

Cancer: The Price of Progress

Posted by

Wednesday, 29 June 2005 14:47 - Last Updated Wednesday, 29 June 2005 14:47

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PEJ News - F.H. Knelman, Ph.D.: The above is the title of a book I began writing some fifty years ago. My thesis was that the majority of cancers had environmental causes. These were mostly exposure to carcinogens in the workplace and in the general environment, the latter by far the waste products of industrial operations. According to the World Health Organization, some 80% of all cancer is environmentally-induced and is therefore preventable. CA

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F.H. Knelman, Ph.D.

The progressive meaning of Progress is a multidimensional mix of social and personal development, coupled to peace on Earth and peace with Earth. The current meaning is unidimensional economic growth blind to all other considerations. Among these other considerations is a high correlation with cancer. The medical-pharmaceutical-chemical establishment reduces all the human environmental and social dimensions to the imperative of the bottom line. They therefore focus on cure rather than prevention. Cancer, after all, is a growth industry. Economic growth is the ultimate measure of progress. During the second half of the twentieth century some 75,000 new chemical compounds have been introduced to the living environment, among them several potent carcinogens.

Governments and even regulatory organizations have accommodated progress as equated with economic growth, with nothing less than worship of the GNP. And the resource which logically dominates the compulsion to grow is oil. The automotive, chemical and pharmaceutical industries are all oil-dependent. The U.S. economy, more than any other, runs on oil. Oil has become the feed stock of progress. And of all the countries in the world, the U.S. is the most dependent on oil. The geopolitical consequence is the war in Iraq, the accommodation of Saudi Arabia and the series of political moves to gain control of the oil and gas-rich Caspian Sea region and the former Eastern Republics of the Soviet Union. The relationship with Canada and, of course, Venezuela, are also determined to a large degree by the need to access their oil. Alberta is the focus point of interest, particularly with the huge potential reserves of the tar sands. The U.S. woos Alberta and Alberta is highly responsive. They share the neoCon political agenda. The pressure will only increase if the war in Iraq bogs down and the oil supply system is interrupted by pipeline attacks.

The terrible cost of this extreme use of and dependence on oil is not only social and military but oil is also the basis of a huge chemical and pharmaceutical complex. We have now come full circle. Hundreds of byproducts from these industries are carcinogenic or suspected to be carcinogens. Petrochemicals include pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, fuels, plastics, insecticides and synthetics of all kinds, as well as the automobile industry. Combined, they are a source of a multiplicity of cancers. At the same time, oil is the major source of economic growth, narrowly defined as progress. The circle is completed, cancer is the price of progress. But even beyond this, environmental degradation generally and its major threat, global warming, are also the price of progress. The United States is the world leader in economic growth and industrial degradation. To defend their self-appointed category of Number One, they have invoked Pax Americana, a program to rule the world.

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There are many excellent books on cancer. In terms of cost and value, I would recommend ?The Cancer Conspiracy? by John Moelaert, a superior booklet on the subject. It can be ordered directly by email at: [http://members.shaw.ca/cancer conspiracy](http://members.shaw.ca/cancer%20conspiracy), for \$20.00, including postage and handling for mailing in Canada. For other countries same web site and click the Order link. For all interested parties, I would strongly recommend you order it.