

Exposing the Lies

Prions, Organophosphates & Mad Cow Disease



Mark Purdey

Mark Purdey is a farmer and a self-taught scientist who has achieved status and standing in his profession the way his forebears achieved recognition for their famous fowling pieces and shotguns — the Purdey line — before the Great Depression. During recent years Purdey has taken on the role of confirmer of the adage that science is too important to be left to scientists. In a word, he has annihilated the conventional wisdom that spongiform encephalopathy is transmissible in the way of viral transmission. His hypothesis, based largely on cancellation of the copper connection as a consequence of manganese in chemical contaminants, the environment, and — not last — via legislated compulsory use of Phosmet (an organophosphate insecticide) is now being confirmed as if written in deathless stone.

Purdey breeds Jersey cows, operates a dairy, and tours the world to find evidence of an environmental connection to the Mad Cow syndrome. His production is organic and heavily legume based. Mark found his niche in farming at age 19 while studying zoology at the university. His yearning for a practical life led him into farming and a life of study, the fruition of which surfaced when he was forced to challenge the powers that be, who seemingly had an agenda for removal of even more farmers from the land.

ACRES U.S.A. What led you into your consideration of Mad Cow disease to your findings, which are somewhat at variance with the conventional wisdom?

PURDEY. It all started in 1984, appropriately, when I was visited by a British Ministry of Agriculture officer, who just suddenly appeared at my farm one morning and ordered me to treat my cows with these warble fly insecticides, which were systemic acting organophosphates. They came because I had fallen into a compulsory warble fly eradication zone after one of the neighboring farmers had an infestation of warble flies. But I said, look, I don't want to use the systemic organophosphate compounds; my cattle haven't got warbles, anyway; and I accused them of acting illegally, saying that they had no legal right to force farmers to use a chemical dressing, particularly one that belonged to a toxic organophosphate group. Largely my refusal to use these chemicals on my cows was based on intu-

ition at that time, but as I started studying the science, I very rapidly realized that these chemicals were derived from military nerve gasses.

ACRES U.S.A. Had Mad Cow disease showed up at that time?

PURDEY. No, but what I was concerned about was, first, the exposure to the farmer-operator who was putting the chemical on, particularly when you handled your cattle afterwards. Because it was put on in an oil form, it had to be poured along the base of the head and the spine line of the cow. It was this oily substance that kind of sat there, and slowly the chemical penetrated through. It was actually designed to metamorphose the whole internal environment of the cow into a poisonous medium so as to kill off the warble fly larvae during the stage of their life cycle when they were inside the cow.

ACRES U.S.A. You did not do that, then?

PURDEY. No, we completely refused to use it. The government were then talking about taking us to court, but they never did. They just heavy-handedly threatened turning up on Monday morning. I took out a High Court judicial review to prevent them from coming to the farm, and I argued that, under the Animal Diseases Act, the British Ministry of Agriculture were only empowered to force treatment with a vaccine or a serum. I said that the Animal Diseases Act doesn't authorize them to come and forcibly treat with a chemical dressing, because that is neither a vaccine nor a serum. We actually won our High Court case, and we didn't have to treat our cows with anything, basically they were warble free.

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ACRES U.S.A. This was in 1984?

PURDEY. Yes. Whenever I had warbles before — and we occasionally did in one or two of the weaker cattle that couldn't run fast enough to get away from them — I used powdered derris root, and I would just rub it into the warbles. Derris root is a non-systemic acting insecticide that comes from a vine in South America, and it is pretty toxic stuff, but because it is non-systemic, it doesn't go through the skin of the cow, yet it does get rid of the warble flies.

ACRES U.S.A. It is not a chemical of organic synthesis — a natural poison?

PURDEY. It is a natural chemical agent which is toxic, but because it is non-systemic, it stays where you put it.

ACRES U.S.A. When did the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) show up?

