



eventually leads to an anti-GQ1b immune response in the host and consequent neurological symptoms. Here we present the first example of a bacterial determinant associated with the pathogenesis of post-infectious acute immune-mediated neuropathy. Although the circumstantial evidence is strong, it remains to be delineated whether this association translates into a causal relationship between *csfII* gene activity and GBS/MFS.

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Animal cloning experiments still banned in Italy

To the editor—A news story in the May issue of your journal that reports on worldwide legislation regarding human cloning (*Nature Med.*, **7**, 518; 2001) gives the impression that Italy has one of the most open and advanced policies in the world. This is far from the truth. In fact, an ‘ordinanza’ (legislative power used by the Ministry for urgent and temporary matters) has been in place since March 1997 banning “any experiment targeted directly or indirectly to human and animal cloning.” This rule permits only the cloning of transgenic animals or endangered species assuming that cloning is a routine technique that does

not require experimentation¹.

In 1999, when our laboratory announced the cloning of Galileo (a bull obtained from blood cells²) we were charged with a criminal offence³, a verdict that was overturned six months later by a High Court Judge in Cremona who ruled that the ban on cloning was illegal. Although the scientific community had high hopes that the government would change its position on the matter—Health Minister Umberto Veronesi created a Commission headed by Renato Dulbecco that returned an open-minded report on cloning at the end of last year—nothing has changed. The ‘ordi-

nanza’ banning cloning it is still in place and any scientist embarking on cloning experiments in Italy (animal and human) could still face criminal charges.

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