

## A Time of Spiritual Testing

**W**hat kind of people readily approve the sale of toxic drugs and criminalize those who make natural, harmless remedies available? The answer to this question startled me. Why? Because I'm one of the people who allow such a government to operate ... and you're one of those people too! I wanted to rationalize the question and throw the blame on politicians, government bureaucrats, and leaders of multinational corporations. There's no denying they must take their share of the responsibility but we've allowed a system to build up around us that is regulating and legislating our freedoms away at an alarming rate. It is we who must take responsibility.

The grab for power over us is a carefully-orchestrated world movement. Is it a conspiracy? Some call it that but really by today's standards, many see it as simply good business practice.

### *What would you do?*

You are an executive in a multinational corporation that researches and manufactures pharmaceutical drugs. You see that a growing number of people are taking responsibility for their health. You see there is a strong trend toward the use of natural remedies—remedies that don't allow for huge profits, as they can't be controlled by a patent. You know if this trend continues, your profits ... and your power will decline. You meet with your peers to discuss your options. Knowing you're not willing to offer natural products for the relatively small profits generated by existing herbal companies and natural health product manufacturers, you decide you must either eliminate or control them.

***It's a time of spiritual testing—what would you do?*** Would you act for the good of yourself and your business and use your government connections, your media connections and your money to eliminate and control natural remedies? Or would you act for the good of the whole—stay with pharmaceutical drugs or expand by competing fairly in the natural remedies market—knowing this decision may cause you to lose your present job.



***It's a time of spiritual testing —  
Do you choose power or do you choose love?***

***What would you do?***

You were elected to represent your people in government. You'll soon earn a secure pension and be financially sound for life ... if you follow the party line. You see the abuses of power—you see how the main financial support for your political party comes from multinational corporations. You feel the pressure to pass legislation that benefits the multinational corporation. You are one person against a powerful, well-organized machine.

You are asked to cooperate and pass legislation that will control herbal and other natural health products by treating them as drugs. You know herbs have been used for centuries, and other natural health products for decades, without harm. You know this will increase the cost of these products and it will limit the freedom of the individual to gain access to them.

You also know if you don't cooperate your future as a politician is limited because your political party will ostracize you and your campaign financing will dry up.

***It's a time of spiritual testing—what would you do?*** Would you act for the good of yourself and pass the legislation? Or would you act for the good of the whole ... risking your political career?

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***What would you do?***

You work for the government as an employee of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the U.S., Health Canada, or the health regulation department in another country. You believe in what you do—you believe you protect the public from harmful substances. You're asked to start a regulation process for natural health products. You're told they're to be treated as drugs. Your department drafts a list of natural remedies to classify as drugs.

There is a public outcry. You are asked to form a committee to appease the public. You're told this committee must support the reclassification of herbal products—either as drugs or as a separate category that can later be controlled like drugs.

You discover that these natural health products have been safely in use for decades and some for centuries. You realize having herbs, and other natural products that include vitamins and minerals, can be simply classified as foods to protect the public's safety. You know, however, if you don't cooperate you'll be passed over for promotions, demoted, or your job will be eliminated.

***It's a time of spiritual testing—what would you do?*** Would you act for the good of yourself and form the committee? Or would you act for the good of the whole and risk your career and your reputation?

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### ***And what do you do?***

Are you resigned to fewer freedoms? Are you willing to accept further erosion of your choices? Fear and acceptance are two reasons we've allowed government to control us. Each time we lose a freedom, we are told it is necessary in order to protect us, it's for our safety, and it is the only way to ensure we will be safe ... and we accept this.

Or are you willing to make a difference? Are you willing to face your fears and stand for freedom? Are you willing to take responsibility?

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If you choose to do nothing, more freedoms will be taken away. If you choose to recognize how readily fear is used to manipulate us, you can make a difference.

When enough of us take responsibility, history shows a paradigm shift eventually develops. That is what happened when the US was founded. Individuals searching for a better life and freedom from societies with rigid controls settled in the new world and developed a Constitution that respected individual rights and freedoms. It is said that paradigm shifts can only take place when the older generation retires and the younger generation is ready to assume responsibilities in society. Are you ready, no matter what your age, to support those who stand for freedom?

