

thealdenham

Hunting Symposium cancelled

Posted on November 13, 2015November 16, 2015 by thealdenham

The Countryside alliance, James Barrington, Brian Fanshawe and Dr Tony Mudd are to be congratulated on their decision to pull out of the Hunting Symposium at Winchester in the coming weeks for one simple reason. They were going to defend hunting against the creativity and imagination of one man and he notably was not going to be there, I am of course talking about Professor Stephen Harris who it could be said is largely responsible for this whole hunting debacle.

Using these two attributes (creativity and imagination) he took a very simple subject 'controlling foxes' and turned it into a very complex subject that has the benefit of lining his pockets while giving the left something to cogitate over. To show how simple it should be he even provides the evidence from his submission to the Burns inquiry and latest report for the Scottish Parliament.

Harris report to Scottish Parliament – For fox numbers to remain stable “64% mortality per annum is needed across the fox population as a whole”.

Harris to Burns – *“There have been a number of fox population estimates. The most generally accepted is that produced by Harris et al. (1995), who estimated that in Britain there are 240,000 adult foxes at the start of the breeding season, and that these produce around 425,000 cubs each spring. Of these, 33,000 adult foxes (14%) live in urban areas. The total pre-breeding population in England is 195,000 adults, 22,000 in Wales and 23,000 in Scotland”*

He even gave us the numbers killed by various methods of control,

Harris to Burns – *“It is estimated that in Britain 285,000 foxes are killed annually by people (Pye-Smith 1997). Dividing this figure according to the different culling methods the numbers killed are estimated as follows: 100,000 killed on the roads, 80,000 shot, 50,000 dug out with terriers, 30,000 snared, 15,000 killed by foxhunts and 10,000 killed by lurchers”*

Off course this means roughly 140,000 die of natural causes. If you add 240,000 (Adult fox Population pre breeding) + 425,000 (cubs born) = 665,000. So what is 64% of 665,000? Back to pre breeding numbers.

So farmers and landowner using a mixture of methods (Ie shooting, snaring, terriers etc.) and utilizing widespread fox control constantly reduce fox numbers on a yearly basis. It's impossible for them not to, foxes only breed once a year, shoot one in autumn, that's one less. VERY SIMPLE, and Professor Harris provides the evidence widespread fox control is working.

However Professor Harris realized he can manipulate this very simple process to his benefit and profit. Using upland fox control as an example I will explain how – He convinces you farmer's aims are purely **local** and concentrates on the woodland. He then claims foxes culled in upland woodland areas are then replaced quickly, sometimes with more foxes. This can be then deliberately misintrepreted to give the impression fox numbers have increased or the spring breeding population has increased, which is an impossibility as foxes breed once a year, so if any are shot, nationally their numbers will reduce. Naturally lamb losses occur but this is dismissed as the odd fox gone rogue that has taken a liking to lamb but this is not a usual occurence or problem as foxes don't take many and losses are at 1%. Then attempts are made to off load the blame of naturally occurring lamb losses onto the poor husbandry of farmers and this is blown out of all proportion. He then breaks down each method of control and compares how many they kill against each other, this enables a very selective attack on each method as the figures are twisted to suit his imagination. I.e Compare the numbers of foxes killed by traditional mounted hunting to the numbers killed by shooting claim a 4:1 ratio while all along infering hunting with dogs should be banned that actually kill roughly the same as shooting as the figures he presented to the Burns inquiry shows.

"It is estimated that in Britain 285,000 foxes are killed annually by people (Pye-Smith 1997). Dividing this figure according to the different culling methods the numbers killed are estimated as follows: 100,000 killed on the roads, 80,000 shot, 50,000 dug out with terriers, 30,000 snared, 15,000 killed by foxhunts and 10,000 killed by lurchers"

Hunting with dogs – $50,000 + 15,000 + 10,000 = 75,000$

Shooting = 80,000

This story has been packaged and sold the world over to organizations and charities who seek to profit from these delibrate misrepresentations. Here is an example from the League against cruel sports,

"Foxes pose much less of a threat to lambs than people are led to believe, with only 1% of lamb deaths actually attributable to foxes"

It's largely down to these deceitful misrepresentations why at least eight high ranking officials and monitors decided to leave this scurrilous faux charity after realising they had been misleading the public and honesty was the best policy.

Naturally Professor Stephen Harris would never attend the symposium because he knows James Barrington would pull his creative imagination apart piece meal with the truth, similar to the below.

It was noted by the GCT, in their submission to Burns, that those seeking to control foxes in the UK largely do not want to see them eradicated unlike Australia where they were introduced and wreak havoc with the indigenious species. They also noted the majority of farmer's aims are to assist control at a **regional** level and in these upland areas over 90% gave to prevent damage to livestock as a reason for killing foxes. So in autumn and winter they cull in the fox desirable forestry areas creating a vacuum, so foxes in the less desirable area surrounding lambing fields move in for better cover and food. However their vacated territories are unlikely to be taken up as the dispersal period will be over. Hey presto you have fox free lambing fields. And now you have foxes in woodland with plenty of natural food so they are less likely to bother your lambs, with

the occasional rogue fox causing damage. Widespread fox control has worked using a mixture of methods, losses of lambs to fox predation are only at 1% and all aims accomplished, the fox has not been totally eradicated, damage to livestock prevented and they have contributed to reducing fox numbers at a regional level. What method kills how many is irrelevant as farmers use a mixture of methods, if the gun doesn't get you the hounds will find you. Claimed poor husbandry is a horrid slur on our farmers as these losses are the same the world over, that's what you can expect for the number of lambs born.

So there you have it folks a very simple process made complex, smoke and mirrors. The two people who should be at a hunting symposium, James Barrington with the truth, Professor Harris with his imagination and creativity will not be present. With the exception of Dr Daniel Allen we have folk best described as carpet baggers and snake oil salesmen. Hilarious they are trying to make a buck off the back of Professor Harris's creativity and imagination proving just how gullible they are. The Foxhunting debacle has always been a left wing pocket lining scam.

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How Confirmation Bias leads to fraudulent 'science'

Posted on [November 10, 2015](#)[November 11, 2015](#) by [thealdenham](#)

This blog is dedicated to helping Lucy Parry with her thesis titled "Representing Animals in the Deliberative System: The UK Hunting Debate" Lucy is interested in how representations of animals (through various media and discourse) ultimately influence public opinion and policy. And one of her sponsors appears to be the Centre for Animals and Social Justice. Importantly, Lucy is due to give a talk at the Hunting Symposium in Winchester in the coming weeks.

Do you recall in the last few weeks a story appearing in the Guardian? It was suggesting we do not need to use a pack of hounds in Scotland to flush foxes because we can use just two hounds instead since foxes eat rabbits that cause crop damage, making the fox the farmers friend.

"It also calculates that the animals can be worth between £156 and £886 to farmers due to their efficient rabbit predation"

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/oct/28/scottish-foxhunting-review-prompts-report-showing-animals-benefit-to-farms> (<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/oct/28/scottish-foxhunting-review-prompts-report-showing-animals-benefit-to-farms>)

How totally bonkers is that story? This can only have been written by the League Against Cruel Sports for the Guardian. Personally I am more than happy for the League Against Cruel Sports to make the Guardian look like a bunch of clowns.

Aside from the fact Scotland is not well known for its arable flat lands and prairies, what greatly concerns me once again is Professor Stephen Harris. If you recall he was the author of the report this utter nonsense originated from.

