Millions Have Died Because of DDT Ban, New Book Documents

April 21--Dr. Donald Roberts, the entomologist whose malaria research determined that the pesticide DDT works chiefly by repelling mosquitoes, launched his long-awaited book today in a Washington, D.C. press conference: The Excellent Powder: DDT's Political and Scientific History. He and co-author Richard Tren, an economist from South Africa and chairman of Africa Fighting Malaria, summarized the book's main points for an audience that included several distinguished malaria researchers.

"Millions have died" and poor people have suffered "severe and grievous harm" as a result of the anti-scientific attacks on DDT, Roberts said. He emphasized three points: we have to hold the anti-DDT groups accountable for this harm; we have to rescind the World Health Organization resolution that stopped DDT use in 1997; and we have to remove authority over public health malaria decisions from organizations that prioritize "environmental" protection over protecting the public's health.

When asked by 21st Century Science & Technology to elaborate on why environmentalists went after DDT, Roberts stressed that the motivation was population control. "Studies were done that showed that where DDT was introduced for malaria control, the effects were dramatic as malaria death rates declined, and survival went up.... There was great alarm that the malaria control programs using DDT were contributing far too much population growth, and that this was a bad thing."

Both Roberts and Tren demolished the familiar scare stories about DDT: DDT did not wipe out robins, eagles, or peregrine falcons (contrary to the lies of Rachel Carson in her book Silent Spring); it has never been shown to cause human harm (no matter how some researchers have tried to find a correlation); and it works even if mosquitoes are resistant to DDT. The authors stressed that enormous funding has gone into fighting DDT, but that there has been almost no funding for research to come up with new weapons to fight malaria.

The Excellent Powder is available at $25 from Africa Fighting Malaria. For more background on DDT, see http://www.21stcenturysciencetech.com/DDT.html

--Marjorie Mazel Hecht