

Do You Value Health Freedom?

Imagine ... a government that protects our individual health freedoms

It seems odd to those of us who live in democratic countries, that there is a necessity to defend our health freedoms from our own governments.

It seems straight forward that individuals should have the freedom to access products and services from the natural health system as well as the established medical system.

In February 2009, Health Canada regulators, escorted by police with guns, raided the home of a Naturopathic Physician and his wife who own a Canadian Natural Health Products company. The company sells a line of Natural Health Products that are readily available in many stores in the US.

"Instead of being applauded for being a good citizen and helping people recover their health in a safer, more natural way, we were treated as if we were nasty criminals, dealing in drugs. ... We were forced to sit in our living room where we were watched like hawks anytime we moved. We sat for 11 hours," reports Eldon Dahl.

When they were allowed a call to their lawyer, "... he told me to follow the Health Canada agents and document what they were taking and make photographs for future reference." The police refused to let them do this—instead they were told, "We could place you in a holding cell until the search and investigations are concluded, but we don't think it's necessary if you cooperate. ..."

"We sat restricted in our own home and they prevented us the right to view the Health Canada agents searching our entire residence, even violating the privacy of our bedroom. ..."



"My family was shamed and humiliated by the actions of the RCMP [Canadian police] and the Health Canada agents. They laughed together and acted like they were at home."

This scene is quietly being played out in several countries around the world.

What is Happening?

Government is becoming a threat

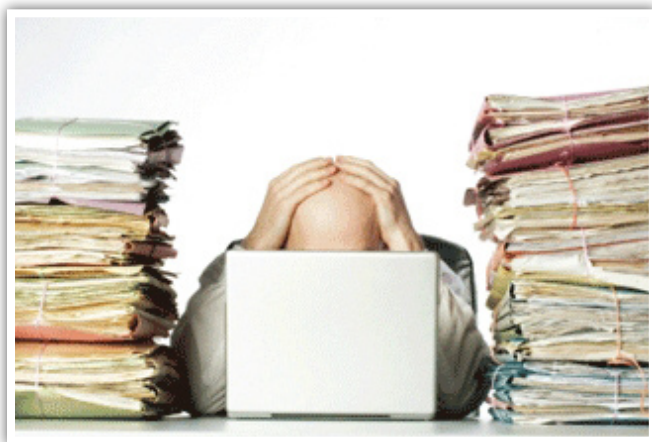
Why has government become a threat, treating well-meaning citizens as criminals? Let's look at how this is happening. Governments are growing at an alarming rate. The number of government employees, the bureaucracy, is burgeoning with no end in sight. The bureaucracy feeds its own growth. Government bureaucracies create regulations, regulations require more employees to administer them ... the bureaucracy grows and grows and grows.

Regulations are sold to our politicians wrapped in a promise to keep us safer. Natural Health is one example. Natural Health Products (NHPs) have a sterling record of safety and can readily be covered by the same regulations that cover the food industry. In fact, Natural Health Products have a better safety record than foods. Yet, restrictive regulations are being imposed on Natural Health Products—products that really require only minimum regulation. The bureaucracy is zealously expanding its territory and in the process limiting our health freedoms.

We need to each ask ourselves, "Am I looking to government to make me safer? If so, is my fear for safety curbing my freedom? And do ever-more restrictive regulations really make me safer?"

Regulations stifle innovation

What does excessive regulation do? Using the Natural Health industry as an example, it stops creativity and innovation. Time, money and inspiration go to appeasing government regulations—to create products that regulators will accept rather than creating products for their ability to help us heal.



For example, health practitioners such as herbalists will have to shift their priority from formulating products with the greatest power to heal to formulating products that meet regulations. Instead of innovative products, regulations will create a one-size fits all mentality with each company

producing the same multi-vitamin product—one that will readily be approved by regulators. A safe industry that has been based on helping us to stay healthy has to shift resources to focus on the ever-growing list of government regulations and deal with the ever-growing number of bureaucrats.

Regulations eliminate choice

These regulations are putting our health at risk. How? The number and expense of regulations will allow only the larger companies to survive. Smaller companies will not survive even though they may have excellent products that we rely on. There will be fewer Natural Health Product manufacturers offering us fewer products. For example, regulations in effect in Canada require every Natural Health Product to be licensed. The process is treating Natural Health Products as drugs—evidence for efficacy as well as safety is required. This process has not yet gained public attention even though behind the scenes there is a high rate of rejection of products submitted for licensing. The restrictive regulations have already led many US manufacturers to withdraw from the Canadian market and smaller Canadian companies are in danger of folding. We've used Canada as a current example, yet this process has progressed further in several European countries and Australia.