### ***Heroes***

Here are two heroes—two people who choose to make a difference.

**Michelle Brill-Edwards, M.D.** is a former high-ranking government employee with Health Canada. After 15 years, she resigned to publicly protest corruption within Health Canada. She spoke out about the abuse of, and disregard of, drug safety on the one hand and over zealous regulation of herbs and supplements on the other hand. At one point in her career, she won an international competition for a post at the World Health Organization (WHO) of the UN. In order for Canada to endorse the post, she was told she must sign a "*written gag order ...*" to ensure she would no longer speak out and cause discomfort to the government. She decided she could not put her personal interest above

the good of the people she was hired to serve. *"I felt that was really unacceptable to me as a physician, and as a Canadian citizen."* She told the government official *"it is not for me to negotiate for private gain a matter of public safety."*<sup>1</sup> Since leaving Health Canada, former peers and politicians have attempted to discredit her.

Dr. Brill-Edwards has returned to private practice. She is a member of The Alliance for Public Accountability.

**Ron Paul, M.D.** is a veteran member of the US Congress from Texas. He has consistently introduced legislation to expand personal liberty and curb the power of government. He has consistently voted for government to honor the US Constitution and protect the rights of individuals. As a presidential candidate for the Republican Party for the 2008 election, he attracted the support of youth and individuals across the nation.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*  
Margaret Mead

Indeed, Dr. Paul's campaign message about liberty and honoring the US Constitution was evident with the rapid spread of his beliefs over the Internet, the number of people who attended his talks, and the amazing amount of money he received from individuals to fund his campaign. With financial contributions from a broad base of individuals rather than corporations, his funding exceeded that of some of the 'mainstream' candidates.

Dr. Paul attributed his popularity *"to the message. ... I have shortcomings, but the message has no shortcomings,"* Paul said. *"It's all about "liberty."*<sup>2</sup>

Both these individuals have shown tremendous strength of character. It takes fortitude to stick to our principles in the face of ridicule, scorn, and a heap of disrespect from peers and the media who do not want to examine the direction of society today and the importance of individual freedoms.

**We can each be a hero.** It's a time of spiritual testing—what will you do? Are you attracted to the idea of personal freedoms and the responsibility that entails or are you comfortable relying on government programs? It is your choice and your freedom. Follow your heart.

### ***Five simple ways to act***

1. Take stock of your life. Look at ways you may be suppressing the freedoms of others—spouse, parent, coworkers, and organizations.
2. Keep yourself informed. Join an organization dedicated to regaining our freedoms.
3. Purchase products from more local sources rather than products made by multinational

corporations—most of the products in large chain stores. We give power to the multinationals by buying their products.

4. Write a letter to your elected federal representative. Here are five suggestions for maximum effectiveness as suggested by Anne Ferreira in *Townsend Letter for Doctors and Patients*, July 2000:

- a. Send your letter to the local office rather than seat of government.
- b. Write about your personal experience.
- c. Do not include mass amounts of photocopied material.
- d. You will get a lot more attention if you have 11 friends and relatives write on the same topic. 12 is considered a magic number to gain attention.
- e. Send copies of your letter to the appropriate government officials as well.
- f. Make an appointment with your elected federal government representative to discuss your concerns.

5. Help to educate others.

It is important to communicate with politicians, even though they are no longer listening to the people. The influence of vested interests is greater than our voices. To bring about change, we need to help educate others and join organizations that have a vision for change and are actively working to protect our freedoms.

One organization we support is Freedom Force International. It has a vision and plan to re-establish respect for individual rights and freedoms: [www.freedomforceinternational.org](http://www.freedomforceinternational.org)

## **References**

1. Videotape of lecture available from Health Action Network Society in Canada: [www.hans.org](http://www.hans.org)
2. <http://hnn.us/blogs/entries/44245.html> (Please note that the video may no longer be viewable)