Sadly for Professor Stephen Harris I read the very same report as he, the very same report from the British Trust for Ornithology he claims is robust, that showed a decline in fox numbers and also showed a decline in rabbit numbers. Professor Stephen Harris fails to mention this. You could not miss it in the report rabbits have declined more in twenty years than any other mammal,

'UK mammal species between 1995 and 2014 for which we routinely produce trends. During this period, rabbit showed the largest decline'

Rather than cite this latest information Professor Harris instead refers to a report from Professor David Macdonald in 2003 that showed roughly throughout the whole of the United Kingdom foxes can save farmers just seven million pounds, (Current IFAW citation of Macdonald ET AL, 2003) cherry picking to the extreme.

However, this farce does not end there. If you read what the animal rights charities actually believed in 2000, the story in the Guardian should have read, "Fox benefits to farmers from rabbit predation, estimates have dropped from between 83 – 233 million pounds in ten years to 7 million. Now evidence suggests with both a decline in fox numbers and rabbit numbers the benefit is likely to a big fat zero.

Based on IFAW & LACS submission to the Burns inquiry (2000)..

'IFAW – Rabbits were estimated to cause over £100 million of damage annually during the mid-1980s. As rabbit numbers have doubled since then it can safely be assumed that the economic losses to rabbits are now considerably larger.'

*'LACS – Farmers who engage in the culling of foxes may be removing a valuable ally. In the early 1980s MAFF estimated rabbit may cost the nation's farmers between £90million and £120million each year. **Harris points out that as rabbit numbers are increasing dramatically this figure may now have more than doubled.** Rabbits form a major part of the diet of foxes across the country. Some studies have shown that rabbits are more abundant in areas where predators, including foxes, are removed or controlled. Harris concluded that 'foxes can be beneficial by consuming rabbits and other pests of agricultural crops' (5).'*

This is of course all nonsense because many arable farmers use widespread culling to reduce fox numbers at a regional level to prevent damage to the two billion a year shooting industry. That's why many arable farmers cull, they even use the term good neighbour policy. Any claimed benefit was always worthless in comparison.

So Lucy, as with the email I sent you last week with a link to a blog detailing at least five incidents I know of and now this latest example in the Guardian. I hope you understand by now animal rights employ a con-trick of just before any important juncture in the hunting debate release a fabrication or distortion to the press. The truth is irrelevant, it's what they are trying to get people to believe that is critical. This fabrication/distortion is then printed in a purported thinking man's paper and read by usually but not always left wing MPs just before they are going to make an important decision and places 'the fox is a benefit' in the foremost of their mind. Oldest marketing trick in the book, nothing new. This is then reinforced by a few thousand obsessed, OCD, narcissist folk writing and emailing them in a frenzy as a constant reminder as the debate approaches.

That's animal rights on hunting in the press for you Lucy in a nut-shell. I very much doubt you will read this blog in any case as with most opponents of hunting confirmation bias is the order of the day. This is a great shame as your thesis will be about as independent and impartial as Professor Harris's confabulation for the Scottish Parliament

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BSc PhD DSc V Reason

Posted on ~~November 6, 2015~~November 6, 2015 by [thealdenham](#)

"Importantly, only a quarter of farmers had purely local aims: three-quarters cited regional control of fox numbers as an aim of their culling regime. In all cases, the expectation of culling is to achieve a temporary effect. Although the complete eradication of foxes may be a justifiable conservation aim on continents or islands where foxes have been artificially introduced (eg. Australia), very few people would wish to see their extinction from Britain. It is an accepted aspect of culling that dispersal tends to even up fox density, so that culling – like gardening or farming – is a temporary management process" (GCT submission to Burns inquiry)

I don't think there are many people in Britain who could not understand that, perhaps the odd Professor from Bristol maybe.

In this latest report for the Scottish Parliament professor Harris informs us that for a fox population to remain stable "64% mortality per annum is needed across the fox population as a whole". Back in 2000 he submitted his research contract to the Burns inquiry with his own researched data showing that's exactly what's happening. We *were* losing 64% of the fox population through culling, road deaths and natural causes. His own evidence provides the reality of what is happening but I suspect he cannot see it. absolutely hilarious.

"There have been a number of fox population estimates. The most generally accepted is that produced by Harris et al. (1995), who estimated that in Britain there are 240,000 adult foxes at the start of the breeding season, and that these produce around 425,000 cubs each spring. Of these, 33,000 adult foxes (14%) live in urban areas. The total pre-breeding population in England is 195,000 adults, 22,000 in Wales and 23,000 in Scotland"

He even gave us the numbers killed by various methods of control,

"It is estimated that in Britain 285,000 foxes are killed annually by people (Pye-Smith 1997). Dividing this figure according to the different culling methods the numbers killed are estimated as follows: 100,000 killed on the roads, 80,000 shot, 50,000 dug out with terriers, 30,000 snared, 15,000 killed by foxhunts and 10,000 killed by lurchers"

Off course this means roughly 140,000 die through natural causes, He still can't reason I bet. So Professor Harris a little hint what if you add 240,000 (Adult fox Population pre breeding) + 425,000 (cubs born) = 665,000. So what is 64% of 665,000?

However notice I said *were* losing 64% because that figure is now old, thanks to Harris and the League against cruel sports and their efforts to remove the sporting element from hunting that percentage has increased simply because fox hunts have been forced to shoot foxes instead of letting them win the day and escape unharmed. Coupled with the popularity of shooting and the control increase to protect game interests Prof Harris is now reporting a decline in fox numbers in his report for the Scottish parliament but then states he does not believe this is down to pest control. Naturally of course he will not reason the decline is down to his action's and the League against cruel sports.

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Professor Stephen Harris – How money perverts science

Posted on ~~November 4, 2015~~ November 5, 2015 by [thealdenham](#)

Once again we find Professor Stephen Harris getting involved in the hunting debate with a League Against Cruel Sports funded report. Of course, they have absolutely every right to do this. However, I was stunned when on Twitter the League had said the report was from an 'independent' expert not least because they are funding it. It was their old CEO, Douglas Bachelor, who once remarked on James Barrington's change of view and subsequent role as wildlife expert to the Countryside Alliance as 'he who pays the piper'.

As I believe his report has the potential to make lives difficult for some folk and use up taxpayer's valuable money and parliamentary time I believe the public should be given all the information I have on Professor Stephen Harris and let them make up their own mind, not only about his independence but also his impartiality.

I first became aware of Professor Stephen Harris on the television during the nineties. They were doing the usual by giving both sides of the argument, both pro and anti, when on came Professor Harris, sat in what looked like a classroom or laboratory, telling the world fox hunts have little impact on fox numbers. Actually the recording of Harris looked old so may have been filmed a few years previously.

The next awareness of Professor Stephen Harris was indirectly through the RSPCA. I had written to them asking why they had changed their stance on hunting and now preferred shooting as nothing really has changed in the calibre of guns used. They wrote back in short saying they now had scientific proof hunting was worse from a cruelty perspective than other methods. My requests from the RSPCA for references to the 'scientific evidence' went unanswered. Then a story appeared in the Times of the cruelties of hunting compared to other methods notably before the Burns inquiry was to start collecting evidence. Now the source of the RSPCA's claimed 'scientific evidence' was revealed, it came from a report called 'How a ban will affect the fox population' and was co-written by Professor Stephen Harris & Phil Baker. What happened next had the opponents of hunting reeling, apparently Professor Harris had copied the 'scientific evidence' from an animal rights website in America without validating the data. The data had in fact been deliberately corrupted to show the cruelties of hunting and Professor Harris had copied this corruption into his

own report. We know this because the author of the original uncorrupted 'scientific evidence', a man called Terence Kreegar, got to hear of how his data was being misinterpreted in the UK and immediately set the record straight by writing to the Times and the Burns inquiry.

