

Bills C-51 & C-52: Canada's 'Big Brother'?

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If you are a freedom-loving Canadian who has not concerned themselves with Bills C-51 and C-52 ... you should get concerned.

These proposals are unprecedented in the amount of power that they accord the government to control virtually every aspect of what we eat, what we use to maintain our health and our choice of consumer goods.

It is completely true that Bill C-51 could have devastating effects on consumer access to Natural Health Products and services. But the scope of these bills goes way beyond this to a more global agenda of controlling food, and even fresh water supplies.

The stated intentions of these bills are, of course, to keep us all safe. But the written authority that they grant would allow for absolute control of our markets by trans-national corporations. This would be achieved by using government regulation to eliminate competition and to control pricing and supply.

To understand how this process transpires it is important to realize that regulations are passed into law *with no Parliamentary oversight or public input*, versus an Act which must pass Parliamentary approval. Therefore with an Act, or amendments to it, (such as Bill C-51 which is a proposal to amend the Food and Drugs Act), the public at least has a chance for input by communicating their opinions to their MP's in Ottawa. Bills can be killed if there is enough public outcry and objection. But once an Act is established, *regulations* are then put into place to enforce its provisions.

Sitting atop today's governments are large trans-national business interests. Behind the scenes, these giant multi national corporations push for (many would say "dictate") regulations because the more regulations there are in any given sector of the economy, the fewer businesses and/or individuals can afford to compete. Put simply, regulations reduce competition by eliminating small and medium size businesses, whose products and services can either be deemed illegal, and/or subjected to compliance standards that are simply too expensive. As these companies disappear, consumer selection is reduced and control over supply and pricing of goods and/or commodities is concentrated into the hands of fewer and fewer.

If a bill were passed that allowed our government to adopt laws from foreign countries or trade organizations by simply declaring that they were now part of our *regulations*, thereby foregoing both Parliamentary and public consent, the sky would be the limit on the control that could be wrought on the Canadian public by 'regulatory blight.' Bills C-51 and C-52 are exactly such bills!

If these bills pass, they both contain provisions that would allow the Government to 'harmonize' with foreign governments and organizations, incorporating their laws as part of our own at the level of regulation! And it is no accident that C-51 and C-52 provide our regulatory enforcement bodies (Health Canada and the Police) with sweeping new powers of seizure and exponentially increase fines and penalties for violation

So where is the driving force for these bills coming from? One of many obvious clues is the motto right on the European Union's Food Safety website: "Food Safety - From the Farm to the Fork." This means that every step of food production is to be regulated. Not surprisingly, Health Minister Clement has been quoted several times using this phrase, verbatim, and it is freely stated that the purpose of these bills is to bring Canada into line with global standards.

Unfortunately, our government like so many others is now at the beck and call of multi-national corporations. In Bills like C-51 and C-52, it is the beat of *their* corporate drum that our government is marching to and of course it is all being done in the name of public safety.

So what can we do? First and foremost OBJECT in handwritten form to your MP against both bills. Ask a question and demand a written response to every letter. Send them often.

Secondly support consumer protection groups such as the NHPPA, (Natural Health Product Protection Association). This group is headed by a genuinely intentioned lawyer named Shawn Buckley who has experienced Health Canada abuses first hand.

Get involved! Go to health food stores that are supportive of the cause and get information and mail-outs. Simply don't let this happen. Say **NO** to Bills C-51 and C-52.

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