Critical Headline Times:

Critical or Cruelty?

Mourning parents stared down at their child, their calloused, frail hands gently clasping the one of their dying child. Their skin is pain and crusty, pus pouring out of gaping, infected wounds like waterfalls. This is the bitter epitome of the rest of the ward, maybe even the world. The child’s fading eyes cry out for technology to save them- Technology they already have, but was banned by a radical, indecisive law that fixed nothing. This is the world of medicines banned or released early because of animal testing’s ban, and it is a dark, terrifying world. It must never happen. It must never happen, or we face extinction, death, pain, and loss.

Thousands of children and adults alike lay in their deathbeds, their immune systems brought to pieces by the crushing capsid of Variola. Variola virus, or smallpox, was the scourge of humanity, always coming back to retake its throne and always ecstatically returning to maim and mutilate its victims. The eradication of smallpox was truly a symbol of humanity’s great ingenuity and determination- Yet it could never have been done without animals and animal testing.

Cowpox was a variant of smallpox, as the name suggests. Victory against this brutal virus was only possible through using the cowpox vaccine on cows and humans alike. Without animal testing, millions more lives would be lost every year as smallpox evolves and infects. A victory like this would be all but impossible to achieve without animal testing.

The truth with animal testing is that it’s very unfairly stereotyped. While some animal testing is very damaging and unethical, like the Draize Test, which involves placing it on an animal’s eyes, most are very controlled and safe, and of those that are not, most are used in other sectors, like fashion. There are already many modern standards, protocols and laws concerning animal testing in medicine.

Furthermore, animals involved in test vaccines if successful will gain immunity from the disease. Even if an incident was to occur with a vaccine reaction or disease, modern medical standards force the pathogen to have been weakened or even completely destroyed, and most likely an antibiotic like Amikacin could easily destroy it.

Zoonosis, the phenomenon of diseases spreading from humans to animals or the other way round exists in many diseases. And if a cure or vaccine actually works but killed a rat or two, it could save not just millions of humans but also millions of animals. Which would you choose?

 The point is a little animal dying could save millions of lives. The death would not be a shameful death but a heroic sacrifice to save millions. It’s sacrificing one or two to save unfathomable amounts of people and animals. Isn’t it more ethical to save millions of lives then save one that most likely won’t even anyway?

So we must stop judging animal cruelty the way we do and actually realize that it may save so many people! It’s not fair that we judge medical animal testing as a brutal beast. We must not be ignorant that animal testing has saved millions of billions of lives.

But until then, it’s out from the Critical Headline Times, and we’ll see you on the next one.