

Letters

Call for Koryagin's Release

The healing professions, by definition, should deliver humane and compassionate care. In many of the world's nations, however, some health professionals use their skills and knowledge to violate internationally recognized human rights. For psychiatrists the potential for professional abuse is particularly troublesome.

In most countries, psychiatrists are vested with the legal authority to have persons suspected of being dangerous to themselves or to others involuntarily confined in psychiatric hospitals for observation and treatment. Occasionally, arbitrary abuse of such authority takes place in many countries, including our own. But abuse of psychiatry as a systematic means of political control is quite another matter. Since the turn of the century, the Soviet government has used involuntary psychiatric confinement as a punitive measure to silence and discredit political dissidents. Amnesty International estimates that at least 200 persons have been forcibly confined to Soviet psychiatric hospitals for political reasons since 1975 and that the real total is probably much higher.

For the few Soviet psychiatrists who have defiantly opposed the abuse of psychiatry in their country, government reprisals have been harsh. One psychiatrist, Anatoly Koryagin, received a sentence in June 1981 of 7 years hard labor followed by 5 years in internal exile for "anti-Soviet activities." The charges against him included his having corresponded with the British medical journal *Lancet*. During his trial, the journal published an article by Koryagin critical of the Soviet government's use of involuntary psychiatric confinement for political reasons (1).

Before his arrest, Koryagin served as chief psychiatric consultant to the unofficial Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes. Formed in 1977, the commission campaigned for the release of dissidents in psychiatric hospitals. During the group's 4-year existence, Koryagin and another psychiatrist, now living in exile, examined 55 dissidents who had been released

from psychiatric hospitals or who were in danger of being involuntarily confined. They concluded there was no medical justification for the forcible confinement or treatment of these people.

According to his family, Koryagin is now near death in Chistopol prison as a result of a series of hunger strikes. But he has continued his struggle for the politically repressed even from prison. In an open letter to psychiatrists worldwide smuggled out of prison, Koryagin writes, "I appeal to you, my colleagues, not for a moment to forget those who have stood up for the rights and freedoms people need, and now are condemned to spend years in the nightmarish world of psychiatric wards. . . . To remember them and to do everything possible for their release is our obligation."

Koryagin has fulfilled his duty to maintain the integrity of his profession with honor. In 1983, he received (in absentia) the AAAS Scientific Freedom and Responsibility Award for his courageous defense of the principle that "medical knowledge and skills should under no circumstances be used for the purpose of suppressing political dissent."

Focusing international attention on imprisoned scientists has been successful in certain instances in obtaining their release. Koryagin has not been heard from since May 1984. He certainly carried out his professional obligations at great personal sacrifice. At the very least, we can individually and collectively appeal on his behalf (2).

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References

1. A. I. Koryagin, *Lancet* 1981-I, 821 (1981).
2. Send letters and telegrams to Mr. Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Secretary General, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, The Kremlin, Moscow, U.S.S.R.; Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Smolenskaya-Sennaya Ploshchad 32/34, Moscow 121200, U.S.S.R.; Captain Romanov (Director of Chistopol prison), uchr. UE-148/st-4, g. Chistopol, Tatarskaya A.S.S.R. 422950, U.S.S.R.

I was surprised to read that, according to Daniel L. Klayman, Artemisia was a "Turkish woman botanist" (Letters, 23 Aug., p. 706).

Recent migration does not alter the ethnicity of ancient inhabitants. In the narrow sense, "Turkish" covers the people now dominant in Turkey, who have called themselves Osmanlis (Ottomans). In the broader sense, it includes the Tataric group of the Sibiric branch of the Mongolians, as well as other groups stretching across Asia from Turkey to central Siberia.

But it is almost certain that the ancestors of the Carian subjects of Queen Artemisia II came from the Aegean islands. Moreover, during the dynasty (395 to 334 B.C.) established by her father Hecatomnus (395 to 377 B.C.), Caria was Hellenized considerably, especially under her brother-husband Mausolus, who died in 353 B.C. (1).

Artemisia herself, grieving for her remarkably beautiful husband, erected "the tomb of Mausolus, one of the Seven Wonders" (1), and declared a Greek literary contest. The prize went to Theopompus, who defeated such giants as Naucrises, Theodectes, and even his teacher, Isocrates (2). Valerius Maximus tells us that the queen mixed her brother-husband's ashes with water and drank the mixture (3). She died of grief a short time later.

