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Vol. 36 • No. 29

The weekly news journal for the profession

August 7, 2006

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## MP CHALLENGES AUTHOR TO BACK UP FOOD ALLEGATIONS

**CONTROVERSIAL** author Tom Lonsdale, whose book *Raw Meaty Bones* claims that processed pet food is causing serious illness in domestic animals, has been challenged to "put his money where his mouth is" by MP Martyn Jones.

The challenge was raised during a two-hour seminar for invited MPs in Westminster on July 12, during which Dr Lonsdale spoke on the proven benefits of feeding a diet of raw meaty bones to pet dogs, cats and ferrets and highlighted his concerns of an alliance between the pet food industry and the veterinary profession.



Tom Lonsdale.

**report by**  
**Nigel Woodbine**  
nigelwoodbine@vbd.uk.com

Mr Jones, MP for Clwyd south and RCVS council member, attended the meeting in order to hear Dr Lonsdale's opinions firsthand after reading his second book, *Work Wonders*, which focuses on the dietary needs of dogs.

He told *Veterinary Times*: "I consider myself objective, and I'm generally open-minded, but his presentation was entirely anecdotal."

Mr Jones claimed that he left the meeting "unconvinced", and said that the idea of a conspiracy between vets and pet food manufacturers was "ridiculous."

Speaking of the author, Mr Jones said: "He has a lot of the charisma and fervour of a television evangelist, but there is very little substance in his message. I think that he's extending the bounds of what is a small valid point about diet to something which is far beyond common sense."

So strong were his feelings on the subject, Mr Jones claimed he challenged Dr Lonsdale to run

his own scientific tests in order to prove his point.

He said: "If you really believe something, you should put your money where your mouth is. They're raising money to put the case to people, so why don't they run a trial? I know it would take a couple of years, minimum, but it wouldn't be desperately expensive – I'm sure they would be able to raise the money if they really believe it."

### Unpaid campaigner

In response, Dr Lonsdale told *Veterinary Times*: "Since 1992 I have, indeed, put my money where my mouth is, having mostly been a full-time unpaid campaigner for the health and welfare of animals and animal owners."

"At the same time, the organised veterinary establishment and pet food company backers brought five bogus disciplinary actions against me – legal costs amounted to tens of thousands of dollars."

"I researched and, assisted by seven lawyers, self-published *Raw Meaty Bones*. Unfortunately, the British, American, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian veterinary associations

all vetoed even reviewing the book, thus ensuring few or no sales to offset the extraordinary costs incurred."

He said: "That Martyn Jones, privy council representative on the council of the RCVS, challenges me, the whistleblower, to fund investigations is the wrong side of outrageous. Perhaps Mr Jones is stalling for time. It certainly helps the junk pet food makers and the veterinary establishment to have friends in high places."

Another MP who met with Dr Lonsdale during his 2006 lecture tour was James Paice, shadow minister for agriculture and rural affairs.

He said: "I read [Dr Lonsdale's] book, which makes powerful reading, but it wouldn't stack up in a court and it isn't remotely substantial evidence."

Despite this, Mr Paice said he had investigated the allegations over the past year, pursuing them with the RCVS, BVA, DEFRA, and even speaking to veterinary colleges over the issue of pet food manufacturers sponsoring courses and lecturers. However, he concluded: "I have not yet seen any clear evidence that indicates any sort of

active conspiracy or cover up."

Dr Lonsdale said: "Sorry, that's absurd. I suggest that Mr Paice re-read Hans Christian Andersen. The Emperor's courtiers, who with responsibility, denied the obvious and defended the indefensible. They said the Emperor was fully clothed in raiments of spun silver, when, in fact, he was stark-staring naked."

He concluded: "Doctors Richard Malik and Douglas Bryden, both pillars of the veterinary establishment, at some risk to themselves, not only endorsed *Raw Meaty Bones* but recommended it for one of the Australian veterinary profession's highest awards [The college prize of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists]. Mr Paice has copies of these nominations, so why does he disregard the opinions of eminent veterinary scientists? When we see Mr Paice in court which side will he be on?"

The full text of *Raw Meaty Bones* is available to download for free at [www.rawmeatybones.com](http://www.rawmeatybones.com) and Dr Lonsdale's new book, *Work Wonders*, is out now. For further information, visit [www.ukrmb.co.uk](http://www.ukrmb.co.uk) or email [tom@rawmeatybones.com](mailto:tom@rawmeatybones.com).

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