

How Advertiser
13 MARCH 1979

A-11

es around us

Protecting turtles

I was disappointed to see that Francee King has once again inappropriately used the Hawaii Newspaper Agency's Dining Out advertising supplement to the Sunday Star-Bulletin and Advertiser to encourage readers to buy and eat products derived from sea turtles. In a recent issue (2-18) King stated that turtle steaks are being brought into Hawaii "from the Grand Cayman Turtle Farm, where turtles are propagated for the express purpose of supplying turtle meat without in any way endangering the species." This is unfortunately reminiscent of Mrs. King's erroneous statements of three years ago (1-18-76) when she attempted to stimulate Hawaii's restaurant trade in turtle soup.

Due to serious population declines, sea turtles are now federally protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Furthermore, based on a lengthy and careful consideration of the facts, officials of the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service have ruled that the commercial activities of the foreign-based Cayman turtle "farm" are not in the best conservation interests of sea turtles. Consequently, the recently passed final regulations on the subject will prohibit importation of all "farmed" (as well as wild) sea turtle products into the United States. Interestingly enough, in California these same products have been banned by state law since late 1977.

I certainly have no objection to King saying nice things about restaurants in Hawaii that advertise in the promotional section she produces. However, it is not proper for her to use this advertising space to promote commerce in threatened species of wildlife. The Hawaii Newspaper Agency has a responsibility to see that this does not take place.

GEORGE H. BALAZS

Monday, March 5, 1979 Honolulu Star-Bulletin A-13

Turtle Steaks

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This is unfortunately reminiscent of King's erroneous statements of three years ago when she attempted to stimulate Hawaii's restaurant trade in turtle soup.

The fact of the matter is that due to serious population declines, sea turtles are now federally protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Furthermore, based on a lengthy and careful consideration of the facts, officials of the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service have ruled that the commercial activities of the foreign-based Cayman turtle "farm" are not in the best conservation interests of sea turtles.

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