Was Artemisia really Turkish?

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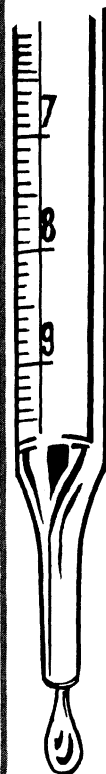
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1. Strabo, *Geography*, XIV, 16.
2. A. Gellius, *Noctium Atticarum*, X, 18.
3. V. Maximus, *Factorum ac Dictorum Memorabilium*, IV, 6.

Genetic "Engineering"?

Ecologists R. K. Colwell, E. A. Norse, D. Pimentel, F. E. Sharples, and D. Simberloff (Letters, 12 July, p. 111) argue that the particular kinds of genetically engineered organisms "now contemplated are 'quite likely,' if inadequately regulated, to lead to some instances of ecological harm." The authors also provide us with several examples of past ecological catastrophes: explosions of turtledove populations, spread of the apple race of a fruit-fly pest, a Johnson grass-commercial sorghum hybrid becoming an "aggressive" weed, and the like. Although none of the examples de-

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rive from genetically engineered organisms, they almost certainly represent new combinations of DNA and underscore the authors' contention that "The forces that actually control a species in nature are, however, frequently elusive and can only be detected through intensive field manipulation." It would seem that only by using new and "sophisticated" techniques of field manipulation available only recently in "experimental community ecology" can we gather the risk assessment data needed "to provide sufficient quantitative information about the potential for negative effect."

If one were to accept at face value the premises and the statements made in this letter, then the only rational response would be to call for a moratorium on the introduction of organisms with new combinations of DNA. Since every human baby contains a unique combination of DNA never before seen on the planet, we clearly could not permit the introduction of these ecological time bombs into polite society until the experimental community ecologists have given us a risk assessment in quantitative terms to ensure that no new Hitlers are in the offing. Immigration must be stopped immediately (the deliberate introduction of new combinations of DNA cannot be permitted). The nefarious activities of plant and animal breeders must come to a halt (that new variety of carrot might take over the planet). Regulations must be written to prevent mutation, unnatural exchanges of DNA in nature, and indeed evolution itself (enforcement admittedly will be a problem).

Does anyone else detect the musty aroma of the Luddites?

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Restricting Immigrant Labor

In their article "The agricultural mechanization controversy" (8 Feb., p. 601), Philip L. Martin and Alan L. Olmstead state that a "rational strategy might be to phase out dependence on foreign workers" by taxing their employers and using the proceeds to fund mechanization research. However, they do not explain the normative assumptions of their proposal, which disregards the interests of those foreign workers whose unemployment they are promoting.

In general, schemes to restrict immigrant labor are subject to economic as well as moral objections (1). By inhibiting the free flow of labor, they encourage

inefficient allocation of capital and impede the efficient use and development of labor resources. From the moral standpoint, the problems are apparent as soon as one casts aside the blinders of chauvinism and considers the welfare of workers worldwide. Martin and Olmstead's allusion to "harvest-of-shame" wages is inadequate, given that the millions of illegal aliens who have eagerly sought work in this country would clearly be worse off if they lost their jobs. The logic of Martin and Olmstead's proposal might aptly be compared to that of taxing the employment of ghetto youths or other minorities hired at less than the minimum wage by an amount equal to the wage differential, and then using the proceeds to fund automation research to eliminate their jobs.

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References

1. D. Collard, *Economic Issues in Immigration* (Institute of Economic Affairs, London, 1970), pp. 65-87; W. H. Hutt, in *ibid.*, pp. 17-44.

In a world without economic or political imperfections, Gieringer's criticism of our proposal to tax the wages earned by temporary alien farm workers in order to accelerate laborsaving mechanization might be appropriate. However, his criticism is misdirected in the real world for economic and political reasons.

A practically unlimited supply of temporary alien farm workers is available at the federal minimum wage of \$3.35 hourly. When the supply of labor is perfectly elastic a wage tax will be paid by employers and not workers, so the tax will not lower workers' wages.

Nation-states are exclusionary—one of their purposes is to establish borders and separate "us" from "them." Nation-states have a universally recognized right to limit the access of temporary foreign workers to their labor markets. We recognize that one can build an argument showing that economic efficiency is maximized with no international barriers to the movement of capital or labor, but we also seriously doubt that an open border is a realistic policy option in the United States today.

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