

We Get Letters

No Drugs -- Period.

Dear Editor:

At the Markson seminar I attended in July, we were honored to have as the guest speaker, Dr. Chester Wilk. Dr. Wilk gave an extremely informative and uplifting encapsulation of the present state of chiropractic affairs. He warned us, however, that if we, as a profession, do not unite under the roof of one organization, we will surely be destroyed by our enemies.

I have no doubt that what Dr. Wilk said is true. It is equally true that this profession will not unite until certain criteria have been met.

Following the botched merger attempt, the constant question of ACA and ICA unity has yet to be answered by either organization. As a member of the ACA I think that the answer is fairly simple. Until the ACA refutes, without equivocation, the use of drugs in the practice of chiropractic and takes a strong stand on basic chiropractic principles and philosophy, the ICA will be able to remain a separate entity to ensure (in their eyes anyway) the continued existence of undiluted chiropractic. The ACA must realize that there is a tremendous ground swell of "straight" chiropractic sentiment in our profession. I use the word "straight" for the lack of a better one. This sentiment has nothing whatsoever to do with adjunctive therapies or nutritional counseling; it has to do with chiropractic. It frightens many chiropractors to read articles in JACA written by lawyers, orthopedists, and other antagonistic parties encouraging our profession to drop the "unscientific" beliefs we have in subluxations and innate intelligence and embrace the views of political medicine. It frightens many of us because we realize that in doing what the orthodoxy wishes, we will be signing our own death warrant.

The ACA must make a distinct statement distancing itself from the lunatic fringe medipractor organizations which are clamoring to be "real" doctors by being allowed to prescribe medication. The argument that is bandied about is that chiropractors should be allowed to do whatever it takes to help a patient out of pain (forgetting entirely that we have no business promising any such results from chiropractic care since the primary purpose of chiropractic adjustments is the removal of vertebral subluxations, not relief from symptoms). The point of this argument is that prescribing medication will enable chiropractors to fulfill their obligation of pain relief. The facts that Dr. Wilk's work has brought to light regarding the inefficiency and danger of medical treatment (i.e., 2,000 deaths per week due to iatrogenic reactions to drugs) seem to have no effect on these misguided chiropractic/medical doctors.

If a chiropractor has a burning desire to prescribe medication, then the best option, indeed the only option open for that chiropractor, is to enroll in medical, osteopathic, or physiatry school so that the wish may be fulfilled. In plain and simple terms, the practice of chiropractic does not include the use of drugs -- period. That is the practice of medicine, and I have yet to hear or read any convincing argument otherwise. The use of nutritional supplements to aid the body's homeostatic response is a far cry from drug use as such supplements are available from health food stores and suppliers. Prescription drugs are not. Iontophoresis does not involve the use of

prescription drugs. All drugs, prescription and otherwise, fall under the domain of medicine. Therefore, it will be the job of organized medicine to instruct chiropractic students in the use of drugs. I fail to see how having an arm of political medicine in chiropractic colleges is to the advantage of our profession. As long as the ACA refuses to denounce in no uncertain terms the use of drugs in chiropractic, the profession will not be united. The argument used by the ACA is that since certain states have laws allowing chiropractors to prescribe medication, the ACA cannot completely denounce chiropractic pharmacology. Since when do state legislators have the right or ability to dictate chiropractic principles? As long as the ICA can point and say, "We are the only organization dedicated to the preservation of chiropractic," or, "We are the only organization dedicated to breaking out of the musculoskeletal confines thrust upon us by political medicine and the insurance companies," we will be united. As long as the ACA refuses to acknowledge that the use of drugs in our profession signals our death knell, we will not be united.

The flip side of the coin is that we will not be united as long as the ICA clings to the foolish notion that two national organizations are good for chiropractic, just as two parties are good for the government of our country. The government of the United States does have two major political parties. It also has three major branches. Does that mean that we would be better off with three national organizations? The judicial branch has nine Supreme Court justices; should we have nine national organizations? This country has, in fact, one government with many different and disparate stabilizing forces. Both the ICA and the ACA combined represent less than half of the chiropractic profession. I suggest that these statistics indicate that our "two party" system is destroying the profession. Chiropractic needs one national organization or our enemies will pick us apart just as the one united government of our country destroyed the many non-united Native American tribes, or the way the united government of England was able to divide and conquer Ireland with its different clans. Chiropractic will not have the one unified voice it needs as long as the ICA continues to cloak itself in a shroud of righteous indignation and moralistic pomposity. The basic truth and virtue of chiropractic is in no way threatened by the use of adjunctive therapies and nutritional counseling. To behave as if such practices could destroy the fabric of our profession is akin to the atavistic political practice of forbidding businesses to be open on Sundays because not observing the Sabbath could threaten the fabric of our society. The principles and philosophy of chiropractic that the ICA holds so near and dear to its heart will be worth nothing in the hands of our conquering adversaries.

