



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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CANADIAN HEMOPHILIA SOCIETY SURPRISED AND DISAPPOINTED AT TAINTED BLOOD VERDICT

MONTREAL – October 1, 2007 – The Canadian Hemophilia Society (CHS) is surprised and disappointed that the trial in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice against one company and four individuals involved in the manufacture, licensing and distribution of Armour's H.T. Factorate has not resulted in any convictions.

"This has been a 20-year struggle for the Canadian Hemophilia Society on behalf of our members," said Pam Wilton, CHS President. "We have fought for a safer blood system, for a public inquiry, for compensation and for a criminal investigation. Our objective has been to ensure that nothing similar happens in the future. This verdict sends the wrong message to those responsible for the health of the public: serious errors can be made in the manufacture, licensing and distribution of essential drugs; these errors can lead to disability and death, yet companies and individuals will not be held accountable."

The events in question relate to the HIV infection of a group of Canadians with hemophilia in 1986 and 1987. This was a time when people with hemophilia and their physicians were led to believe that clotting factor concentrates used to stop bleeding in hemophilia had been made safe from HIV through heat treatment. The terrible times of the early 1980s when HIV invaded the blood system were thought to be over. Tragically, they weren't.

Chapter 16, *Safety in Heat-Treated Concentrates*, of the *Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry on the Blood System in Canada* (the Krever Commission) eloquently chronicles how serious concerns over Armour's heat treatment process in 1986 and 1987 failed to result in precautions to protect patients. Armour made no changes to the manufacturing process; Health Canada ordered no recall; the Canadian Red Cross suspended no contracts. Patients and physicians were not warned. A subsequent 5-year investigation by the RCMP led to these criminal charges in 2005 against Armour Pharmaceutical, Dr. Michael Rodell of Armour, Drs. John Furesz and Wark Boucher of Health Canada's Bureau of Biologics, and Dr. Roger Perrault of the Canadian Red Cross.

A separate criminal trial will begin in October in the Ontario Superior Court in which Dr. Roger Perrault is accused. The charges relate to the failure to adequately screen the blood supply and take further safety measures to protect against HIV and hepatitis C in the 1980s.

At least 1,100 Canadians were infected by HIV, including 700 people with hemophilia, almost all of them before mid-1985. More than two-thirds have died. An estimated 20,000 more were infected with hepatitis C through blood and blood products; the exact number of deaths is unknown but likely surpasses 1,000.

Profile of the CHS

The Canadian Hemophilia Society (CHS) is a national voluntary health charity. Our Mission is to strive to improve the health and quality of life for all people with inherited bleeding disorders, and to find a cure. Our Vision is a world free from the pain and suffering of inherited bleeding disorders.

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