

From: EmailConfirmation [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Your email to the Prime Minister
Date: 16 October 2006 at 13:15:48
To: gregmurph [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Murphy

Thank you for your message to the Prime Minister which you sent through the Downing Street website (www.number-10.gov.uk).

We need to confirm that we have your correct details and that the message shown at the bottom of this email is from you.

Click on the link below to confirm your message.

NOT RELEVANT

If you did not send this message, please contact the Downing Street web team at <mailto:webmaster@pmo.gov.uk>.

Once you have confirmed your email, your message will be passed to Downing Street staff to read. Although the PM is unable to answer emails personally, all your messages are read and the PM is given a report on the issues raised, along with a selection of messages.

Thanks,
The Number 10 Web Team

Here is the text we received:

RE: Health

Dear Ms Jowell (copy - Tony Blair, Peter Kilfoyle, BBC Panorama)

Re - 1) BBC 1 Panorama; and 2) contamination of blood products in the UK

At the beginning of the recent BBC 1 Panorama programme, which alleged your husband's involvement with a blood scandal in Italy in the 1990s, the verbatim and dramatised recreation of a taped conversation between an Italian transport worker and another acquaintance related how they casually referred to a lorry-load of haematological products as "this stuff".

Given your previous standing as a UK minister for public health, I hope I need hardly remind you that for haemophiliacs - the chief consumers of such materials - it is distressing to hear such products flippantly dismissed as "stuff", given that they could be, quite literally, the very lifeblood on which such people depend and, to that end, they theoretically could represent the acute difference between life and death.

Equally, though, I would hope that I hardly need remind you that all too often during these last three decades, the administering of these materials has led directly to the death, rather than the prolonged life, of haemophiliacs and ironically it would seem that the two officials featured in Panorama were, whether unwittingly or not, aptly correct to categorise the pitiful load under discussion as "stuff", particularly as the documentary detailed the extent to which these products were criminally adulterated and laced with the potentially fatal HCV and HIV viruses (and who knows what else?).

Moreover, who in the British government could ever criticise these two men for being so crass in their references to the blood products under discussion because, at repeated junctures since May 1st 1997, the administration of which you have been a central member, has demonstrated an even more casual attitude to the plight of haemophiliacs (either alive or dead), their dependency on clean blood products and the heartbreak and suffering experienced by their families, especially those who have been bereaved.

As the son of a still uncompensated widow of a deceased haemophiliac, my father, who died as a result of contracting Hepatitis C from an infected batch of NHS administered blood products (i.e. "stuff"), I would contend that, relatively speaking, the cursory way in which the two Italian workers referred to their truck-load frankly

pales into insignificance when compared with the haphazard manner in which the current government has addressed all matters concerning haemophiliacs during this last decade.

You'll doubtless be aware - although I sometimes wonder - that during the 1980s thousands of UK haemophiliacs were tragically caught up in a world wide epidemic which was, as an Italian haemophiliac who also featured in the said Panorama programme said, "a death sentence". How right he was. My dear late father, as well as being infected with Hepatitis C after receiving these vile blood products had also, according to his medical notes, earlier contracted both Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B.

It is strongly suspected that the source of my father's infections lay in the surfeit of imported and tainted blood products from the United States into the UK in the late 1970s and early 1980s. A full audit of these supplies, their volume, their origination and intended destinations has never been undertaken in this country thanks chiefly to the continued intransigence of this Labour government since 1997 which, for some mysterious reason, has not deemed it appropriate to expose the obvious incompetence of the previous Conservative administration from 1979 onwards.

I wonder why this is so?

Why is it that this government feels no moral compulsion to investigate this scandal and expose those gravely at fault? One can only conclude that there is evidently something to hide - relating either to current government figures, certainly to previous Tory-era individuals and perhaps also to Labour ministers in the 1970s.

You see, it is hard to allay my cynicism especially when, despite repeated re-assurances from the mid-80s onwards that blood products in the UK were safe, it was alarming to note from the Panorama investigation that the lorry-load of "stuff" in question was housed in an Italian warehouse (in woefully inadequate storage) as late as 1994, ironically some three months after the death of my father.

As you'll appreciate, I found this alarming and I trust you did too.

It was also alleged by Panorama that it was clear that a sizeable batch from the whole volume of the products that finally surfaced in Italy had apparently gone

missing. Where to? When? Who to? Had the contents been administered? Destroyed? Was the missing batch still in storage somewhere? Furthermore, from exactly where did the residual volume that was discovered in Italy originate? Were they materials that had their source in Arkansas, as part of the notorious, Governor-approved, cash-for-blood schemes held in state prisons? Furthermore, how old were the products located in Italy? Did they date back to the 1970s or 1980s even?

