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USE OF ANIMALS IN RESEARCH

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I hate to say it, but, after reviewing the whole procedure, I am convinced that a bullet in the head of each of the goats would have been the most humane method of taking care of the goats on San Clemente. In our relationship with the animal kingdom, I believe that we should be humane in whatever we do. If we must kill animals for food or use them in research, or if we find them useful in any other way, we must be merciful. This we are dedicated to do as veterinarians, and it is the noblest of professions. Please do not let our work be twisted to the adverse in the seeking of profit or acclaim, with specious and overweening rhetoric.

Robert F. Burns, DVM
Lemon Grove, Calif

Use of animals in research

In the *JAVMA* News story about the 1994 AVMA Animal Welfare Forum, in which I was an invited participant, the caption used for my photograph, which says I want to "eliminate the use of animals in research for the benefit of human beings and other animals" (*JAVMA*, Jan 15, 1995, p 130) attributes to me a philosophy that I do not hold.

During my presentation at the Forum, I made it clear that I am opposed to *harming or killing* one sentient being in order to provide benefits to another, which is not equivalent to not wanting to help others, as the caption implies. I argued that you could not define rational,

morally consistent reasons why one individual was, in a holistic sense, more important than another. I argued that the same reasons that forbid us to do harmful research on each other, regardless of possible benefits, logically apply to our treatment of other beings who are similar to us in important ways. I never stated—nor did I imply—that I was opposed to research that might benefit others. Rather, I argued that we would have to find ways that did not depend on harming one creature in order to help another, whether the individual being contemplated for use was human or nonhuman.

Nedim C. Buyukmihci, VMD
Davis, Calif

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