with their branded ones. Funds ran low for surveillance, patience wore thin, and some time around July 18th or 19th the corral-trap was completely destroyed by person or persons unknown.

On September 24, 1970 suit was filed in District Court against Dr. Pontrelli and fifty John Does and fifty Mary Does, in the amount of \$65,000.00, by Jerry Dale Utter and Bill Howard Victor, builders of the corral. Plaintiffs claimed the corral was constructed to capture their own domestic horses, not wild horses, yet work on the corral was commenced three months before they turned their domestic horses into the area (without permission of the owner of the land involved, I might add). The case has not come to trial. I doubt if it ever will, since information given in the deposition was extremely damaging to the individuals bringing suit.

FAILURE TO ENFORCE PUBLIC LAW (continued)

This is an example of the dedication, purpose and courage of a handful of individuals active in efforts to protect the wild horses and burros because no agency will assume the responsibility for their welfare.

And in spite of the fact that neither Dr. Pontrelli nor I destroyed the corral-trap, nor do we know who did, we were put to the expense of hiring counsel, and were subjected to unpleasant and disturbing confrontations.



Completed corral, identified as a wild horse trap by three separate knowledgeable individuals, themselves airborne mustangers before the practice was outlawed.

CURRENT REDUCTION OF WILD HORSE POPULATION

Indicative of the prevailing attitude of local officials is this news item of October 23, 1970, announcing the approval of a wild horse roundup by the Humboldt County (Nevada) Commissioners. There is no evidence that any proof was submitted by the applicant that these animals were depleting the grazing potential, and no reason was given for wanting them removed other than as an aid to a range development program of the Bureau of Land Management.

To my knowledge no interests other than the domestic users were considered, and it is this type of haphazard one-sided decision that must be put to an end.

Nevada State Journal Friday, October 23, 1970-19

Humboldt Rancher Seeks Herd Relocation

Wild Horse Roundup Approved

Special to the Journal

WINNEMUCCA — Paging "Wild Horse Annie!"

Humboldt County commissioners this week approved the request of rancher Louis Baer to round up wild horses roaming in grazing areas at Soldier's Meadow northeast of Gerlach.

Baer, who appeared at a public hearing held by the county board, told the commission there were approximately 200 wild

mustangs ranging on his ranch lands. There were no protests to his proposal.

He said he had been informed by Bureau of Land Management officials they favored the roundup as an aid to their range development program.

Asked by the board what he intended to do with the wild horses, Baer said he had been informed by the BLM that they were checking other areas suit-

able for supporting the wild herd.

So far, the search has been unsuccessful.

"If we are unable to relocate the herd," Baer said, "they will be taken to Fallon and sold at auction."

CURRENT REDUCTION OF WILD HORSE POPULATION (continued)

Reports come to us frequently of horses being shot "to get rid of them" and this usually occurs shortly before the opening of the deer-hunting season in order to blame a hunting accident in the event someone is questioned.

A little over a year ago, such an incident occurred and Dr. Pontrelli took pictures of the four dead horses, shot because they were bothering some rancher. It was apparent that two of the animals did not die immediately.

* * * * *

On Monday, April 5, 1971, Elko County (Nevada) Commissioners granted approval to Bill Alexander to capture several hundred mustangs inside the fenced range of the Nevada Garvey Ranch, a spread of some millions of acres. Pictured in the Milwaukee Journal of January 7, 1968 are some of the mustangs, with the caption "Such herds supply cow ponies for the ranch". However, according to the current article in a Nevada newspaper announcing the granting of the permit, Alexander has entered into preliminary negotiations with a livestock dealer in Southern Idaho for disposition of the horses he captures. He said he expects to receive about six cents a pound for the animals, which would be captured alive and delivered by truck to the buyer. He plans to round up the horses with the use of domesticated horses, to comply with provisions of the statute which forbid the use of mechanical means.

According to official figures available, the State of Nevada has about 8,700 wild horses. In view of the foregoing instances of capture and proposed capture, that 8,700 figure will not too much longer remain, and what was once a thrilling and exciting component of the Western scene will have been captured and delivered alive for 6¢ per pound, the going rate for pet food use.

DOMINANT USE OF RANGES BY VESTED INTERESTS NO LONGER JUSTIFIED

Insofar as the domestic livestock and the hunting industries are concerned, they must realize that the years of dominant use of the public lands are over. We, the people, recognize we have a right, too, to this rapidly diminishing resource for purposes other than to provide forage for privately owned cattle and sheep, or to provide forage for target animals to oblige the hunters.

