

What is Codex?

By Helke Ferrie, February 2009

Codex Alimentarius (Latin for food standards) started out as an international organization in the 1960's mandated to establish standards of weights and measures, oversight with regard to food adulteration and related issues, because international trade increased very rapidly at that time. Many languages and measuring systems, as well as notions of what was acceptable with regard to quality, needed to be streamlined to facilitate international trade. Codex worked well for this purpose or we would not have all those many foods available in our supermarkets which were rare novelties prior to WWII.

In the late 1960's the FDA made the decision (probably innocently, as they cannot be assumed to be clairvoyant) to place the pharmaceutical companies in charge of drug research since they had the laboratories and the scientists able to do this (see D. Haely for details). Fairly rapidly, pharmaceutical laboratories took over from the standard government laboratories which had produced essential drugs, like penicillin, and basic vaccines according to the demand of public health policies of the day. Those policies were not very corporate friendly, which is basically they have become since then.

By 1978 drug companies had become very large and prolific in their output, and their famous products (e.g. cortisone, diuretics, various pain killers, the different forms of antibiotics, some successful vaccines) propelled them into a class of corporations now often referred to as Big Pharma. They ceased to be primarily government suppliers of basic drugs and became huge corporations selling products for profit, trading their shares on the stock market, and becoming part of the competitive advertising scene. Their clients were now shareholders – and the Death Industry began. Profits at quarterly increasing rates and happy shareholders can only be achieved when one has an increasing number of people taking drugs. This is also the basis for the current situation which has brought us primarily drugs that are only for the purpose of symptom control by design and the transformation of symptoms (known to be general for many diseases) into “diseases” requiring long-term symptom-control, e.g. depression, menopause etc.

Codex expanded in the late 1970's to include the development of regulatory guidelines for Big Pharma. Since Big Pharma's entire existence is possible only as long as patent laws exist to protect profits, the collision with the much longer tradition of herbal, nutritional and homeopathic medicine as well as with the ancient traditions of Chinese and Aryurvedic medicine became inevitable. All these systems of medicine do not use synthetic materials and their products are not patentable (certain applications are sometimes patentable).

Codex became completely infiltrated by Big Pharma representation which had been seeking aggressively to control medicine to protect its profitability. With the advent of the World Trade Organization and governments becoming committed to “globalization” and “privatization”, Codex guidelines have become increasingly enforceable through the WTO. Much of this is presented in detail in Health Canada scientists, Shiv Chopra's *Corrupt to the Core*, Kos 2009.

What to do about Codex?

The solution to the Codex-supported corporatization of medicine and the problems Codex has systematically created for non-patentable, natural health products and medical systems not based on synthetic drugs and symptom control is to make both the WTO and Codex irrelevant. The same is true for the protection of agriculture against its corporate control through synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and genetic engineering of plants and food-producing animals. *Codex, the WTO etc. are only as powerful as the Nation State allows itself to be weakened.*

You and I can stop them. Nothing else can.

There is a vast, mainstream literature in politics and economics on how such organizations as the WTO are deliberately designed by their founders to weaken the power of the Nation State, to make the voice of the individual voter as irrelevant as possible, to have national legislatures no longer answerable to the country's electorate but to be answerable instead to multinational corporations and international organizations. This is not the stuff of conspiracy theories but enshrined in the charters and policy statements of these entities.

An especially clear example of this strategy to weaken the Nation State is found in the two recent federal bills the Canadian government introduced prior to the 2008 fall elections: C-51 intended to amend the *Food and Drugs Act* (which does not need amending, but does not enforcing) and C-52 which was intended to amend the *Hazardous Products Act* and now has returned in January 2009 as C-6. See my book on these – now available for free on my website.

The reason you and I can stop this process is because the Nation State is based on constitutions and a network of legislation assuming the power of the people's decision-making within a country's borders. The actions of the WTO, Codex, and many other organizations like them, are strictly speaking not constitutional, nor are they embedded in existing national legislation – they deliberately are designed to ignore these and transcend them without public knowledge and consent or parliamentary debate. However, the basic truth is that these national constitutions expressly do not permit selling of the farm, the country, and your right to decide what goes into your body and what medicines you wish to use or refuse. Fortunately, many countries are beginning to remember this fact.

