

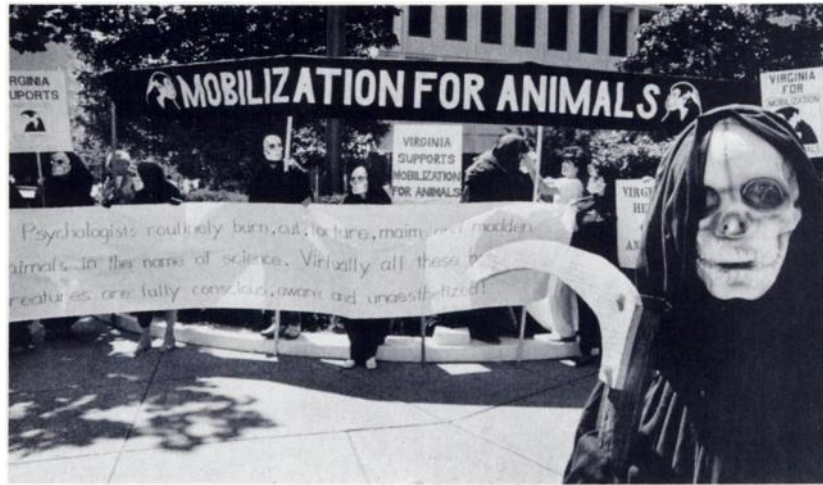
## ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT UNDERMINES RESEARCH AND THREATENS LABORATORIES

The animal rights movement around the world has been creating serious problems in biomedical research "by undermining the public's confidence in medical science and with proposals to restrict the use of laboratory animals through legislation," according to Frankie L. Trull, president of the Foundation for Biomedical Research, a group based in Washington, DC, dedicated to ensuring the responsible and humane use of research animals.

John A.D. Cooper, MD, PhD, president of the Association of American Medical Colleges, pointed out that although most investigators support the humane treatment of laboratory animals "for moral as well as scientific reasons," the goals of fanatics who want to restrict or abolish animal experiments are "absolutely absurd." In an interview with the *American Medical News* (Sept. 20, 1985, p. 3), Dr. Cooper noted that it is still "an uphill battle to convince busy scientists of the severity of the problem."

Howard J. Dworkin, MD, president-elect of The Society of Nuclear Medicine (SNM), said that "it's important for SNM members to be aware of some of the problems that the animal rights movement has caused for investigators." Dr. Dworkin, who is also chief of the Nuclear Medicine Department at the William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, MI, attended a meeting last year of the Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS), where Ms. Trull called for a united effort by the scientific community to educate the public on the necessity of laboratory animals in research.

The animal rights movement has resorted to illegal actions, such as stealing research animals, defacing



*Protests by animal rights groups have forced the scientific community to address the issue of the care of experimental animals. On February 11, 1986, the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine in the United States held a public meeting in Washington, DC, to hear statements from various scientific and animal groups.*

(John Phillips/Chronicle of Higher Education)

laboratories, vandalizing computer equipment, and destroying records. "There also have been threats reported against biomedical researchers, institution administrators, and their families," said William R. Hendee, PhD, vice president for Science and Technology at the American Medical Association (AMA), and a past president of the SNM (*1*).

On April 28, 1985, seven members of the Animal Rights Direct Action Coalition forced their way into the University of California at Davis Primate Center, and were later found guilty of trespassing.

In January of 1985, the Lifeforce group, based in Vancouver, Canada, raided a laboratory at the University of Western Ontario and stole a monkey and three cats. Several months later, Lifeforce took two university investigators to court for "willfully causing unnecessary suffering" to a baboon by keeping it in a restraint chair for four months during an inves-

tigation of cholesterol and lipid metabolism. Lifeforce dropped the charges after the witnesses for the prosecution had testified, but before any witnesses for the defense had been called.