It would be well at this point to review some of the prevailing arguments in support of continued dominant use of the open range by the domestic livestock industry:

DECREASED GRAZING ALLOTMENTS TO PROVIDE FORAGE FOR OTHER THAN MEAT-PRODUCING ANIMALS WOULD CREATE A SERIOUS ECONOMIC HARDSHIP FOR MEAT CONSUMERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY BY CAUSING A MAJOR RISE IN MEAT PRICES.

Comment: This is a gross exaggeration. On a nation-wide basis, 1% of food cattle and 6% of food sheep are grazed on the public lands. The remainder are raised in pastures and feed lots. Scientific feeding methods have proved advantageous, and thus fewer and fewer livestock depend upon the public domain lands for forage.

ONE OF THE NATION'S LARGEST INDUSTRIES WOULD BE DEALT A SEVERE FINANCIAL BLOW.

Comment: Latest available figures indicate there were the following users of the public domain for livestock grazing:

15,468 permittees on lands administered by BLM
7,900 lessees on lands administered by BLM
14,180 permits on National Forest lands

THE DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF SMALL COMMUNITIES IN THE WEST, BY PROVIDING A MARKET FOR COMMODITIES SUPPLIED BY LOCAL RETAILERS.

Comment: 52% of Bureau of Land Management forage is allotted to fewer than 700 permittees. In most instances these are absentee operators whose profits in the main are not seen in the local communities. Furthermore, with increased

DOMINANT USE OF RANGES BY VESTED INTERESTS NO LONGER JUSTIFIED (continued)

mechanization, there is less and less need of manpower on these large ranch operations.

(Source of foregoing: Statement of Boyd L. Rasmussen, Director, Bureau of Land Management, before the House Subcommittee on Public Lands, 3-4-69.
Public Land Statistics 1969.
Vern Thompson, Supervisor of Humboldt National Forest, by telephone, at my request.)

NEW BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT WILD HORSE POLICY

Where once the wild horses numbered in the millions, they have been reduced to approximately 17,300 in the eleven Western States: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. The wild burro population is estimated at 8,000.

Through years of being the target for public opinion in defense of the wild horses and burros because of its custodianship of the public domain which the animals inhabit, the Bureau of Land Management has come to recognize the importance of these heritage animals to the people of America, and in its FACT SHEET ON WILD HORSES May, 1967, this statement is made:

"Long ago there were great herds of wild horses roaming the Western prairies from Canada to the Mexican border. Descended from horses that escaped from early Spanish explorers, these 'mustangs' became an important part of the history of the West. Today there are still some untamed horses living on the open ranges of several Western States. Only some, however, are descendants of the great mustang herds. Because untamed horses represent a colorful and historic chapter in the story of the West, the Bureau of Land Management shares with many people an interest in preserving and protecting bands of wild horses."

As a result of this recognition of public opinion, the Department of the Interior, in September of 1968, designated an area in the Pryor Mountains along the Montana-Wyoming border as a national wild horse range. The move, however, came only after four years of bitter controversy over the fate of approximately two hundred horses, historically important to the area since the 1880's, that were to have been removed in a range management program.

Saving this important part of our heritage step by step, area by area, is far too slow a process, while the animals outside a particular disputed area continue to be slaughtered, captured and relentlessly harassed.

RESEARCH VITALLY NEEDED

I have always realized that without more knowledge about the wild horses and burros, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to guarantee their future.

Since Dr. Michael J. Pontrelli was attempting to institute an ecological research program on these animals, and he could not obtain support from regular channels of research funds, my organization aided him by directing donations of many private individuals toward his research.

So that the necessary research can be facilitated in the future, I urge that special provision for ecological research now carried on by Dr. Pontrelli be included in this legislation, but that the carrying out of the provisions of this bill not be conditioned upon the results of research; that the provisions of this bill be put into effect immediately under the guidance of the Advisory Board until such time as adequate scientific information is obtained.

