



Sylvie Simon

The letter

Making polluters face their legal liabilities

This letter from Sylvie Simon, journalist and author of many works, is an opening move in the current strategy for making all those responsible face their legal liabilities with regard to the evident damage being caused to public health from the environmental pollution generated by artificial High Frequency microwave radiation.

As of 2010 we can state that the present system is based on denial and dishonesty on all sides, including from the institutions involved: none of them should be excused from their liabilities. It is one of the aims of Next-up organisation to pursue this objective.

We will be grateful for your support in this vital campaign on behalf of public health.

The authorities are watching over us

The British government has recently presented its "sincere regrets and its profound sympathy" to the relatives of the victims of thalidomide, which caused numerous irreversible handicaps between 1958 and 1961. It is estimated that about 12,000 children were born with appalling malformations of the eyes, ears or heart, and atrophied or missing limbs. Half of these children did not survive. In later years it transpired that some of the survivors passed on their handicaps and deformations to their own children via their damaged DNA.

This poison had been approved by all the regulatory bodies concerned, who gave assurances that this medication could be administered "with complete safety to women who were pregnant or about to give birth, since it had no dangers for the mother or the child".

It was only after thousands of disasters and deaths that this medication that "had no dangers" was finally taken out of circulation.

And it took another 50 years for Mike O'Brien, the British Minister of Health, to announce to the survivors in Britain, who had been demanding for decades that the government admit its share of responsibility, and who have been receiving some compensation from the perpetrator of this poison, that they would be receiving an additional annual compensation from the manufacturers. Obviously this long delay has saved paying any compensation to the victims who died in these lost years. In France, its prescription is limited to one month for women of child-bearing age.

Distilben® was used to prevent spontaneous abortions although in 1971, an American study of 4000 women over five years revealed that it was responsible for difficulties in pregnancy and could cause cancer of the uterus in the mother and genital malformations in the infant. The FDA, which was much more strict in those days than it is now, immediately forbade its use, and during the following year other countries did the same.

But in France, in spite of all the risks involved in using it, on the advice of bought-and-paid-for experts, it continued to be prescribed for six more years, with the blessing of the authorities and the Ministry of Health.

The victims - 160,000 women "benefited" from this treatment - had to fight for years for recognition of the harm that had been done to them. Finally, in January 2010, 40 years later, the High Court made two significant rulings in favour of those victims suffering from cancer.

They no longer had to prove what made of medication their mother had taken during the pregnancy - a grotesque requirement - and could then sue either Novartis or UCB Pharma, and claim compensation once they had proved the link between their illness and the fact that their mother had taken Distilben®. This was the least that could be expected, especially since in May 2006, *Le Parisien* told us that this poison "was also the probable cause of a veritable series of suicides".

This shows all too clearly how the side-effects of medicines only come to light long afterwards, and that the original list of these effects is rarely exhaustive and can be queried at any time, even decades later.

Over the years and in all countries, medical catastrophes go through the same sequence of stages. The industry smothers us with information prepared by scientists who produce misleading declarations, and then when reports of illness and deaths pile up, the authorities persist in quoting reassuring statements from the experts denying any connection between the product and its dangerous effects, and meanwhile forbid any dissenting scientists to express an opinion in public, and even discredit their work.

Nothing has been learned from these tragedies by those who allowed the widespread use of asbestos, or of the PCBs that have accumulated in the soil because of their slow rate of decomposition, or of growth hormones in farm animals, or of agrochemicals. And then there was the scandal of the cancer research organisation ARC, denied by more than 600 doctors and researchers, who used their "scientific" position to declare in favour of the association, in

spite of the repeated warnings from the regulatory body IGASS (General Inspectorate of Social Affairs).

The same saga was played out in the cases of contaminated blood (issued for transfusions until the stock was all used up); of human growth hormone that caused the death of 117 young people treated in the 1980s (and for which those responsible got a free pardon); of Vioxx, considered the most effective medicine of the year but which killed off several tens of thousands of people before it was withdrawn; and of the antibiotics prescribed for decades without due regard, which have thus lost their effectiveness.

We could add to the list of "potential killers still at large", such as dioxins, highly carcinogenic and mostly produced by the incinerators in refuse recycling plants; oestrogens which are found in high concentration in rivers and which are causing a drastic drop in the reproductive capacities of male fish; GM crops grown in open fields (much to the regret of 74% of the French population); and the innumerable phone masts, mobile phone antennas and wi-fi networks for wireless Internet spreading all over the country, although no credible study on their impact on human health has been done, and where it will take years for their damaging effects to become obvious.

The manipulation continues with the hepatitis B vaccination and the complete denial of its thousands of victims, and with autism caused by certain vaccines but which prompts hardly any interest in our parliamentary deputies, to say nothing of the "swine flu" non-pandemic, an international scandal we will never hear the end of since damaging side-effects from the vaccine (not from the flu) will gradually show up in the coming years.

And then in May 2009, the Ministers of Ecology, of Health, of Economy and of Housing signed an interministerial order setting aside the ban on "recycling" radioactive waste from the nuclear industry by using it in manufactured goods and in building materials. The ruling came into force in spite of the adverse opinion of the nuclear safety authority. So some day soon they may start using radioactive concrete to build houses or schools. It's the asbestos story all over again.

Who is, or will be, held responsible for these disasters? Nobody, obviously. Occasionally certain manufacturers are brought before the law, but they always extricate themselves, to their great advantage. And you can be sure that none of those responsible for the health of the public, who let them carry on and never interfere, have ever been questioned, though they are all deeply complicit in the disinformation and the lies spread by the manufacturers and the media.

The only thing left to hope for is that the general public will finally stop listening to the numerous experts, who are both judge and interested party, and who are in the pay of industries that are as blind as they are criminal, and that it will awaken from its coma before more catastrophes befall us, as they do at regular intervals in our country.

All these scandals have many points in common, and one and the same origin: the fatal attraction of making money to the detriment of safeguarding health. Yet after each scandal, eminent "specialists" basking in general forgiveness tell us in trembling tones that the decisions **that have been condemned were justified by "scientific knowledge at the time"**. Meanwhile, to the notion of "responsible but not guilty" has been added that of "guilty but not deserving of condemnation".

Very few of the people who are to blame have ever been condemned, and then they have only had to pay a fine. As long as this still happens, however large the fine may be, they will continue in their wicked ways, since the risk is far from equal to the profits to be made. **The only way to limit the damage they can do is to put them behind bars along with those sentenced under common law, like anybody who has committed a crime.**

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