"The opinion of the defense lawyers and many others was that Lifeforce had essentially used the court for public relations purposes," said Trevor D. Craddock, PhD, of the Nuclear Medicine Department at Victoria Hospital in London, Ontario. In many senses, both sides felt that they had won because the baboon experiments had been completed, and therefore terminated, during the trial, said Dr. Craddock, and because the charges against the investigators had been dropped.

"There's no question that those of us involved in medical science need to be very aware of the fanaticism of the various animal rights groups, and the extremely militant actions which

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they are prepared to take in an effort to publicize their cause." added Dr. Craddock, who is also a member of the SNM Scientific Affairs and Research Committee.

### Terrorist Threats

The Animal Rights Militia in England has claimed responsibility for planting four explosive devices found on January 8, 1986, outside the homes of people involved in animal experiments. Bombs were found by a Scotland Yard anti-terrorist squad: in West Sussex under the car of the sales director of Shamrock Farms, a firm that imports and breeds monkeys for sale to research laboratories; in London under the car of an investigator at the Institute of Psychiatry; in Harrogate on the front porch of the scientific director of Hazleton Research Laboratories; and in Staffordshire on the doorstep of a professor of neuroscience at the University of Keele.

The Animal Liberation Front in the United States said that it would not resort to violent tactics, but according to a newsletter of the National Association of Biomedical Research, the Front's press officer did say that many of its members would support violent means, and "I wouldn't be at all concerned if vivisectors were killed, compared with the death and suffering they cause to millions of animals."

### SNM Member Receives Threat

Last September, an SNM member who conducts animal studies received this handwritten letter in the mail from OCTAD, a group believed to be based in Long Beach, CA. Law enforcement officials do not know what the acronym stands for.

*Dear Vivisector,*

*It is time you started placing yourself [mentally] in the position of the animals you systematically torture day after day. Because you will, after your long-awaited death, be in that*

*position, suffering their endless pain and terror, in Hell for eternity. You should prepare yourself now because your long-awaited death is coming, sooner than you might think.*

*You have made this the only road to true success for the anti-vivisection movement, so that road is now being contemplated seriously. Have no doubt that you will pay dearly for the crimes you have committed against God, the precious animals He created, the people who constantly grieve over the things you do, and the human victims [such as the 10,000 deformed thalidomide victims] whose lives have been destroyed by your idiocy and carelessness.*

*If you think you have gotten away with your repulsive, sadistic deeds, you are gravely mistaken. The plan is in the making, and the people involved do not care what happens to them if they are caught. They would rather be dead than to cohabit the planet with freaks like you for much longer.*

*The next time you look into one of your victims' eyes, instead of your usual scientific smirk, you had better cry, for your own wretched soul.*

*The Messenger*

The Animal Liberation Front broke into a University of Pennsylvania laboratory in May of 1984, damaging equipment and destroying records, and stole videotapes that documented more than 60 hours of experimental work with a baboon. The tapes were edited and shown around the country by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). Shortly after the break-in, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which funded the group's research on head injuries, conducted a formal investigation in response to public pressure and telephone inquiries from Congress.

According to *Science*, the baboon's head was encased in a helmet and subjected to a sudden jerking motion,

similar to whiplash from a car accident, causing the animal to go into a coma (2). On July 18, 1985, the since-departed Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Margaret Heckler announced a suspension of the project's funding on the basis of a preliminary NIH report.

The action occurred several days into a PETA protest during which 80 demonstrators occupied the offices of the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke. According to the National Association of Biomedical Research, several scientific associations sent a letter to the HHS secretary stating that the decision "cannot help but create the public impression that you acted under duress, capitulated to the demands of an irresponsible advocacy group, and colluded in their efforts to legitimate and publicize their activi-



**This dog is being imaged in the prototype of an instrument which led to the design and construction of several positron emission tomographs, including the PETT III, PETT IV, PETT V, PETT VI and Super PETT I and II. "These tomographs are used extensively in clinical studies, and it should be noted that the dogs were properly anesthetized and did not suffer from the procedure," said Michel M. Ter-Pogossian, PhD, professor of radiation sciences at the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology in St. Louis, MO. (Courtesy of Michel M. Ter-Pogossian)**



ties. . . . No matter how sound your reasons may ultimately turn out to be, appearing to reward the tactics used at the NIH increased the vulnerability of academic institutions to further break-ins, destruction of property, and the loss of research data of incalculable value."

