



Canadian Hemophilia Society
Help Stop the Bleeding
Société canadienne de l'hémophilie
Arrêtons l'hémorragie

Tainted Blood Trial Finally Starts

TORONTO. Tuesday, February 22, 2006 - The first criminal trial involving the Canadian tainted blood scandal began today in the Superior Court of Justice in Toronto. The case relates to the distribution of blood products for the treatment of hemophilia that were produced and sold by Armour Pharmaceutical Company, based in Bridgewater, New Jersey, approved by Health Canada's Bureau of Biologics, and purchased by the Canadian Red Cross. At the opening of proceedings, lawyers for the Crown announced that all charges, including those against Dr. Roger Perrault, the former Director of the Canadian Red Cross Society's Blood Transfusion Service, would go ahead. "We are very pleased that the Toronto trial has begun," said Canadian Hemophilia Society spokesperson John Plater.

Mr. Plater attended and observed the proceeding and then spoke outside the courthouse. "The Toronto trial," Plater said, "is about the limited circumstances involving blood products for the treatment of hemophilia produced by Armour Pharmaceuticals and we are pleased that after so many delays it has finally come to trial. We anticipate a long hearing with plenty of important testimony which will give us further insight into how products that should have been free from HIV were allowed to be used in Canada." Defendants Dr. Michael Rodell, the former Vice-President of Scientific and Regulatory Affairs at Armour Pharmaceutical Company; the Armour Pharmaceutical Company itself; Dr. John Furesz, the former Director of the Bureau of Biologics at the federal government's Health Protection Branch; Dr. Wark Boucher, the former Chief of the Blood Products Division of the Bureau of Biologics; and Dr. Roger Perrault of the Canadian Red Cross were arraigned on charges of criminal negligence causing bodily harm, common nuisance by endangering the public, and in the case of Armour one count of failure to notify under the Food and Drugs Act Regulations.

Dr. Perrault faces other counts of common nuisance by endangering the public related to events involving the failure to properly screen donors, implement testing for blood-borne viruses and warn the public of danger. That trial is expected to begin in Hamilton in 2007. In May 2005 the Canadian Red Cross pleaded guilty to an offence under the Food and Drugs Act in a agreement with the Crown that led to the dismissing of similar charges laid against the organization.

For background information on the tainted blood tragedy and to follow the trial proceedings, check the special "Tainted Blood Trial" web-link that has been set up on Canadian Hemophilia Society website: www.hemophilia.ca/en/4.3.php.

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