MEETINGS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

Since introduction of a measure into the second session of the 91st Congress in January of 1970, Dr. Michael Pontrelli and I have had a number of meetings with the various interested groups, including representatives of the American National Cattlemen's Association, at their invitation, for the purpose of discussing legislation that is now recognized by many of the principals to be of utmost importance. S. 1116 and H. R. 5375 are in general the result of those meetings, and most of the points have been mutually agreed upon. The differences that still exist are:

The prohibition against domestic release. Although the cattle industry spokesmen agree that there are flagrant abuses in the release of domestic horses, they do not want it prohibited and have promised to come up with an acceptable regulatory provision. None has been forthcoming, and they prefer to fall back on existing provisions which have proven inadequate. Therefore, we stand fast in our position that domestic release must be prohibited.

Disposition of excess animals. Opposition is expressed to the provision prohibiting the commercial use of these animals. We believe that profits which would be derived from what might be considered surplus animals would tend to encourage over-zealous control measures, and by elimination of the potential for financial gain, a more realistic approach to control measures would be taken.

PROHIBITION AGAINST DOMESTIC RELEASE

There is a most important reason for including a provision in legislation prohibiting the release of domestic horses on the public lands. It is a common practice among some individuals in the Western States to turn out branded domestic horses to provide a nucleus for a later roundup--by airplane, which is the only way it is commercially profitable to harvest them. Should he be apprehended, he can claim he is rounding up only his own branded stock and could not help it if a hundred or so wild unbranded horses got mixed in with his own.

Or . . . he sometimes allows the domestic releases to produce progeny over a period of two or three years, then gathers everything including the wild ones by claiming them to be offspring of the original domestic release, in a harvest that provides a marketable commodity which has cost him nothing to raise, either in grazing fees or in taxes on them.

NECESSITY FOR POLICE POWER FOR LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY INDICATED

I am gravely concerned that specific police powers have not been delegated to the land management agency in the legislation.

Charged with carrying out provisions of the measure, yet without the legal authority to issue citations upon witnessing violation of the provisions of this Act, or being informed by a reliable witness of violation, the Bureau of Land Management would be severely hampered in carrying out enforcement were it not authorized to cite violators.

I therefore feel it is a matter of utmost importance that duly appointed personnel of the Bureau of Land Management be given the legal authority to issue the necessary citations when violations occur.

AMENDMENTS TO H. R. 5375

There is a growing recognition in this country of the cruelty and abuses prevalent in rodeos.

We respectfully request that Section 7 of H. R. 5375 be amended to read:

"Any person who violates the provisions of this Act or the regulations issued by the Secretary pursuant to this Act or who processes or permits to be processed, into commercial products, in whole or in part, or to be sold for use in rodeos, whether lawfully acquired or not"

We also respectfully ask that the fine for violations, in both Sections 7 and 8, be changed to read: "\$2,000.00"

We further respectfully ask that a new section be added to H. R. 5375 to provide funds for research on the wild horses and burros.

We also respectfully ask that provision be made in H. R. 5375 to give the necessary authority to the Bureau of Land Management to issue citations when violations of the bill occur.

DESIGNATION AS A NATIONAL HERITAGE SPECIES

The term "feral" meaning a once domestic species of animal that has gone wild is now used in identifying the wild horses and burros. They must be removed from this category, which is a limbo that is neither "wild" nor "domestic" and in which their survival has been threatened and the intent of protection efforts lost in debates on semantics and definitions.

Not considered "wildlife" in the sense that deer, elk and antelope are considered wildlife, they have not come within the scope of wildlife management agencies which now have jurisdiction over all of the animals other than domestic.

Neither are they domestic animals.

That is the reason for the proposed legislative terminology national heritage species and national esthetic resource. It would designate a new category that would not be in conflict with present wildlife regulations, and other heritage species such as buffalo and American eagle could be then placed in this category.

Any argument that these animals may technically be feral by dictionary definition would negate the special role they have played in our American heritage.

PROGRAM FOR WILD HORSES AND BURROS NOT TO BE LIMITED TO SPECIFIC RANGES

It is a most acceptable provision that specific ranges be set aside where the wild horses and burros are of primary concern, to satisfy a public desire to have an opportunity to see these animals in their habitat.

However, wild horses and burros must be included as users of the remainder of the public domain as well, in a multiple use concept, consistent with consideration given to other animals, and to forage availability.

Without such a provision, those horses and burros on lands other than specific ranges would be at the mercy of everyone to whom their presence has been undesirable, or to whom their capture and sale would represent a fast dollar. We would fear that they would become victims of massive range clearance programs, with no regard to the necessity for their removal to carry out such programs. We stand firm in our support of the provision that they be considered in a multiple use concept.

