

Tom Lonsdale Veterinary Surgeon

PO Box 6096
Windsor Delivery Centre
NSW 2756
Australia

Phone: +61 2 4574-0537
Fax: +61 2 4574-0538
E-mail: tom@rawmeatybones.com
Web: www.rawmeatybones.com

20 June 2004

Professor Richard Halliwell MA VetMB PhD MRCVS
President
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Belgravia House
62-64 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 2AF

Dear Professor Halliwell,

Thank you for meeting with Roger Meacock and myself at Belgravia House on 17 June 2004.

We requested the meeting in the hope that differences between ourselves and the Royal College could be resolved.

You invited me to outline our concerns.

I indicated that I believe that the veterinary profession represents a major obstacle to the appropriate health management of domestic pets. That the profession, since the 1860s, has presided over the growth of the processed pet food industry and that the profession is now thoroughly enmeshed with the industry. I suggested that the artificial pet food industry, in alliance with the veterinary profession, is responsible for the mass poisoning of domestic pets.

As the UK regulator of the profession, I implored the Royal College to act, and thereby save itself from public contempt. I indicated that my colleagues and I, when we discovered that we had previously misadvised our clients regarding the suitability of processed foods, quickly set the record straight, apologised and moved to remedy past wrongs.

I suggested that around 9% of veterinarians agree with my analysis judging by the votes I have received at Royal College elections in each of the past eight years.

You vehemently denied that the votes carried any validity — and spoke as if this was the collective view of the College Council. You asserted that a hamster, if it should stand for election to the Council of the Royal College, would receive as many votes.

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You mentioned that you had part-read my book *Raw Meaty Bones* and described what you saw as shortcomings. I suggested that you may be mistaken and that those veterinarians who have published reviews of the book (www.rawmeatybones.com) were united in their high praise and recommended it to all veterinarians. I remarked that the UK veterinary press had steadfastly refused to review the book. You emphasised that in your opinion: ‘Their reason could be there is so much to find fault with that the review could be embarrassing.’

Early in our discussions you indicated:

I don't believe that dogs should eat bones.

[Bones] create serious problems — most vets would agree.

The pet food manufacturers have come out with other methods of cleaning teeth of dogs and cats — I think they are pretty effective.

Paradoxically, later in the discussion, you suggested that you were in agreement with me regarding periodontal disease and that, for many years, you had been aware of the problems associated with the condition.

The mass poisoning of domestic pets by their health care providers cannot be condoned.

As self-appointed guardians of the public interest, where pet health is concerned, the leaders of the veterinary profession have obligations:

- To research and advise on the extent of the damage caused by artificial diets — they have not.
- When presented with the evidence, to clarify and act upon that evidence — they have not.
- When presented with the evidence, at an early stage to alert the veterinary profession and wider community — they have not, but instead have taken steps to suppress the evidence.

These failings of the veterinary leadership serve to inflict great cruelty upon the animals under our care, cost £billions in unnecessary food and veterinary costs and stand in the way of major human health care advances.

Please, as a matter of the utmost urgency, advise how the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons proposes to remedy the widespread failings.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Lonsdale
CC: Interested parties