Letters

Animal-Care Laws: The Mood of Congress

For many years American scientists have believed that the general public and clear-thinking congressmen would not support the legislative restrictions on medical research for which "humane" societies have pressed. But now research laboratories are being seriously threatened with federal legislation which will impede the use of laboratory animals. Congress promises to bring forth from committees in the near future a bill or bills affecting all laboratories which buy animals across state lines or which receive funds from federal sources. Effective action by an alert scientific community will be essential to prevent inclusion of serious restrictions on all experimentation on "higher" animals.

In 1963 hearings were held on legislation concerning laboratory animals, and, although no legislation was forthcoming immediately, the seeds were sown for a variety of later bills.

At those hearings the research community presented an ill-prepared defense and little offense. As a result, the government published a document (*1*) which provided laymen with accounts of a variety of alleged "inhumane" acts against dumb animals. Thus encouraged, the antiexperimentalists greatly increased their efforts, using fragmentary evidence and poor documentation but with a flare for propaganda devices. They convinced legislators that the prevalent attitude of scientists toward animals was one of callous indifference. Attempts by scientific groups, such as the New York State Society for Medical Research, to press for constructive legislation based on scientific standards of laboratory care (*2*) met with opposition. In the absence of an effective program to interest legislators or the public in legislation which would provide healthier and better laboratory animals without restrictions on research, the void has been filled with bills backed by antiexperimentalists. . . .

On 2 September 1965 a hearing was held by a subcommittee of the House Committee on Agriculture (*3*) concerning a bill on "pet stealing" (H.R. 9743). Testimony by scientists failed to shake the belief of Representative Resnick, sponsor of the bill, that 50 to 60 percent of all dogs and cats used in laboratories are stolen. These figures were subsequently used in a nationwide broadcast by an esteemed radio commentator, in network TV news programs, and in several newspaper and magazine articles. (The figures were based on the fact that the state of Pennsylvania does not have a "pound" law but yet is one of the larger suppliers of dogs and cats in the northeast; Resnick believes that most of the animals supplied from this state must be stolen.) Other alleged abuses in the transport of animals were discussed at the hearing, and scientists were placed in the same camp as animal dealers and were blamed for such abuses.

At another hearing (*4*), by a subcommittee of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce on 30 September 1965, Representative Rogers of Florida gave the clear impression that he will press very hard for passage of his bill (H.R. 10049) in the current Congress. This bill, which is quite restrictive as now written, is backed by many of the humane societies, including the respected American Humane Society. The National Society for Medical Research, representing 1100 scientific organizations, testified in favor of the Roybal bill (H.R. 5191) and against the Rogers bill. The Roybal bill is a statement of attitudes that the public and scientists should maintain toward medical research and laboratory-animal care; it does not provide for enforcement of its provisions and is therefore not popular with legislators.

In the Senate, Clark of Pennsylvania has offered a bill (S. 1071) setting up licensing procedures based on English laws that were written in 1876. The bill contains many restrictions, including one permitting vertebrate animals to be used only as "a last resort." Esteem for its backers, among them Justice Fortas, one of its authors, has led the New York *Times* to editorialize in favor of this bill (*5*). Many other bills have been introduced.

The legislators' motives are honest and forthright. They are convinced that there is a need for legislation. Their failure to consider the effect on medical research and to recognize that scientists cannot regulate the transport and care of animals by dealers stems from the failure of scientists themselves to state their case effectively. . . .

In New York State several medical schools have recently invited congressmen to discuss the problem of legislation with them. These discussions have been held not only at tea, but also in the animal quarters and in research laboratories conducting animal experiments. The results have been gratifying. Not only have congressmen learned much about animal experimentation, but the scientists have become familiar with congressional feelings. . . .

Only a serious attempt by researchers and their organizations to put effective bills into the hands of leading legislators will persuade Congress to drop the harmful legislation now pending. Such bills should contain provisions for the effective enforcement of high standards of animal care and—perhaps most important of all—for government sponsorship of centralized animal farms where higher laboratory animals would be bred and raised. And there should be a separate bill for the licensing of animal dealers.

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References

1. Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, 87th Congress, on H.R. 1937 and H.R. 3556.
2. *Bull. N.Y. State Soc. Med. Res.* (Dec. 1965).
3. Hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Agriculture, 89th Congress, on H.R. 9743 *et al.*
4. Hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, 89th Congress, on H.R. 10049 *et al.*
5. New York *Times*, 28 November 1965.

The Antiballistic Missile: How Would It Be Used?

There is food for thought in Luther J. Carter's article on the proposed antiballistic missile system (News and Comment, 24 Dec. 1965). An item that I for one have been ruminating on is the evidence of disagreement between Major General Betts

and the anonymous "State Department specialist in politicomilitary affairs."

On the one hand, Major General Betts points out that "Buying seat belts doesn't mean that you intend to smash into the car of someone you don't like" (p. 1698). On the other hand, the politicomilitary scenarist argues, if I may paraphrase, that seat belts will in fact let you play the game of chicken with more abandon—particularly if your car happens to be much bigger than the oncoming one (p. 1697).