PURDEY. In Britain, they were using organophosphates at the end of the 1970s. In 1982, it became compulsory, and the use of it increased. Also, over the years in Britain, they increased the concentration of the chemical to a level that proved to be unique to the rest of the world because it was so high. No one really knows why it was so high. In 1980, they switched to using a 20 percent concentrated organophosphate called Phosmet, which they poured along the spine of the cow, and it had to be used twice a year. In the few other countries that had compulsory warble campaigns they only used it once a year and at half the dose rate — 10 milligrams per kilogram of bodyweight — whereas we used it at 20 milligrams per kilogram of bodyweight of a 20 percent concentrated solution, which was really high. Basically, when BSE emerged, officially in 1986, I wasn't surprised. I knew immediately that it was the legacy of the warble fly eradication campaign.

ACRES U.S.A. They call it transmissible, but is it really transmissible?

PURDEY. It is, in a sense. I do support the prion hypothesis of Stanley Prusiner. But what I am saying that is different is that it is the chemical cocktail that produces the abnormal prion protein, and organophosphates are well known to deform the molecular shape of proteins in the nerves — this is how they produce their well-known toxic effect, the acute effect. They deform a protein called cholinesterase at high doses, and that

damages the balance of the nerves because cholinesterase is involved in counterbalance of the nervous impulse. So, if you remove the cholinesterase, then you get an overdrive of nervous impulses and at the very worst you get a paralysis, which would mean death when you paralyze the nerves that control the lungs or the heartbeat.

ACRES U.S.A. The prion doesn't have a nucleus, does it?

PURDEY. It is like any other protein — it is produced by genetic material in the cell — but basically, the prion is a malformed prion protein.

ACRES U.S.A. Is it infectious in the same way that a virus is?

PURDEY. No, it is totally different. There is no evidence for such a conclusion, and I believe it certainly does not act as an infectious virus does. It doesn't infect people or animals horizontally. A good example of this lack of infectious action is that there hasn't been a single case of BSE in a home-reared cow on a fully converted, organic farm in Britain. Yet when you buy cows for breeding purposes, as I do, and those cows then get BSE, it never spreads across to your home-reared cows. This, in a sense, shows that it is not horizontally transmitted.

ACRES U.S.A. So the term “transmissible” is really conjectural?

PURDEY. That's right. It is just an interpretation of what is going on. If you inject it into an animal's brain, then you will pass the disease on.

ACRES U.S.A. This is what Prusiner did, isn't it?

PURDEY. Yes, but that is not saying that it is the virus. I believe, maybe this is jumping the gun a little bit, but the prion in its active form will generate a free-radical chain reaction, and this is due to the presence of an abnormal metal that has bonded onto the prion protein in place of copper. It is basically the metal manganese that replaces copper on the prion protein.

ACRES U.S.A. Let's back up a little bit. You picked up on this instinctively as you

were refusing to comply with the order from the Ministry of Agriculture. This apparently led you into your own hypothesis of what was causing the mischief.

PURDEY. Initially, I thought: Organophosphates are recognized to deform proteins. Here is a disease that is considered to be caused by a deformed prion protein. So isn't it possible that the organophosphate has interacted with the prion protein in the brains and the spines of the treated cows? After all, it was poured along the spine millimeters away from where the prion protein exists. It seems a feasible culprit.

ACRES U.S.A. How much would the grinding up of sheep with scrapie or any other animal for cattle cake or protein bypass have to do with this, other than maybe transporting a contaminant?

PURDEY. Personally, I think it has nothing to do with it at all. Basically, the meat and bone meal, not that I agree with feeding it to cows particularly, but the ingredient that was blamed for Mad Cow disease in Britain was actually exported by the boatload all over the world during the '70s, '80s, and '90s. If micro-doses of the meat and bonemeal caused this disease, as we have been told officially, why didn't the disease burst out in Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and all of the Third World countries where thousands of tons of this stuff was exported for cattle feed? My 6-year-old daughter can see the stupidity in that. Yet in Britain, the media has drummed this mind-set hypothesis into the public mentality that meat and bonemeal is the cause of BSE, and nobody questions it. Just on the fact that it was exported all over the world alone is enough in my mind to discredit the whole official theory. There are also an awful lot of other flaws that can be shown in the theory.

ACRES U.S.A. How do you account for Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) in almost 100 cases? Is there any connection, in your opinion?

