

ing and research facility in Alamogordo, New Mexico, conducts research into AIDS, spinal cord injury, and vaccine development. It has long been a target of animal rights groups, most recently when the Air Force transferred 111 chimps, many of them descendents of animals used in the space program, to the facility. In September, the foundation agreed to give up 300 of its 600 chimps after the U.S. Department of Agriculture charged the lab with animal welfare violations related to the deaths of five chimpanzees (*Science*, 10 September, p. 1649). Last month the Center for Captive Chimpanzee Care was awarded custody of 21 of the Air Force chimps.

The lab irregularities are described in a 31-page report by an FDA investigator, who lists alleged infractions without comment.

The report, obtained by In Defense of Animals (IDA), based in Mill Valley, California, states that laboratory workers kept inadequate records of some animal conditions, changed experimental protocols without proper approval, and failed to collect necessary tissue and urine samples. In one case, according to the report, three animals in a study lost approximately 20% of their body weight in a matter of weeks and another died. Despite this, the report states, no animals were removed from the study for medical reasons. Another item notes that there was no documentation of physical and neurological exams required by an experiment. The report also found violations in record-keeping requirements, including data and observations recorded on loose "scrap paper," and noted the use of "deteriorated or outdated reagents and solutions."

IDA says that the document highlights sloppy science by Coulston, which receives much of its support from the National Institutes of Health but also tests new products for pharmaceutical and medical device companies. "It's far more than just record keeping," says IDA's Eric Kleiman. "If a protocol calls for tissue samples to be taken and they're not, that could damage the whole study."

Coulston Foundation spokesperson Don McKinney says the lab has responded to the report with "foundation-wide changes" in record-keeping procedures to comply with FDA requirements. He says he does not believe the infractions jeopardize the validity of the three studies covered by the inspection, but "we always take these things very seriously." Coulston's top management, he says,

met with quality-assurance and scientific staff to discuss the report.

James McCormack of the FDA's Bioresearch Monitoring Program declined to comment while the investigation is still active.

However, in some other cases involving violations of good laboratory practices, the agency has ruled that affected studies could not be included in applications for drug or product approval. Punishments can range from a warning letter to disqualification of the facility. The agency is expected to issue a final report in a few months.

Other researchers who carry out clinical studies with primates say the report is likely to be a blow to the foundation even if it does not affect the results of specific studies. "Anytime FDA raises concerns ... it's a pretty serious matter,"

says virologist and immunologist Krishna Murthy of the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research in San Antonio, Texas, who has served as principal investigator on several primate studies subject to FDA approval. Bill Hobson, president of Sierra Biomedical in Sparks, Nevada, says he would be "surprised" if the research was compromised but that the report could have financial repercussions. "These things are open to the public, and our competitors use them" as ammunition when bidding for contracts, he says.

—GRETCHEN VOGEL



A watchful eye. Chimpanzee studies at The Coulston Foundation are under FDA scrutiny.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

University of Cambridge To Team Up With MIT

CAMBRIDGE, U.K.—When leaders of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) gathered in their Cambridge, Massachusetts, offices to consider which top-notch European university might make the best partner for a broad research and education alliance, it is perhaps not surprising that they chose that other Cambridge, home to one of Europe's oldest and highest profile universities. And their choice may have been swayed by the fact that it's not going to cost them a dime. On Monday, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown announced that the British government would invest more than \$100 million over the next 5 years to help jump-start the new Cambridge-MIT Institute.

Brown was the principal architect of the partnership and first approached MIT leaders about 18 months ago, having been deeply im-

pressed by MIT's track record in converting science into successful businesses. "If you look at what MIT has achieved in its time, it is actually quite frightening," a treasury spokesperson says, pointing at MIT's top ranking in patents awarded to U.S. universities and the more than 4000 companies it has spawned. MIT had been approached by several foreign institutions, but "the fit seemed to be best with the University of Cambridge," says Lawrence Bacow, chancellor of MIT.

The institute will not be built of bricks and mortar, but will make use of existing infrastructures. Staff and student exchanges, joint research and education projects, and adapting MIT's business programs to the United Kingdom are the main ingredients of the deal. The British government will provide about 80% of the total budget for the next 5 years through its Capital Modernization Fund, and private industry will chip in the rest.

Despite Brown's focus on what Britain has to gain, MIT insists it is more than a hired gun. "We'll get a lot out of it as well," says Bacow. "This relationship provides extraordinary resources [for MIT] and an opportunity to collaborate with the University of Cambridge in a lot of areas." Cambridge Vice Chancellor Alec Broers agrees: "This ties together two prime research institutions from two different environments, and that's the way the world will have to go. If you want to be at the forefront of the scientific endeavor, you've got to have an international outlook."

International ties between universities are not new, but what makes this alliance unique is its broad scope. Unlike some more focused collaborations MIT has embarked on, such as a pending deal between MIT's Media Lab and the Irish government that would create a \$200 million information technology teaching center in Dublin, "faculty from all our five schools will be engaged," Bacow says. Whether the new institute delivers will be seen after the initial 5-year funding runs out, when spin-offs and licensing fees are expected to pay more of the bills. If everything goes as planned, Bacow expects a lot more Cambridge-to-Cambridge traffic by next spring.

—MICHAEL HAGMANN



Cementing the deal. MIT's Charles Vest, Gordon Brown, and Alec Broers (left to right).