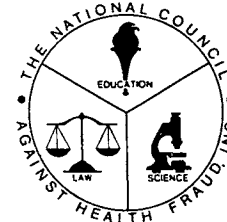


NCAHF NEWSLETTER

QUALITY IN THE HEALTH MARKETPLACE



JANUARY / FEBRUARY, 1989.

MEMBER SUPPORTED

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PATIENTS CITE MD FRAUD

The annual cost of health insurance fraud is estimated to be about \$50 billion. A survey of 700 households found that four out of ten (40%) respondents felt that their doctors had cheated an insurance company at least once. In releasing the survey Aetna Insurance officials estimated that only 3-5% of physicians intentionally defraud insurers. The discrepancy in percentages between patient and company estimates is explained by saying that "a small group of doctors defraud on a large scale." Respondents rated health insurance fraud and income tax fraud second only to stock market insider trading in severity as white-collar crimes. The most common type of fraud cited was forgiving of copayment (23%); second, was ordering unnecessary tests (10%). (Med World News, 11/28/88, p.56.)

TEEN WHO FOUGHT FOR MACROBIOTIC THERAPY DIES

In July, 1987, the parents of Sonja Boden went to court to fight for the privilege of treating their 17-yr-old daughter, who had Hodgkin's disease, with Macrobiotic Diet, acupuncture, massage and positive thinking. These inappropriate therapies were prescribed by Dr. Jewel Pookrum, a general practitioner with the Perfect Health Institute in Detroit. The judge granted the Boden's wishes as long as her disease remained in remission. Sonja's tumors had shrunk by 40% at that time which encouraged her parents. This improvement followed her first chemotherapy session which experts say is a common result of treatment. We later learned that Sonja's disease had progressed and that her odds of survival had dropped from 85% to 50% due to delays in proper care.

Sonja's obituary appeared in the Nov 18, 1988 Detroit Free Press. It was a sad little one-inch square item which was obscure in contrast to the

large splash the front-page picture story was given under the headline "A chance to fight cancer their way." It seems that a story about taking on the "establishment" with unusual cancer treatments made a better news story than another teenager's death.

COMMENT: If this tragedy had occurred in California, Pookrum would be subject to indictment under Health & Safety Code No.1707.1, the state's excellent law which forbids health providers from utilizing unproven methods of cancer therapy unless they are responsible experimental programs that meet scientific requirements. NCAHF believes that every state should have such a law. Its the most effective anti-cancer quackery measure we are aware of.

AGING

As healthy Americans grow older and more affluent they become better targets for quackery. So-called "life extension" products, and others aimed degenerative disorders, are proliferating. "Why do we age?" (FDA Consumer, Oct '88) provides basic information in a readable fashion that can help serve as an antidote to "Fountain of Youth" quackery.

STUDY FAILS TO CONFIRM IQ BENEFITS OF SUPPLEMENTS

A report published in The Lancet (Jan 23, 1988) claimed that taking a multivitamin and mineral supplement for 8 months significantly raised nonverbal intelligence scores in a group of 30 British school children. The study has been criticized on methodological grounds and an attempt to replicate it using a larger sample of subjects has failed to confirm its results. In a double-blind trial, 154 11&12-yr-old school children were divided into two groups and matched for age, sex, developmental stage and IQ test scores. After a 4-week trial there was no difference between subjects taking the multivitamin and mineral

supplements (containing all of the nutrients that used in the earlier study, plus copper and selenium) and placebo controls. (DJ Naismith, et al, The Lancet, 8/6/88. From Nutrition Research Newsletter, 10/88, p.119.)

COLORADO OUTLAWES MENTAL HEALTH QUACKERY

Colorado House Bill 1026 took effect on July 1, 1988. "...in order to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare ...and...protect the people...against the unauthorized, unqualified, and improper application of psychotherapy, psychology, clinical social work, marriage and family therapy, professional counseling and school psychology..." the new law establishes "a grievance board with the authority to take disciplinary actions or bring injunctive actions or both concerning unlicensed psychotherapists, licensed psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed professional counselors and certified school psychologists." Although the new law is aimed primarily at the state's licensed mental health professionals, (ministers of religion are exempt) the fact that the legislature decided to hold unqualified persons to the same kind of accountability has Colorado's holistic health soothsayers in an uproar as they ponder the possibility that their activities will come under legal scrutiny. The gurus of psychobabble are mounting a drive to be exempted from the new law.

