

Association for the Abolition of Animal Experiments

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Founded in 1979 under the name of CIVIS

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Animal experiments?

Before the national referenda in Switzerland for the abolition of animal experiments in 1985, 1992 and 1993, as well as the referendum for genetic protection in 1998, numerous personages from industry, universities, economic and political circles, as well as the media warned that the acceptance of these referenda would be a catastrophe for medical research and for the ill: Thousands of jobs would be lost, the animal experiments would be transferred abroad, and – their principal argument – human diseases could not be cured.

Unfortunately, these alarmist warnings were successful and all of the referenda were rejected by the Swiss public. Nevertheless, the chemical-pharmaceutical industry has been eliminating thousands of jobs in Switzerland since 1985, and it has been increasingly transferring animal experiments to Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and the United States, where animal «protection» legislation is either nonexistent or very minimal. Worse still: Despite the use of more than 20 million laboratory animals in Switzerland since 1985 – not to mention the hundreds of millions of animals used in the rest of the world – AIDS, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, diabetes, lupus, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, Huntington's disease, paraplegia and the majority of cancers, rheumatic diseases and cardio-vascular diseases not only remain incurable, but some are increasing on a massive scale.

Attempts to cure these diseases through gene technology have also failed. Since the first genetic modification of a laboratory animal in 1980, tens of thousands of transgenic «animal models» have been created worldwide which supposedly «contract» human diseases. However, the 25 years of research with such animals and the use of several hundred gene therapies on more than 10,000 patients worldwide have led to extremely disappointing results: To this day, there exists no incontestable proof that a single patient has been cured, and since 1998 several patients have died due to a gene therapy.

The fact that human diseases cannot be cured on the basis of animal experimentation is hardly surprising: Due to fundamental differences between species and their metabolisms, animals react differently to diseases than humans. Furthermore, an artificially and forcibly induced «disease» in an animal is not comparable to a naturally and spontaneously occurring disease in a human being.