For example, last year Norway passed legislation banning *all* use of mercury, thereby completely disregarding Codex's endorsement of mercury amalgam dental fillings and going even further than various Scandinavian countries and Austria had gone already done in the early 1990's. Austria refuses to import or even grow in test plots any genetically engineered foods for people or livestock, thereby again disregarding Codex's endorsement of GMOs being safe as well as defying those European Union's member states some of which would be prepared to accept GMOs. The entire European Union has defied the orders of the WTO in this matter many times in the past decade. Italy started the process of banning artificial sweeteners (Aspartame, Equal etc.) on the grounds that they are neurotoxic and carcinogenic (the company that makes equal has filed for bankruptcy as of January 2009) and all public cafeterias from kindergarten through university must serve organic foods only. The population of the UK has made life impossible for corporations seeking to

introduce GMOs into England, thereby defying the policy of several successive governments of both parties. In June 2008 tiny little Ireland voted No to the entire Lisbon Treaty on the grounds that natural health products and local agriculture (and some other related matters) are not protected by this version of the EU Constitution; they sent all member states back to the drawing board. Despite Codex's repeated endorsement of pesticides and food additives etc., the EU ratified the famous REACH treaty which came into effect in January 2008 and requires the re-examination of more than 60,000 chemicals in terms of potential harm to human health. Australia has ordered a moratorium on anything involving GMOs. Canada put a ban on bovine growth hormone and some other carcinogenic hormones and drugs, thanks to the massive public support of the efforts of Health Canada scientists Drs. Shiv Chopra, Margaret Haydon and their colleagues, thereby defying a succession of Conservative and Liberal Prime Ministers, starting with Mulroney, who did everything possible to ignore the safety provisions of the Canadian *Food and Drugs Act*. Then Prime Minister Paul Martin even fired these scientists on grounds of "insubordination" – they refused to pass dangerous drugs. Last June, India basically scuttled with WTO juggernaut to control agriculture worldwide, and many South American countries joined this effort successfully. The WTO is in a stalemate at the moment.

All these measures make the WTO and Codex irrelevant. In the UK especially, the Alliance for Natural Health went successfully to war with Codex in the international courts by invoking trade law, rather than entering into discussions about drug safety (an oxymoron), the safety and biocompatibility of natural health products (which Big Pharma wants to own, patent, and exploit), or the basic human right to choose your therapy (in the face of corporate imperatives, human rights tend to lose). This ANH strategy paid off and Codex has become increasingly embattled, less and less authoritative, and can no longer get away with controlling its original agenda. But the battle is far from over!

Fortunately, the current economic depression, which will last for a long time undoubtedly, hits the biggest corporations, hell-bent on controlling food and drugs, the hardest. It is quite possible that we are witnessing the dying of the Golden Goose – those millions of patients with a real or alleged chronic disease, loyal and compliant and herded into the Sickness Industry by doctors deliberately kept ignorant or themselves on the take – because nobody can pay those ridiculous prices to maintain the Sickness Industry. I predict that this Depression will also have a bonus pay-off in public health – people will probably become healthier when they can't afford garbage food and garbage drugs.

Codex does remain a threat, and the work of the Alliance for Natural Health is absolutely vital – indeed, whatever projects the ANH undertakes in Europe will always have a direct effect on North Americans, Australians and those countries beginning to be lured into the Big Pharma fantasies of the magic bullet. If Canadian support the ANH, they support our own freedom of choice. Whatever the EU does, hits us through international trade laws and agreements. Canada does not yet have a comparable movement for freedom of choice in healthcare as Europe does through the ANH. Codex meets in Europe. Codex has more voting power through the EU than any other block of nations. Codex churns out its science-challenged and

legally dubious “guidelines” with alarming regularity and can always be counted upon to support anything from pesticides to toxic drugs, from useless and harmful vaccines to food additives that are neurotoxic, carcinogenic, and gender-benders (Codex still approves officially of bovine growth hormone!). That toxic sludge will not stop by itself. It only stops when the Nation State – the individual voter – demands truly representative government and refuses to cooperate with the corporatization of food and drugs. That means you and I must act. That also means that what we do matters.

Sources and Resources

The following information is recommended for source information and to learn how to re-build the Nation State. You can inform yourself about the battle that has been waged, since the 1990’s to the present, by natural health organizations and increasingly by mainstream medical and nutritional scientists, to stop this determined push to monopolize health care and food production under Big Pharma control. The environmental movement has also been most helpful by showing how the aims of the food industry connect with that of the drug companies and by demonstrating the detrimental effect both have on the environment. That is how Europe’s REACH treaty came about. Many of the poorer countries have become especially aware of the dangers this corporate juggernaut poses to their indigenous agriculture and medicines and are waking up to the fact that they, too, are in danger of being enslaved to corporate-controlled public health (another oxymoron) and the push to have everybody around the planet forced to accept lethal vaccines and symptom-control drugs for ever and ever. Read the following and join some of these excellent organizations.