COMMENT: Hooray for Colorado! The idea of holding all who presume to offer the public a health service to the same standard of consumer protection is commendable. Quacks want a double-standard--penalties for professionals and freedom for themselves. Now let's see if the new bureaucracy can make it work. CareNetwork, Nov, '88 reviews the law and its intended applications in three articles available from NCAHF for \$2.)

DIET & BEHAVIOR "EXPERT" FAKES HIS CREDENTIALS

A Canadian newspaper, reveals that Alex-ander G. Schauss has misrepresented his background and achievements in his curriculum vitae. The investigative report itemizes eight specific examples where Schauss lied. Schauss is president and sole registered agent of the American Institute for Biosocial Research in Tacoma, WA. He has been traveling around the U.S. and Canada for many years expounding his unfounded theories about diet and antisocial (criminal & delinquent) behavior. Schauss' lectures before teachers in British Columbia at which he received lecture fees of as much as \$1,000, prompted the probe.

Schauss apparently is a good salesman for his ideas, but also embellishes them with the illusion that they are supported by his sound academic background and research. Many teachers, mental health workers and probation officers have been confused by Schauss' notions. Schauss is defended by the Canadian Schizophrenic Foundation whose director, Steven Carter is also editor of the Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine--a megavitamin advocacy group. Schauss lists himself as a "Ph.D. candidate" and encourages the accolade of "Dr." to be used in reference to himself. In fact, he has been registered since 1981 at unaccredited California Coast University in Santa Ana. (The Vancouver Sun, 9/13/88)

COMMENT: NCAHF has been aware of the pseudoscientific nature of Schauss' work for years. His pretensions regarding diet and criminal behavior led to a lengthy investigation by a special task force and the publication of a position paper on the topic. This article is well written and of high interest to anyone interested in these issues. Available from NCAHF for \$1 and a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

IMPORTANT SERIES REVIEWS HISTORY OF CONSUMER PROTECTION LAW

1988 was the 50th anniversary of the 1938 Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. A 3-part series in the FDA Consumer (Oct '88, Nov, Dec-Jan '89 issues) reviews the important points of that significant legislation. In addition, an FDA Consumer Memo "Milestones in U.S. Food and Drug Law History" (HHS Publ. No. [FDA] 85-1063) presents a synopsis of key events in chronological order. These resources will be valuable to anyone desiring to improve their understanding of consumer protection law.

MISSISSIPPI CHIROPRACTORS ATTEMPT TO THWART PEER REVIEW

On December 3, 1988, the Mississippi State Board of Chiropractic Examiners (MSBCE) sent a memo to all licensed DCs stating that they would be subject to license revocation if they acted "as a consultant for insurance companies for the purpose of altering or reducing claims...without first, physically examining the patient, reviewing all entry examinations, x-rays and other procedures, in the presence of...and/or in the office of the claim-submitting chiropractor." NACM's Danny Futch, DC, attempted to dissuade the MSBCE action. In a September 23 letter he stated:

The purpose of a consultant is not to alter or reduce claims, but to offer a peer-professional opinion on the medical necessity of therapeutics applied to the condition diagnosed by the attending physician. If the treatment and diagnostic procedures are excessive and/or unnecessary for the condition diagnosed, a report which details the rationale for determination of these procedures is outlined for the company requesting the evaluation. These procedures may include excessive treatment, treatment not appropriate for the condition diagnosed, diagnostic procedures outside the scope of chiropractic practice (based upon individual state statutes), and unnecessary or excessive use of x-rays (a known health hazard). Accompanying this report are recommendations of appropriate diagnostic procedures, and when necessary, referral to the appropriate medical specialist.

The purpose of the evaluation/review is to protect the consumer (patient), as well as the third party payer. If the attending physician has acted with reasonable and professional responsibility with regards to to patient (i.e., recognized diagnosis, examinations, tests, therapy and treatment are based upon scientific principles generally accepted by the chiropractic profession as essential and appropriate to the condition diagnosed) no changes or opinion to the contrary are expressed in the review / evaluation.

