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Junk Pet Food and the Damage Done

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Dogs, cats and ferrets fed a regular diet of processed food suffer from a range of cruel and debilitating diseases. Pet owners can improve their pets' health by feeding them a natural, chewy diet primarily of whole raw carcasses or at least raw meaty bones.

Morgan Spurlock conducted a risky experiment. In the film *Super Size Me*, Spurlock put McDonald's food to the test. Every day at every meal for 30 days he ate at McDonald's restaurants across America. By the end of the experiment Spurlock was in bad shape. He gained 24 and half pounds (eleven kilos); his liver turned to fat; cholesterol shot up; and he doubled his risk of heart failure. Fortunately for Morgan Spurlock he did not become addicted to junk food, was able to follow his doctor's orders and stop the experiment. Also his holistic health counsellor girlfriend was on hand to nurse him back to health. **1**

Just for a moment and with little danger to our physical health, let's conduct a thought experiment. Imagine if all the Big Macs, Happy Meals and Coca Colas consumed by Spurlock during his month-long binge were tipped into a vat, mixed to a uniform consistency and cooked under pressure. Using the most modern, automated, computer controlled technology supervised by scientists in white coats; imagine if the resultant glop was divided into two parts; half to be sealed in cans and the other half to be dehydrated, extruded into kibble and packed in brightly coloured bags.

I know it may seem strange, but imagine if Spurlock then either slurped through the contents of the McCans or crunched his way through the McKibble. And now — this is an important aspect — imagine that Spurlock neither had a toothbrush nor the ability to ask for one, so consequently didn't clean his teeth for the month-long experiment.

Now I ask you: What would Spurlock's physical, dental and mental health be like after such a crazy experiment? Would doctors, dentists and health regulators provide official endorsement for the canned and kibble diet? Indeed, would it be likely Spurlock picked up his McCans and McKibble at his local medical or dental practice?

OK, experiment over, no need for wild imaginings. For the vast majority of pet dogs (modified wolves), cats (modified desert predators) and ferrets (modified polecats) a diet of McCans or McKibble is their every-day reality. Spurlock's doctor told him he had to stop his unnatural experiment inside 30 days because he was killing himself. By contrast, the world's pet doctors (vets) encourage pet owners to feed McCans and McKibble *every day* of their pets' lives. I know; I was one such vet.

Poisoned five ways

For the first fifteen years of my working life as a graduate of the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, I went along with the veterinary conventional wisdom. I counselled my clients against the feeding of home prepared meals — because they were unlikely to get the ‘balance’ of nutrients right, I suggested. Raw meat posed a risk due to bacteria and lack of calcium, so I said. As for bones: everyone knew that bones pose a hazard for breaking teeth and causing obstruction. And whoever heard of feeding bones to cats? The manufacturers have removed the guesswork, I assured my clients. ‘Giant companies understand the science and have the resources to ensure the best possible fare for your pet. It’s convenient too!’

With the matter of diet for my patients glossed over, I could return to the more pressing problems associated with diagnosis and treatment. After all, that’s what I was trained to do and that’s what my clients expected of me — and the stream of sick pets with skin disease, heart, liver, bowel and dental disease, cancer and other maladies was never ending.

Oh! How I cringe! How culpably, horribly wrong I had been! As varied as my patients were in size, species, age, sex and breed, the one common uniting feature was their junk food diet. They were all fed McCans and McKibble and almost without exception this was the reason why animals needed my services. Yes, it’s as simple and dramatic as that and for the following three sometimes five reasons.

1. Soft canned foods and grain-based kibble do not clean teeth. In fact food sludge sticks to teeth and feeds the bacteria in dental plaque. The body’s second line of defence, the immune system, mobilises against the bacterial invaders. The result: inflamed gums, bad breath, circulating bacteria and bacterial poisons that affect the rest of the body.**2, 3**

2. Dogs, cats and ferrets don’t have the digestive enzymes in the right quality or quantity to deal with the nutrients in grains and other plant material — whether those nutrients are raw or cooked. When grains are cooked at high temperatures at the pet-food factory the starches, proteins and fats become denatured or toxic to varying degrees.**4** Junk food is laden with colorants, preservatives, humectants and a raft of other strange chemical additives — none with any nutritive value and all toxic to varying degrees.**5** Once in the bowel of a carnivore, toxic nutrients are absorbed into the circulation and affect various body systems.