"This has been a continuing problem with misinterpretation of my data that apparently began with an anti-hunting group in the U.S. That group's web page attributed changes recorded in trapped foxes to changes in foxes chased by dogs. This is blatantly incorrect and, I suspect, wilfully done.

I personally have no stake in this issue in the U.K. other than trying to insure that the objective truth is disseminated. If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me."

Critically the RSPCA had used this data to influence Politicians and members of the public but no apology was forthcoming from them or Professor Harris.

Naturally this threw Professor Stephen Harris' suitability of having some involvement in the Burns inquiry in 2000 into doubt and serious questions were asked. And that was not the only consideration. He was currently involved in studying fox numbers that was funded by the anti-hunting organisation, the IFAW. I can remember the subsequent screeching from the Labour backbenches at the suitability of the make up of their inquiry team led by Lord Burns and their alleged hunting bias which probably led to Professor Harris' eventual involvement.

So, for the Burns inquiry, two teams were organised to study population and management and report back, these research contracts are still viewable on the Burns inquiry website. Burns arranged them into two teams led by Professor David MacDonald and an anti-hunting team consisting of Dr Pieran White and Professor Stephen Harris. Both reports are actually very good apart from one major gripe I remember the Countryside Alliance making to its supporters. Both teams were asked to evaluate all the available information including the five studies on why farmers cull foxes. On average over the five studies, preventing damage to livestock was given as the motive of those looking to control foxes and this is given by the Macdonald team. However Professor Harris took the mean from just two studies to conclude reducing abundance or fox numbers is the reason why farmers control foxes. This may seem insignificant but you have to remember Professor Stephen Harris is currently involved in a study looking into Fox numbers and the impact of a ban on hunting. Naturally for Professor Harris and his financial backers, the IFAW, any conclusion appearing to be the number one reason for controlling foxes is, in essence, supporting their study.

This IFAW funded study took place between 1999 and Feb-Mar 2002 and was renowned for being in the right place at the right time because foot and mouth caused hunting to be suspended during 2001 allowing, it was claimed, an analysis of whether hunting has any impact on fox numbers. Most notably the report findings were not announced to the upcoming Portcullis hunting hearings but to the press a few days before-hand and Professor Harris had been chosen to represent the anti-hunting organisations.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1406293/Hunting-ban-will-not-lead-to-fox-boom-says-study.html> (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1406293/Hunting-ban-will-not-lead-to-fox-boom-says-study.html>)

Almost immediately its impact was negated for one simple reason, during the year of 2000 we had the most severe winter weather hit in the middle of spring, the coldest period since 1963, this is when the cubs are born. This was notable because up to this point it had been one of the warmest

springs on record.

“Severe weather has forced the closure of one of Britain’s main airports, Luton, near London, as blizzards and flooding have caused widespread chaos”

Link to news story.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/4/newsid_4380000/4380415.stm
(http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/4/newsid_4380000/4380415.stm)

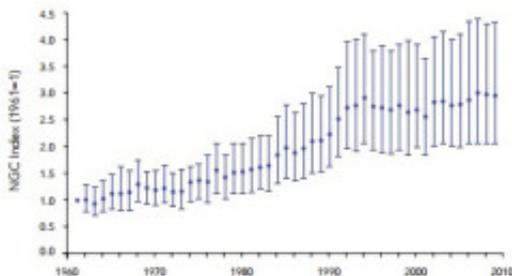
This was followed in the Autumn of that year as one of the wettest on record.

“The wet weather brought widespread flooding to England and Wales as rivers rose to record levels and burst their banks. The worst flooding was in mid-October and then from late October into early November. The disruption was compounded by some very strong winds at the end of October, damaging buildings, trees and power lines and cutting road and rail links”

Link to news story.

<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/interesting/autumn2000.html>
(<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/interesting/autumn2000.html>)

As any mammal expert worth his salt will know conditions as extreme as these will have a catastrophic effect on fox numbers the following year, it’s not only foxes suffering but their natural food supply as well. This drop in numbers can be clearly shown in the following GWCT national fox bag graph(fig.1). The numbers of foxes shot can be seen to drop in 2001. I could argue all day long with Professor Harris over the possibility of farmers increasing or decreasing the use of other methods to compensate those no longer killed by hunting during the FMD crisis but the simple fact remains, as the extreme winter of 1962 proves, the preceding year the amount of foxes available to culling by shooting has dropped.



(<https://thealdenham.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/untitled.jpg>)

Fig 1, Special thanks to the (GWCT) Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust.

<https://www.gwct.org.uk/> (<https://www.gwct.org.uk/>).

Professor Harris, who conducted his final survey in Feb – Mar 2002 and critically before the spring breeding season, was merely recording the effects of extreme weather conditions on the fox population and not the effects of hunting. Alun Michael, who was chairing the Portcullis hunting hearings, was in no doubt and on the advice of his independent advisor said the report was ‘inconclusive’, which is the correct conclusion. However this report has been continually used by

the LACS, IFAW, RSPCA and Professor Harris as evidence hunting has no impact on fox numbers. In his latest use of this survey for the Scottish Parliament Prof Harris uses it to show fox numbers declined over the foot and mouth period, his data is actually supporting my conclusion.

Alun Michael,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1406619/Some-hunting-is-necessary-says-rural-minister.html> (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1406619/Some-hunting-is-necessary-says-rural-minister.html>)

2003 – Not a press release or report but something different this time. At a Labour fringe meeting organised by the Campaign for Protected Animals who comprised of the LACS, IFAW & RSPCA a peer reviewed study into shooting showing higher than expected wounded rates is refuted to thunderous applause and cheering by Labour Backbenchers and Professor Harris announces his own study, which counters the Middle Way groups study, will be peer reviewed shortly. Eleven years on the peer reviewed study has not materialised. This is documented in the book Rural rites by Charlie Pye-Smith.

2004 – Another newspaper article at the end of July designed to coincide with the upcoming hunting debate in mid-September and we find Professor Harris once again adding comment for his paymasters. Also note he mentions his own 'inconclusive' report but this time brings to the fore another report apparently similar to his own. Actually, he could not be further from the truth. This report comes from his friend Professor Phil Baker and studies winter culling in upland forest areas, ironically it shows widespread fox control working as intended, only Professor Harris with his PhD cannot see it.

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2004/jul/28/hunting.ruralaffairs>
(<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2004/jul/28/hunting.ruralaffairs>)

I will explain – It was noted by the GCT, in their submission to Burns, that those seeking to control foxes in the UK largely do not want to see them eradicated unlike Australia were they were introduced and wreak havoc with the indigenous species. They also noted the majority of farmer's aims are to assist control at a regional level and in these upland areas over 90% gave to prevent damage to livestock as a reason for killing foxes. So in autumn and winter they cull in the fox desirable forestry areas creating a vacuum, so foxes in the less desirable area surrounding lambing fields move in. However their vacated territories are unlikely to be taken up as the dispersal period will be over. Hey presto you have fox free lambing fields. And now you have foxes in woodland with plenty of natural food so they are less likely to bother your lambs, with the occasional rogue fox causing damage. Widespread fox control has worked, losses to fox predation are only at 1% and all aims accomplished, the fox has not been totally eradicated, damage to livestock prevented and they have contributed to reducing fox numbers at a regional level.

