PETA WANTS LARRY THE CAT TO 'PURRSUADE' THERESA MAY TO GET BIG CATS OUT OF CIRCUSES

Wednesday 10 August, 2016

Group Hopes Number 10's Feline Will Become Official Spokescat

London – Life at Number 10 may be *paw*sitively posh for Larry the cat, but his feline brethren who are used and abused in circuses aren't so lucky – which is why PETA has sent a letter asking him to be the official spokescat for its campaign urging Prime Minister Theresa May to ban big cats and other wild animals from circuses. The letter asks Larry to imagine having his beloved toys and catnip taken away and being forced to live with his arch-nemesis, Palmerston, just as wild animals in circuses suffer in barren cages without any enrichment and are often forced to live in dangerously incompatible groups.

"Big cats and other wild animals used in circuses never have the freedom to roam or the opportunity to enjoy a warm sunlit nap", says PETA UK Director Elisa Allen. "As PETA's official spokescat, Larry would call for a long-overdue ban on this archaic cruelty and help usher in a new era for Britain in which no cat, no matter his or her size, is mistreated."

PETA – whose motto reads, in part, that "animals are not ours to use for entertainment" – notes that in addition to being confined to cages or boxcars for long periods of time and denied the opportunity to engage in natural behaviour, wild animals in circuses are forced to perform tricks under threat of being beaten, whipped, or shocked with an electric prod. They commonly suffer from chronic health problems, abusive treatment, psychological disorders, and aberrant behaviour – and many die prematurely.

PETA's letter comes after David Cameron's failure to act on his promise to ban wild animals from circuses by January 2015, despite overwhelming public support evidenced by a Defra consultation, which saw 94 per cent of respondents, including the British Veterinary Association, in favour of the ban.

If Larry agrees to be PETA's spokescat, he'll join Michael Sheen, Martin Freeman, and Ann Widdecombe in teaming up with the group to push the government to join Austria, Bolivia, Finland, India, Mexico, and many other countries in prohibiting wild-animal circus acts.

Read PETA's full letter to Larry here. For more information, please visit PETA.org.uk.

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