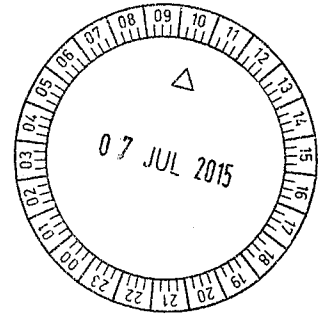


Peta Rakela



30/6/15

Select committee established to inquire into roles and responsibilities of RSPCA

Inquiry into the roles and responsibilities of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)?

Yes. By all means, go ahead.

If one looks optimistically at this inquiry, and has belief in fair process and justice, the outcome of this inquiry **should** be of benefit to all non human animals – not just the so called “objects” of this inquiry – culminating, one would hope, in the ELIMINATION of ALL cruelty towards them.

Like others before me I too have been a strong advocate for animal welfare and the requirements necessary to ensure animal welfare on a daily basis.

Unlike many of those others the only **vested** interest I have is for the well being of the non human animals that have been, and continue to be these “objects” of human exploitation.

My life experiences as a teacher, a wildlife rehabilitator, a scientist, and a semi urban rural dweller along with my long time involvement with various NGO groups, and political parties, has given me insight into past and current animal welfare regimes both state wide, and nationally.

I do not like what I have seen. In fact it makes me ashamed to be part of a culture that endorses this sort of behaviour.

It is with this understanding and knowledge that I have spoken out about some of the inadequacies of the RSPCA, particularly in regard to their inability to protect wildlife.

At the heart of several of these inadequacies lie influences, both direct and indirect, within and outside the RSPCA that have, and continue to prevent the RSPCA from doing what it is supposed to do- prevent cruelty to non human animals, and to a broader range of species.

For this reason I have advocated an independent body (and I do mean independent body) which has, amongst other things, **authentic power** in its regulatory role in animal welfare and its public education role.

The fact that **some** funding, albeit pitiful (when all things considered) has been provided to the RSCPA by the State Government through the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA).says it all, doesn't it?

Vested interest indeed!

As the RSCPA is the only regulatory body within WA that has prosecutorial powers outside of Government there CAN be NO interference from vested interests, and at this point in time, this is clearly not the case.

The fact that this inquiry is in the hands of Mr Mazza, from the Shooters and Fishers Party, is laughable, and makes a mockery of the whole thing and our so called democracy!

He called for five MPs **with himself as chairman** to be appointed to inquire into the RSPCA's funding from government, objectives and use of its powers.

What a total sham!

That the RSPCA dared to publicly defend its anti recreational hunting stance using monies given by Members Of the Public to fight cruelty certainly did not warrant subsequent demonisation and questioning by Mazza and the dollar counting, pro cruelty league. But demonisation, and severe cash drain and distraction in defending itself against such claims, it got !

Having been an administrator for a facebook page against recreational hunting, and been more than alarmed by the number of, and general disposition of, hunters I would be encouraging the RSPCA to continue it's resistance on behalf of the majority of Western Australian's who find the practice of killing sentient beings for fun, pleasure, and recreation abhorrent; those who find the increasing violence in our society intolerable; and those who find our cultural regression into barbarism intolerable.

And here we are!

Another inquiry, called by a minority party(in every sense of the word), with 1 representative, a party that gained a mere 3% of the agricultural regional vote, a party that is determined to WEAKEN animal welfare laws for a minority of people to gain, to the detriment of society.

[THE WA Shooters and Fishers Party has joined the Australian Livestock Exporters' Council (ALEC) in questioning whether the RSPCA is becoming more radical]

Radical? Now preventing cruelty is radical?

[Shooters and Fishers' MLC Rick Mazza told the Legislative Council last week there were concerns the RSPCA "maybe transitioning into an animal rights group"].

The RSPCA is, at best, and then questionably, a welfarist organisation.

What we need to be more concerned with is what the Shooters and Fishers Party is transitioning into!

Anyone up for an inquiry into this?

Additionally the RSPCA, it seems to me, has always been dictated to by farmers, and the current inquiry has also the well being of farmers and other vested interests in its sights. It seems to me, and I'd say many others, that the current committee is not quite so willing to cow tail to vested parties, hence the uproar, and inquiry.

What's the problem? Perhaps it's the fact that the RSPCA is finally doing what it is supposed to do!

As Mr Brown, and others have stated "This unique position requires the roles and responsibilities of the RSCPA and its staff to be clear, transparent and open to investigation".

Agree. And would also hope that Mr Brown, Mr Mazza and their ilk follow suite!

I, for one, do hope that the Select Committee will provide a unique opportunity to inquire into the leadership, direction and responsibilities of RSPCA, duplication of services shared with DAFWA, and to establish a transparent report available to the public about the manner in which government funding is distributed and applied.

I would also hope that committee members and their interests & affiliations are made known to the public.

Any chance that the Shooters and Fishers party could do the same?

I do hope that that the RSCPA , who provide a reasonable service in their advocacy and care for companion animals such as cats and dogs under the provisions that their social license provides them, not only continue in this capacity, but go beyond, way beyond.

Wildlife need protection.

["He (Mr Mazza) also referred to claims, reported in Farm Weekly last week, by ALEC chief executive officer Alison Penfold that the RSPCA used "selective statistics" to mount a campaign against the live export trade, and also to its endorsement in Victoria of anti-duck-shooting advertising"].

Excuse me? Now the RSPCA should be an advocate for the Shooters Party and Farming lobby?

I have no doubt that the called inquiry into the RSPCA is but another attempt to weaken Animal Welfare in Western Australia.

My recommendation would be to set up an INDEPENDENT body. It certainly is long overdue.

Ghandi

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated"

So where exactly does that leave us?

Morally bankrupt, I'd say!

Peta Rakela

emailed 2/7/15