It is my opinion that this proposed rule change is not in the best interest of the consuming public, nor does it offer any protection to the insurance industry from over-utilization or fraud, both of which are problems inherent in the chiropractic profession today. The proposed change would make any claim review almost impossible to accomplish (obviously, the intent and purpose of the change)."

Futch accuses the MSBCE of losing sight of its reason for existence, which is to see that the highest standards of chiropractic care be offered to the public. Instead, Futch says that MSBCE appears to be working in collusion with the state chiropractic association to protect Mississippi chiropractors from this kind of peer review.

LETTER OF WARNING ON B-6

Kurt Donsbach recommends 100 mg daily of vitamin B-6 in the Nov, 1988 Health Freedom News, (p.18). Nancy Tullis, RD, of Louisville, KY has notified HFN editor, Maureen Salaman, by certified mail (12/29/88) that this advice is dangerous. Ms. Tullis cites a controlled study in which it was shown that dosages as low as 20 mg daily for two years and 100 mg daily for two months can cause neurological symptoms (Dalton K. Acta Neurologica Scandinavica 76:8-11, 1987).

BOOK ON CULTS FOR PARENTS

Cultism represents one of the most resistant types of deception and manipulation of people. Cultism often involves various forms of health quackery, and may be classified as a form of mental health quackery. The American Family Foundation has produced a useful book on the topic in Cults: What Parents Should Know--a practical guide to help parents with children in destructive groups, by Joan Ross, EdM, and Michael Lagone, PhD. Order from AFF, P.O. Box 336, Weston, MA 02193; \$9.95.

ORGANIC GERMANIUM

Germanium, a rare metallic element, was once widely used to make transistors, and still plays a role in electronics. Various organic (carbon-containing) germanium compounds are being promoted as "miracle drugs" largely through the health foods industry. James Lowell, PhD, describes the origins of recent promotions of organic germanium in a 6-page article in Nutrition Forum (Sept/Oct '88) as well as some of its past history when it was used in the 1920s until found to be ineffective and possibly dangerous.

NCAHF ALERT HELPS END NHF DECEPTION

NCAHF recently warned the Jefferson County (KY) Medical Society (JCMS) that it had unwittingly formed an alliance with an anti-consumer protection organization--The National Health Federation (NHF). In October, 1988, a letter was issued on a combined NHF-JCMS letterhead voicing concerns that many insurance companies are restricting doctors, hospitals and therapies they will pay for. The letter encouraged doctors to refer patients who complain of such restriction to NHF--which presented itself as a "consumer group" fighting for "health freedom." JCMS officials were unaware of the fact that NHF's notion of "health freedom" included the promotion of unorthodox therapies and aggressive opposition to consumer protection laws. In November, JCMS's publication Louisville Medicine carried letters to the editor by NCAHF President William Jarvis, and Thomas W. Benninger, MD, pointing out that NHF's is more of a trade group, has a sordid background and an aggressive anticonsumer protection philosophy. On December 2, JCMS Executive Director, Lelan K. Woodmansee, notified a local NHF official that the JCMS Board of Governors had voted to end immediately any affiliation with NHF (The Courier-Journal, 12/18/88, p.B6).

FOOD ALLERGY BOOK

Few areas have been more abused than the false diagnosis and/or treatment of food allergies. We have reported in the past that people appear to misinterpret that they personally suffer from food allergies by a factor of 15-fold (NCAHF Newsletter, July-Aug, 1986). Dr. S. Allan Bock's excellent little book Food Allergy: A Primer For People, has been revised and is now available from Vantage Press, 516 W. 34th St., New York, NY 10001; \$8.95 plus \$1.25 postage & handling.