The best source for anything concerning Codex and its related organizations is the **Alliance for Natural Health** in the UK, run by Dr. Robert Verkerk and some of Europe’s top lawyers.

In Canada, the **Natural Health Products Protection Association** (NHPPA) run by lawyer Shawn Buckley is the best source for correct information on the same issues pertaining to Canada.

In Canada, the most helpful organizations in matters of foods, drugs, economics and the protection of the Nation State in general are

Council of Canadians Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

For sources on facts and political developments pertaining to foods and drugs, go to the bibliographies of my books:

H. Ferrie, *What Part of No! Don’t They Understand? Rescuing Food and Medicine from Government Abuse*, Kos, 2008, download for FREE on www.kospublishing.com.

H. Ferrie, *Dispatches from the War Zone of Environmental Health*, Kos 2004, also FREE on www.kospublishing.com You can download my articles on Codex from this website also.

- D. Abbey, *Global Profit and Global Justice*, New Society Publishers, 2004
- M. Angell, *The Truth About the Drug Companies: How They Deceive Us and What to Do About It*, Random House, 2004
- L. Armstrong et al, *Cancer: 101 Solutions to a Preventable Epidemic*, New Society Publishers, 2007
- J. Bakan, *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*, Viking, 2004 (see also the documentary film that goes with the book)
- M. Barlow & T. Clarke, *Global Showdown – How the New Activists are Fighting Global Corporate Rule*, Stoddart, 2001
- P. R. Breggin MD & D. Cohen, *Your Drug May Be Your Problem – How and Why to Stop Taking Psychiatric Medications*, Perseus Books, 1999
- H. Brody, *Hooked – Ethics, the Medical Profession and the Pharmaceutical Industry*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2007
- P. Brown, *Toxic Exposure – Contested Illnesses and the Environmental Movement*, Columbia University Press, 2007
- D. Davis, *The Secret History of the War on Cancer*, Basic Books, 2008
- L. Elliott & D. Atkinson, *The Gods That Failed – How Blind Faith In Markets Has Cost Us Our Future*, Nation Books, 2009
- G.B. Faguet, *The War on Cancer – An Anatomy of Failure*, Springer, 2004
- R. Fitzgerald, *The Hundred-Year Lie – How Food and Medicine are Destroying Your Health*, Dutton, 2004
- M. Goozner, *The \$ 800 Million Pill*, California University Press, 2003
- D. Healy, MD, *The Antidepressant Era*, Harvard University Press, 1997
- J. P. Kassirer, MD, *On The Take – How Medicine’s Complicity with Big Business Can Endanger Your Health*, Oxford University Press, 2005
- N. Klein, *No Logo – Taking Aim At The Brand Bullies*, Vintage, 2000
- D. Michaels, *Doubt Is Their Product – How Industry’s Assault on Science Threatens Your Health*, Oxford university Press, 2008
- G. Monbiot, *Captive State – The Corporate Takeover of Britain*, Macmillan, 2000
- R. Moynihan & A. Cassels, *Selling Sickness – How The World’s Biggest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients*, Nation Books, 2003
- M. Nestle, *Food Politics – How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, California University Press, 2001
- J. Perkins, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, BK, 2004
- M. Petersen, *Our Daily Meds – How The Pharmaceutical Companies Transformed Themselves into Slick Marketing Machines and Hooked the Nation on Prescription Drugs*, Sarah Crichton, 2008
- D. J. Savoie, *Court Government and the Collapse of Accountability in Canada and the UK*, University of Toronto Press, 2008
- J. M. Smith, *Genetic Routlette – The Documented health Risks of Genetically Engineered Foods*, Yes! Books, 2007

R. Smith, MD, *The Trouble With Medical Journals*, Royal Society of Medicine Press, 2006

J. Standford, *Economics for Everyone*, Fernwood, 2008

T. Traavik & L. L. Ching eds., *Biosafety First*, Tapir Academic Press, 2007

W. Wasgner & R. Steinzor eds., *Rescuing Science from Politics – Regulation and the Distortion of Scientific Research*, Cambridge University Press, 2006

J. Washburn, *University Inc. – The Corporate Corruption of Higher Education*, Basic Books, 2003

Helke Ferrie, February 2009