

Drugs-R-Us

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Just when I thought that there were no more surprises, along came the testimony before Congress during the CHAMPUS hearings last year.

There were many opponents, two-star generals, representatives for the Department of Defense (DOD), and us. You heard me, us. Just like Pogo, we found the enemy and they were us. They (us) didn't testify against the inclusion of chiropractic in the CHAMPUS bill, nope, they testified as to just what chiropractic needed to be and what it was prepared to do for the good of our country: medicate and vaccinate everyone in the armed services.

I couldn't believe my ears and right next to me sat a fellow DC and rather than the old "us against them" it was us against us. Dr. Cianciulli, one-half of the "Dynamic Duo," talks about maturity, but this wasn't maturity, this was treason. He said that chiropractors in his group were taking extra courses in pharmaceuticals and were prepared to medicate and vaccinate if we were allowed to serve in the armed forces and be included in CHAMPUS. He said something to the effect that the services needed real doctors, ones who were able to perform full range of services, real primary care physicians. To say that many of us were embarrassed is putting it mildly.

Unfortunately, there are a few people across the country that want to make chiropractic into something it isn't. In a time where we need to be pushing for patients' freedom of choice in health care, so they will be able to choose between chiropractic care and medical care, along comes this misguided self-serving bunch who try to blur the main issue: our differences.

Who needs another osteopathic profession? We already have one and we're larger than they are. Many of the DOs do not practice manipulation anymore. They are medical doctors with a different set of initials behind their name. They changed, we didn't. We are stronger now than they ever were because we have continued to be what we always were, doctors of chiropractic.

We eschew drugs not because of some ancient and medieval philosophy, but because our profession is based on the body's inherent recuperative powers rather than on the body's need for outside influences like drugs. We provide health care through natural means by reducing subluxations, providing exercise regimens, nutritional counseling, and support. Some of us provide adjunctive therapies. Where do drugs fit in?

Several people have become upset at the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE) for having the word "drugless" in their "standards." They wish to remove it or to qualify it as a minimum standard of chiropractic education, thereby opening the doors for one or two of our colleges to teach "the use of" pharmacology in the treatment of disease and not just for informational purpose or toxicology courses.

This would be the final push to take us out of our role as the world's largest, drugless healing art and place us in the ranks of the dodo bird.

I believe that these few unhappy souls should obtain their medical degrees by attending medical college and not by going through the chiropractic back door. They are trying to change it into something that suits them, by making chiropractic into something it was never meant to be.

Altering the historic philosophy and practice of chiropractic by turning to drugs does not make us better doctors, it makes us doctors without a purpose or identity. We would be set adrift in the world without an anchor, without a reason for being.

Just because we have not found every reason justifying the things which we all know work, is hardly a basis to abandon everything we do know, especially in favor of something that we know is, at its best, not better than chiropractic and at its worst, detrimental to health. Could this attempt to force us into drug giving be just another way to increase profits for the chiropractor and the drug industry? Are those malcontents preaching a higher yet false purpose while hiding their intent to make themselves "look good" to those in the medical and country club establishment?

If they truly want to teach a medical curriculum in a chiropractic college then they must first have the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE) petition the US Department of Education for a change in the recognition of CCE, and amend its scope to encompass the accreditation of drug-related subjects and practice by its member colleges.

A chiropractic college in Australia is considering changing its name from "School of Chiropractic and Osteopathy" to Department of "Complementary Medicine." Hey Australia, what are you fish or fowl?

How about rumors that a West Coast college is thinking of changing to "doctor of chiropractic medicine" degrees. I can't wait for them to try and acquire accreditation or licensure from 50 states. Maybe that college will try to become a medical school instead. I sure hope it does, because it doesn't belong in chiropractic. So why potentially hurt millions of people just to save their ego? What type of school is it, ICA or ACA influenced? Time will tell, but you should already know.

The only national organization that presently condemns the use of drugs by chiropractors is the ICA. The ACA does not go far enough in their statement against the use of drugs by DCs in that they "cop out" by saying that they embrace states' rights in this matter. In other words, if a chiropractic group within a state wants to add the use of drugs to their present scope of practice, the ACA probably would not take a stand against them. Maybe several thousand letters to the ACA head office could change their minds or you could just join the ICA instead.

There are millions of people in the United States who have not yet received the benefit of chiropractic care. We should not allow these deviant few chiropractors to deprive them of their chance to receive a chiropractic adjustment rather than a "chiropractic drug."

A minority who deviates from the traditions and/or current practices of the vast majority does not represent or constitute the true nature and method of practice of a profession.

It is not yet passe to be a real doctor of chiropractic. It is time to stand up and make your voice and feelings heard. Write your college and tell them in no uncertain terms where you stand, withhold funds from those who do not respond favorably, and support the national group that takes a firm stand against the use of drugs in the profession, anywhere, anyplace.

Chiropractic medicine is an oxymoron!

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FEBRUARY 1994

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