surprised at the government's rigidity. Jane Cardosa, a virologist at the Institute for Health and Community Medicine at the University of Malaysia in Sarawak, says she called the health ministry in November and again in January, urging officials to look for alternative infectious agents. She also expressed her doubts in a January message to ProMED, an electronic forum for emerging-disease researchers. The government's response, she says, was an e-mail reprimanding her for questioning the official theory. "The ministry made an early presumptive diagnosis, and they have difficulty admitting it was a mistake," she says. When costly fogging and vaccination campaigns failed to halt the disease, she adds, "it became even more difficult to admit there was an error." Lam, too, says "it was quite obvious to us right from the beginning that not all the cases were due to Japanese encephalitis." But not being involved in the official investigation, he didn't look for other possible culprits.

David Quek, editor of the journal of the Malaysian Medical Association, says the episode reminds him of a heart infection outbreak in Sarawak in 1997, in which more than 20 children died. Health authorities blamed that epidemic on the Coxsackie virus—and kept doing so long after scientists had ruled it out as the culprit. This time, says Quek, "we hope that the authorities can be a bit more enlightened. Sometimes it's all right to admit an error." **–MARTIN ENSERINK**

VACCINE DEVELOPMENT

NIH Scientist to Head IVI Institute in Korea

SEOUL—An epidemiologist at the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) has been named the first director of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) in Seoul, Korea. The appointment of John Clemens to a 5-year term is a major step forward for the independent institute, founded in 1997 by the United Nations Development Program to research and promote vaccines in Asia.

Clemens is chief of the epidemiology branch in the intramural program at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, which he joined in 1990. He has spent 15 years in Latin America, Egypt, India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh and has broad experience with pediatric infectious diseases and vaccine development. "He's at home in Asia ... and has real clinical trial experience," says immunologist Barry Bloom, chair of IVI's board of trustees and dean of Harvard School of Public Health in Boston.

Heart and Seoul. John Clemens brings a commitment to pediatric vaccines to IVI post.

Clemens's first challenge after moving to Korea this summer will be to draw up a scientific program for IVI, which has begun to build a $50 million laboratory on the campus of Seoul National University that will be completed in late 2001. He plans to expand studies already under way on the prevalence of disease in the region to include Japanese encephalitis, rotavirus (a cause of diarrhea), and pneumococcal infections. IVI recently launched a study in Korea, China, and Vietnam of *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, which was dethroned as the leading cause of pediatric meningitis in the United States after a successful vaccination campaign. Five major pharmaceutical companies are supporting IVI's effort to study its prevalence in Asia.

IVI is also working with the World Health Organization (WHO) to enroll 600,000 Vietnamese in a test of a promising oral cholera vaccine that costs only 20 cents a dose. "If this vaccine proves to be protective ... it could make a major impact on the global control of cholera," says Clemens.

IVI's long-range goals include helping developing countries raise their rates of vaccination and working jointly with teams of researchers and international health organizations. Its 15,000-square-meter lab will provide space for a staff of 200 recruited internationally and for limited production of vaccines used in clinical trials. Although Clemens has never run an independent research institute, his colleagues are confident that he will learn fast. "He knows how to do what needs to be done," says Bloom.

IVI has already overcome a rocky start. Some saw it as a competitor to private industry and to existing organizations such as WHO (*Science*, 6 December 1996, p. 1607). But 7 years after the institute was first proposed, Clemens asserts that those conflicts have eased. "IVI will serve as a collaborator with WHO wherever and whenever it is appropriate," says Clemens, who has spent 8 years on various WHO vaccine-related steering committees. "But we are not a coordinating agency for other organizations nor a policy-making body [for the community]."

The institute has also survived Asia's economic crisis. The South Korean government, which is paying for the lab, has kept all its financial commitments to date, says Bloom, and the Program for Appropriate Technology and Health, a Seattle-based group that works with developing countries on reproductive technologies, is setting up its Asian office at IVI as part of a $100 million grant last year from Bill Gates (*Science*, 11 December 1998, p. 1971). The grant is expected to be especially helpful in boosting IVI's roster of non-Asian contributors. **–MICHAEL BAKER**

Michael Baker writes from Seoul, Korea.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Activists Ransack Minnesota Labs

The University of Minnesota is reeling from one of the most damaging attacks on a U.S. research facility by animal rights activists in recent memory. The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) claimed responsibility for an incident last week in which vandals stole over 100 research animals and ransacked labs at the university's Twin Cities campus, causing at least $2 million in direct damage and the disruption of dozens of research projects. Some of the sabotaged projects, in research areas such as Parkinson's disease and cancer therapy, involved human cell cultures but no animals.

In a press release, the ALF said it had "liberated" the animals and called other damage "economic sabotage" to "decrease profits to the animal abusers." The attack surprised some observers, however, as ALF, whose North American press office is in Minneapolis, had lately turned its attention to fur and farm operations rather than labs. "This is really the first time in at least half a dozen years where there's been major damage to a biomedical research facility," says Frankie Trull, head of the National Association for Biomedical Research in Washington, D.C., which monitors animal rights groups.

In the Minnesota attack, vandals broke into the basement of a psychology building early on Monday, 5 April, and took 116 rats, mice, pigeons, and salamanders. Among the stolen animals were several transgenic mice for studying Alzheimer's disease that Karen Hsiao's group has described in *Science* (4 October 1996, p. 99). A video released by ALF shows several people in black clothes and masks dropping pigeons into white containers and spray-painting the walls with slogans like "No More Torture" and "Animal Liberation Now."

What happened to most of the animals is unclear. A university animal care official found 14 of the 27 pigeons and five dead and three live rats in a field east of Minneapolis. But ALF spokesperson Kevin Kjonaas questions "the validity of anything coming out of the university right now," noting that ALF usually puts animals into homes.

The vandals also broke into a building housing otolaryngology, ophthalmology, and