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Health (Fluoridation of Drinking Water) Amendment Bill

The New Zealand Ministry of Health's mission statement is: "**Improving, promoting and protecting the health of all New Zealanders**".

The Health (Fluoridation of Drinking Water) Amendment Bill, if enacted, will do nothing to improve or protect the health of New Zealanders.

THE HIJACKING OF SCIENCE BY INDUSTRIAL GIANTS.

Public funding for research over decades has been more and more difficult to come by and corporate funding is finding its way into our tertiary and teaching institutions threatening impartiality and free-thinking.

An embedded or compliant media further perverts the science. Investigative journalism is now rarely in evidence. Mendacity and spin is the new norm.

ASBESTOS

The United States government and asbestos industry have been criticized for not acting quickly enough to inform the public of dangers, and to reduce public exposure. In the late 1970s, court documents proved that asbestos industry officials knew of asbestos dangers since the **1930s** and had **concealed** them from the public. Asbestos as a workplace health hazard was not fully understood (or ignored) in New Zealand until the late 1970s or 1980s after significant court cases here and in Australia, and a ministerial inquiry in 1991.

LEAD IN PETROL

It took over two decades to achieve the removal of lead in petrol in NZ. This was despite international evidence and original research conducted in NZ on the harm to child cognitive function and behaviour from lead exposure. There was a lack of clear direction from government, political point scoring between political parties was evident, a lack of scientific expertise within the MOH and an unhealthy liaison between the lead alkyl industries and public health officials.

DIOXIN

The manufacture of dioxin related chemicals by Ivan Watkins Dow in New Plymouth was all of the above but the effects were more obvious. There were illegal emissions from the plant and high soil dioxin residues resulting in unprecedented rates of both birth defects and cancers. The government and its agents embarked on a scandalous cover-up and even introduced a subsidy in 1969 to increase production and use of 2,4,5-T by farmers. Corporate profit was put before health.

GLYPHOSATE CO-FORMULANT

World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified the compound as a probable carcinogen in March 2015.

There is vigorous debate in Europe considering a EU-wide ban on glyphosate. What is the Ministry of Health's attitude to this substance? Is it safe for domestic and agricultural use?

EXIDE BATTERY SAGA

The Exide battery saga in Petone was an illustration of MOH or District Health Board foot-dragging and incompetence. Residents living near the plant had been complaining for years of chronic poor health due to illegal emissions (including lead vapour) from the plant. Exide were absolved because appropriate testing was not employed either by Exide or health authorities.

U.N. TREATY AND THE PHASE DOWN OF MERCURY USE.

In January 2013 the United Nations final mercury treaty session took place and will require countries to phase down amalgam use. Setting national objectives aimed at minimising amalgam use.

We have been lied to for decades about the "safety" of mercury in the amalgam form. Mercury vapour is given off from the exposed surfaces of the amalgam with mastication, the consumption of hot liquids or highly acidic/alkaline foods and from the replacement of fillings. The mode of entry to the brain is the same as for lead and the effects are cumulative.

The response from the NZ Dental Association to the 2013 U.N. Treaty on Mercury is that the "status quo will remain". The MOH expresses a cautionary approach in some situations e.g. pregnancy but otherwise their stance is that it is safe.

NEUROBEHAVIOURAL EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL TOXICITY (The Lancet - Neurology. March 2014)

In 2006 the authors did a systematic review and five industrial chemicals were identified as developmental neurotoxicants including lead and methylmercury. Since 2006 studies have documented six additional developmental neurotoxicants including **fluoride**. The author's findings and summary should make our health regulator and the NZ Dental Association review their stance on fluoride and mercury. My guess is that the MOH and the NZDA will not move on this and will continue to endorse and use these deadly toxins because it is POLICY.

FLUORIDE AND ALUMINIUM

Fluoride combined with even trace amounts of aluminium in water can cause major brain damage. The World Health Organisation (WHO) explains in a report on aluminium that aluminium salts used as coagulants at many water treatment facilities can lead to increased concentrations of aluminium in finished water, which is worsened by the addition of fluoride chemicals.

Cooking in aluminium cookware using fluoridated water is creating this deadly combination even if the aluminium wasn't present in the municipal supply!

Occupational exposure to aluminium is hazardous and causal links with this neurotoxin to dementia and Alzheimers have been proven.

In the home setting aluminium is present in foods, drugs, cosmetics, food containers and foil.

CONCLUSION.

When an agency, with a mandate to promote health, has a predilection for promoting and endorsing the use of harmful toxins that are either ingested, placed in the human body or environment, then their actions are tantamount to criminal negligence.

When policy and sophistry take precedence over science;

When mendacity is substituted for truth;

When governments (or their agencies) and corporations collaboratively conspire against citizens;

When an embedded and compliant media stifles society;

Then democracy is well and truly jeopardised.

With the Ministry of Health's track record can the public trust them when they say "water fluoridation is safe and effective"?