

# Letters

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## A Role for the Clergy in Animal Welfare?

In connection with M.W. Fox's and J. Rimbach's articles about the term "dominion" in the oft-quoted passage in Genesis (1:26) proclaiming man's dominion over all nonhuman animals (*Int J Stud Anim Prob* 3(3):178 and 198, respectively), I have two questions.

I would ask first whether there is any proof that the interpretation "dominion" is the correct translation for the word that appears in the original script. Rimbach's article seems successful in vindicating the Judea-Christian religion of blame for our prevalent shabby attitude toward animals in general. However, culpable or not, have not the various religions *responsibility* for the righteous treatment of animals, and respect for their proper dignity?

Humanitarians, seeking cooperation from the preachers of these various religions, run into what seems to us to be an apathetic attitude on their part. I'm wondering whether these rabbis and preachers aren't simply at a loss to know *how* to incorporate animals' interests into their services. This is unfortunate-tragic, even - for the animals and animal welfare workers, and for the Church as well. We need the blessing of the Church in our endeavors, and the Church surely must be accountable on this ethical issue.

Second, I would ask: Should not the various religions establish official policies, general and specific, toward animals, and then provide training in such for their leaders?

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## **Firm Support for Culture Training**

I notice that in a recent issue of the *Journal* (3(3):185, 1982) "alternatives" in Canada were discussed. There is, unfortunately, one small error in your report regarding support for Dr. Sergey Fedoroff's tissue culture training course at the University of Saskatchewan. As you may be aware, the course for several years was supported by grants from the Animal Welfare Foundation and the Canadian SPCA of Montreal.

In 1981, the Honourable John Roberts, Minister of State for Science and Technology, responded positively to the Canadian Council on Animal Care's (CCAC) request to the various federal and provincial government departments for support of the course on an annual basis, indicating that funds would be made available through the CCAC budget. Although the CCAC is co-funded by the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), it was the Minister of State for Science and Technology who authorized the support by the CCAC of the tissue culture training program. This support was begun this past summer.

In passing, I would like to emphasize that the 1983 announcement for the tissue culture course has already been advertised. It will be held as a satellite program of the International Society for Neurochemistry's annual meeting in Saskatoon, July 22-29, 1983. (Contact Dr. S. Fedoroff, Department of Anatomy, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada S7N 0W0.)

I recognize that this is a small point, but I would like to keep the record straight with respect to interest in the development of alternatives, not only of NSERC, but also the singular interest of our Minister of State of Science and Technology.

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