Microwaves Can Cause Cataracts

“The Army decided not to renew the contract in 1968, shortly after I reported posterior capsular changes in seven civilian employees at the Signal Corps base at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The chief of Ophthalmology Service at the Walter Reed General Hospital, Colonel Budd Appleton, told me there was no such thing as microwave cataract. He claimed the only thing one could say was that a patient had a developing cataract due to normal aging. One trouble with this theory was that in many of the forty-two cases I had reported, a cataract had formed in only one eye, whereas senile cataracts usually develop bilaterally. Of course, the military people were anxious about my findings for a number of reasons. First of all, if I turned out to be correct, and if it became widely recognized and accepted that microwaves could cause a specific and recognizable type of cataract, the armed forces were liable to incur some huge medical-legal problems, especially with civilian employers who had been exposed to radar. Second, and even more important, an enormous part of the nation’s weapons-development program for the next decade, including the antiballistic-missile systems, was predicated on the assumption that the ten-milliwatt level was safe. If this standard turned out to be unsafe and had to be lowered, the cost of relocating radar and missile sites and of redesigning equipment would amount to billions of dollars. With so much at stake in the ten-milliwatt standard, the military could scarcely afford to accept any findings that cast doubt on the theory that cataract formation was thermal in origin. But, you see, like the two technicians in Thule, none of my forty-two patients had any recollection whatsoever of experiencing heat or pain in their eyes. This meant that cataracts could be produced by exposure to microwave levels that did not produce acute burn, which, in turn, raised the possibility that cataracts might form in the eyes of people who were chronically exposed to low levels of microwave radiation over long periods – for example, radar technicians or unsuspecting people using microwave ovens that leak.”

Quoting Dr. Milton M. Zaret, clinical associate professor of ophthalmology at New York University – Bellevue Medical Center on page 63 to 64 of The Zapping of America – Microwaves, their Deadly Risk, and the Cover-up by Paul Brodeur (Published by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1977)