CANADIAN QUACKERY

Even before a free-trade agreement with Canada, yankee promoters of unproven and worthless remedies have found a lucrative market north of the border. Mike Petta-piece and Paul Benedetti, reporters with The Spectator (Hamilton, Ont), describe the promotion of "alternative" health care in Canada's largest province in a feature series of articles which ran over 6-days in October. They estimate that Canadians spend at least \$500 million annually on such care. The promoters and their remedies are familiar ones. A Donsbach U. graduate is a prominent leader of the health foods movement. Chelation therapy, vitamins, herbals, hydrogen peroxide, chiropractic, homeopathy, naturopathy, cancer cures, and more make up the dubious list. This series does the best job we've seen yet of describing the state of affairs of quackery in Canada. NCAHF has reformatted the series into a 15-page reprint available for \$4 (US) postpaid. "Obviously, US-Canadian quackery runs a two-way trail, because several prominent nostrums promoted in the US originate in Canada.

STUDY IMPLICATES RAW MILK

A study of Salmonella dublin cases in California from 1980-1983 estimates that more than one-third were attributable to raw milk consumption. The researchers estimate that infections are acquired by users at a rate of 8-35/100,000/yr, and that immunocompromised persons are at exceptionally high risk of becoming seriously ill or dying from S. dublin exposure. (Richwald et al. Publ Hlth Reports, 103:489-493, 1988.)

[**Note:** California's Alta Dena Dairy has been in trial in Alameda Superior Court since Oct 5 defending against an injunction prohibiting advertisements claiming that Certified Raw Milk is the "safest," "purest" and "most nutritious" milk you can buy. The dairy sold \$7.8 million worth of raw milk in California in 1987. (10/5/88 Consumer's Union press release.)]

WHAT ABOUT "BOOSTING" THE IMMUNE SYSTEM?

The idea of "boosting the immune system" has been a primary rationale for a great deal of quackery since the 1970s when cancer research turned in that direction. The AIDS problem has given the idea further impetus. Most people have only vague ideas about the immune system and what "boosting" it means. An article in the UC Berkeley Wellness Letter (Dec, '88) titled "Can you boost your immune system" puts the concept in perspective.

CLEAN WATER MACHINE UNSAFE

An FTC judge ruled that Norelco falsely advertised that its Clean Water Machine would clean tap water when it knew that the device added methylene chloride, a potentially hazardous chemical, to the water. The company was notified in 1982 that the chemical was being added to water by the device (it was in glue used in the replacable filter cartridge), but continued to sell the filters until at least 1986. (FTC News & Notes, 88:3, 9/26/88)

CONSUMER ADVOCATES OR ORGANIC FOOD PROMOTERS?

Our curiosity was piqued when we saw that Michael Jacobson, Director of the "Center for Science in the Public Interest," promoted as a panelist with three organic foods (two company presidents and one owner) entrepreneurs in a health foods trade association flyer for the "Natural Foods Expo East" (Baltimore, Nov 4-7). We were dismayed when we saw an ad for a mail-order guide to organic food compiled by CSPI (11/12/88, Harrowsmith, p.18).

Our complaint against a self-described consumer group promoting organic foods is not out of any antagonism toward individuals who want to garden without using pesticides or commercial fertilizers, but because the term "organic food" has been associated with consumer fraud and misrepresentation since its inception. The term "organic" creates and capitalizes upon unfounded fears about the safety of regular foods, and misleads consumers who buy these products. The FTC conducted an extensive study into the concept and found that the claim that such foods were inherently superior to their commercial counterparts "false and unsubstantiated" (Proposed Trade Regulation Rule on Food Advertising, FTC, 1978, p.242).

NCAHF recognizes that, justifiably or not, many people have a fear of chemical residues on foods. We believe that such people should have access to residue-free foods if they are willing to pay the extra money these cost. However, the record shows that merely claiming that foods are grown a certain way cannot be substantiated. Only a guarantee on the label that a food is chemical residue-free can give consumers what they desire. Such a labeling claim can be substantiated. NCAHF is disappointed to see a consumer advocacy group promoting the flawed concept of "organic foods."

Note: A good article on the fallacies of organic foods is: "Is organic the way to go?" Tufts U. Diet & Nutr Newsletter, 1:89.