PURDEY. Not from eating beef at all. For instance, in a village near me called Lymthstone, in Devon, there were two cases of variant CJD in people who lived about 200 yards apart, which was very interesting from a scientific point of view. This was blamed on the local butcher's shop, as it has been in all of the villages where variant CJD has erupted around England. There are clusters now, by the way, all over England in about six or seven very tiny areas, and it is always

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blamed on the butcher's shop. It can be argued that the butchering techniques that have been blamed are the same techniques used all over the U.K., not just in rural butcher shops but in urban butcher shops, as well. Going back to Lymthstone, what was interesting about this cluster was that one of the people who died was a Marine who lived in the Marine camp, and another person was a normal civilian living on a village street. The civilian had been buying meat from the local butcher, but the Marines do their buying in bulk from supermarkets. If the Marines were to buy their meat from the local butcher, they would buy him out in one meal. So, it is kind of a stupid hypothesis to me.

ACRES U.S.A. So it is basically etiology unknown as far as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease is concerned?

PURDEY. I would ask the question, why are these clusters appearing in rural and coastal areas? Eighty percent of the cases of new variant CJD are appearing in these areas. It suggests that it is something that is going on in rural areas as opposed to cities and towns. There are certainly equal numbers of meat eaters living in towns and in the countryside, so why do we have this strange eruption of variant CJD cases, often in tiny villages and little hamlets?

ACRES U.S.A. What's the contaminant?

PURDEY. I believe, basically, that the cause of these variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob outbreaks is exposure to a whole range of chemicals that are increasing and have an oxidizing effect. Of course, the systemic organophosphate chemicals are one major group that have been used in a big way all during the '80s and '90s in Britain. These chemicals have been used in large amounts in rural areas and are often sprayed on arable crops and are carried in the air, and residents of villages breathe in the spray directly from these crops. Organophosphates are well-known oxidizing agents. Also, in the countryside you get other oxidizing agents that are on the increase such as ultraviolet radiation and ozone gas, which forms as a result of ultraviolet radiation. In towns you don't get the problem with UV light because the smog that covers the town environment actually absorbs and scatters the

ultraviolet radiation before it reaches the earth. In rural areas what you are getting is a cocktail of oxidizing agents, be it crop sprays such as systemic organophosphates, ozone gas that builds up as a result of ultraviolet radiation interacting with exhaust gasses, or the ultraviolet itself. All of these oxidizing agents are hyper-oxidizing the human beings and the animals that are living in the rural regions as opposed to the urban regions. Basically, I think that this is what causes these diseases, the free-radical effects that are produced by the impact of oxidizing chemical that come in through the retina in the eye, that we breathe in through our lungs, and even go up the nose straight into the brain.

ACRES U.S.A. This would be the connection, then, with the symptoms of kuru, a similar disease found in New Guinea, wouldn't it?

PURDEY. Exactly.

ACRES U.S.A. You mentioned copper. Would you elaborate on that?

PURDEY. To try to prove my hunch that organophosphates had a role in BSE and interacted with this prion protein, I tried to do some experiments — tried to get the government to do the experiments initially. Obviously, they were reluctant to do the experiments because they compelled farmers to use the warblecide chemical. They weren't going to then do research that might expose and put them in a position for huge compensation claims. Eventually the government did do an experiment, but it was the wrong one. They tested an organophosphate that wasn't the same type as the one used on farms. They exposed this to a synthetic prion protein, which did not contain a particular part of the protein that would interact with the organophosphate that you would get in the real world. To cut it short, it wasn't a realistic experiment, and it failed, but the government then used it to discredit my work. I then basically had to raise my own money and money from well-wishers to get my own experiment done, which we did at the Institute of Psychiatry's Department of Neuroscience in London. We exposed living cells that manufacture this prion protein, in a cell culture, to the correct organophosphate that was used on farms.

ACRES U.S.A. Did this prove you out?

PURDEY. It did change the protein in three out of the four ways that are seen in

the protein in the early stages of the BSE disease process. At the very least, this proves that organophosphates produce a strong susceptibility to the disease — but it didn't prove everything. There was one change in the prion protein that wasn't there. In a sense, I went back to square one and designed this world tour where I would go around the world on my own to pockets where this disease had clustered — these were tiny little pockets of the world. My first port-of-call was in Colorado in a tiny area of the Rocky Mountains where chronic wasting disease was a hot spot in deer and elk. Then I went to Iceland to certain valleys where sheep scrapie is very intense, and to adjoining valleys where there is no scrapie at all in the sheep. I went to Slovakia, where CJD is present in three villages. I went to Calabria, where one hamlet has experienced 20 cases of CJD since 1995.

