MICRO WAVE NEWS

A Report on Non-Ionizing Radiation

French TV Documentary Links IARC RF Panelist to Industry Interference

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A hard-hitting documentary aired on French television last night alleges that René de Sèze, a well-known member of the French RF community, worked to delay, if not bury, a study that would be detrimental to the mobile phone industry. The 90-minute show reports that de Sèze coordinated a study on behalf of Bouygues Telecom, a leading cell phone operator, and when the results supported a radiation health risk, he did everything he could to discredit it. De Sèze works for French National Institute for the Industrial Environment and Hazards (INERIS).

The allegation comes just days before de Sèze travels to Lyon to be a member of a panel assembled by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) to evaluate the cancer risks associated with cell phone radiation. IARC is already under fire for inviting three industry operatives to be observers at the meeting, while barring the press. Those invitations, the makeup of the panel, as well as the fact that key results of the Interphone study, an IARC project, remain unpublished, have prompted EMF activists, among others, to raise questions about IARC's objectivity and fairness. (The Interphone data on acoustic neuromas and parotid gland tumors and the location of the brain tumors relative to the phones have not yet been made public, though there are rumors that the panel will have the acoustic neuroma and tumor location results at next week's meeting.)

Earlier today, for instance, Mast Victims, a U.K. group, circulated an imitation movie poster for "Science of the Lambs" under the heading "Opening in Lyon, France, May 24-31." One faux endorsement runs: "'Worth Every Penny' —Mobile Manufacturers Monthly." The poster takes a pot shot at Anders Ahlbom, a member of the IARC panel, who has been widely quoted as saying there is little chance of any cancer risk from cell phones. (See an interview with Ahlbom posted by the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS).)

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The study, coordinated by de Sèze, found that cell phone radiation could be lethal to chicken embryos. Led by Florence Batellier of the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA), it was designed to see if a similar study by Madeleine Bastide, published in 2001, could be replicated. Batellier says that her study is in general agreement with the results reported by Bastide. Batellier's paper took six years to come out due to interference from de Sèze and Bouygues Telecom, according to the documentary; it finally appeared in 2008. De Sèze has insisted that the observed deaths of the embryos were due to a thermal effect, Batellier states. When asked about the implications of the two studies by Sophie Le Gall, the filmmaker, de Sèze deadpans, don't phone chickens. (Bastide died in 2007.)

The documentary also raises questions about the transparency of ICNIRP in terms of its failure to reveal its members' ties to industry, notably those of Bernard Veyret. It also features a rare interview with Pierre Aubineau, a French researcher, who had a falling out with Veyret over his paper showing RF-induced leakage through the blood-brain barrier (see *MWN,* N/D01, p.1). Aubineau has accused Veyret of trying to suppress his paper, much like de Sèze stands accused of delaying Batellier's. Aubineau's paper has never been formally pubished other than as a conference abstract.

"Mauvaises Ondes" (Bad Waves) was broadcast in prime time on France 3, a public TV station last night. It may be viewed on the Internet until May 25th. It is only available in French. [Now you can see it here.]

The day after the broadcast (May 20), FFT, the French telecom industry association, called the documentary "biased" and an exercise in "disinformation." FTT's four-page letter to the president of French Televisions does not address the charges leveled against de Sèze.

IARC, René de Sèze, Bouygues Telecom, Mast Victims, cell phones, INERIS, ICNIRP, Madeleine Bastide,

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