



PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

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The Honorable James C. Greenwood
Chair of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee
on Oversight and Investigations
U.S. House of Representatives
2436 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515-3808

Dear Chairman Greenwood:

We hope that you can help primates and other animals cruelly treated in Columbia University's laboratories in New York City. Our organization, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), has more than 750,000 members and supporters dedicated to alleviating the suffering of animals. While we object to the use of animals in experiments, we are also pragmatic enough to know that it won't end tomorrow, so we work to lessen the suffering of those animals unfortunate enough to be caged and killed in laboratories.

Catherine Dell'Orto is a veterinarian who blew the whistle on the horrendous treatment of baboons and other animals in Columbia's laboratories. An internal investigation revealed that almost half the animals she complained about had not received proper veterinary or post-surgical care. Dr. Dell'Orto contacted us when it became clear to her that the university was trying to use its prestige and power to sweep the matter under the rug. It seemed to her that government regulators were aiding and abetting Columbia in this endeavor. Dr. Dell'Orto resigned in February 2003 because of retaliation for having brought these serious deficiencies to Columbia's attention.

We have chosen to write to you because of your chair position on the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and because the House Committee on Energy and Commerce has launched a probe into the spending of monies budgeted to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

We beg you to look into three aspects of stroke experiments on baboons conducted by E. Sander Connolly of Columbia. The baboons used in these experiments were the catalyst for Dr. Dell'Orto's complaint. We believe that the following three aspects need scrutiny:

- 1) Because these animals did not receive adequate or appropriate anesthesia for the surgeries that caused their strokes (their eyes were cut out and a blood vessel to the brain was accessed through the eye socket and clamped off), the results of the experiments are invalid. We have attached a letter from Nicholas Dodman, DVM, a former professor of veterinary anesthesiology at Tufts University, who categorically states that Columbia failed to provide proper anesthesia and analgesia to the baboons. This cruel and botched experiment has wasted more than 1 million taxpayer dollars through NIH funding.
- 2) The repetition of stroke experiments such as those conducted by Connolly on these baboons must stop at some point. We have enclosed letters from

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THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS

neurologists Robert Hoffman, M.D., and Carol Van Petten, M.D., both of whom are struck by the useless and repetitive nature of these experiments. Why does the NIH continue to throw money at something that has not borne fruit?

- 3) E. Sander Connolly is quoted in a May 2001 news release from Progenics, the pharmaceutical company that supplied the test substance for the stroke experiments, as saying, "The positive outcome of this study underscores the potential of DHA to protect patients against the debilitating consequences of stroke." Given the fact that Connolly's test subjects were not provided proper care, it seems quite bold of him to claim positive results for Progenics' product, dehydroascorbic acid (DHA). We would like to know whether Connolly has or had any stake in Progenics. The NIH was funding his baboon experiments, and it would seem that the government would want to make sure that there was no inappropriate or premature position or action taken on the part of the grant recipient that would influence the company's stock.

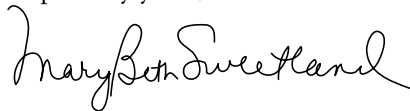
There are other similarly hideous and wasteful experiments going on at Columbia. Michel Ferin places metal pipes in female monkeys' skulls to act as stressors so that he can see how stress affects their menstrual cycles, and Raymond Stark is still fooling around with infusing pregnant monkeys with nicotine to see the effects on their fetuses.

The NIH virtually shut Columbia's laboratories down in 1986 for failure to comply with federal regulations regarding the use of animals in experiments. Now, Dr. Dell'Orto's courageous actions have exposed even more Columbia misconduct. Columbia University does not deserve to receive continued funding from the NIH when it can't even properly follow very minimal animal-care regulations.

Please make this case a part of your inquiry. Please find out what is so rotten in Denmark. The entire funding system needs to be turned on its head. So many billions are wasted on making animals sick, when that money could go to helping humans in need right now.

Thank you so much for your time. We hope to hear from your office soon and would like to add that Dr. Dell'Orto is most willing to talk with anyone about this matter. I can be reached at 757-622-7382, extension 1334.

Respectfully yours,



Mary Beth Sweetland, Senior Vice President
Director, Research & Investigations Department