ACRES U.S.A. What were you able to find out?

PURDEY. What I did in each area was test the environment for all of the different trace elements in metals, because I was interested in the possibility that there might be something abnormal in the particular environment. I was asking the question: why is the disease present in these environments and not spreading to disease-free areas adjoining where the same animals and humans are living but not getting the disease? That in itself shows that it doesn't spread horizontally, otherwise it would have spread like wildfire, for instance, right across the Rocky Mountains, because, as you know, there are deer all over the Rockies. So why is it just staying in one tiny area?

ACRES U.S.A. What did you find in the case of chronic wasting disease?

PURDEY. I found in every single area really high levels of the metal manganese and rock-bottom levels of copper.

ACRES U.S.A. And manganese inhibits the uptake of copper.

PURDEY. Well, that is true, but I found very low levels of copper in the soil anyway, which could have been due to the high levels of manganese or even molybdenum. I also found low selenium and low zinc. All of the trace metals that are involved in antioxidant enzymes in the body, the activators, were at a low level, but manganese was high. I then got interested in people who had died from manganese intoxication, for instance, miners who were working in manganese mines.

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It seemed that their death was caused by the manganese getting out of control and setting off these free-radical chain reactions. That really interested me, because I thought: if manganese is setting off these chain reactions in deer and sheep and humans in these pockets all over the world, and there are no antioxidants there to mop up and scavenge these free-radical chain reactions because of the low selenium, zinc and copper also found in all of these areas, then spongiform disease could be a free-radical disease that is caused by oxidizing agents in the environment.

ACRES U.S.A. Your organophosphates are the oxidizing agents?

PURDEY. Yes. So, it was beginning to become very clear to me what was happening with the disease. The source of manganese was also quite interesting to me. In Colorado it seemed to be coming from the pine needles that the deer were wolfing down in this one area where the disease was really intense. Ranchers in that area told me that the deer were very overpopulated in this region. There was a shortage of pasture and food. They somehow thought this had something to do with the cause of chronic wasting disease. I think they were right. Other ranchers said that the animals were eating pine needles to make up for their lack of food. So, I took home pine needles from the area, and I got extractable manganese at 2,000 parts per million, which is very high.

ACRES U.S.A. If you had that much manganese, even if there was a pasture, it would be along about the level of Australia.

PURDEY. In Iceland it was coming from volcanoes that were spewing out manganese in certain valleys.

ACRES U.S.A. How do radioactive agents figure into all of this?

PURDEY. I think they are like a lot of metals, they can cause different types of diseases when they are radioactive. They cause oxidizing effects, they can generate free radicals that can produce cancers, etc.

ACRES U.S.A. This is basically an environmental problem that we are talking about?

PURDEY. Yes. In Slovakia it was coming specifically from the steel factories that the communists had erected, but they hadn't

filtered the chimneys. Immediately downwind of those factories were the cases of CJD in the villages that were in the rain-belt region of these factories. All the manganese was being rained down on these villages to the extent that the pine trees were actually dying in the villages where there was CJD. Furthermore, the local people in this area of Slovakia are so poor that they actually used pine needles for tea and for syrup. So you have this intriguing link up with pine needles, which bio-concentrate manganese anyway, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. In Italy, where I went in Calabria, where the scrapie and CJD cases have been breaking out since 1995, these cluster regions were immediately downwind of the petrol refineries. I found that in 1990 they switched from using lead to manganese in the refining process. I think these clusters initially — this started quite recently, in 1995 — were all linked to the fallout of manganese from the petrol refining process.

ACRES U.S.A. Is this essentially what this investigator named Brown at Cambridge found?

