Human BSE/CJD - Anatomy of a Health Disaster

New book on BSE widely praised

Our reporter
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Human BSE/CJD—Anatomy of a Health Disaster details the findings of last year's Workers Inquiry convened by the Socialist Equality Party of Britain into the fatal illness contracted from eating infected beef. It has been praised for its honesty and integrity in uncovering the truth about this public health disaster.

Hundreds of copies have been sold since the book was launched on February 12. The families of victims of Human BSE/new variant CJD have been particularly supportive. John Middleton, the father of Human BSE victim Mathew Parker, described *Anatomy of a Health Disaster* as "a book that tells the real truth about Human BSE and the heartache and suffering this horrendous disease causes. Having to watch our children and loved ones dying, the pain is immeasurable. This book tells it how it really is."

Middleton took part in a book signing at Waterstones bookshop in Sheffield, which was covered extensively by local press and TV, including a five-minute feature on Yorkshire Television's *Calendar*news programme and reports in the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Doncaster Star*. He will speak at a public meeting to launch the book in his hometown of Doncaster and a number of other relatives have agreed to do the same in other areas.

The *Doncaster Courier* carried a front-page article under the headline, "Book will continue fight for the truth: Father to speak out on CJD horror." *PHA News*, the newsletter of the Public Health Alliance, has issued a forthcoming publications announcement that says the book "contributes towards an understanding of all the factors involved in the BSE/CJD crisis and provides a basis for its resolution.... It considers BSE to be the direct result of a political setup which protects the interests of big business at the expense of the social interests of working people." *PHA News* announced it would carry a full review of the book in its next issue.

Frances Hall, mother of BSE victim Peter Hall, is a leading spokesperson for the Human BSE Foundation, a support network set up by victims' families. She writes of the new book:

"I would like to thank the Socialist Equality Party for setting up a Workers Inquiry at a time when the Conservative government was refusing to allow one. The resulting book sets out the facts in an easy to read manner and will, I hope, make plain how disaster can result from government's putting the interests of profit before the health and safety of the population.

"I trust that some good will result from the lifetime of pain that families like mine now have to face, and that the deaths of our loved ones will prevent a tragedy like this ever happening again."

Gerard Callaghan, brother of Human BSE victim Maurice Callaghan, writes:

"This book is important. It comes as the end result of a thorough and earnest inquiry into the causes of Human BSE and the chain of events that led to the creation of BSE and the deaths of a growing number of young people, amongst them my wonderful brother Maurice; of its human manifestation.

"Its importance is clear: the submissions to the inquiry range from the fields of microbiology, public services, scientific research and politics, both national and international. All are underpinned with the views of those who have lost most, the families of the Human BSE dead. In total they represent a critical mass in the debate and their views are essential.

"The Inquiry's findings focus on what is perhaps the most overlooked aspect to the crisis—that the deaths are the result of the way in which we feed ourselves and how we have allowed the importance of human health to be eclipsed by the drive for profit in the food

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industry.

"Scientific research is vital, as the inquiry points out. However, if the market remains unaltered in a fundamental way, we may well see many such tragedies in the future. Every death from Human BSE represents a tragedy of inestimable consequence.

"This book is unsettling, as it should rightly be. I found the submissions from other families deeply distressing, each echo of pain and anger mirroring the deep despair felt most strongly in my own home in the dark days when the curtain of grief suddenly parts and we glimpse a brief view of just what has happened here. The inquiry, in offering such a platform for the families, has placed our views at the core of the matter. I thank it for doing so. Without such a narrative, unsettling though it is to relate, the story is incomplete in every way.

"There are many aspects to Human BSE, the most disgraceful food/health debacle of modern times. The Workers Inquiry has outlined clearly the parameters of the debate. A heavy responsibility rests on all of us to develop its findings as we continue the search for the truth."

Stan and Pat Mellowship's daughter, Donna, died this year from Human BSE. Stan Mellowship writes:

"When we first received the book, I sat and read it right the way through that night, and it took quite a bit of time to read. It's very, very good. It's strong and to the point. It should go out to everybody because it does open your eyes to a lot of things. The time you must have spent on this inquiry and the investigation that you made, I just take my hat off to you, I really do. The book is such easy reading—plain English. Yes, a brilliant book.

"It needs to go into the schools to make the kids aware, because the younger children don't stand a chance, do they? Beef is just banged on a plate. The parents need to be told. They are not only killing my Donna's generation and my generation, they are killing the younger generation coming up. You should get the book into doctors' surgeries. It should go into the medical journals, chemists, everybody. At £6, it's a price that everyone can afford."

Pat Mellowship, Donna's mother, shared her husband's enthusiasm: "The book is a real eye-opener. It's very, very good. It's written so that everyone can understand. Some of the books you pick up, they are all long words, but you don't get that in here. Every household should have this book to make them aware about BSE/nvCJD."

Professor Richard Lacey, a leading expert on BSE, made a submission to the Workers Inquiry. He has campaigned to expose the cover-up of the BSE/CJD crisis for the past 10 years and provided evidence about the dangers from BSE in the recent $8 million libel suit against Oprah Winfrey in the United States. He writes:

"I warmly welcome the publication of this book. It is the first serious attempt to get at the root of the problem and identify the source of the deception. It has no political axe to grind and I urge everyone to read it and come to their own conclusions.

"The conduct of the Workers Inquiry was entirely satisfactory and its findings are excellent. I support them enthusiastically. Certainly the recommendations on page 121 should be implemented immediately and I would advise that these proposals should be put into the hands of Lord Justice Phillips and the government inquiry into BSE/CJD."

(The Human BSE Foundation is soliciting information and testimonials from families that have been affected by Human BSE. The organization's e-mail address is: FIHall@aol.com)

Copies of Human BSE/CJD-Anatomy of a Health Disaster can be ordered from Mehring Books: PO Box 1306, Sheffield, S93UW, United Kingdom. Telephone: 114-244-0055 (Sheffield) E-mail:sep@socialequality.org.uk

The price of the book is £5.99, plus £2 shipping and handling (US$ 9.95 plus $3.50 shipping and handling).

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