Professor Harris and his friend Phil Baker attempt to convince you farmer's aims are purely local and concentrate on the woodland. So they are claiming foxes culled in upland woodland areas are then replaced at some stage, sometimes with more foxes. They then give the impression fox numbers have increased or the spring breeding population has increased, which is an impossibility as foxes breed once a year, so if any are shot, nationally their numbers will reduce. This can only be achieved by ignoring all the evidence of what farmers intend to achieve by culling and making up your own little scenario to package and sell to the highest bidder.

Personally I think it amusing Prof Harris has gone to press with two studies, one showing the effects of extreme weather conditions on foxes and the other showing fox control working as intended.

At the Portcullis hunting hearings in 2002 Professor Stephen Harris told the inquiry team “In the last 20 years there has been no change in fox numbers overall in any significant way” Now in his latest report for the Scottish Parliament he is claiming fox numbers declined from 1995 – 2004. This suggests Professor Harris is using time-scales and data from sources that fit his current funding. This is relevant as once again in 2004 a story breaks as the hunting legislation ping-pongs between the House of Lords and Commons. Yet again we find Professor Harris commenting on another IFAW linked story before a hunting debate is due to take place. This time the story is Simon Hart’s famous e-mail concerning a claimed ‘nationwide shortage of foxes’ and a request from Lord Daresbury for shoots to leave foxes for hunting. Professor Harris has three channels open with the current available evidence, of course he could keep his mouth shut but this appears to be an impossibility; One – state there is not a nationwide shortage of foxes as populations are stable as he has already claimed in the Portcullis hearings; Two – point out that Lord Daresbury is correct and more foxes are being shot now than before making them no longer available for hunts to cull. This can be seen in the dramatic increase in shooting in the GCT fox bag survey (fig.1) from the early nineties. However, rather unsurprisingly, Professor Harris opts to side with his IFAW paymasters and makes the following statement: *“This admission reveals the hypocrisy of the pro-hunt lobby. They don’t manage the fox population and they don’t control it”*.

It would appear this materialised off the back of his own ‘inconclusive’ report.

<http://www.realca.co.uk/bloodsports/countryside-alliance/bloody-liar>
(<http://www.realca.co.uk/bloodsports/countryside-alliance/bloody-liar>)

It becomes fairly obvious to even the most casual observer at important junctures of the hunting debate, up pops Professor Harris with a comment, quote or research in a newspaper to please his backers.

Even when all stakeholders at the Burns inquiry in 2000 were asked not to go to the press until Jack Straw had delivered the content of the report to parliament, a few days before-hand up pops Professor Morton, known to be in the same circle of animal rightists as Professor Harris, to claim the cruelties of hunting based on the X-rays from The Burns inquiry. Naturally an attempt to subvert Lord Burns’ conclusion that ultimately there was not enough verifiable data to reach a view on cruelty. Professor Morton is outside the gagging request from Lord Burns, he later went onto represent the anti-hunts position at the Portcullis hearings.

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2000/jun/11/hunting.ruralaffairs>
(<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2000/jun/11/hunting.ruralaffairs>)

Conclusion – My own view is one of disagreement with the League Against Cruel Sports, Professor Harris does not appear to be either ‘independent’ or ‘impartial’. I have given you all the information I know, what do you think?

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Smoke and Mirrors

Posted on October 30, 2015October 31, 2015 by thealdenham

It appears the League Against Cruel Sports and Professor Stephen Harris both have suffered severe memory loss if the latest League funded research offering called '*the utility of killing foxes in Scotland*' is anything to go by. So, for the record, I will remind them why they conspired to ban hunting in 2002 – 2004.

The problem anti-hunt brigade had with hunting was with what they claimed the cruelty of the chase, the actual kill came a poor second as they admitted once caught by a pack of hounds it was pretty damn quick. So, effectively, both the English and Scottish parliament responded by preventing the chase to a short flush and death by shotgun.

The only problem with that scenario is that foxes that once escaped and given best are now shot, this includes those foxes that were once run to ground. According to Professor David Macdonald in his submission to the Burns inquiry on average 36% of foxes were run to ground of which only 28% were subsequently dug out and shot. Naturally the kill rate increases as more foxes will be killed than before. Incidentally this was the main complaint in Scotland from hunts after their ban was implemented as foxes are no longer managed with the fittest escaping but shot out of hand.

According to Harris in his report since the hunting ban fox numbers have 'declined' he further claims this does not have anything to do with 'pest control' which actually suggests he has forgotten why he helped instigate a ban in the first place.

Perhaps if he were to give it a little more thought he would realize if there was a decline in fox numbers throughout the UK then Professor Stephen Harris and the League Against Cruel Sports have implicated themselves in this decline through this report. How ironic.

None of which matters really, because this utterly appalling report which should be renamed 'Smoke and Mirrors' and is for Scottish Politicians with Narcissistic personality disorder, they won't read it but will rely on the odd comment handed them by the League Against Cruel Sports.

The League Against Cruel Sports is a charity that has lost no less than eight high ranking officials and monitors all claiming a ban would increase suffering. Which coincidentally further supports Professor Stephen Harris and the League Against Cruel Sports in their implication of themselves in the decline in fox numbers. Before the hunting ban was enacted in 2004, Richard Course Ex-League Against Cruel Sports chairman obtained a ban on traditional mounted hunting on land owned by the co-operative, the nation's biggest farmer, only to witness foxes killed by other methods. He said "foxes were killed in increasing numbers by shotgun shooting and snaring" he then went onto to say "by trying to reduce suffering I had only contributed to increasing it". So we kind of got a rehearsal of what would happen in the event of a ban, so congratulations to Professor Stephen Harris and the League Against Cruel Sports in your success in what appears to be a reduction in fox numbers.

It's time to forget that appalling biased rubbish from Harris and read an impartial view from Lord Burns in his very last appearance in the House of Lords in the hunting debate. This is quite long but worth it. You can read in and see he is struggling with the concept of what he thinks are normal reasonable-minded folk and why they would still favour a ban on hunting, despite his evidence and conclusions. Of course what he did not know then, but we know now, is Labour, like the SNP, are nothing more than a bunch of narcissists, slaves to a cause, mere protestors in it for themselves and their chosen causes. Being an MP allows them to feel good about themselves while they force their world view on folk by foul means.

Lord Burns: My Lords, since completing the report on hunting with dogs in the summer of 2000, with an inquiry that I had the great privilege to chair, I have restricted my comments on this contentious issue to only two occasions. The first was during the debate in this House in 2001; the second was in giving evidence to Alun Michael's committee in September 2002. Since then, I have kept out of the debate because I have little to add to what was said in the report and my experience has become increasingly out of date. However, I thought that today's debate was an occasion on which I should make some points about what I regard as the substance of the issue. I should also like to make some observations about the process that has been and remains under way.

