

An Interview with the President of the AWC

Richard Tyler, DC

Everyone was busy talking about the news conference called by the president of the Alliance of Wonderful Chiropractors (AWC) Dr. Perry Humbug. What new revelations would be given to excite the chiropractic profession? The tension mounted. Suddenly there was a noise in the back of the conference room. It was Dr. Humbug waving and smiling and shaking hands with everyone. He embraced one of the photographers, then stood on a chair and gave a double victory sign. After more handshakes, hugs, and chair standing he was finally at the podium and ready to begin the conference.

Humbug: Hi, everyone. I love you all. I love you if you're black, white, red, yellow or even blue. Before we begin, I'd like to make a short statement. I believe in unity for the chiropractic profession. I'll support anyone who has a license to practice chiropractic. I'll support anything that a person wants to do. It's just too bad everyone isn't as open-minded and dedicated to the welfare of the profession as I am. My biggest problem is that I'm too humble. This is the cross I must bear. The unending pain of leadership. Let us pray.

Reporter: Excuse me, "your grace," but before you get too carried away maybe you could answer a few questions.

H: Go ahead. I'm all for you and whatever you want to ask. I don't even care if you have a criminal record or if you're a member of the Communist party. If this is your thing -- then do it. This reminds me of the time that I ...

R: Excuse me but I'd like to ask a question.

H: Of course. Ask whatever questions you want. I don't care if ...

R: How is this alliance of yours different in its approach to chiropractic?

H: We believe that every chiropractor should practice as he wants. While I personally am a straight, I wouldn't think of telling someone else how to practice. As long as the individual practices within the scope of the law in his or her state then I and the Alliance will back that person all the way. There will be no prejudice in the Alliance. Anyone who is a chiropractor is welcome to join.

R: How is this different from the tenets of the American Chiropractic Association (ACA)?

H: Well -- it just is.

R: How?

H: In heaps of ways that you just don't understand.

R: Try me.

H: You're obviously here to stir things up. But it doesn't matter to me because you have a right to

believe anything you want and may God bless you.

R: Some have suggested that this Alliance is just a gimmick to boost your ego and profits. After all, you have your own paper which now promotes your own organization. In other words, your paper appears to be nothing more than a glorified newsletter for your own little club.

H: Oh, yeah? Well, how about Don Petersen, Jr.?

R: What about him?

H: Well, he's got his own paper. So there.

R: And there the similarity ends. Dynamic Chiropractic is an independent paper with no ties to any chiropractic organization.

H: Well, what about those big ads.

R: For the ACA or the ICA?

H: Well -- I never see anything about the Federation of Straight Chiropractic Organization (FSCO).

R: You mean you never read the regular column by the president of the FSCO? "DC" has an editorial policy like any paper and part of the policy is to give a forum to any legitimate form of chiropractic expression. The only thing the paper is against is one group trying to dictate how the other should practice. It looks like you didn't discover professional tolerance after all.

H: Yeah? Well the ACA is falling apart anyway.

R: Oh, you mean "the sky is falling, the sky is falling" bit? Apparently the ACA is doing some house cleaning so they can be more responsive to the needs of the profession. This should be done periodically to every organization so that it may run more efficiently. Of course, there are always those malcontents who might find their positions in jeopardy. They get "even" by writing nasty little letters to people who have vested interest in trying to discredit the oldest and most influential association in the profession.

H: Why would I ... I mean, someone want to do that?

R: Because your ego apparently must be fed. After all, Dr. Bill has his own club in the ICA.

H: Yeah? Well Sportelli owns the ACA.

R: He happens to be the present chairman of the board and as such is doing the job he's supposed to by trying to make things work better.

H: Yeah? Well ... well, how about his selling his Introduction to Chiropractic to the ACA.

R: The book is one of the finest patient education tools ever written. Should the ACA or any association be denied access to such material because it happened to be produced by one of its own members? And it's difficult to imagine that the fortunes of Dr. Sportelli might hinge on the purchase of some of the material he produces. Seems pretty obvious that you're grasping at anything to denigrate your "competition."

H: I resent that.

R: And the profession should resent anyone who sets up organizations to further splinter it. This glorious "enlightenment" you claim to have had about accepting and defending all approaches to chiropractic has been the cornerstone of the ACA since its inception in 1964. So what's being gained by starting a new association? And what's being gained by starting your own little "research" club -- other than to cheapen real research with a gimmick-ridden scheme to get more patients? If you're interested in legitimate research you might check in with the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research (FCER).

H: Who are you anyway? You look familiar. I'll bet you're Don Petersen, Jr.

R: Nope.

H: The assistant editor of "DC?"

R: Come on.

H: Okay, I give up. Tell me who you are.

R: I'm everyone who really wants a unified profession based on mutual respect. I'm everyone who is sick and tired of all the two-bit schemers who feed off the profession with patient procurement scams and phony organizations. I can be seen on the rosters of the ACA and on the pages of Dynamic Chiropractic. My name is Louis Michael Sportelli Pedigo.

There was a long silence.

H: Okay, let's get on with this. Any more questions? Okay then, I think I'll tell you about my latest plan to ...

As Humbug spoke, the audience began to walk out, leaving him as he should be -- alone.

RHT

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