Infected Blood Inquiry

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Getting towards the end

As the Inquiry moves into its final stages amended witness statements start appearing from those called to give evidence at an earlier date.

Two are of particular interest. Andrew Lansley and Sir Kenneth Calman.

Lansley reminds the committee that he reduced NHS management costs by a third, secured the lowest ever waiting lists and sharply reduced hospital acquired infection rates.

He does not spend much time on his ill-fated reorganisation. His only involvement in blood was, he claimed, attempts to improve the ex-gratia support for victims.

Not an impressive witness!

Kenneth Calman a former CMO relates the background story to the creation of the National Blood Authority.

Regional Transfusion Directors were not keen and were worried about the loss of a local donor base.

One crucial issue was whether the NBA would directly manage Regional Transfusion Centres or limit themselves to national policy.

Latterly RBT directors saw the writing on the wall and fell into line. Regional Directors of Public Health were opposed on principle.

Regional managers were not enthusiastic but Regional Chairman saw no reason to object provided the implementation proceeded carefully and slowly.

One of their number eventually became Chairman of the new national authority. All the politicians wanted the issue settled quietly.

Eventually the opposition melted away and the NBA was created on 1st April 1993.

We then hear from the Chair of the Committee on Standards in Public life.

Did politicians act properly?.

The expert statistics group reports in

and a transplant surgeon is called to answer the question should patients harmed with infected blood have priority on liver transplant lists.

He thought not.

The next big event will be the evidence from permanent secretaries including Alex Chisholm the Chief Operating Officer for the civil service.

I did not know we had one!

Eventually, all the core participants will be invited to tell the Chair what they think he should conclude and recommend.

This is still some months away.