PURDEY. I got very friendly with David Brown because he had done some really good work showing that the normal, healthy prion protein bonds on copper. Normally, the prion protein has an antioxidant activity — that is its function, as an antioxidant enzyme, in fact. David Brown basically discovered this. I hypothesized from my environmental findings that if copper was absent and manganese was high, maybe manganese could substitute itself where the copper should be on the prion protein, and that could cause a malfunction. David Brown tested my hypothesis and got this exact change. He got the prion protein to bond up with the manganese when there wasn't any copper there and produce this fourth type of deformation to the prion protein, which wasn't achieved in the trials we had done with the organophosphates. This seemed to complete the story to me. David Brown went on to look at the brains of people who died of CJD, as did another French team, and both of them found manganese at 10 times the normal level in the brains of people who died of CJD and, furthermore, he discovered low levels of copper, selenium and zinc in these brains as well, which reflected what I had found in the environment. It was just fascinating.

ACRES U.S.A. Did your travels take you to France?

PURDEY. Yes. I've been looking at BSE there.

ACRES U.S.A. Are you familiar with what André Voisin wrote in *Soil, Grass and Cancer* about the phenomenon he called enzootic ataxia, which seems to have many of the same signs and symptoms as Mad Cow disease?

PURDEY. Yes. I've got his book, in fact. He is one of my heroes. Certainly the lack-of-copper aspect of prion disease can explain a lot of symptoms.

ACRES U.S.A. The United States Department of Agriculture's taking out a bunch of sheep and killing them, and then holding their brains on ice for months on end before they test them is really not a very defensible procedure, is it?

PURDEY. No — I think that is outrageously ridiculous. I know about the slaughter of sheep that belonged to Larry Faillice, and he is a highly intelligent person who has actually worked with BSE in Britain. I think what happened there is just as outrageous as what has been going on Britain and Germany, with all of these perfectly healthy cows being slaughtered.

ACRES U.S.A. How many cows have been slaughtered in England as a presumed defense against Mad Cow disease?

PURDEY. Basically, any cow that lives beyond 30 months is incinerated.

ACRES U.S.A. That comes to about 2 or 3 million head by now?

PURDEY. Yes, something like that.

ACRES U.S.A. If you had that many diseased cows, and indeed there was infectious transmissibility, wouldn't you have a few more than 100 Creutzfeldt-Jakob cases?

PURDEY. Exactly. Basically every slaughterhouse person in Britain knows there were mad cows coming into slaughterhouses long before the government recognized BSE officially. In fact, a lot of slaughter men said they knew when the government recognized the disease because these mad cows just stopped coming to the slaughterhouse after 1986. Most vets, slaughterers, and farmers say that Mad Cow disease was around from the beginning of the '80s.

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ACRES U.S.A. Hasn't it always been around a little bit?

PURDEY. Well, yes. In 1913, Stewart Stockman reported in the *Veterinary Record* that ox scrapie could be a problem in the wintertime. It seemed to emerge at that time of year. I think what we call Mad Cow has been around in its traditional form for quite a long while, but the modern form is definitely a more aggressive version of the disease.

ACRES U.S.A. We used to have to rely on hardware disease or something like that to have a cow attack the barn. Now we have more sophisticated poisons.

PURDEY. That's right. I think these modern-day chemical oxidizing agents that have been used in farming or are in our environment in the form of UV, which is increasing, these specifically accelerated the disease processor. Instead of a 20-year-old cow getting BSE, you are finding 4- or 5-year-old cows getting it, and instead of a 60- or 70-year-old human getting CJD, you are finding 20-year-old humans getting it. It is the same disease, but it is an accelerated, more aggressive version, because the oxidizing agents that are coming from the environment are increasing so much that it is kind of blitzing our brains with this hyper-oxidization that just accelerates the whole process and brings the disease out in younger individuals.

ACRES U.S.A. We hear rumblings out of the United Kingdom to the effect that there is some other agenda afloat than the one that is pretended, especially with the emergence of Foot-and-Mouth disease.

PURDEY. We know full well that in the European Agenda 2000 they were talking about reducing livestock in Europe by 20 percent, if not a lot more.

ACRES U.S.A. What is the purpose?

PURDEY. My feeling is that this is a sort of global agenda to reduce livestock that brings us back to Monsanto, *et al.*, and all the other multinational big guns who basically make a lot more money out of arable crops. These multinationals have a sort of double-whammy profit where they sell the GM seed, for example soybeans, and then they supply the agrochemical for growing the crop, so they make a double profit out of it.