Clearly there are those among the ABM proponents who unabashedly regard the ABM (and civil defense) not merely as a shield to reduce casualties in the event of an unavoidable incident, but also as a means for giving the government more freedom to take the risks which would make such an incident, or a worse one, more likely.

For every responsible person who admits to that position, there are *n* more who hold it, but who are reticent about saying so—maybe even to themselves. The magnitude of *n* is unknown, but in view of the obvious political and other reasons for reticence, it is perhaps rather large. One might also ask where the other kind are—the ones who would couple a "purely protective" ABM-CD system with positive moves *away* from the anarchy of power politics. Their voice is lost in the background noise.

Since the reasons for wanting the system probably have a bearing on how it would be used, it is not clear a priori that this particular seat belt would help us to develop decent and enforceable rules of the road.

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French Planning: Some Realities

J. B. Quinn, in "National planning of science and technology in France" (19 Nov. 1965, p. 993), was impressed by the esthetics and symmetry of French planning, as one can be with many French institutions. However, he understated certain realities of the planning process in France.

A number of western European countries have national economic planning. Spain, Turkey, Greece, Ireland, in addition to France have plans, running from 5 to 15 years, covering many sectors of the economy, including science. West Germany, Belgium, Sweden, and, most recently, Italy have comprehensive planning of science alone in relation to economic factors, aiming to bring together all public and private research and development into a single blueprint.

The first point, which Quinn failed to emphasize, is that in general, planning is undertaken to husband limited means, not to manage largesse. The American National Recovery Act during the 1930's was a forerunner of present European planning, and it was a product of our Depression. (Indeed, it is said that Jean Monnet, the father of the French Plan, drew some of his inspiration from the American NRA experience.) The French Plan is no exception to this generalization. It was created in the immediate postwar years when the alternative to planning was bankrupt chaos in France. Planning will no doubt be abandoned, or at least reduced, when the need for frugality ends and private initiative can be more fully released. (A nation behaves like a housewife: her bookkeeping is strict only when her budget is limited.)

Quinn is correct in pointing out that Monnet envisioned a nonenforced planning, with all sectors of the economy joined in a creative and realistic blueprint for succeeding years. Monnet saw planning as a catalyst, a unifying and educational force among disparate industrial, social, and economic elements of French life. As Pierre Massé, the director of the Fifth Plan, wrote, "The spirit of the Plan is a concert of economic and social forces. Jean Monnet realized the Plan could only succeed if all Frenchmen were directly or indirectly involved in its elaboration."

But in France it doesn't entirely work out this way, and this Quinn did not stress. While aiming to be a "consensus," expressing the needs and potentials of each sector of society, it is, in fact, to a large extent a gearing of the economy to the views of the government. After all, the elected officials are the ones who must live with the Plan. Therefore it is they who establish the economic limits within which each of the sectors must adapt its program for the Plan.

The history of the Fifth Plan is instructive in this regard. In June of last year, the public was given a preliminary view of the Plan, 6 months before the final version was to be completed. At that time, one of its options was based on economic growth of nearly 5 percent per annum during the next 5 years. This would have promised a fourfold increase over the Fourth Plan in support for science. But, from newspaper accounts, this "expansive" philosophy conflicted with the restrictive "stabilization" policy of Finance Minister Giscard d'Estaing. D'Estaing's views prevailed, and the growth rate prescribed by the Fifth Plan was reduced, finally to 2.4 percent, in the version which the government accepted just before the elections. Even the OECD criticized this rate as too restrictive. Of course the reduced growth rate meant that the planning in each sector required paring down. Some participants in the Plan viewed the final levels of support as verging on *dégradation*. For example, the "minimal support" requested by the medical research subcommittee was rejected by Plan officials as not minimal enough. A still lower limit was given them, and, as a result, the first page of their final report starts off with a blunt disavowal of responsibility. By their calculations, although overall science will receive a 15-percent annual boost over the Fourth Plan, in medical research there is practically no improvement over the previous Plan. The French governmental agency for medical research, INSERM, is said to have funds for one research fellowship for every 30 qualified candidates.

Whatever the economic justification for restricting the Plan, this sequence of events exposes one of the limitations of the French planning process: it can become, without meaning to, a sort of mild, indirect blackmail. It involves all social and economic sectors in a planning exercise which is obliged to fit the government's views. By committing these sectors to its own program in advance, the government in effect saps their freedom of vigorous protest later on. Along this same line, as Pierre Lelong points out in *Révue Economique*, while the Plan is "liberal, it is certainly not democratic." The members of the numerous commissions for the Plan serve as individuals by appointment, and not as representatives of a particular group, class, or interest. This too may inhibit, later, the development of open, constructive dialogue between these interests and the government. The absence of such a dialogue in science is especially striking in France. During the elections, most candidates prepared "position papers" on science, but science never became the issue in the campaign that it was in Great Britain 2 years ago, or in Norway or Germany last