Products available from natural health practitioners and health food stores are quietly disappearing. Products formulated by individuals dedicated to help us heal are being replaced by products that appease government regulators. Products formulated by inspiration and creativity are being replaced by one-size fits all products. Does this make us feel safer?



Regulations increase costs

What does excessive regulation do? In addition to curbing innovation and creativity, Natural Health Products become more expensive.

We pay for the expense of regulations twice. We pay higher and higher taxes to maintain the bureaucracy that creates the regulations and we pay the increased cost of our products as a result of the rising expenses incurred by companies to meet regulations. Will the Natural Health Products you rely on remain affordable?

In most countries, Natural Health Products and visits to natural health practitioners are not covered by health insurance—we pay out of our own pockets. Now government not only wants us to pay for Natural Health out of our own pockets, but to also shoulder the cost of excessive regulations. We will pay more for our health.

Natural health products are safer than foods

With Natural Health Products being pulled into the category of pharmaceutical drugs and other potentially high-risk medical products, is the requirement to prove effectiveness justified? Herbs and natural nutrients are meant to help the body heal itself rather than override body processes and symptoms as many drugs do.



A Natural Health Product often provides several benefits to the body as compared to a pharmaceutical drug that is usually created for a single benefit—a benefit that usually has side-effects. Sometimes the side-effects can be quite toxic and cause harm. We understand with the level of risk inherent in most pharmaceutical drugs, that effectiveness needs to be established.

The potential for harm needs to be weighed against the benefit. This is not necessary for Natural Health Products.

With Natural Health Products, we as consumers have always determined efficacy ... we continue to purchase products we find helpful and we do not repurchase those that did not help. Our ability to make our own choices is disappearing. Is this in our best interests? Will we be healthier? Will we be safer?

Why Isn't Government Listening?

We are intelligent enough to make our own health choices. Yet, government is not listening or respecting our ability to make our own decisions. Let's look at Canada as an example to illustrate the process that is happening in most developed countries. In 1997 Michelle Brill-Edwards, a medical doctor, spoke out about the abuse of power within the halls of the Canadian health regulatory system. Dr. Brill-Edwards was a high-ranking employee with Health Canada. She resigned to bring attention to what she saw as the slack regulatory environment surrounding drug safety as she felt the health of the public was at risk. On the other hand, she objected to the over-zealous regulation being applied to herbs and food supplements with a record of safe use. Her integrity was one spark that generated a strong response from the public to protest unnecessary regulation of Natural Health Products. The government did not listen.

On the way to a police state?

Fast forward to 2008, the Canadian government introduced two new bills—one to lump Natural Health Products in with pharmaceuticals and medical procedures, the

other for safety of consumer products. Both bills proposed sweeping policing powers for regulators. Bureaucrats and politicians would have free rein to determine guilt with the ability to levy onerous fines and confiscate products—circumventing our legal system.

Our legal system determines whether a person is innocent or guilty after hearing evidence from both sides. Regulators would no longer have to use the courts. With the new bills, the judgment of regulators and politicians would reign supreme. This means, based on a regulator's belief, a company could be wiped out overnight. Companies would no longer have an income to pay employees or to fight for their rights. The livelihoods of many people could be at stake. And, small businesses are considered the backbone of any country's economy.



The bureaucracy seizing power

How many abuses by government bureaucrats have each of us experienced, or heard about, over the years? Bureaucrats are human—they have biases and they make mistakes like each of us. Do we want them to have the power to judge products, companies and individuals based on their beliefs? Canadian citizens reacted to the bills by bombarding politicians with their objections and letting them know they want the freedom to choose their health products. Instead of listening to the people, politicians made excuses, by saying they had failed to properly educate us on the intent of the regulations.

Bills are being introduced to expand the powers of government employees; bills that give bureaucrats complete power to seize and fine, without having to use judicial systems; bills allowing bureaucrats to adopt international regulations without review by politicians or the people.

The drive by government to impose restrictive regulations on Natural Health Products keeps springing to life despite massive public protest. Why aren't they listening to us?

Why is this Happening?

Politicians no longer serve the people

Politicians are becoming puppets. Bureaucrats are heard above the outcry of voters. Politicians have lost their way. They no longer are the voice of the people. Politicians,

the voice of the bureaucrats, tell us we are clamoring for safety, safety, and more safety.

Is this the truth? Or, are they responding to the beat of a different drummer? Let's look at other possible influences. Who benefits? Large multi-national corporations have a lot at stake. If countries around the globe adopt a standard set of regulations, it will make it much easier for them to sell their products. No need to deal with differing regulations in different countries. The stiffer the regulations the better for large multi-nationals as they can readily afford the rigors and expense of meeting regulations. Smaller companies cannot. Voila, competition is readily reduced.

