

THE VERDICT OF GUILTY of feigned illness unless proved innocent, or a diagnosis of neurosis, continues to be the common fate of patients suffering from chronic brucellosis. It is the purpose of this communication to point out that the evidence on which the damaging judgments are made is faulty. Because of the large number of patients involved in one sweeping indictment, the unreliability of the evidence is more obvious than ever before in the recent reports on 16 cases by Trever, Cluff, Imboden, and others.¹⁻³ The patients were Government employees in the bacteriological laboratory at Fort Detrick, Md., where studies on *Brucella melitensis* and *Br. suis* were in progress. Altogether 60 employees contracted brucellosis between 1945 and 1957. In a follow-up study made on 24 patients in whom the infection had been contracted four to eight years previously, it was found that in 16 patients the disease was prolonged for one to eight years. The authors state that they classified as having chronic brucellosis "all patients with complaints of malaise, fatigue, myalgia, arthralgia, backache, or feverishness for a period of one year or longer beyond the acute illness, unassociated with bacteremia, changing serological titer, ~~or~~ physical abnormalities."³

Evans, Alice C. Chronic Brucellosis: the Unreliability of Diagnostic Tests. JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION. V.16 (12), pp. 942-945, December 1961.