3. Poorly digested grain-based junk food supports a large population of toxin-producing bacteria in the lower bowel. The bowel lining, in constant contact with poisons, may be adversely affected. Some poisons pass through the bowel wall into the blood circulation, are carried to other organs and create further problems.**6**

4. Like Morgan Spurlock, some pets show signs of ill health after a short time consuming junk food. For instance, puppies frequently suffer from bad skin and diarrhoea. Long term exposure to the diet-related toxins listed in 1, 2 and 3 leads to diseases of body organs. Diseased organs produce more toxins which enter the blood stream and add to the spiral of worsening disease.**3**

5. Mostly pets suffer in silence — they can’t speak in words. But when animals are

affected by the above four categories of poison their body language tells observant owners to seek help from the vet. Some vets say: ‘Stop! Stop feeding junk food.’ Sadly, though, most vets ignore categories 1, 2 and 3. Instead they diagnose diseased organs as mentioned in 4. Treatment usually involves strong pharmaceuticals which then contribute another level of toxic insult.⁷

What about the genetic diseases, infectious diseases, the parasitic diseases, the broken legs, other traumatic diseases and the diseases of old age? You may ask. For sure these are all important factors governing the wellbeing of our pet carnivores. But clearly, undeniably, pets worn down by the toxic effects of a junk-food diet are at greater risk of succumbing to other diseases and the recovery phase is likely longer too.⁸

Stop!

Stop feeding junk pet food is the first and best bit of advice I can give you — for the benefit of your pets, the human economy and natural environment. By stopping doing harm we take the first steps on the road to doing good. It gains us a bit of breathing space allowing us to survey the scene, investigate further and harness the benefits of our newfound wisdom.

Actually, it’s not so new. Hippocrates, the famous Greek physician in the 5th century BC, said: ‘Leave your drugs in the chemist’s pot if you can heal your patients with food.’⁹

So why did we lose sight of the ancient wisdom; why did we ignore the teachings of nature; and of utmost importance why is it so difficult to discuss, let alone reverse, the current orthodoxy? By way of explanation let me tell you a story that when taken to a conclusion should provide medical, scientific, social and environmental benefits worth \$billions.

Since 1955 when Juliette de Bairacli Levy published her *Complete Herbal Book for the Dog* there have been mutterings about the inadequacy of processed-food diets for pet dogs and cats.¹⁰ By the late 1980s Australian vets were passing comment and by the early 1990s were registering open dissent. Dr Breck Muir often remarked about the foul odours given off from both ends of dogs fed canned food. In December 1991 he wrote in the *Australian Veterinary Association News*:

Canned pet food not the healthiest

The pet-food situation has concerned me for some years, my feelings brought to this by the current competitive marketing of various dental work stations for veterinary use.

The scene as I see it goes like this: “Here is the best food ever made for your dog Mrs Jones” handing her a can of commercial dog food or dry food, “but he may develop problems with his teeth, so here is a special toothbrush and paste for you to use to clean his teeth regularly, and then if that doesn’t keep the periodontal disease at bay then we have the very latest in dental equipment just like your own dentist has, and we can give Fido that perfectly enamelled ivory grin” — that he would have had had you not fed him the commercial food in the first place.

Here we have the perfectly engineered commercial circle — a problem doesn't exist, so we create one, and ... come up with all the remedial treatments.¹¹

Also in December 1991, my article, Oral Disease in Cats and Dogs, appeared in the Sydney University Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science newsletter:

The stench of stale blood, dung and pus emanating from the mouths of so many of my patients has finally provoked this eruption of dissent.

The sheer numbers passing through the practice, when extrapolated to the world situation, tell me that oral disease is the source of the greatest intractable pain and discomfort experienced by our companion animals.

This is a great and mindless cruelty we visit upon our animals from the whelping box to the grave. Just imagine having a mouth ulcer or toothache for a lifetime.¹²

Whilst the chemical contents (masquerading as nutrients) of junk pet foods are a major cause of concern, the new emphasis on oral hygiene opened an important chapter focussing on the *physical form* of the food. Indisputably, lions, tigers, wolves and all other wild predators don't have access to toothbrushes, dental floss or annual check-ups at the dentist. Nature equipped carnivores with the tools of trade to complete a very necessary evolutionary function: eating and thus regulating herbivore populations on planet Earth. Strong, precision tools need to be kept sharp and clean and it's by the very act of gnawing and ripping their way through tough hide, muscle, sinew and bone that a carnivore's teeth and gums get scrubbed, scraped and polished.