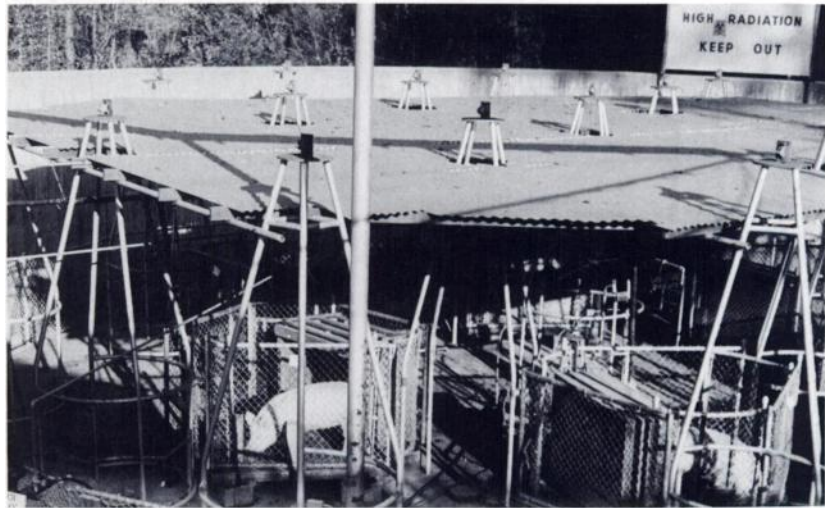
The NIH released its final report on October 4, citing the investigators for not giving the animals enough anesthesia, for conducting surgery in unsanitary conditions, and for inadequate training of laboratory technicians. In addition, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), responsible for enforcing the Animal Welfare Act, fined the university \$4,000 for the abuse of primates.

"PETA pressures regulatory agencies to suspend funding because of animal abuse," according to its promotional pamphlet, and the organization takes credit for the suspension of other NIH grants. PETA distributed video films taken after the Animal Liberation Front's "rescue" of animals in 1985 at the City of Hope animal lab near Los Angeles, which PETA said resulted in the NIH cutting off research funds.

### Pound Laws

"Efforts have arisen over the past couple of years in the United States to impede, if not altogether prevent, the use of animals in biomedical research. These efforts have been directed principally at the passage of local and state laws to prevent the transfer of animals from welfare shelters to research laboratories. So-called 'pound-laws' have been introduced in many states, and several have been passed," said Dr. Hendee (3). He pointed out that 90% of shelter animals are put to death, and restrictions on using these animals for biomedical research increase costs by forcing investigators to buy subjects from commercial suppliers.

Under current law in Ontario, Canada, animal pounds must honor re-



*For external radiation studies, investigators at Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU) in Tennessee expose animals to cobalt-gamma radiation in the Variable-Dose-Rate Irradiation Facility or the Low-Dose-Rate Irradiation Facility. ORAU also conducts assessments of internal radiation effects on animals with a variety of radio-nuclides administered by ingestion or by intravenous or intramuscular injection. (Courtesy of ORAU)*

quests for purchase from scientists, but an amendment introduced last year to the Ontario Animals for Research Act would allow pound operators to opt for destroying an animal instead of sending it to a research laboratory. The University of Western Ontario newspaper reported that 2 million unwanted pets and stray animals are destroyed annually in Humane Society and pound facilities in Canada, while about 10,000 dogs and 5,000 cats are used in research.

