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House of Lords,
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Ms Christine Corrigan
Director of Investigations
The Parliamentary Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP

15 July 2002

Dear Ms Corrigan

Thank you for your letter of 1 July. I do not know where you have got this argument from that contamination was largely inevitable because of the prevalence of Hepatitis C in the UK population. It is possible to have a sub-clinical infection with Hepatitis C but this, I had always believed, was rare and that most people experience jaundice. One of the crucial reasons for going for self-sufficiency was the belief, well documented by Richard Titmus in *The Gift Relationship* that the vast majority of British blood donors, having no financial reward, were very likely to admit to having had any episodes of going yellow or jaundice and that in a purely British blood transfusion donor system there was a good chance of most batches of Factor VIII not being contaminated. I assume you have been given concrete evidence for your position and I would be grateful to have that evidence because on this hinges everything.

To be blunt, if I had been told that by my medical advisers in the Department of Health at the time I would not have pressed so hard for self-sufficiency. So it is a crucial piece of medical information.

Yours sincerely

DAVID OWEN