CHIROPRACTORS CONSULTING FIRM IS SCIENTOLOGY-LINKED

According to The Cult Observer (Mar-Apr, 1988) David Singer Consultants of Clearwater, FL, a company specializing in teaching marketing to DCs, is connected to the Church of Scientology. According to a story that appeared in the St. Petersburg Times (11/29/87), A Seattle DC, David Scheer, who paid Singer's company \$4,000 in hopes of improving his practice ended up paying \$18,000 to the Church of Scientology. After encountering what he termed the sect's "money-hungry rapaciousness," Scheer "opened my eyes and demanded the money back... it took us five, six months and we had to hire an attorney to get it." Singer officials admit that Scientology is the religion of the majority of its staff although they downplay the connection between the firm and the church. The article also quotes former church supervisor Karyn Kuever as saying that DCs make good subjects for Scientology because "they're in a line of work that is not well accepted."

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT HEARS SWAN TESTIMONY

On Nov 1, 1988, the Michigan Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a civil suit against the Christian Science church that alleges negligence and misrepresentation by the church and its agents in the death of 16-month-old Matthew Swan. Plaintiffs Rita and Douglas Swan allege that CS practitioners made several representations about the nature of little Matthew's illness, such as, he was "cutting a tooth or was paralyzed, had roseola or rheumatic fever." Practitioners also stated that the disease was not reportable when the Swans declared their intention to report the illness to public health, and insisted that they were competently treating these illnesses. The suit had been dismissed in 1983 on First Amendment grounds and by an appellate court in 1986 on statutory grounds. The Supreme Court granted leave to appeal only on the question of whether or not CS practitioners are permitted to diagnose under Michigan's religious exemption clause. Plaintiffs argue that defendants cannot claim religious immunity when engaging in secular health care, that diagnosis is necessarily part of medical practice, and one who communicates diagnosis is practicing medicine; and, civil liability can be imposed for causing harm while practicing medicine without a license, and because such is done with religious motivation does not provide legal immunity. (CHILD Newsletter, Fall, 1988)

TEST OF PARANORMAL HEALING FOR HYPERTENSION

A prospective, randomized study of the possible effect upon high blood pressure of laying on of hands or healing at a distance versus a placebo control group is reported. Interesting, all three groups experienced significant reductions in diastolic blood pressure, but there was not a significant difference between the experimental and control groups." (British Medical Journal, 296:1491-1494, 1988.)

"Improvements resulting from the mere fact subjects participate in a study is called the "Hawthorne effect." This interesting effect is named after a manufacturing plant at which various methods for improving performance found that anything worked--even techniques that should have impaired performance--just because the participants were aware of the fact that they were subjects in a study.

NADER'S SAFE FOOD PETITION

According to Whole Foods (10/88) Ralph Nader, former Sen. George McGovern and the Americans for Safe Food (ASF) coalition have launched a petition drive calling for government to promote the production of food grown without pesticides and other synthetic farm chemicals. Nader stated at a Washington news conference that "America's families are sitting down to a contaminated meal laced with invisible filth, dangerous bacteria, cancer-causing pesticides and drugs." ASF is spearheaded by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), a Nader group.

COMMENT: NCAHF makes no secret of its fundamental differences between it and Ralph Nader's brand of consumerism. NCAHF does not hold with the Naderites' strident, adversarial approach. NCAHF does not see "consumer" as a special class but as a role played by everyone. Although scapegoating industry has great populist appeal, it is counterproductive in the long run. The strident approach serves to aid and abet quackery by unnecessarily undermining confidence in regular sources of food, water, and health care. NCAHF believes that Nader grossly overstates alleged dangers in America's food and has dubbed this approach "food terrorism." Undermining consumer confidence opens the door for quackery's illusory "alternatives." Making people believe that our food is unsafe provides the rationale for diet being both the cause of means for curing serious diseases--which is the most pervasive form of quackery today.

LAUGHTER, HOPE AND CANCER

Americans are being deluged with messages about the ability of the mind to affect serious diseases. No one disputes the value of optimism in improving the quality of life, nor that the quality of one's life is of ultimate importance. There is good evidence that hopelessness and depression can kill, but the relevant question today is whether or not laughter and optimism can affect the biological course of a disease. Melvin Konner, MD and Rabbi Benjamin Blech each deal with this issue in "Laughter and Hope" (Cancer News, Summer, 1988) and "don't blame the victim" (Newsweek, 9/ /88). The appealing, but flawed ideas of Norman Cousins, Shirley Maclaine, and Bernie Siegel, MD, are critically examined.