ACRES U.S.A. This accounts for the advertisements Archer Daniels Midland

is putting out in the United States, where they compute how many more soybeans can be raised if you turn pastures over to soybeans rather than animals.

PURDEY. I think this is what is going on. The chemical industry, per acre of grassland, doesn't get rich. I mean there are very few insecticides, certainly in this country, that ever get used, even on chemical farms. You are lucky if a farmer sprays his pasture once a year, but with an arable crop in Britain, the crops get sprayed 10 times a year, so the profit for the chemical industry is going to be far more if you are growing arable crops than green grassland.

ACRES U.S.A. This aftosa virus is made to appear like the black death. What's your fix on this?

PURDEY. Again, I think they are just milking what they call a crisis to take out vast numbers of completely healthy livestock for no proper reason. They are very short-sighted, because we all know that cow manure is the heartbeat of the soil; it is the humus that is the cornerstone of soil fertility. By destroying livestock, you are putting the whole soil eco-system into this downward spiral, with loss of soil fertility and the massive soil erosion that could ensue. With soil erosion you begin to lose all the micronutrients, and you need to irrigate a lot more because the soil doesn't have the sponge capacity to hold water, etc. The ramifications are enormous concerning the denuding of livestock from agricultural systems. Wherever I have been studying around the world, I have noticed this prejudice against livestock production in favor of arable production, and this really concerns me. I think what has been going on with Foot-and-Mouth in Britain is just tragic. In fact, most farmers feel that the disease was deliberately released in order to catalyze this whole European agenda to reduce livestock.

ACRES U.S.A. Is there any truth to the report that social workers are now hitting those farms that have been wiped out by the gun squads and telling them to go out of business?

PURDEY. Yes. There is a whole process that seems to go on. You receive a D-notice, which is a notice where you are basically put under government control. When you are served with a D-notice by the government, all your cows get slaughtered. What is very weird about Foot-and-Mouth is that it has been controlled by

Number 10 Downing Street, that is, Tony Blair's headquarters — it is completely out of the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. There has been a lot of unease amongst many Ministry of Agriculture officers who are not happy with what has been going on with this overkill situation. Downing Street seems to be controlling the whole thing.

There are a lot of other strange things going on. For instance, there was a whole fleet of brand new purpose-built lorries that were up and running immediately when the first cases of Foot-and-Mouth were reported. Where did those lorries come from? Where were they manufactured? Who put the order in to build these lorries? Because the only purpose they have is for transporting large numbers of carcasses. With BSE there was never a need to transport a large number of carcasses from point A to B; with BSE, you just transport two or three dead cows, at the very most, from the farm to the incinerators. So these new lorries are definitely purpose-built for the job. A lot of farmers are asking the question: Why were they ordered before the epidemic started?

ACRES U.S.A. They were incinerating them in the open — is this even possible? Are you able to get the temperature high enough to incinerate properly?

PURDEY. This is another bone of contention. A lot of the farmers were concerned that the fires were actually spreading the virus. When you light the fire and the smoke comes off, the presence of the smoke signals that the temperature hasn't risen enough, because there is still water being driven off before the fire really gets going, and it is at this stage, when the smoke is billowing out, that you are going to have active virus perhaps spreading like wildfire across the countryside.

ACRES U.S.A. In any case, they can't control the wildlife or the birds.

PURDEY. Yes, they were feeding off of dead carcasses that had been left there up to 10 days after slaughter.

ACRES U.S.A. Is the program slowing down in England? Are they still executing cattle?

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PURDEY. What they report is confirmed cases of Foot-and-Mouth, but what seems to be going on is that for every confirmed case of Foot-and-Mouth you get vast numbers of unconfirmed adjoining herds being slaughtered. In some cluster areas of Foot-and-Mouth, it has transpired afterwards that there has never been an actual positive case because they slaughter the herd before the blood test results come back. Then they go to the next herd adjoining and say they have to slaughter them because they are adjoining, and so on. In this way they are always slaughtering contiguous herd after contiguous herd. Using this technique they have wiped out whole areas, 40 or 50 miles across, taking out all of the livestock before they have even demonstrated one single positive herd. It's got the farming community very, very worried and angry.

