



## Righting the wrongs: charting a new course

*There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world: and that is an idea whose time has come.*

VICTOR HUGO<sup>1</sup>

What's to be done? The answer is lots, and it depends on many factors, not least our imagination. First off we could ask John Mars to reconsider the role of Mars, Inc. We could suggest to him that he dismantle the company's artificial pet food empire and direct the profits of its other ventures to the establishment of a natural pet food industry. But I suspect that that idea, for a number of reasons, will not receive early acceptance. Better, then, that we prepare the ground for a lengthy campaign.

The environmentalists' catchcry 'think globally, act locally' inspired millions, such that Margaret Thatcher was moved to say: We are all environmentalists now. Not long ago, before 1962, that could not be said. In that year Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, her account of the poisoning of waterways and forests by agricultural chemicals. The chapter headings bored into the global consciousness. 'Elixirs of Death', 'And No Birds Sing', 'Needless Havoc' and 'The Human Price' were effective because they were true. Carson lamented:

We allow the chemical death rain to fall as though there were no alternative, whereas in fact there are many, and our ingenuity could soon discover more if given the opportunity. Have we fallen into a mesmerised state that makes us accept as inevitable