The noble Lord, Lord Mancroft, said that the debate was not about cruelty, but I do not think that we can avoid returning to the issue to remind noble Lords of the evidence on welfare. We must keep in mind two aspects of the impact of hunting on animal welfare. The first is the clear adverse welfare effects on the hunted animal of the chase and possible kill. The second is how hunting compares with alternative methods of controlling population numbers.

Taking account of both aspects, there is insufficient verifiable evidence to reach views about cruelty, one way or the other, and our committee came to that conclusion. Indeed, the committee pointed to areas where there was scope for more research to clarify some of the areas of doubt. It remains a slight puzzle that people continue to take a very strident position on the issue of cruelty, given what I regard as the lack of available evidence.

The first problem is that there is no direct measure of pain for a hunted animal; we must make do with indirect measures. Scientists have made some progress in measuring the effect on deer of being hunted, although even in that case there was scope for different interpretations of the data. There is no equivalent evidence to progress the analysis of the impact on the welfare of hunted foxes. We carried out studies and an examination of post-mortems of hunted animals. We were able to conclude that there were significant adverse welfare effects in the final stages of the hunt, but we could not be more precise. I continue to argue that the reason that that is not decisive of the argument as a whole is that we must compare the adverse welfare effects of hunting with the adverse welfare effects of other methods of controlling numbers.

The fact is that farmers and gamekeepers will kill foxes whatever the outcome of the debate. They are simply not persuaded by the "live and let live" approach. Whether that is rational may be debatable in some circumstances, but it became clear to me and other members of the committee that that is the reality. It is unlikely that an end to hunting will reduce the number of foxes and deer that are killed; at issue is the way in which they are killed. The committee did not have sufficient evidence to reach a clear conclusion on whether hunting involves significantly worse welfare effects than other legal methods of control.

My view remains that hunting with dogs falls short of what we would like to think of in other contexts as "humane killing" but the sad fact is that so do many of the other methods likely to be used. That is especially true for fox hunting. The committee was able to say that laming comes quite close to humane killing when it can be practiced in the right circumstances, but it is not available everywhere. Snaring has particular

problems and clearly fails the test of humane killing. Although shooting with shotguns might be humane under some circumstances, it also has the capacity to wound and injure without killing. The problem of alternatives is even more severe in upland areas, where lamping is not possible and dense forestry provides a great deal of protection for foxes. So the balance of the welfare case for a ban on hunting foxes with dogs remains very complex. Without further evidence, I find it very difficult to see how anyone comes to a clear view on the issue.

This is not the time to deal with deer hunting and coursing. As the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, has already mentioned, the welfare arguments against deer hunting are probably more certain because a skilled stalker of deer probably has a distinct edge over hunting from a welfare point of view. But we also pointed out in our report that there are other complications in deer management. The welfare arguments against coursing are probably the clearest of all, as population control plays no part. But I have a residual worry that a ban on coursing would not eliminate the activity but would merely result in diversion into other forms of coursing.

Those are a range of reasons why I concluded that it was difficult to reach a very clear view on the issue of welfare, and that to use that argument in a very strong position, one way or the other, continues to fall some way short of the sort of evidence needed to make substantial political interventions. I can see why many people intuitively are concerned about the welfare aspects of hunting. We know that lots of people are upset by the ritual of hunting; they do not like the idea of it at all. But they must answer the challenge of the welfare problems involved in control of populations of foxes and deer by other means. I will not be convinced by the argument that there is no reason to control those populations—that they will control themselves—until farmers and gamekeepers are also persuaded of it. Indeed, I suggest that most people who live in the suburbs of London would say that there is not much evidence of foxes controlling their own numbers.

At the same time, those opposed to a ban on hunting should recognise and accept that hunting for most participants is a recreational activity and that there are associated welfare problems. It will not necessarily be the case that the balance of the argument will forever remain unknowable or complex. Over time it may be possible to make progress on obtaining more evidence on the matter.

I shall use the remainder of my remarks to comment on the process being used to resolve the issue. I must confess that, when I embarked on the inquiry into hunting, I hoped that the process might be able to narrow some of the areas of debate and to throw some light on the issues of greatest dispute. During the investigation, I was left in no doubt about the strength of feeling on both sides of the issue. We have seen it already here today. All that I would say is that the people with whom I dealt conducted themselves correctly throughout. I thought that the response to our report was encouraging, and I hoped that it might be possible to find a way forward that would recognise some of the uncertainties surrounding the impact on animal welfare and would command a wide measure of agreement, even if it did not persuade everyone.

Unfortunately, during the debate in 2001, this House made a major tactical error, I am afraid to say, by voting in favour of self-regulation, rather than licensing, from the three options that were put before us. It was evident then that the option of self-regulation would not move us towards a consensus. Support for that option badly misfired. More importantly, the momentum towards an agreed way forward that I saw in some quarters was lost as a result.

Armed with our report and a manifesto commitment to enable Parliament to reach a conclusion on the issue, Alun Michael started a process to try to reach a degree of agreement. It was a noble effort, and, following that, he put forward legislation. The problem is that the House of Commons rejected it and substituted a straightforward ban.

Although I fully understand the frustration of those who favour a ban and feel that the issue has been debated long enough—even my own involvement seems an age ago—I find it difficult to accept the use of the Parliament Act in circumstances in which there is no clear scientific support for the animal welfare implications of a ban. I fear that it can only be divisive in the country at large, as well as being inconsistent with the use of that procedure. For me, it would be an enormously disappointing end to the attempt to find some common ground on the issue. I struggle enormously to see how it passes Alun Michael's test that the legislation should be soundly based and should stand the test of time.

If there is a desire on the part of the Government and of this House to reform hunting in a way that is gradual and avoids the divisiveness that would be created by a simple ban, there may still be a way forward, through a combination of licensed hunting and further reform of animal welfare legislation. I hope that, during our debates, it may be possible to examine that further, as several noble Lords have already said I am in no doubt that, if one had some combination of licensing and change in animal welfare legislation that was generic, rather than being targeted specifically at some activities, certain categories of hunting would be eliminated over time. I suspect that we would see fewer hunts, and I suspect that the day-to-day behaviour of those engaged in hunting would change. There would be less intrusiveness among those who do not want to be part of it. I also suspect that the interest in hunting would decline. For many of the people whom I met during my travels, the threat of a ban and the perceived attack on the countryside have played a bigger part in maintaining support for hunting than any desire that they had to participate in the activity. That has been one of the paradoxes of the debate.

I hope that it is not too late for a determined attempt to find a way forward on the issue that is evidence-based; gives the courts a clearer role; reflects the realities of farming; has a chance of commanding support on both sides of the debate; and, above all, will stand the test of time.

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History repeats itself for Professor Stephen Harris

Posted on [October 29, 2015](#)[October 29, 2015](#) by [thealdenham](#)

Zealot – “a person who has very strong opinions about something, and tries to make other people have them too” – Online Cambridge dictionary

A zealot explained, but what if that person is an academic and someone you expect would take into account all the available evidence before forcing his very strong opinion on the nation. What if that opinion was being wielded by Politicians to further restrict a sector of society from carrying out their already arduous and thankless task?

The League Against Cruel Sports have recently published research from an academic going by the name of Professor Stephen Harris. They are going to attempt to use his opinion to convince the Scottish National party (SNP) that the use of only two dogs instead of a full pack to flush to guns is less cruel in the hope this makes it even more difficult for the Conservative party to then bring England and Wales into line with Scotland in using a full pack.

