

PETA Statement Knighthood Honours for Prof. Colin Blakemore

Monday 16 June, 2014

Knighting someone such as Colin Blakemore – who has not only inflicted terrible pain and suffering on animals but also carved out a career by defending any and all experiments on them at a time when we have learned so much about animals' social and behavioural needs – is surely contrary to the values of traditionally animal-friendly Britons. There's a good reason why Blackmore was the only chief executive of the Medical Research Council in the organisation's history to have left office (in 2007) without being knighted. To knight him now makes a mockery of the government's pledge to reduce the number of animals killed in meaningless experiments. Perhaps once there was a utilitarian excuse for using animals, but in recent years, studies have amply demonstrated that approximately 90 per cent of medicines that pass tests on animals fail in human beings because they aren't safe or don't work. That's an enormous waste of money, animal lives, scientific resources and hope. Our honours system should recognise innovative scientists who use effective, progressive and humane methods that save animals from undergoing painful and deadly experiments in laboratories and that reliably predict results in humans.

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