Other legislative efforts in the United States included amendments to the Animal Welfare Act, passed by Congress and signed into law (P.L.99-198) in December 1985. The new rules include requirements for additional reporting on compliance with standards, institutional animal committees, personnel training, annual USDA inspections, and increased penalties. Institutional animal committees must consist of at least three members, including one veterinarian and one person not affiliated with the institution "to provide representation for general community interests."

In the first action taken since the new law passed, the NIH suspended funds for all animal research on vertebrates above the level of rodents at Columbia University's Health Science Division and medical school in New York. After an unannounced spot inspection by the NIH on January 23-24, 1986, James B. Wyngaarden, director of the NIH, ordered the suspension that has halted research projects on heart disease, cancer, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), lupus, arthritis, infertility, organ transplant surgery, and birth defects.

According to the *New York Times* (February 3, 1986, p. 1), Columbia was cited for deficiencies in: the number of veterinarians, the sterility of areas where animals recover from surgery, the housing of dogs under quarantine, and the techniques used to minimize health risks to laboratory personnel.

The NIH has guidelines for animal treatment (the Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals by Awardee In-

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stitutions), which the agency revised in June 1985.

The NIH also conducts workshops on the humane care and use of laboratory animals for institutional administrators, animal care committee members, laboratory animal veterinarians, and investigators. The next two workshops will be held on March 12, 1986, in Little Rock, Arkansas, and April 4, 1986, at the Harvard Medical School in Boston. [For more information, contact: Kathleen Masterson, University of Arkansas Medical Center (501) 661-5502; Virginia Werwath, Harvard Medical School (617) 481-0400 ext. 202; Roberta H. Garfinkle, Education Program Coordinator, Office for Protection from Research Risks, NIH, Bldg. 31-Rm. 4B09, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20892.]

The Scientists Center for Animal Welfare also holds workshops on laboratory animal care and how to set up and run animal care committees. The group is planning a series of workshops for 1986 starting with a program on animal pain this spring in Texas. [For more information, contact: Scientists Center for Animal Welfare, 4805 St. Elmo Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814 (301) 654-6390.]

Although the animal rights movement has attracted attention, the general public shows signs of appreciating the role of animals in research. In Switzerland last year voters re-

jected a referendum by a two-to-one majority for a complete ban on vivisection after the animal rights group Helevetia Nostra managed to gather 150,000 signatures proposing that a clause be added to the constitution stating that “vivisection of vertebrate animals, as well as all cruel experiments on animals, are forbidden in the whole of Switzerland.”

In addition, a poll of 1,412 people in the United States, taken by Media General-Associated Press, showed that 80% of the respondents believed that animals were necessary for research (although 30% believed that they were not treated humanely), and 90% approved of using rats although only 55% approved of experimenting on dogs.

### Greater Value to Human Life

As medicine reaches into new frontiers, public debate on the ethical use of animals in medicine will continue. In light of the animal rights groups that protested the use of a baboon heart last year in the infant “Baby Fae,” the *Journal of the American Medical Association* recently published an article stating that it seems ethically defensible to allow research involving xenografting when no reasonable alternative therapy exists. “The immediate nonavailability of such options, when combined with a moral point of view that accords greater value to an individual human life . . . would appear to justify, at least for the time being, killing

animals for the purposes of further research involving xenografts.” (4)

The only effective counter-measure against the animal rights movement is the education of elected officials and the public at large about the need for continued use of animals in biomedical research, said Dr. Hendee. “Now would not be too early for individuals within each state to develop an appropriate public education program on the role of animals in biomedical research. Otherwise, we may find ourselves saddled with a series of laws that will seriously handicap continued progress.”

[For more information on laboratory animal legislation and animal rights groups, and to report any threats from these groups received by your institution, contact: Barbara Rich, National Association for Biomedical Research, 818 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 303, Washington, DC 20006 (202) 857-0540.]

*Jillian E. Frohman*

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*This rat is being scanned by a gamma camera at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) in Tennessee to determine the biodistribution of a test compound. (Courtesy of ORNL)*