I have a very big problem with Professor Stephen Harris and his opinion because he touts the following in his latest funded research by the League Against Cruel Sports.....

Professor Stephen Harris,

“The scientific evidence is clear: any losses of lambs to foxes are minor compared to other forms of mortality and studies in Scotland have shown that fox numbers are determined by changes in the habitat, not ‘pest control’. Improvements in husbandry would have a much greater benefit in reducing lamb losses than hunting foxes.”

.....**he was also present at both the Burns inquiry and Portcullis hunting hearings and is fully aware of the following information including the adjudication against the RSPCA.**

Every Major study (1,2,) scrutinized by the Burns inquiry found farmers cull to PREVENT damage, they shoot the fox before the damage is done. They are looking to achieve low losses with widespread fox control. Rogue foxes exist to remind us of the danger of not carrying out widespread culling of a spree killing animal.

HUNTING WITH DOGS: HEARINGS ON THE EVIDENCE (9-11 SEPTEMBER 2002) Session 1C.
Principle Of Utility: Evidence From Dr Piran White, University Of York

“Prevention of predation is a major reason why foxes are culled (Macdonald 1984; Produce Studies 1995; Saunders et al. 1995; Macdonald and Johnson 1996; Baker and Macdonald 2000 (2); Heydon and Reynolds 2000(1)”

ASA adjudication against the RSPCA they deliberately left off the last part of the sentence in a flyer highlighted in bold.

*‘The *MAFF does not consider foxes to be a significant factor in lamb mortality nationally, **but it should be stressed that this is against a background of widespread fox control by farmers’.***

Incidentally death by natural causes or husbandry to lambs in the modern world is roughly the same wherever you go, be it New Zealand or Australia, that really is nothing more than a red herring. Harris will know that too.

I have left the most telling until last because the basis of this attempt to force the two dog limit in Scotland revolves around two dogs being less cruel than a pack. However the problem I have with that is the last time Professor Stephen Harris involved himself in claims of cruelty was an almost identical scenario. He produced a research document called ‘How a ban will affect the fox population’, in this document it was claimed research showed hunting to be by far the worse method of control for cruelty compared to other methods. However the data was exposed by the original author of the research, (Terence Kreegar), but worse than that it was exposed at the government inquiry after being used to influence politicians and members of the public in very much the same way the League Against Cruel Sports are attempting to use this current research by Professor Stephen Harris. **History repeats itself.**

Kreegar’s dismissive to the Burns inquiry,

“There has been a continuing problem with misinterpretation of my data that apparently began with an anti-hunting group in the U.S. That group’s web page attributed changes recorded in trapped foxes to changes in foxes chased by dogs. This is blatantly incorrect and, I suspect, wilfully done.”

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Wildlife is not at risk, your wallet is.

Posted on ~~October 26, 2015~~ ~~October 27, 2015~~ by [thealdenham](#)

I have three scams for you to keep an eye out for. The first involves leaflet droppers who not only drop off a leaflet for the latest curry house in town but also check under your doormat and surrounding flower pots for keys. They probably sell this information on to a bloke down the pub. The second is an online scam that involves fake air travel websites, you book what you think is a legitimate ticket only to find the website is a fake and a perfect copy of the real website, a friend's son recently lost eight hundred pounds through this scam.

The next is even more brazen and is perfectly legal. This centres around wildlife crime, the format for these sites are all the same. They give the impression they are working tirelessly to stop the complete eradication of our wildlife from the Countryside and they do this on a purely voluntary basis but if you would like to donate or buy a lousy over-priced T-shirt or hoody it all helps.

You can bet they show images of a few poisoned birds and the story of how they were found. Then usually the best line of all, 'tip of the iceberg', used constantly by scam animal welfare charities. What you will not be given are hard statistics. That's because in actuality wildlife crime conviction rates are so insignificant they are barely recorded. How do you feel about donating now?

The whole scam now can be viewed as such, make out wildlife crime is of epidemic proportion, make folk feel guilty through images of dead birds or hares, then they can feel better by way of donation. Surely the most basic scam in the book?

The stark reality is the folk responsible for these wildlife crime websites are out and out narcissists. The new labelling on narcissism appears to be confined to those self obsessing over themselves on Facebook, this is way off the mark, self obsession is only part of narcissist's make up. Try someone with a world view who is not interested in your opinion, they are self obsessed with their own and will use intimidation, abuse and the law to force this view on to you. Basically someone who is a bit of a Scammer but loves having authority on their side, self righteous, they are a slave to a cause upholding the law of the land. The picture on wildlife crime unfold now?

Well sadly it's about to get a lot worse. Only last night did I discover Essex Police were working with a badger group who so happened to have protested against the cull. That's right, the folk who caused the cost to the taxpayer of the badger cull to spiral are now in essence being given credibility by Essex police when there are wildlife managers out their qualified and experienced in this line of work and able to give the police impartial expert advise.

As part of #wildlifecrime week our @EPRuralSpecials have been working with @TheBadgerGroup goo.gl/mfc6ZU



RETWEETS 16 FAVORITES 19

8:09 AM - 25 Oct 2015

(<https://thealdenham.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/plod1.jpg>)

I can relay a conversation I once had with one of these from a badger group who was proudly announcing his group had secured a conviction against a hunt staff member. I pointed out due to his obvious bias, he or any of his group should have been nowhere near a court room to which he replied "Well the judge obviously did not think do". However, a while later as we debated fox hunting he gave me that old chestnut lamb losses are low we don't need fox control. I pointed out the point of control is to prevent damage, widespread fox control keeps lambs losses to a minimum, that's the point of control. He is in essence saying fox control is working as intended. I informed him that was a blindingly obvious conclusion and yet he had missed it it due to his fanatical bias, my point had been proved on his unsuitability for being a witness in a court of law or in any capacity advising the police. Surprise, the discussion we had on the now famous Grace Dent RSPCA backed Claude the cat article was quickly removed, these animal rightist groups cannot stand folk knowing the truth and go to great lengths to hide it.

No surprise then within the last few weeks do we see a case against a member of a hunt for alleged badger sett disturbance thrown out of court. A complete waste of time, a case bought by obsessives with obvious fanatical bias. That the police actually listen to these people can be deemed criminal in itself after all it's our money paying for the subsequent investigations.

When I grew up in the countryside forty plus years ago it was not uncommon for lads to have a birds eggs collection, you would also see lads walking around with air rifles shooting anything that moved. This actually had been going on for generations, they were merely doing what their fathers had done before them. What was strange though is there was still plenty of wildlife compared to today. The only thing that was rare were corvids. Which leads me to that rather unsurprising survey by the GCT and RSPB finding that where predators are in fewer numbers wildlife flourishes, you don't say? You needed research for that?

The real wildlife criminals are the online scammers who want to see wildlife unmanaged but hilariously their campaigns cause conflict. LACS say don't control foxes but then support the Campaign for Hen Harriers, where the fox has has to be eliminated before they can nest, total madness. It's time the Government investigated online website scams concerning wildlife and rap Essex police across the knuckles at the same time for sheer stupidity.

