

Re: WHICH SCIENCE OR SCIENTISTS CAN YOU TRUST?

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From: Dr. Jai Maharaj (usenet_at_mantra.com)

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WHICH SCIENCE OR SCIENTISTS CAN YOU TRUST?

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[Subject: Which Science or Scientists Can You Trust?

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Which Science or Scientists Can You Trust?

Michael Meacher told a public conference on Science, Medicine and the Law in the strongest terms that we need independent science and scientists who take the precautionary principle seriously and sweeping changes are needed in science funding and scientific advice to the government that ensures the protection of independent science

Which scientists?

Nobody disagrees that debate over whether we should go ahead with new technologies should be conducted on the basis of science, but which science? Independent science or industrial science? Let me test out a few examples on you.

Fifteen years ago a lorry driver accidentally tipped 20 tonnes of aluminium sulphate into the public drinking supply in north Cornwall — nearby residents and local doctors are convinced they were poisoned; but two Government enquiries found no evidence. Whom do you believe?

There are childhood leukaemia clusters in villages down the Cumbrian coast — local residents and independent scientists think it is the consequence of chronic exposure to low-level radiation from nearby Sellafield; but the Department of Industry (DTI) and British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) think it is

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nothing to do with local nuclear power stations — their best explanation is that it is caused by high levels of inward and outward migration. Whom do you believe?

Mark Purdey, a Somerset farmer turned epidemiologist, has produced detailed evidence to show that BSE was caused by farmers spreading Phosmetz, an organohosphate (OP), over the backs of cattle as a prophylaxis, but the Government's MRC Toxicology Unit – funded by the pharmaceutical company Zeneca – apparently refuted this theory. Which company held all rights over the production of Phosmetz? Zeneca. Whom do you believe?

Gulf War Syndrome has been a persistent disabling, and sometimes lethal, condition since the first war in Kuwait in 1991. Both UK and US soldiers and their independent scientific advisers are convinced that the soldiers were poisoned by the OP insecticides that they were liberally sprayed with. But the MOD and chemical companies insist there is no evidence for this. Whom do you believe?

Well, if you have any doubts, look at what has actually happened in the past when Government, in the teeth of ove