

**Witness Name:** Doctor Abraham Karpas

**Statement No:** WITN0684030

**Exhibits:** WITN0684031 - WITN0684033

**Dated:** 16 August 2023

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR ABRAHAM KARPAS

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I provide this statement in response to the Second Written Statement of the Hon Richard Tedder [WITN3436006] dated 23 April 2023.

I, Dr Abraham Karpas, will say as follows: -

#### Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Dr Abraham Karpas. My date of birth is GRO-C 1937 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am an expert in some aspects of Medical Virology, having trained first as a veterinary surgeon at Zurich University, completing my studies in 1963; later I received a doctorate in veterinary medicine.
2. After working for 6 months as a vet I took a position in a laboratory of Medical Virology at the Department of Microbiology of Geneva University Medical school. A year later I got a French Government Research Fellowship in Virology at the Institute Pasteur in Paris. Thereafter I held a postdoctoral research post in virology at Harvard Medical School in Boston, USA. Subsequently, I was an Assistant Professor to Dr Albert Sabin (developer of the oral polio vaccine) at the University of Cincinnati in the USA. In 1969 I moved to Cambridge to take up the post of Assistant Director of Research in the Department of Haematology at Cambridge University Clinical School. I held this post until October 2005, when I retired according to university statutes.
3. My published research was awarded a Doctor of Science (Sc.D) by Cambridge University in 1982 and I was subsequently offered membership of Trinity College and a fellowship at Wolfson College.

### A response to Professor Richard Tedder

4. I read with some surprise Richard Tedder's claim to be a helpful medical/scientific collaborator in his latest statement. It bears repeating that with unlimited access to AIDS patients he refused to provide me with blood samples on the grounds he had no need for further collaborators. And, when I followed the suggestion of my department head, Professor Frank Hayhoe, to write asking for small samples on a non-collaborative basis (14 July 1983), I got no reply.
5. The letter to the *New Scientist* in 1987 [WITN3436007] included in his statement has numerous inaccuracies, if not lies, including the claim that I never requested any material from him. I pointed these out in a response letter to the *New Scientist*, published May 14 1987 [RLIT0002040] (page 2). However Tedder does at least admit that Wellcome Diagnostic paid him/his department licence fees, though not how much. Weiss does not, although he and Tedder licensed to Wellcome Diagnostics both the HIV isolate (French in origin) and the T-cell line (CEM - American in origin) essential for growing the virus.
6. Tedder's claim that Weiss had a good relationship with Professor Luc Montagnier is not true. Montagnier suspected Weiss of responsibility for the rejection of his seminal 1983 manuscript, and gave me the rejection comments he received from *Nature* in the hope I might be able to expose Weiss' role. The rejection of that manuscript set back AIDS research and diagnosis a whole year.
7. Tedder does admit to his close long-term friendship with Phillip Mortimer. This gives support to my accusation that the reason for the six months delay in approving the American Abbott diagnostic test was in order for Tedder to develop a similar test for Wellcome Diagnostics.
8. An Abbott spokesman made the same suggestion in the 1985 *New Scientist* article [DHSC0000509] which I additionally exhibited in my first statement, [WITN0684001].
9. Although Tedder had refused to provide me with any material from AIDS patients in 1983, in 1987 he wrote to me on 8 June 1987 asking to evaluate the AIDS Cell Test I had developed in 1985 [WITN0684032]. My test had been formally evaluated for the DHSS on 3 and 4 June 1987 in Mortimer's virology laboratory and a week later I had received from Mortimer a formal copy of the Interim Report he sent to Mr. David Kennedy of the DHSS and copied to Mr Wickland of the World Health Organisation in Geneva [WITN0684031]. Since the evaluation had already been carried out I could see no harm in sending it on to Tedder. It appears this was a grave mistake on my part. I suspect it alerted him to bring pressure on his long-term friend Mortimer to tamper with the results.
10. A short time after I sent Tedder a copy of the official Interim Evaluation Report, Mortimer's office sent me a copy of the final report in which I noticed several drastic changes to the evaluation data, making my test unreliable. I therefore contacted David Kennedy of the DHSS who came to visit me in Cambridge and suggested

having a meeting with Dr Mortimer. Dr Mortimer refused to take part.

11. I then approached the science reporter of the *New Scientist*, Steve Connor, giving him a copy of both interim and draft final reports. Dr Mortimer refused to talk to Steve Connor.
12. Steve Connor then approached Chris Smith MP to raise the question in the House of Commons and reported the affair in the *New Scientist* under the heading, "Health officers 'altered' data on AIDS test" [HSOC0007665] (page 2). I also showed it to Professor Raymond Dwek FRS of Oxford University, a collaborator of the time on AIDS research.
13. Dwek wrote to Dr J Smith, Director of the PHLS laboratories in Colindale, stating, "I am very concerned by the discrepancy between the Interim Report and the draft of the Final Report" [WITN0684002]. My lawyer of Paisner & Co also wrote to Dr Mortimer; but he told me that without proof that Mortimer changed the data due to his friendship with Tedder there was no way he could be taken to court under English law.
14. In 1986 I licensed my test to a Japanese company [WITN0684033] who arranged approval and production by the diagnostic company Denka Seiken in Japan, where standards of quality control are very high. In Japan it is marketed as the Karpas AIDS Cell Test and to the best of my knowledge it is still being produced and sold there.
15. Due to Mortimer's change of the evaluation report it is not accepted for use in the UK despite it being far cheaper than other tests such as the Wellcome Diagnostics one.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

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August 2023

**Table of exhibits:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes/ Description</b>	<b>Exhibit number</b>
23 April 2023	Second written statement of the Hon Richard Tedder.	WITN3436006
9 April 1987	Letter to the New Scientist from Richard Tedder in relation to a response by Dr Karpas regarding AIDS collaboration.	WITN3436007
14 May 1987	Response letter from Dr Karpas to the <i>New Scientist</i> , published May 14 1987 (page 2).	RLIT0002040
8 August 1985	<i>New Scientist</i> response letter on "AIDS Omissions" by A Karpas	DHSC0000509
8 June 1987	Letter from Professor R S Tedder to Dr Abraham Karpas regarding HIV screening in The Gambia.	WITN0684032
14 July 1988	<i>New Scientist</i> article, "Health officers 'altered' data on AIDS test" (page 2).	HSOC0007665
June 1986	Interim report to Mr David Kennedy of the DHSS on the "Karpas AIDS Cell Test Kit".	WITN0684031
3 November 1988	Letter from Professor R A Dwek, Director of the Oxford Glycobiology Unit to Dr J Smith, Director of the PHLS Laboratories in Colindale.	WITN0684002
28 August 1986	<i>New Scientist</i> article entitled, "Japan buys British 'litmus test' for AIDS" by Steve Connor.	WITN0684033