For dogs, cats and ferrets the biological principles are exactly the same as for their wild cousins. Nutrients need to be raw and easily digested; physically the food should be raw, tough and chewy.¹³ In practical terms that's a diet of whole chickens, rabbits, fish or similar. A raw meaty bones based diet provides a good second-best option.

Blowing the whistle, catching attention

If unnatural pet food injures the health of pets, then the cosy relationship between the pet-food manufacturers and the veterinary profession injures pets, pet owners and the veterinary profession too. Breck Muir complained:

The infiltration of the commercial pet foods into our lives is one of the great success stories of the business world. Gross sales figures for a single product type is probably only bettered by petroleum products worldwide.

We as a profession have been led by the nose by vested interests into a current situation where most younger vets actually recommend commercial pet foods as the best available way of feeding domestic pets — because they have never known of any other way. Before they had their first pet they were bombarded with constant mass media advertising instilling into them that various commercial foods are the only way to go, and when they graduated and went to postgraduate nutrition courses again they had this idea reinforced by visiting lecturers who actually mentioned brand names in their notes.¹¹

Breck and I thought that blowing the whistle on the processed pet-food issue might trigger debate. We also hoped it might lead to reappraisal and resolution of a gathering crisis. However, we were about to be taught the first of several lessons — the pet-food industry/veterinary profession alliance is extensive, strong and hostile to criticism.

Upper echelons of the veterinary profession (veterinary associations, veterinary schools, research institutes) and junk food makers do deals behind the scenes. The Australian Veterinary Association sent Breck's letter to John Wingate, the then president of the Pet Food Manufacturers Association Inc. (now the Pet Food Industry Association of Australia Inc.). Wingate's self serving response published alongside Breck's letter told vets:

The best way to feed a pet animal is with reputable brands of pet food. . . these products are known and designed to satisfy the requirements of the animal as defined by the National Research Council of the US Academy of Sciences, which is the accumulation of the most up-to-date world-wide knowledge on the subject.¹⁴

Yes, that's right, the junk pet-food culture extends all the way up to the US Academy of Sciences, along the way, animal welfare organisations, dog and cat breed societies, pet magazines, books, print and electronic media all sing from the junk pet-food makers' song sheet.

But as practising vets ministering to the needs of a steady stream of sick pets, we found that our senses and our daily experience told us that the weight of so-called veterinary evidence was wrong. We delved deeper, looking in text books, and research papers. And everywhere we stumbled, tripped and fell we found new evidence of the harmful effects of junk food.

Most pets are fed junk food and never clean their teeth. By simply cleaning diseased teeth and gums and changing pets over to a more natural diet otherwise intractable diseases disappeared — never to reoccur. Penicillin, hailed as a wonder drug, is used to treat some bacterial diseases but has no long-term disease prevention benefits. Using dentistry and diet we could cure many and prevent most of the diseases afflicting pets.

Tentacles of the monster

Communicating the good health, good news message to other vets became paramount, and so began a cat and mouse game with the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA). As fully paid up members of the Association we could submit letters to the Letters Page of the *AVA News*. The AVA and pet-food company sponsors were not so keen. Nevertheless, between December 1991 and March 1993, a small band of raw meaty bones enthusiasts managed to get ten letters published. Six vets wrote in support of the junk pet foods. There was no official pronouncement from the AVA until, without warning, they announced: '*AVA News* believes that this issue has been aired fully over the last year and does not intend to run further correspondence.'¹⁵

False and misleading pet-food company ads continued as before. Pet-food company behind the scenes discussions continued as before. The annual AVA conference showcased pet-food companies and the AVA working in partnership; with guest lecturers sticking religiously to the party line. But we, the members with binding obligations to our patients and their owners, were forbidden to discuss fundamental health issues: dental disease affecting *most* and diet affecting *all* of our patients.

That was back in March 1993. What would you have done if your professional association blocked the communication of vital information? What if your profession was living a lie, injuring pets and cheating consumers? That was the situation we found ourselves in and needing to mount a response.

First we tabled an Annual General Meeting (AGM) motion calling on the AVA to lift the ban on discussion and to form a committee to investigate the connection between diet and disease in companion animals. Against the odds, and thanks to timely intervention by Dr Douglas Bryden, Director of the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Research, the motion gained approval.¹⁶ We were gratified by the temporary success, but no time to celebrate. With the committee report expected to take months to prepare we turned to other strategies.