ACRES U.S.A. Many of those farmers will now go out of business, won't they?

PURDEY. Completely. They get compensation, which has been very generous, and that is another strange thing. A lot of farmers get sort of bullied into agreeing to have their cows slaughtered, and one of the carrots that's held in front of them is that the government is paying them more than what the animals are worth in the open market. They use this to persuade farmers to enter the slaughter program.

ACRES U.S.A. What if a farmer has a prize herd of animals that he has maybe line bred for a number of years and built up into a good herd? Do they give him the commodity price or the premium that they would be worth?

PURDEY. I think they have been getting good money in compensation. But this isn't the point, because a lot of rare breeds are being slaughtered out, and it possibly even could mean the extinction of one or two species. If you have bred pedigree cattle, as I do, for 20 or 30 years, you could never get those animals back once they are slaughtered, not with all the money in the world. You've lost that skillful breeding that you have been carrying out over the years, and you can never get it back.

ACRES U.S.A. So the farmers pays the price, even if well compensated for the animals that are slaughtered.

PURDEY. Of course, there is also the big emotional suffering and loss that goes with it all. So, yes, they give you a free two days with the social workers that are supplied by the government, but these social workers are not really helpful because they advise you not to go back into farming. For traditional farmers, that is not what they want to hear. What is going to make them happy and what is going to heal them is to hear that they are going back to farming. These traditional farmers who have lost their cattle, all they want to do is get back to work tomorrow. A lot of them have been prevented from going back to farming simply because the British government is buying up the livestock quota at a knocked-down price because their value has tumbled as a result of Foot-and-Mouth. They buy up the quota, and they don't put it into circulation again. That in itself will reduce the number of livestock in Britain, and it is very disturbing and perhaps betrays the hidden agenda that is going on.

ACRES U.S.A. For yourself, are you continuing your research and investigation of these cases?

PURDEY. Very much so. I am going to Australia to study a group of Aboriginal people who live on an island off northern Australia who have developed a neurological syndrome that manifests itself either as a motor-neuron disease or this mystery dementia disease, which I think is a prion disease.

ACRES U.S.A. This is where we came from with the kuru, isn't it?

PURDEY. Yes, it is very close, actually. In fact, it is on the same vein of land, of soil, that runs across through northern Australia into the kuru region in New Guinea. But what happened on this island

was that a mining corporation started open-pit mining of manganese at the end of the 1960s, and this black dust has basically contaminated the whole island, including the Aborigine's habitat. It was after the introduction of the mines that this disease started appearing in the Aboriginal people, but, true to form, Mr. Manganese Mine virtually governs the whole island, and so these people haven't had brain autopsies carried out as they should have. I want to go over there and approach the Aboriginal society and persuade them that it would be in their own interest to have some brain sections from some of the people who have died analyzed and checked for prions, manganese, etc. What the aboriginal people have been told is that this disease is, in fact, a virus, and that it can't come from a Portuguese miner who came to work there in the 1970s. This is just typical; time and time again we hear these vested interests, who are responsible for starting a disease by some new chemical product or whatever, they always blame something that is naturally occurring. These companies scapegoat a mystery virus, a natural toxin, or a genetic weakness, but they never accept that some product, which has a multi-billion dollar turnover perhaps, could be the cause of disease. This is the deadlock that we seem to be in as a modern society.

ACRES U.S.A. Everything bows to the World Trade Organization, I guess.

PURDEY. Exactly. It is always the same multinational corporations that seem to be behind these mega-coverups of the true causes of some of these modern diseases that are developing, whether it is cancer, BSE, autoimmune diseases, even viral diseases — a lot of the viruses that are endemic in our environment are bursting out because the immune system has been depleted by a lot of the chemicals and radioactive agents that have been released into the food chain.

Mark Purdey is an organic farmer and scientist from Somerset, England. He has traveled the world looking at the connections between organophosphate use and environmental pollution and BSE, Creutzfeldt-Jakob, and other autoimmune and degenerative diseases of the brain. His website is at <www.markpurdey.com>, and he can be reached through e-mail at <madcowpurdey@aol.com>.

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