COMMENT: Americans have great faith in the human will. In the last century several new religions--the most prominent of which is Christian Science--developed from exceptional beliefs about "mind over matter." Medical people share this popular idea to a large degree, but have had difficulty in validating beneficial effects scientifically. The benefits of optimism have been assigned to the art of health care--which is reason enough to encourage it clinically. Unfortunately, the more credible the idea that mental gymnastics can affect cellular biology becomes, because of being repeated over and over, the more the concept will be abused.

CALIFORNIA BOARD DENIES GERBER APPEAL

The California Board of Medical Quality Assurance (BMQA) has refused Michael Lee Gerber's appeal for reinstatement of his medical license (OAH No.N 32371, 11/3/88). Gerber's license was revoked in June, 1984 for "clearly excessive treatment," "gross negligence," "repeated similar negligent acts," and "incompetence" in a case which focused upon Gerber's use of Hoxsey cancer methods, chelation therapy, coffee enemas, megavitamins, herbals and enzymes in the fatal cancer treatment of June Terzie. BMQA's denial was based upon Gerber's failure to demonstrate that he has changed his practice techniques in any significant way. According to the BMQA report, following revocation of his California license, Gerber moved to Reno where, in December, 1984, he obtained a license from the Nevada Board of Homeo-pathic Medical Examiners. Gerber has continued to practice in a manner similar to what he was doing previously in California except that he no longer treats cancer patients.

ANTEDOTE TO FOOD TERRORISM

Biochemist Thomas Jukes offers some advice to those who fear the supposedly unnatural toxins in everyday life in "How to survive when everyone's scared" (21st Century, Sept-Oct, 1988). Jukes points out that the rate of cancer has not increased with the expansion of the chemical industry as was predicted in 1900; identifies vested interests in promulgating scare stories about the food supply; and, shows that natural carcinogens in our daily diets far exceed those to which we are exposed due to chemical technology.

FTC ACTS AGAINST PROGRAM-LENGTH ADVERTISEMENT

In the last issue of this newsletter we attacked program-length pseudo talk shows and/or documentaries as forms of broadcast media abuse. The FTC has charged JS&A Group, Inc. and its President and owner Joseph Sugarman, with falsely claiming that their program-length video advertisement is an independent, investigative consumer program that conducted an objective investigation of sunglasses the company sells (FTC File No.872 3151, 11/1/88). JS&A Groups also promotes dubious health products (see "Quackery aboard airlines" NCAHF Newsletter, Sept-Oct, 1988).

AK INVENTOR DISCLAIMS NOT

In an article appearing in The Chiropractic Report (Dec, '88), George Goodheart, DC, developer of "Applied Kinesiology (AK)," [AK is the dubious practice using tests of muscle-strength to diagnose and prescribe for a wide variety of conditions] disavows any connection with "Neural Organizational Technique (NOT)," the controversial cranial method promoted by Carl Ferreri, DC. NOT was the technique involved in an outrageous study done in Crescent City, CA, in which Ferreri claimed to be able to improve the performance of children with learning disorders [the Crescent City case was detailed in the Dec, '88 issue of Hippocrates magazine]. Goodheart complains that he and AK "get blamed for a lot of things," that Ferreri took several sections of AK and called it NOT. When things "go well he (Ferreri) calls it NOT, when they do not, he calls it AK." Goodheart claims that AK has "very rigid examination forms, and good scientific documentation," and that AK is not simply muscle-response testing such as that which is used for detecting nutritional deficiencies recently reported in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association.

COENZYME Q-10

Coenzyme Q-10 (Ubiquinone) has been a popular dietary supplement recently. We have been aware of beneficial claims for more than a decade. Obtaining evaluative data on this substance has been difficult, and the final chapter has yet to be written. However, a review of the substance by The Lawrence Review of Natural Products (May, 1988) states in summary: "Ubiquinones, particularly Q-10, are naturally-occurring compounds found in aerobic organisms. Q-10 had been widely used in Japan, the Soviet Union, and Europe for a variety of therapeutic uses, notably cardiovascular diseases. It is currently available in the United States as a dietary supplement. Preliminary animal research indicates that Q-10 may have genuine value for at least some of the purposes claimed by proponents, and toxicity appears to be minimal in animal studies. No doses have been established scientifically for the treatment of any human disorder and no RDA has been established for this compound. Nevertheless, this compound appears to possess significant pharmacologic activity and warrants more complete investigation in disease states." The review includes the history, biology, chemistry, pharmacology and toxicology of ubiquinone (includes Coenzyme Q-10, ubidecarenone, and mitoquinone).

