Verstraeten, Thomas

From: Verstraeten, Thomas
Sent: Friday, July 14, 2000 10:42 AM
To: 'Philippe Grandjean'; Verstraeten, Thomas
Cc: Chen, Robert (Bob) (NIP); Destefano, Frank; Pless, Robert; Bernier, Roger; Tom Clarkson; Pal Weihe
Subject: RE: Thimerosal and neurologic outcomes

Dear Dr. Grandjean,
Thank you for a very rapid response!
I apologize for dragging you into this nitty gritty discussion, which in Flemish we would call "muggeziften" . I know much of this is very hypothetical and personally I would rather not drag the Faroe and Seychelles studies in this entire thimerosal debate, as I think they are as comparable to our issue as apples and pears at the best.
Unfortunately I have witnessed how many experts, looking at this thimerosal issue, do not seem bothered to compare apples to pears and insist that if nothing is happening in these studies then nothing should be feared of thimerosal. I do not wish to be the advocate of the anti-vaccine lobby and sound like being convinced that thimerosal is or was harmful, but at least I feel we should use sound scientific argumentation and not let our standards be dictated by our desire to disprove an unpleasant theory.
Sincerely,
Tom Verstraeten.

-----Original Message-----
From: Philippe Grandjean [mailto:pgrand@health.sdu.dk]
Sent: Friday, July 14, 2000 6:45 AM
To: Verstraeten, Thomas
Cc: Chen, Robert (Bob) (NIP); Destefano, Frank; Pless, Robert; Bernier, Roger; Tom Clarkson; Pal Weihe
Subject: Re: Thimerosal and neurologic outcomes

Dear Dr. Verstraeten - I have given your message priority and will respond below to the
questions raised in your message. I shall look in detail at the documents you attached, but
that will not be until next week when I'm back in Boston. Best regards - Philippe Grandjean

> 1. Dr. Clarkson stated that neither of the Faroe or Seychelles studies found
> any adverse effects linked to post-natal exposure. Two remarks :
>
> * The Faroe study did found a negative statistically significant
> association between two test results (finger tapping and reaction time) and
> post-natal exposure (measured by child hair mercury at year). Adjusting for
> breastfeeding did not only not resolve these, but added a third association
> (visuospatial memory).
>
> (ref. Grandjean et al, Methylmercury Exposure Biomarkers as Indicators of
> Neurotoxicity in Children Aged 7 Years, AJE, 1999).

That's correct. At least when assessed by the Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test, visuospatial
performance is more closely associated with postnatal exposure than with