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Shooting down untruths

Posted on October 26, 2015 October 26, 2015 by thealdenham

Written for Farmer James

I have just read an interesting discussion on twitter concerning shooting as the next possible target for animal rights fanatics. It was suggested perhaps the Countryside alliance learnt a lot from hunting and are in a good position to defend shooting. My first thought is we don't defend, we attack, we attack with the history of the past and show normal folk the untruths used to obtain a ban on hunting and how that translates into a ban on shooting. We will never convince the fanatics and Labour MPs to see it our way, they are narcissist pure and simple, they cannot change their view their personality disorder is dictating to them. When you write or explain your case its for the benefit of normal people who have the power of reason, they are not stupid, tell them the untruths used to obtain a ban on hunting and they will reason the same type untruths are being used against shooting, they will be correct.

So could the Countryside alliance have done better over hunting? I don't believe so, the problem being the way media was back then. Basically you could print an untruth in a newspaper advertisement or in a flyer handed out down city / town centre high streets and by the time it was brought before an ASA hearing the damage had been done. Simply folk will have seen the fox with its entrails hanging out with the comment it had been killed by disembowelment by hounds, but they will never read the ruling stating the fox had actually been shot a few months later. So the Countryside alliance would win the ruling but members of the press were not interested in reporting it. I even believe our foes knew this so carried on seeing what they could get away with. Can you imagine that now with twitter or Facebook, ritual humiliation for our foes?

* ASA Adjudications at the foot of this blog.

Could the Countryside Alliance have done more at the Burns inquiry? Again I don't believe so purely on the basis they acted as normal honest folk. Burns asked the stakeholders not to go to the public until after his findings had been reported to parliament, the Countryside Alliance stuck to that. If they went to the press over the Kreegar affair and the untruths discovered by the enquiry team before Burns had a chance to report his findings then Labour Politian's would have been screaming bloody blue murder. Ironically the opponents of hunting did go to the press against Burns wishes on two occasions showing the ball was well and truly in their court, just more deceit to add to the growing list.

Simply the insidious toxic nature of our opponents the Countryside alliance struggled to comprehend as we all did. It's only now we realise we were dealing with plain old narcissist's.

So when Burns report findings were announced it would have been a good time for the Countryside Alliance to propel the Kreegar incident to the fore and take up the battle but the Animal rights spin machine prevented this by simply putting out the nonsense that the Burns inquiry had found in their favour and at this very moment the Countryside alliance are distancing themselves from the report. Simple but effective, from then on The Countryside alliance could only defend, the kreegar incident went largely unreported until after the ban was in place.

So for the record, I wrote to the RSPCA in late 90s asking why they had changed their opinion on hunting and now prefer shooting. They told me they had scientific evidence proving hunting worse by far than other methods of control. They not only told me but everyone else who would listen the same including Politian's. Only when this scientific evidence was produced for the Burns inquiry did the original author of the study get to hear of it in America and wrote to Burns explaining it has been deliberately corrupted.

Kreegar to Burns

"This has been a continuing problem with misinterpretation of my data that apparently began with an anti-hunting group in the U.S. That group's web page attributed changes recorded in trapped foxes to changes in foxes chased by dogs. This is blatantly incorrect and, I suspect, wilfully done"

The anti hunting team calling themselves deadline 2000 and later the CPHA comprised of the the RSPCA, LACS and IFAW went onto deliberately corrupt the Burn's inquiry findings knowing full well their supporters have confirmation bias, ie will only read their interpretation of the burns inquiry. A major key finding of comparison of welfare was corrupted in this example,

Burns inquiry

*"Our tentative conclusion is that lamping using rifles, if carried out properly and in appropriate circumstances, has fewer adverse welfare implications than hunting, including digging-out. However, in areas where lamping is not feasible or safe, there would be a greater use of other methods. *We are less confident that the use of shotguns, particularly in daylight, is preferable to hunting from a welfare perspective. We consider that the use of snaring is a particular cause for concern"*

Dealine 2000/CPHA

*"They concluded that where a need to kill foxes is demonstrated or perceived: "lamping using rifles, if carried out properly and in appropriate circumstances, has fewer adverse welfare implications than hunting, including digging-out." In areas where lamping is not feasible, * the use of dogs to flush foxes to waiting guns can be humane and effective if properly..."*

*the use of shotguns deemed less preferable in the Burns enquiry has been switched to flushing to guns in the second version. For the record burns did not say flushing to guns was "effective" or "humane"

Keeping telling the truth and show the untruths of the past, we cannot give in to bigotry, prejudice. Remember above all, you`re normal they`re not

* ASA rulings against the RSPCA, IFAW and LACS

Complaint upheld: The ASA determined that the RSPCA's claim that "Independent polls have consistently shown that most people in this country agree with us" was not true.

Complaints upheld: The ASA determined that the IFAW implied a 30-year-old practice was current; that 'full of soil' was an exaggeration; that submitted evidence was insufficient.

Complaints upheld:

The ASA determined that LACS was misleading and inaccurate in their use of a quote from the Burns Inquiry.

Complaints upheld: The ASA determined that LACS was misleading and inaccurate in a pamphlet about hare hunting and coursing, including using no-longer-accurate data from 1951 when current information was easily available.

RSPCA – In an advertisement concerning stag hunting, the ASA upheld a complaint that the advertisement gave the impression that stags are caught and killed by hounds. In fact, stags are brought to bay, (a defensive posture,) and shot with a licensed firearm or humane killer, a fact which the advertisement concealed.

The photograph in one advertisement claimed to show a hunted fox that had been killed by disembowelment. In fact, as the RSPCA later admitted, the picture was of a fox that had been shot dead, then partly eaten by hounds some time later. The ASA upheld a complaint that the picture was not genuine, and did not represent what happened to a fox killed by a hound. The ASA also asked the RSPCA “to ensure that they could demonstrate that the pictures used in future advertisements were representative.”

The RSPCA advertisements claimed that foxes are not an agricultural pest problem, citing the Ministry of Agriculture’s position as “the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food estimates the number of lambs taken by foxes to be not significant.” The Countryside Alliance submitted to the ASA an actual text of the Ministry’s position, which reads “The Ministry does not consider foxes to be a significant factor in lamb mortality nationally, but it should be stressed that this is against a background of widespread fox control by farmers.” The ASA asked the RSPCA “to ensure that they did not select quotations in a way that could mislead in future advertisements.”

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James Barrington’s dismissive of an online petition

Posted on [October 21, 2015](#)[October 21, 2015](#) by [thealdenham](#)

During this week my attention was drawn to an online petition. This petition is remarkable in that it asks for the RSPCA powers of prosecution to be retained when they did not have any in the first place. I then remembered this petition has done the rounds a while back and merely resurfaced, so I checked out previous posts I made and slightly fortuitously came across a response from the great James Barrington who took it apart piece meal.

Please read the first two paragraphs of the petition and the subsequent dismissive by Mr Barrington. I strongly suspect the petition information in it’s entirety is so untruthful as to only warrant James attention on the first few paragraphs. And I also ask you to consider the following comment made to me still viewable online by the petitions originator back in May 2013.

