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18 December, 1990

Dear Director,

A site visit by the American Association for Accreditation in Laboratory Animal Care conducted on November 19, 1990. Several suggestions were made during the exit interview by Dr. John E. Harkness from Mississippi State University and Dr. Bonnie J. Mills from Baxter Healthcare Corp., Santa Anna, California. We were advised to monitor incoming specimens more closely, have genetic evaluations performed on breeding colonies, request a second veterinarian to act as a compliance officer, maintain a greater control and surveillance of personnel entering the animal areas, increase the amount of instruction of graduate students and technicians, compare protocols with grant applications closely and submit more complete minutes of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). During the last 25 years we have observed animal research move from the control and overview by investigators toward increasing control by the IACUC and the administration. With the exception of the "Dog Lab," animals have been removed from teaching. There is a subtle reduction in large animal research and a substantial increase in the cost of research with animals and the time required for its completion.

The future forebodes greater regulation of research, greater cost and decreased creativity in the biomedical field. It is difficult to find individuals who are imbued with great creativity and are willing to make a sustained effort to explore new ideas, methods, etc. in the present climate. If more restrictions and paper work are required, the amount and quality of research will correspondingly decrease. The golden years of the 1960's and 1970's are behind us. I doubt that I will be present at the reading of this missive but wish you gluck, gelt and Gesundheit.

Sincerely yours,

Donald H. Clifford, D.V.M., M.P.H., Ph.D.
Professor and Director
Division of Laboratory Animal Medicine

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