



BUAV condemns the use of animals in grotesque and cruel UK warfare tests

The BUAV, the UK's leading animal organization campaigning to end animal experiments, has called for an end to the cruel use of animals in warfare experiments following further revelations of the severe suffering inflicted on animals at the top secret Porton Down military laboratory in Wiltshire.

The BUAV has uncovered disturbing evidence of animals used in warfare experiments in recent years, including monkeys, pigs and guinea pigs. These animals have been used in research largely to test the safety and efficacy of preventative and therapeutic strategies to diseases or agents that may be used as weapons, or to develop "models" for warfare infections. Many of these experiments involved substantial suffering and resulted in the death of the animals. In some tests, there were no reports of treatment or pain relief given.

Since 2005, over 75,000 animals have been used in tests by the Ministry of Defence. This includes an increase in the number of monkeys. (1)

In addition to the ethical objections of using animals in such grotesque and cruel experiments, the BUAV also points out the inadequacies of using nonhuman animals in an effort to understand human beings. Furthermore, it is not clear that all avenues to study human patients or study diseases in vitro had been explored before researchers began subjecting animals to such cruel experiments.

Examples of animal tests include:

- 1) In an attempt to develop an animal "model" for inhalational tularaemia, a disease caused by a bacterium used as a biological weapon, ten marmosets were exposed to various doses of the bacterium in order to determine the LD50 (the dose causing 50% of the animals to die) while restrained in a head-only exposure chamber. The animals suffered severe effects including fever, abnormal breathing and internal bleeding. Some died; all survivors were killed. None of the animals survived or were kept alive for longer than 13 days.
- 2) In an attempt to develop an animal "model" of inhalational anthrax infection and to determine the LD50, twelve marmosets were exposed to an aerosol containing anthrax spores while restrained in head-only exposure chambers. The animals developed shortness of breath, partial paralysis, disorientation and lethargy. Six animals died and those still alive after 10 days were killed. The infection has painful and debilitating effects and the marmosets must have suffered immensely before experiencing a painful death. There were no reports that pain relief or other supportive measures were provided.
- 3) Guinea-pigs were poisoned with a nerve agent, exceeding the lethal dose by five times. Various combinations of therapy drugs were then injected into their muscles. The animals were observed for signs of nerve agent poisoning. These included incapacitation, abnormal body temperature, and intestinal intussusception (an extremely painful condition where part of the intestine telescopes on itself causing blockage of blood vessels – thus causing gangrene or internal bleeding). Animals in poor condition were killed 24 hours after the poisoning. As nerve agents cause damage to many vital organs

resulting in convulsions, internal bleeding, breathing problems (and eventually inability to breathe), etc., the animals would have suffered severely before they died or were killed.

4) Pigs were used in a test to evaluate barrier creams against sulphur mustard (SM). SM is a liquid warfare agent which causes chemical burns and may cause severe skin lesions that heal slowly. Different patches of skin were pretreated with 3 barrier creams and were then exposed to a high dose of SM through contact with the skin for 5 minutes. After the pigs had to endure the effects of SM for a period of time, they were killed and their skin examined.

5) Marmosets were used in an experiment to investigate what has been called, 'Gulf Veterans Illnesses.' It has been thought that multiple vaccinations (anthrax, pertussis, plague, yellow fever, polio, typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis B, meningococcal meningitis and cholera) and/or the pretreatment against nerve poisoning by pyridostigmine bromide (PB) could have been the cause. The animals were surgically implanted with a transmitter and mini-pump and received a combination of vaccines and PB or saline control. Animals were killed 18 months after the first vaccination and post mortem examination and tests were carried out. The research did not support the theory that Gulf Veterans Illnesses may be resulting from the multiple vaccination and PB pre-treatment. The authors say: the "model was specifically developed to include measurement of indices that directly reflected the signs and symptoms most frequently reported by Gulf veterans; e.g. impaired cognition, sleep disturbances and fatigue." How could they compare the situation of a war veteran with an animal in a laboratory cage?

BUAV's Chief Executive, Michelle Thew states: *"Although supporting the need to ensure the safety of soldiers and civilians in an ever increasing dangerous world, the BUAV is opposed to deliberately causing suffering and death to animals in such grotesque and cruel experiments. It is totally unacceptable to treat animals in this way."*

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<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100209/text/100209w0001.htm#10020971000011>