

## The Mouse Still Roars

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You may not be familiar with the 1959 film "The Mouse That Roared." It's an hilarious comedy about a tiny, mythical European country, the Duchy of Fenwick, which is beset with economic woes. In desperation, the leaders of the country decide that their only salvation is to declare war on the United States, surrender shortly thereafter, and begin collecting U.S. foreign aid.

Peter Sellers leads the cast, playing three roles, including the Prime Minister Count Mountjoy, and the Grand Duchess Gloriana. Their attack force (armed only with crossbows) arrives in New York, but finds the city deserted. Not knowing that they have arrived during a nuclear drill, the befuddled army goes searching the empty streets for someone to surrender to. They stumble upon a mad scientist who has developed a great weapon of mass destruction. With him as a prisoner of war, they now find themselves in a perplexing situation. What do they do if they win the war?

The chiropractic profession has been "roaring" in a number of different arenas:

- in the court rooms against the American Medical Association et al.;
- on the guideline panels of the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research;
- on the pages of prestigious research journals;
- within the political inner workings of the World Health Organization;
- and now in the halls of the U.S. Congress.

We've won on several fronts. We won against the AMA and received our "foreign aid" in the form of monetary settlements. We've won research grants. We've won an increased patient base that comes with greater public recognition.

But once you've roared and won, then what? What do you do after you've gained a level playing field? How do you act after you've finally been accepted as a member of the health care club? This is where the hard part comes. It's now time to go to work.

The goal used to be recognition. We all fought to rid ourselves of the chains of prejudice. Now that most of those chains have fallen away, we confront many of the same challenges the other health care professions face.

In some respects, fighting for recognition was much easier. Since then, our agendas have become much more complicated and diverse. Like slaves suddenly given their freedom, we must establish ourselves economically and politically.

Chiropractic is at the adolescence of its development as a profession. Life seems more complex and less rewarding than it did in the good old days. Will we mature, or will we just refuse to grow up?

We got here by our involvement -- our willingness to respond to the various challenges with letters, phone calls, donations and action. And while these past efforts were sparked by emotional response, involvement needs to become the driving attribute of a mature profession.

This is a critical time for chiropractic. The playing field has leveled considerably. Most of our critics are willing to listen to our point of view. We must compete and improve. Should we fail, our enemies will rejoice, saying "We told you so."

We all need to do and become more than ever before. In my position, I need to ask some hard questions:

- Is *Dynamic Chiropractic* a better publication than it was two years ago?
- Is the layout more attractive and more easily read?
- Do the articles tell you all of the critical details?
- Are we covering more of the important news you need to know?
- Are we doing everything we can to support chiropractic's success?

Likewise, you need to ask yourself some questions:

- Consider your practice. Are you a better chiropractor than you were two years ago? How have you improved?
- Are your marketing efforts more effective? Are you communicating better with your patients?
- Are you doing everything you can to support chiropractic's success?

The next five years will either see a tremendous growth for chiropractic or a slow recession. The decision is ours to make collectively. Every patient you see is an opportunity to affect our success. Every political battle is ours to win or lose.

Make every patient encounter your absolute best. Respond to every opportunity you see. We're making chiropractic history.

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