



## Disturbing the peace

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

MAHATMA GANDHI<sup>1</sup>

Natural diets based on raw meaty bones promote the health of pets, the human economy and the natural environment but, I admit, I used to believe the opposite. As a 1972 graduate of the Royal Veterinary College at the University of London I was trained to believe that pet dogs and cats are best fed on processed food hygienically sealed in cans and packets. Oral disease and ‘dog breath’ were scarcely considered, being accepted as a commonplace condition of the domestic carnivore. As a student, sitting at the back of the class, it suited me to subscribe to the prevailing orthodoxy.

Fortunately, discussion with colleagues and the hard lessons of practical experience later overturned my faith in the commercial offerings — but it took time. There was no ‘Road to Damascus’ style of conversion but rather a series of events over a number of years. Meanwhile I fought against the creeping realisation — after all the majority of my profession still believed in processed foods and the regulatory authorities were known to deal harshly with those who took an independent line. When my inner turmoil finally subsided and the contradictions dissolved I was convinced that I should actively help my clients towards the new understanding.

Where previously diet hadn’t featured in my consultations — whether for serious disease or routine health checks — it was now elevated to a central position. The usual starting point for the discussions