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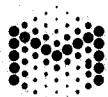
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concern for the monkeys under Taub's care and unconnected with efforts to disrupt biomedical research on animals, even though "the issues in the trial all had to do with animal care."

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A number of recent events have focused on welfare concerns for experimental animals. Holden's excellent account "Scientist convicted for monkey neglect" describes the lack of veterinary care provided to 17 surgically treated monkeys that led to the suspension of funds from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and a court conviction under the state anticruelty laws. At the 13 and 14 October congressional hearings of the subcommittee on science, research, and technology, this monkey case was discussed in some detail. Subcommittee chairman Douglas Walgren called for suggestions for measures that would improve humane standards for laboratory animals. The conference of the Scientists Center for Animal Welfare, held from 11 to 13 November, addressed the responsibilities of scientists toward experimental animals and analyzed the review procedure currently used.

The following ten recommendations are proposed. They are based, in part, on recommendations from the conference of the Scientists Center for Animal Welfare and, in part, on my personal convictions.

Inasmuch as there is general agreement that proper care and use of experimental animals is desirable, it is recommended:

- 1) That public and private funding agencies use consultants with expertise in animal issues to review selected grant proposals that pose special concerns;
- 2) That funding agencies require investigators applying for grants to specifically address animal issues;
- 3) That accreditation of institutions by the American Association for the Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care be fostered;
- 4) That more funds be allocated by public and private sources for upgrading animal facilities;
- 5) That training courses be provided to scientists to increase their sensitivity and knowledge about animal care policies;
- 6) That institutional animal care committees be composed of members with

broad representation of viewpoints and who have no conflict of interest;

7) That inspection and review procedures by the federal government be improved;

8) That a central office be established within the federal government to coordinate federal activities affecting proper use and care of experimental animals;

9) That current policies be reassessed to see if additional requirements would be beneficial to ensuring high standards of humane animal care; and

10) That on a prospective basis, an evaluation be made of the peer review system for animal welfare concerns.

Given appropriate leadership and resources, I believe that support for most, if not all, of the above-listed recommendations would be forthcoming from the biomedical community. As a result, the quality of animal research would be enhanced and the accountability of scientists to the public would benefit.

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Aspartame in Canadian Soft Drinks

Imagine my surprise, while swilling down a can of an aspartame-sweetened Tab, to read the following statement in R. Jeffrey Smith's article "Aspartame approved despite risks" (News and Comment, 28 Aug., p. 986). "The additive . . . will not be used in soft drinks because Searle has yet to find a way of keeping it stable for the duration of a soda's shelf life." How was the trick pulled off (one assumes) in Canada, where drinks sweetened with aspartame have already hit the market? Smith's interesting article could have been improved by consideration of such regulatory decisions in countries other than the United States.

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The impetus for putting aspartame in soft drinks was much greater in Canada, where saccharin is banned for such uses. A spokesman for Searle says that the shelf life issue requires additional study before aspartame can be introduced into sodas in the United States. Canadian soft drink manufacturers, who studied the issue independently, say no further study is needed and no problem exists.

—R. JEFFREY SMITH