I was asked, not long ago, why I included burros in my plea for the wild ones. Not native to North America, either, they are in the same limbo as the wild horses . . . neither wildlife nor domestic livestock. Although they occupy slightly different areas than the wild horses, their habitat, too, is desired for other purposes, and they are as much a part of the American heritage as are the wild horses, for together they played a significant role in the settlement of the American West.

Objection has been registered by representatives of the livestock industry to including them in the same legislation as wild horses, as their control and management would differ from that of the wild horses.

We take the position that enactment of legislation covering both species does not imply that both species must be managed the same. However, the need for management and control of burros in some areas is clearly evident, as is the need for protection, and it is at this time that enactment of legislation toward that end should be accomplished.

ADVISORY BOARD

For the first time in the history of public land use, the general public is clamoring for recognition of its rights on such lands as well.

Heretofore, the Bureau of Land Management, in its custodianship of these lands, has reacted to the voices that came through the loudest . . . those of the vested interest groups, which is understandable. Now, however, the land management agency is acutely aware of the necessity for consideration of public interest. To provide representation of the various aspects of public interest, and to afford a wide range of expertise from which to arrive at decisions affecting the public lands in relation to wild horses and burros, we strongly support the provision calling for the appointment of such an Advisory Board.

CONCLUSION

Because I was among those who began the fight long ago, and have been closely identified with it during the intervening years, I feel I am well qualified to pass along to you the feelings of those who have written literally thousands of letters to me. Without exception, the wild horse or mustang, more than any creature alive, symbolizes to them the freedom upon which our country was founded. The response to the plea in their behalf comes from every part of our nation; from every level of our society; from every age group.

Perhaps it is because the forebears of the wild horses and burros were as alien to these shores of the new world as were our own forebears alien to these shores;

Perhaps it is because together they settled the trackless wilderness; drove off Indian attacks; enforced law and order; brought civilization to this raw young country;

Or carried the mail over 2000 miles of savage wilderness of Frontier America from Saint Jo to Sacramento and back again in the epoch that history records as the Pony Express.

Whatever the reason, it has been, and is, tremendous.

This fight in behalf of the wild horses and burros has captured the interest of young people as no other issue ever has, and as a result, they have become cognizant of their responsibilities not only to the welfare of the animals, but to becoming involved in the mechanics of the legislative process; an awareness of their privileges as Americans and the potential for greatness and goodness if they but exercise that awareness.

Through whatever tool that miracle is accomplished, in this instance the future of the wild horses and burros, our country will be the better for it, because it is the young people who will be our lawmakers in so very short a time.

CONCLUSION (continued)

An example of other ways in which the youth has been vitally affected is the experience of a dedicated teacher, whose story is told in a newspaper of her home town, and which is a part of her own testimony. But in this presentation, I briefly point out to you the areas in which her students have benefited far beyond their immediate concern for a flesh and blood creature. They are developing new study skills, a larger vocabulary, the ability to research books, magazines, bulletins, legislative bills and other materials, broadening their reading ability and their knowledge of techniques and procedures. Spelling, particularly, has shown tremendous improvement, as has their writing, for they strive to make the best possible impression upon their legislators to whom they write for support of the wild horse and burro bill. They have studied topography, climate, flora and fauna in relation to the habitat of the wild ones. The backgrounds of their lawmakers have been studied, their families, homes, legislative committees. Ecology, interrelationships between animals and plants, history, Indian culture, all have become a more important and interesting part of their curriculum, as they relate them to their efforts in behalf of the wild horses.

But the young people do not stand alone in this issue, for aligned with them are those who, in adulthood, have come to realize that the over-exploitation of our resources and the lack of care and concern for all that is not commercially profitable to some individual, has deprived them of what they had every right to expect as their heritage.

Our generations, yours and mine, have been careless of the bounties of nature that were loaned to us and it is no wonder that THE ESTABLISHMENT is emerging as a tarnished symbol and the target of criticism and rebellion.

I would ask now that this legislation before you, to provide protection, management and control for the wild horses and burros of our land be favorably

CONCLUSION (continued)

considered and passed without delay, for it was from the backs of their ancestors that our own pioneer forebears wrote the most glowing chapters in the history of this, the greatest country on earth. It might just make up a little bit, to those who come after us, for the destruction and waste of much of their heritage that can never be replaced. A gift to future generations of which our generation might well be proud.

Respectfully submitted,

Velma B. Johnston
Velma B. Johnson (Mrs. Charles C.)