There are many more questions I could ask, but here I'm sure you can see the pressing need for a public enquiry. Because surely if, in the course of just one letter to you, referring to just one British TV programme, I can rattle-off a volley of questions that need answering, then it stands to reason that there is so much more that needs exposing. Agreed?

Frankly, I find it impossible to believe that a batch - who knows what size? - of products that was originally part of that consignment eventually located in Italy didn't ultimately find its way to the UK. It goes without saying that the products that were responsible for the manslaughter of my father and others by the UK government obviously had to have been sourced from somewhere. Somebody must know? The very fact that Panorama alleged that a batch, belonging to the original consignment which was eventually located in Italy, had mysteriously disappeared seems, to my mind, to be eerily consistent with the curious disappearance of so many batch serial numbers relating to the products that were eventually administered to my father.

Furthermore, I did find it somewhat curious that Panorama also reported that documentary evidence, stored in Italy, relating to the said consignment of blood products discovered in that country were accidentally lost. It would appear that they were blown out of an open office window during an electrical storm (and apparently no copies had been made). It coincidentally reminded me of the fact that here in the UK, critical Department of Health papers relating to the blood products scandal were accidentally shredded by an office junior. Furthermore, it also reminded me of the fact that documents relating to the supposed control of plasma production in Arkansas prisons in the 1970s and 80s have also mysteriously disappeared from the Governor's mansion in that US state. I suppose that one could say this also has echoes of the unfortunate - and seemingly entirely accidental - fire that occurred in the attic of an Arkansas prosthetics clinic some years ago which completely

destroyed batch!

loss of documentary evidence that could have shed much light on the whole tragic export scandal. Just as an afterthought, I've also always wondered whether a break-in at the Canadian HQ of the Haemophilia Society, curiously on the very same night as that unfortunate fire in Arkansas, which also led to the further disappearance of considerable amounts of documentary evidence, was just another episode of cruel luck.

If you'll allow me to crystallise things this way: my father was infected with and later died from Hepatitis C related complexities but, try as we might, we have not been able to locate the batch numbers of the products that were administered to him and we are told that they have been mistakenly mislaid; however we know a wider consignment of products - minus a crucial batch - was traced to Italy but again it would seem that the paper trail ends here because evidence was blown out of a window; sadly, also, we know that key evidence at the UK Department of Health was shredded thus leading to another dead end; and finally it would seem that crucial documentation in both the US and Canada has also been destroyed through a series of fires and misfortunes.

It would seem that the tragedy of my father's death has been compounded by a further series of quite remarkable tragedies that have prevented an investigation into how he came to die.

Or am I being naive and is it more a case that this Government's constant and pointed refusal to hold a public enquiry speaks volumes about the global cover-up to which it is party?

Through your husband, Panorama alluded to your indirect - and obviously entirely circumstantial - involvement in this whole scandal and I naturally would refrain from repeating any inferences made by the BBC.

However I will say that sadly I will never, ever be able to watch you on television or read about you in newspapers without thinking of even the remotest possibility that you, of all people, someone who has held high office in this country's public health department, had connections, however coincidental, to the blood scandal which brought about my father's death. And I naturally would shudder to think that even in

the remote case that this was true, it has somehow influenced this Government's continued stance in refusing to hold a public enquiry into the biggest health scandal - and possibly biggest scandal full stop - that this country has ever known.

I am also left to wonder if you were one of the ministers who were party to the heinous and prolonged policy refusal to pay recompense to the haemophiliacs involved in this tragedy who contracted HCV. And although this intransigence has been alleviated to a derisory degree through Skipton Fund payments for those still suffering from the daily horrors of HCV (trust me, it's horrific), there are still aspects of the old cold-heartedness in clear evidence through the ongoing refusal to recognise the widows, like my mother, of those who, like my late father, paid the ultimate deathly price.

I trust you will appreciate that I have found this a difficult letter to write, as I also found it very difficult watching that Panorama programme, especially hearing how so many people may have made money out of the type of product that ultimately killed my father and many other husbands, fathers, and sons.

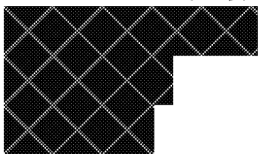
I also trust that you will probably be eager to re-assure and correct me about the true facts relating both to the Panorama allegations and the wider blood scandal that took place here in the UK. In that respect, then, I would eagerly anticipate your reply.



As well as replying directly to me, though, might I suggest that the very best way to clarify the full truth about this whole matter - and your obvious non-involvement - would be to hold a public enquiry?

In anticipation of your reply,

Yours sincerely

Mr G.W. Murphy,



cc: Tony Blair (e-mail), constituency MP - Peter Kilfoyle (e-mail), BBC Panorama (e-mail)