“The Burns enquiry most certainly did not say hunting was less cruel than other methods. In fact the Burns enquiry was not asked to comment on cruelty”

Online petition,

“Support the RSPCA in their stand against fox hunting. Pro hunting MPs are trying to destroy the ability of the RSPCA to prosecute illegal fox hunting. We must all stand behind the RSPCA to show they have huge public support. Over 700 hours of Parliamentary time was spent discussing hunting with hounds. Lord Burns was commissioned to produce a report on whether or not hunting is cruel. The findings of The Burns report show that hunting with hounds is indeed cruel and seriously compromises the welfare of the fox. Foxes have evolved for speed over short distances, fox hounds are slower, having been bred for stamina in order to make the chase last as long as possible to give the riders a fun day out. The unlucky fox will run his heart out, and then one of three things will happen. He may escape, although it has been shown that animals that are hunted to exhaustion may often die of shock and stress even if they manage to get away from the dogs. They can suffer from multi-organ failure due to the stress of the chase. If the fox doesn't manage to evade the dogs, he may go to ground in a badger sett or a den. The sett is sometimes blocked to prevent the poor animal from trying to hide, but those that do go to ground are surrounded and the terrier men get to work. Underground battles between terriers and foxes can be protracted and can cause horrific injuries to both animals as the fox fights for his life. A fox that is caught out in the open by the hounds is not quickly dispatched by a quick nip to the back of the neck, as is stated in the pro hunting literature. The animal is literally torn apart. It has no chance against the number and the size of the dogs, and it is quickly rolled onto its back and usually disembowelled”

The petition in full can be found here.

<https://www.change.org/p/prime-minister-david-cameron-rspca-must-retain-its-powers-to-prosecute-hunters-who-break-the-law> (<https://www.change.org/p/prime-minister-david-cameron-rspca-must-retain-its-powers-to-prosecute-hunters-who-break-the-law>)

James Barrington`s dismissive,

There are so many untruthful statements here:

1. Pro hunting MPs are not trying to prevent the RSPCA from prosecuting hunts or indeed anyone else for that matter. What they want is for the RSPCA to act proportionately and to take cases that involve real cruelty and are genuinely in the public interest. Also not to rely on costs being paid out of the public purse whenever they lose a case.
2. Lord Burns and his committee of inquiry did not conclude that hunting was cruel. As he stated in the House of Lords on 12th March 2001, “Naturally, people ask whether we were implying that hunting is cruel...the short answer to that question is no. There was not sufficient verifiable evidence or data safely to reach views about cruelty.”
3. The claim that foxes “can suffer from multi-organ failure due to the stress of the chase.” comes from a misrepresentation of the work of Dr Terry Kreeger – one that was repeated at the Portcullis House hearings in 2002. Dr Kreeger strongly refutes such a conclusion and points out that his work has been misused in this regard.

It would indeed seem that the anti hunting argument has to rely on untruthful statements to fool the public into opposing hunting with hounds.

Additional information from The Aldenham,

I would just like to add myself the information Dr Terry Kreegar submitted to the Burns inquiry and can be still viewed online by those not wanting to disseminate false information.

“The statement, “a North American study showing that hunting a fox for five minutes in a ten acre enclosure causes as much physiological suffering as catching one in a leg-hold trap. On post-mortem the foxes showed haemorrhage of heart and lungs and congestion of adrenal glands and kidneys. Blood analyses showed high levels of enzymes reflecting tissue damage” is INCORRECT.

I have not published that chasing a fox with a dog causes changes that are less than/equal to/greater than being trapped. The post mortem changes that are quoted are applicable ONLY to TRAPPED foxes. We never published post mortem analyses on CHASED foxes. It appears that people are taking trapped fox data and applying it to chased foxes. The only published data referring to chased foxes are the elevated heart rates and body temperatures that appeared in the Canadian Journal of Zoology (see below).

The statement “Red foxes caught in foothold traps developed Cclassical stress responses characterised by increased HR [heart rate], increased HPA [hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical] hormones, elevations of serum chemicals, and neutrophilia” is CORRECT as it refers only to TRAPPED foxes. However, if a reader is not reviewing the information critically, it may appear that these findings apply to chased foxes as well”

“This has been a continuing problem with misinterpretation of my data that apparently began with an anti-hunting group in the U.S. That group’s web page attributed changes recorded in trapped foxes to changes in foxes chased by dogs. This is blatantly incorrect and, I suspect, willfully done”

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There are none so blind as those who will not see

Posted on [October 19, 2015](#)[October 19, 2015](#) by [thealdenham](#)

Eleven years ago the Labour party conference was held down in Brighton and was notable for the large peaceful protest by hunt protesters concerned about the impending ban on hunting. Ironically, the main thrust of the protesters complaint was the possibility of six to eight thousand working class jobs, many in remote rural areas, that could be lost if hunting was to shut up shop completely. Surely a Labour cause? Actually the Rural, Agricultural and Allied Workers (TGWU) now part of Unite union appear never to even balloted its members on the subject of fox-hunting but merely took up the anti hunting stance to gain favour from their masters in the Labour party.

The protesters were kept well away from the conference centre and one Sussex policeman remarked to a friend on our good behaviour and apologised for the behaviour of the London Metropolitan Police who he said appeared to come down looking for trouble and acted in a provocative manner. He further went on to say they did not want them down at Brighton and they could have easily coped. This very revealing comment goes some way to explaining the scenes witnessed in parliament square two weeks previously.

The only trouble witnessed that day was caused by a Labour MP from Manchester called Gerald Kaufmann who, against police advice, deliberately walked through the protesters knowing this would cause provocation and abuse. Naturally a set-up, as he then wrote an article in a newspaper the same week in which he referred to folk protesting over possible job losses as ‘Larcenous scum’. It could be said Kaufmann partially succeeded where the very good friend of the Prime Minister and head of the London Metropolitan Police, a man going by the name of Ian Blair, failed.

Interestingly, he was forced out of office by Boris Johnson.

Fast forward eleven years and we now have a Tory conference in Manchester, oh the irony. This attracts Labour Protesters, not out of any concern over jobs, but over democracy and the unfairness of the first past the post system which incidentally never appeared to bother them when Labour won elections. I must confess to once using that line of argument to point out Blair was banning hunting with dogs with only 33% of the vote to be told by a left wing anti hunt fanatic, 'Tough titty mate that's democracy for you'. I accepted that point.

This violent, egg throwing, spitting, 'Tory Scum' shouting hate mob were allowed to get close to the Tory conference goers, who were not looking for confrontation. This hate mob are not there to debate they are there purely to intimidate and abuse in the hope their world view is forced on folk. They use causes and campaigns as a way to promote themselves, look at me, slave to a cause, aren't I just great. If we were 'larcenous scum' Gerald Kauffman I am not impressed with your 'dregs of society' mates.

Don't be fooled, what we saw in Manchester was a gathering of personality disorders with Corbyn the main speaker, he personifies this mob.

It should be to Corbyn's credit that he once turned up at a meeting in Parliament of those who turned their backs on anti hunting in favour of animal welfare. However, he was merely gesturing in a 'look at me I have heard the alternative but have not been swayed' manner. Which so happens to be very bad news for Corbyn because I know he would have been informed that at least eight officials and monitors have left the League Against Cruel Sports after discovering a ban would increase suffering as alternative methods are used to replace those used in fox hunting. And yet, armed with this knowledge, Corbyn was one of the very first to sign Paul Flynn's faux early day motion that derived from a Sunday Mirror article on a claimed nationwide shortage of foxes for hunts to pursue back in July. **In essence Corbyn signed up to a contrived deceit as there was not a nationwide shortage of foxes as has been proven by the anti hunting bodies of all people. He did this in the full knowledge eight officials and monitors of these anti hunting bodies left claiming a ban on hunting would increase suffering.**

Corbyn has proven he is not for listening and will continue up a blind alley to follow his own world view which he hopes to pursue with a mob mentality.

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