

TRIBUTE TO JOHN YIAMOUIYIANNIS

Translation from the *Japanese Journal of Fluoride Research*, No. 19, Nov. 2000, p. 1

Dr John Yiamouyiannis, biochemist and founder of the Safe Water Foundation, USA, died October 8, 2000, passing away peacefully in sleep at his home in Delaware, Ohio, surrounded by members of his family.

Since 1990, when he first came to Japan to deliver a special lecture at our invitation, a deep bond of respect and understanding developed between us in sharing a common goal to end water fluoridation. Here I wish to extend my heartfelt condolences to his family.

Dr Yiamouyiannis received his undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago and afterward, in 1967, earned his PhD in biochemistry at the University of Rhode Island. Upon completing a year of postdoctoral research at Western Reserve Medical School, he became a biochemical editor at Chemical Abstracts Service, the world's largest center for chemical information, in Columbus, Ohio. There, while reviewing numerous biochemical reports on fluoride, he became aware of many of the health-damaging effects of fluoride. His subsequent activity opposing water fluoridation based on this knowledge prompted efforts by the National Institute of Dental Research to have CAS silence him or risk losing substantial US Public Health Service funding. This action ultimately compelled him to resign from his position at CAS.

In this setback to his career, he was not the first in the controversy over fluoridation. Even such accomplished physicians as Drs Ionel F Rapaport and George L Waldbott were severely oppressed in the early stages of the dispute over fluoridation. Even today, similar reprisals continue, as can be seen in the case of Forsyth Dental Research Center toxicologist Phyllis J Mullenix, PhD, and USEPA cancer scientist William Marcus, PhD. These actions are described by Professor Paul Connett in his "Fluoride: A Statement of Concern", which is translated into Japanese in this issue of the *Journal of the Japanese Society for Fluoride Research*, as "a sickening thread that runs throughout this sorrowful 50-year history of fluoride promotion by agencies of the US Public Health Service."

Dr Y, however, did not bow to pressure or let himself become a victim. Instead, he chose the path of maximum resistance to oppose corrupt authority, not to flatter it. What he had to endure is vividly described in his well-known book, *Fluoride the Aging Factor*. His indomitable courage made him a hero to many who were like-minded. But organizations like the American and British dental associations and even government agencies like the US Public Health Service and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tried to avoid confrontation with him, admitting that "Dr Yiamouyiannis is

conversant with the literature” and “running up against Dr Yiamouyiannis is not recommended.”

Dr Y’s studies with Dr Dean Burk to determine whether cancer death rates increased after fluoridation in the 1950s caused great concern among many Americans and prompted Congressional hearings in 1977 followed by a 21-day court trial in Pennsylvania. There the presiding judge was compellingly convinced of the adverse effects of fluoridation and ordered its halt as a public health hazard. His decision, however, was overruled on jurisdictional grounds, and at an administrative level fluoridation policy remained unchanged.

Twenty-three years later, in June 2000, Congressional hearings were again held. This time USEPA scientist Dr J William Hirzy testified, urging federal lawmakers to recognize that fluoridation causes great harm and should be suspended. How regrettable that Dr Yiamouyiannis is not alive to see this happen.

Dr Yiamouyiannis, you were a great leader, and the work you did was a great achievement. The alarm you sounded was heard by many people around the world. I pray for the repose of your soul, and I trust your spirit has flown to the heavens, from whence the wisdom of your Greek ancestors might be heard today to correct such an outrageous mistake as fluoridating our drinking water.

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CORRECTION

Endemic fluorosis in Southern Rajasthan, India by SL Choubisa. *Fluoride* 2001;34(1):61-70.

In Table 2 (page 65) the first entry of the last column should read 59/558. The author's name in the headers on pages 66 and 68 should be Choubisa. In the first line of the Acknowledgements (page 69) Environments should read Environment.