Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Wild Animals in Travelling Circuses (Scotland) Bill

Written submission from Nathan Roche

I am in favour of banning the use of wild animals in circuses. It is well documented that they are cruelly treated to force them to perform, and circuses cannot provide anything like a natural environment for such animals as elephants, big cats, camels etc. The reality is they are often chained up and spend most of their time in small cages, nothing like their natural environment, causing major physical and psychological harm. There is no justification for animals to be made to suffer like this, for all of their lives, for the profit of a few. There can be no educational benefit in seeing animals abused, humiliated and forced to perform unnatural tricks. This does not teach children to respect animals. There are many successful circuses with only human acts - of course the humans are performing of their own free will, not as captives and slaves!

For a long time a large majority of people in the UK have been against the use of wild animals in circuses (shown in your public consultation). I have myself joined protests against animal circuses in the UK and some other countries. In several other countries bans on wild animals in circuses have been enacted some time ago, and animals have consequently been rescued and rehabilitated, but in England moves to ban this have been blocked again and again in parliament and the Conservatives have done nothing. Now in Scotland you have the opportunity to be the first to say goodbye to this form of obsolete animal abuse for so-called entertainment.