

**Submission  
No 240**

**INQUIRY INTO EXHIBITION OF EXOTIC ANIMALS IN  
CIRCUSES AND EXHIBITION OF CETACEANS IN NEW  
SOUTH WALES**

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As a Justice of the Peace NSW for more than 41 years, now retired, I wish to record my support for the existing regulatory and performance control regime.

It is already regarded as the most stringent and effective in the world, and has originated many of the safety and performance systems that have become standard in many countries.

I Over a period of more than half a century, I have inspected most of the presentations of performing animals in Australia, and in several developed and developing countries, and ours compare more than favourably with any overseas ones.

Relevant researchers have confirmed that Australian exhibitors use only positive reinforcement - the same method every primary-school teacher uses in the classroom to teach reading, writing and maths.

As you may be aware, several urbanised countries subsidise the visits of performing exotic animals, as a potent means of discouraging anti-social behaviour among younger society members. Crime rates go down, when youngsters are positively engaged and diverted.

Australian Circuses have not asked for this, although many overseas governments say their experiences confirm that they are economically justified.

You may also be aware that the very survival of some genera of animals depends on control groups, of which mobile exhibitions fulfil an integral role in education and genetic dissemination.

It needs pointing out that children and adults find this type of instruction both enlightening and fun. More enjoyable, at all levels (and therefore much more effective), than any other type of education this field.

It is the only form of relevant live instruction available in most non-metropolitan areas of this State, a situation that only partly remedies the cultural deprivation of people in these areas. There appears to be no advantage, and significant further deprivation, in the proposed regime.

Its unexpected consequences clearly discriminate against country children.

“Experience teacheth more than instruction”. (Attributed to Aristotle)

In view of all this, I wish to record my opposition to the un-necessary and economically-discouraging provisions of the regime currently under consideration.

Yours sincerely,  
John MacDonnell.