COMMENT: Even if Coenzyme Q-10 turns out to have value for several conditions, this does not warrant its indiscriminate use. Biologically active substances even with low animal toxicity may be harmful to humans suffering from certain health problems. The promotion of substances for conditions other than what they have been proven safe and effective for is quackery.

FAITH HEALING EXEMPTIONS COST OHIO FEDERAL FUNDS

NCAHF has watched the Ohio legislature with dismay as it repeatedly has failed to enact protection against irrational faith healing for children. Two Ohio judges have ruled the state's religious exemption clause unconstitutional, and the Dept. of Health & Human Services has warned that the state would lose federal child abuse funds if it did not bring its law into compliance with regulations. Although it has considered bills in its last four sessions, the legislature still has failed to act. In 1988, Ohio lost over \$700,000 in federal funds, as a result. According to an Ohio legislator quoted in this report, lobbying by Christian Science church representatives has held up reform. (CHILD Newsletter, Fall, 1988)

ABILITY TO POLICE DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING DIMINISHED

The Federal Trade Commission has lost 20% of its resources and its leadership position in overseeing advertising since 1986 according to Commissioner Andrew J. Strenio, Jr. Strenio told the American Advertising Federation's Conference on National Advertising Law and Business that the future direction of advertising regulation is "at a crossroads," and urged the new administration to approve adequate agency resources and to reaffirm "by word and deed" that the FTC is a force to be reckoned with in policing deceptive advertising. FTC now has fewer employees than any year since 1961 despite the fact that advertising expenditures have gone from \$1.7 to \$14.7 billion from 1961-1987. (FTC News Notes, 11/21/88).

COMMENT: Since quackery works primarily through deceptive advertising, every real consumer organization should be concerned about this state of affairs. Perhaps, Ralph Nader and CSPI get going on this diminishing of consumer protection rather than creating unjustified fear of America's food supply and advancing the dubious concept of "organic foods."

AMERICA'S HEALTH

The American Council on Science & Health (ACSH) has released its new revision of America's Health: A Century of Progress. The report presents the scientific evidence of the state of the public's health. The importance of this report cannot be overemphasized because it counters the exaggerations, distortions and outright lies of the health doomsayers who profit from denigrating regular foods, water, health care, and public health programs. The report is well-balanced. It notes that "we have never had it so good," but also recognizes that a substantial portion of deaths today are preventable. It focuses on cigarette smoking, controlling high blood pressure and serum cholesterol levels, auto safety and other realism as it puts America's health into proper perspective. The booklet is available from ACSH for \$3; write 1995 Broadway, NY, NY 10023-5860.

CALIFORNIA OUTLAWS AIDS ADS

California lawmakers recently passed AB 2936, which adds AIDS and ARC to the list of diseases, disorders and conditions in the state's Sherman Food, Drug & Cosmetic law. This will prohibit the advertising of any drug or device represented to have any effect on AIDS or ARC.

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The idea of "boosting the immune system" has been a primary rationale for a great deal of quackery since

the 1970s when cancer research turned in that direction. The AIDS problem has given the idea further impetus. Most people have only vague ideas about the immune system

and what "boosting" it means. An article in the UC Berkeley Wellness Letter (Dec. '88) titled "Can you boost your immune system" puts the concept in perspective.

Readers unable to locate articles cited in the Newsletter may obtain free copies from the **NCAHF Resource Center**, 3030 Baltimore, Trinity Lutheran Hospital, Kansas City, MO 64108. Postage and Handling: \$1 members, \$2 nonmembers for each article. Payment must accompany order.

FOR INFORMATION ON JOINING NCAHF, WRITE P.O. BOX 1276, LOMA LINDA, CA 92354

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