If the ACA and ICA really wish to bring this profession into the 21st century with dynamic energy, they know what to do. If the necessary steps are not taken, there will be no chiropractic -- not for us, not for our children, and not for our patients.

Charles A. Krieger, D.C.
Astoria, New York

Unity -- a Must

Dear Editor:

In your December 6, 1991 issue of *Dynamic Chiropractic*, you raised the questions: Is there a practical definition of unity for the chiropractic profession? Is unity an ideal or can we really hope to attain it?

With the help of Webster's Dictionary, I submit the following for consideration: Unity -- one association representing a profession gives its solidarity of a group, though made up of diverse and

various ideas, enables it to express its opinions, manifest its strength, and exert its influence as one -- one official spokesperson for the profession.

As a member of the ICA Board of Control for about 18 years, and as chairman of the PR Committee for 10 years, four other board members and myself concluded: The ICA did not have the potential in membership and finances to properly represent and promote the profession as desired and needed. Most of that time was under the leadership of Dr. B.J. Palmer as president. We resigned from the ICA board and joined others from the NCA to form the ACA. In my opinion, the same situation exists today as existed 30 years ago.

Unfortunately, the ICA membership does not understand or realize that practically all of the membership dues are required to pay expenses for officials to and from two business meetings per year. This was true 30 years ago and no doubt, in my mind, it is true today. In my opinion, the potential in membership and finances is no greater or better than 30 years ago.

If the powers that be in the ICA don't like some of the ACA policies, they will have a much greater chance of changing those policies as ACA members than as non-members. If the right attitude is used and if they are as concerned about chiropractic as they claim, then surely enough members should be able to be elected to the House of Delegates where the policies are made. With well over 20,000 members, the ACA can afford to pay the expenses.

Unity must be attained with one strong ACA. Increase that membership to over 40,000 members and chiropractic will survive for posterity.

Unity must be attained.

Leonard K. Griffin, D.C.
Auburn, California

Collective Power

Dear Editor:

In 1973 or 74, while returning to NCC from Christmas break, the idea came to me that our profession should sue the American Medical Association for restraint of trade under the Sherman and/or Clayton anti-trust laws. Since I had studied these laws in undergraduate school, they seemed an appropriate vehicle for redress of many of the ills visited upon chiropractic by the medical establishment. Upon returning to NCC, I talked the idea up with my fellow students for a few days. A few thought the idea to be ridiculous, a few thought it excellent, and most were somewhere between. As the days went by, other more immediate concerns replaced that idea on the scale of importance in my life, and my attention was only occasionally directed to it. Several years later I heard that one of my classmates who had been very enthusiastic about the idea was involved with Dr. Wilk and others in suing the medical establishment for restraint of trade. Since then I have flattered myself that I had something to do with the suit by Wilk et al. against the aggressive, monopolistic medical establishment of that day.

Whether or not the Wilk et al. suit against the medical establishment resulted from the above chain of events is of limited import. More important is the energy of will that Wilk et al. demonstrated in their persistence and constance in putting such an idea into manifestation. Without such will, an idea remains as a thought.

I believe that there is another idea which could have a similar impact upon the future of our profession. An idea which requires the collective will of all or most of the members of our profession within the United States. The idea is concerned with the future state of chiropractic care vis-a-vis a national health system in the United States.

Recently, each of us witnessed the effect on Congress of motivated members of Medicare recipients in changing a law. When Congress saw the number of voters who protested these changes in Medicare laws they quickly responded. As a patient who is a judge once commented to me, "You can spend all the money you want on lobbyists or PACs, but if you really want action from your representatives, show them that the people who vote for them care about the issue."

I propose that we, as a profession, do just that -- that each chiropractor and each friend of chiropractic that we can muster begin now to collect names with addresses on petitions, as well as letters from individuals to their respective federal representatives for delivery to the next Congress asking for fair and reasonable access to chiropractic care. This same petition could also protest the present limits of access to chiropractic care under Medicare and other government insurance and ask for more equitable access and coverage. Whenever possible, enthusiastic patients and friends should also be encouraged to write individual letters to their congressmen, senators, and to the president. One letter could easily be sent to all representatives and, if necessary, the chiropractor could mail the letter. The petitions could be collected by one or several coordinated organizations and delivered in a unified and timely manner to the appropriate representatives.

The mechanics of putting such an idea into manifestation is best left to organizations who are better equipped and used to putting ideas into action. I believe that if collectively we, as a profession, join our individual wills to this task, we can manifest a tremendous force that will have directed impact on the future state of chiropractic care in America.

Paul R. Thompson, D.C.
Virginia Beach, Virginia

JANUARY 1992