

Synopsis of Dr Grahame Blackwell's Presentation to NSCA Conference 8/6/04

First, noted that I had not expected to be speaking without Prof. Challis present (his train was delayed). I know that he and I have widely differing views and felt uncomfortable about putting my points without his being there to hear, and possibly respond to, them. However felt it inappropriate to change my talk just because of that.

Then referred to a previous meeting almost exactly 1 yr ago nearby, at Wishaw (Sutton Coldfield) at which I and a number of other scientists concerned about masts & health spoke, also Prof. Challis and a few other people. At one point an NRPB spokesman (also a speaker) hotly denounced the 'mast concerns' scientists as 'scaremongers', worrying people unnecessarily. Now in the last few months (March 31st 2004) the NRPB has reversed its stand on health risks from overhead power lines, acknowledging that they significantly increase the risk of leukaemia - a fact which has been voiced by a number of those 'scaremongers' for years, in some cases over a decade. If it takes another decade for the NRPB to realise that those 'scaremongers' are also right about masts, it will be far too late for the British people.

Pointed out that the government and its advisers are facing a crisis of confidence with respect to the mast issue - by their actions they have forfeited peoples' trust and confidence. When the Chief Planning Officer can write to the First Secretary of State expressing grave concern over the mast issue, asking for a serious review of the planning process on masts, and is met with what can only be seen as a snub, a 'do not disturb' sign, it's clear that someone's not listening. Normally law-abiding people (one presumes) have in places pulled down masts because they see no other avenue for protecting themselves & their families against what they perceive as a serious threat. Certain mast operators are throwing up illegal masts in blatant defiance of democratic decisions by planners, and in some cases Planning Inspectors, that those masts should not go up - we even have the bizarre situation where police are called in to see off contractors who are putting up an illegal mast that they claim is for the police! The word that springs to mind is 'anarchy'.

Quoted from Hansard, a question put by Andrew Mitchell MP (Shadow Minister for Business) in a Commons debate on 28th January 2004:

"On 10 July, in a House of Commons debate, the Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety told MPs that concern over the possible health effects of Tetra emissions arose from research in the 1970s and that it had since been "virtually impossible" to replicate those research findings. Given that research findings on this subject, listed in the Stewart report and the National Radiological Protection Board report on Tetra, show more successful than unsuccessful replications since 1980—the most recent successful replication being in 1999—how do the Government explain her claim?"

Observed that public infer from this that government is basing its assurances and policy on a false premise, and may prove to be incorrect. Gave facts - 4 replications in 80s and one in 90s as listed in Stewart Report, one further in NRPB Report on TETRA in 1999 (just 5 yrs ago), an 8 to 4 majority of successful replications in those two reports- six of those **after** the 70s. Given previous discredited Government assurances on, for example, BSE there is deep concern over possible consequences.

Then referred to interview with Prof Blakemore (see p.4 of 'Myths & Facts' sheet in info pack), quoting first highlighted statement re. 'those studies [from the 70s] have not been duplicated in subsequent work' without comment. Added quote 'and in any case the effects that were described didn't have any obvious health implications', contrasting this with a quote from the NRPB Report on TETRA (given that the 'effect' concerned is disturbance of calcium levels in brain cells):

"It is recognised that calcium plays an important role in many biological processes, especially in the function of nerve cells."

This is clearly techno-speak for 'don't muck about with calcium levels in brain cells'.

Referred to frequent use of misleading terminology, applying meanings to words that are **not** the meanings understood by almost everybody else. 'Pulsing' - commented as p.2 of 'Myth & Fact' sheets in info pack; 'Continuous' - as 1/2 way down p.3 of M&F. Also commented on assertion that mast output is too weak to cause risk - as well as points made in M&F sheet (1/4 way down p.3) I cited research showing non-thermal effects at power levels way below ICNIRP, that correspond to observed effects around masts: weakening of blood-brain barrier, allowing toxins from bloodstream into brain cells, resulting in headaches, dizziness and in the longer term serious brain damage (e.g. Parkinson's, Alzheimer's); reduction in nighttime melatonin release - melatonin is both a sleep regulator and an anti-cancer scavenging agent, so reduction leads to sleep disorders and in the longer term reduced immunity to cancer. Noted that ICNIRP guidelines themselves explicitly exclude such effects from the protection offered by ICNIRP certification - i.e. the Government's 'safety' measures offer absolutely **no** protection against such effects, that have been shown to occur in highly reputable peer-reviewed research studies and are reflected in observed symptoms around masts.

I referred to Catania Resolution (in info pack) - 16 world-class researchers in the field putting their reputations on the line and stating unequivocally that the sort of effects just referred to **do** occur at levels below ICNIRP guidelines. I also referred to the Freiburger Appeal, now signed up to by over 2000 doctors and profs of medicine who state their firm conviction that increasing incidence of major and chronic illnesses (including normally age-related conditions at ever-lower ages) is due primarily to phone & mast radiation - they base this on thorough studies of the activities and lifestyles of their patients.

I finally referred to the Yasmin Skelt case - as in info pack. I echoed MP Andrew Mitchell's observation, in the Commons Debate of 28th January, that it appeared that PPG8 was encouraging Planning Inspectors to act unlawfully. In a situation where the Government has a very substantial vested interest and at the same time is calling all the shots, is it surprising that the British people feel that their legitimate concerns, based on a wide array of substantial evidence, are not being heeded?