Large multi-national companies wield their influence through international bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO). Countries send their bureaucrats to attend meetings at the world level. The process seems to be a one-way street as no one is representing the people, small businesses or our freedoms at these meetings. The process seems carefully designed to shift power from people and politicians to bureaucrats through international agreements that favor multi-national companies.



Multi-national corporations in control

Again, we'll use Canada as an example. The control by multi-national corporations became clear during a conference call in which we participated along with several other individuals representing the natural health industry on April 25th, 2008. Representing the Canadian government were key bureaucrats who had drafted the bill to lump Natural Health Products with pharmaceutical drugs. In defense of the regulations, it was stated that companies must be able to compete internationally. When asked why we don't adopt a system similar to the US that allows freedom of choice by requiring a disclaimer on the label of the Natural Health Products, the answer was simply that US regulation does not conform to international standards. Harmonization of regulations internationally has become the priority for government bureaucrats. These regulations are for the benefit of these large corporations, they do not benefit the people, they do not make us safer nor do they make us healthier. Smaller companies, with more local markets, are often more dedicated to providing quality products for health but they will be swept away along with our freedoms.

Our freedom is threatened



Our freedom is threatened. What would you prefer? If you had cancer, as an example, would you prefer to be able to choose from both medical and natural health options?

And if you would prefer the continued dominance of the medical system that allows only medical options, are you willing to give others their freedom to choose natural health options?

Is this in our best interests? Will we be healthier? Will we be safer?

Government priority is not safety, nor even health—the priority is harmonizing with international regulations to make it easier for the large multinational companies. This priority is set at the expense of small businesses, at the expense of our health, our safety, and at the expense of individual freedom.

What can we do? We can let our elected representative know how important Natural Health Products are to us and our families. We can join consumer groups in our country working to restore freedom of choice in health care. Many have been doing this over the years, and often the result is minimal at best. We gain a delay of a few years, until the movement to restrict Natural Health emerges again. Is there something else we can do? Ed Griffin, founder of Freedom Force International, believes the only way to make effective, permanent change is for individuals who believe in freedom to step into leadership positions that will help create freedom for all.

<http://www.freedom-force.org>

Imagine a World

There is something powerful we can each do as well. It is important to place our attention on what we want—our freedom, rather than allow our energy to feed what we don't want.

We need to keep in mind a spiritual principle—a spiritual law that is sometimes referred to as the Law of Attraction. We attract that to which we give our attention. We create that which we give our attention. We need to create a vision that focuses on freedom. We need to imagine a world based on individual freedom.

We need to remind our politicians, our elected representatives, of the purpose of

the privilege we've given them—the privilege to serve as our government. We need to give them a vision to work towards. Let's replace governments that rule to dominate the people; governments that wield a hefty club with unjust laws and harsh punishments; governments that dictate to us as though we were stupid to ...



- » Imagine a world where politicians recognize government exists to protect our freedoms.
- » Imagine a bureaucracy that respects and holds dear its responsibility to serve the best interests of the people it serves.
- » Imagine a government that serves from the heart; that serves to inspire people; that serves by listening to us as intelligent beings.
- » Imagine the doors to freedom of choice swinging open. Imagine you have a wide range of options for your health—choices that include both medical approaches and Natural Health Products and therapies.
- » Imagine a smaller government that results in reduced taxes and reduced prices; a government that makes it less costly to stay healthy.
- » Imagine that you feel safer as your government is no longer a threat to your health.

Canada is creating a vision, a positive focus for health ... with a proposed Charter of Health Freedoms. This charter drafted by constitutional lawyer, Shawn Buckley, is catching the imagination of people across Canada. It gives a vision for government to work for the benefit of all.

Imagine ... a government that protects our individual freedoms

Reference

- 1) "Natural Supplements Treated as Illicit Drugs... Stop Bill C-6," Eldon Dahl, *Synergy Magazine*, Mar/Apr 2009

Organizations dedicated to health freedoms:

Canada:

Charter of Health Freedom: <http://www.charterofhealthfreedom.org>

Health Action Network: <http://www.hans.org>

United States:

The National Health Federation: <http://www.thenhf.com>

Health Freedom USA: <http://www.healthfreedomusa.org>

American Association of Health Freedom: <http://www.healthfreedom.net>

Europe:

World Institute of Natural Health Sciences: <http://www.winhs.org>

Consumers for Choice in Health Care: <http://www.consumersforhealthchoice.com>

The Alliance for Natural Health: <http://www.anhcampaign.org>

National Health Federation in the UK: <http://www.thenhf.co.uk>

Australia and New Zealand:

Suggestions Coming...