Despite the AGM success, letters to the editor continued to be censored or rejected. One way to circumvent this obstacle was to stand for election to the AVA Board. We reasoned that the AVA was constitutionally and legally bound to permit candidates to publish their manifestos. So once a year matters of dentistry, diet and disease made a brief appearance in the *AVA News*.¹⁷ Most years we received about 10% of the votes — never enough to gain election, but enough to trouble the pet-food companies.

Second, if the vets refused to discuss the issues, then taking the issues direct to the public seemed worth a try. However we were under no illusions; the junk pet-food monster became ensconced in our society using the print and electronic media. Paid advertisements and craftily placed articles, TV and radio shows encourage the acquisition of pets, pet food and veterinary services. Fortunately, some journalists are prepared to take risks even if it means offending their employers and advertisers. From small beginnings the press, TV, radio and nowadays the internet mention (some of) the issues.¹⁸

Third, we overcame our feelings of inadequacy and conducted research in the scientific literature and on the patients under our care (with the full consent of the owners). Why inadequacy? Well, there's a general belief that research is time consuming, costly and requiring vast intellectual and material resources. Maybe that's true in advanced research. But for us exploring a new field the information was relatively easy to obtain — and besides it was fun — especially when our opponents handed us confirmatory evidence.

Such was the case with the AVA Diet and Disease report released in February 1994, nine months after the 1993 AGM. Although 'assisted' by pet-food company vet, Dr Barbara Fougere and other pet-food company sympathisers the committee nevertheless reported that instead of investigating the full impact of diet and disease they had limited their enquiries because:

- The committee believed the concerns raised required urgent attention and comment. It was considered that within the time frame set by the AVA it was not possible to explore every aspect of dietary interaction with disease.
- Information which could be gathered on the broader issues would be unlikely to add more than is already well known.
- Concentration should be placed on periodontal disease and diet because this was the principal area of current concern to the Australian veterinary profession.
- It was felt that if periodontal disease could be prevented then any secondary complications from this problem would be reduced.

There is *prima facie* evidence to justify concern by veterinarians. Pet owners should consider the need to provide some ‘chewy’ material as well as the basic nutrient intake of their dog or cat.

Periodontal disease may be associated with the occurrence of other diseases but the available evidence is inconclusive. Periodontal disease is arguably the most common disease condition seen in small animal practice and its effects on the gums and teeth can significantly affect the health and well being of affected animals. This is sufficient in itself to give reason for concern. Proof of additional systemic effects is not necessary to justify further action.

Further research is required to better define the relationship between particular diet types and oral health in dogs and cats. Those investigating small animal health problems should also take diet and diet consistency into account when researching systemic diseases — possible confounding effects of diet and poor oral health must be considered in such studies.¹⁹

Prophetic last words, indeed. Hands-on research in my practice has confirmed that diet and diet consistency are *the prime determining factors* in most diseases treated at suburban veterinary clinics. A range of previously hard-to-treat conditions disappeared as if by magic when dental care coupled with diet change became our top priority. Investigation of pets suffering an acquired immune deficiency revealed a startling restoration of immune function and return to health when the animals’ foul-mouths were treated and diet changed to raw meaty bones. The implications are immense, and not just for AIDS sufferers.⁸ It’s relevant for all of us with an immune system and, as I postulated in a paper published in the *Journal of Veterinary Dentistry*, likely significant to our understanding of the ecology of health and disease on planet Earth.²⁰

The pet-food industry/veterinary profession alliance, with a multibillion-dollar fighting fund, was in no mood to listen, except insofar as its members wished to consolidate their position. With so many problems associated with the feeding of junk food, they are adept at turning adversity to advantage. Their tentacles wrap around a problem; they pour money into research and present themselves as public benefactors. So it was with periodontal disease which became the new hot topic in pet-food company research labs and universities the world over. Their solution: A plethora of artificial dental products carrying inflated health claims — often endorsed by the Veterinary Oral Health Council.²¹

Getting the products to the end user depends on a willing sales force free from independent thought. Veterinarians enjoy status and respect; once indoctrinated they are the ideal sales and marketing force. Accordingly, veterinarians are tutored in the mail, in advertisements and in visits from pet-food company representatives. With minds filled with pet-food company ‘facts’ vets are then encouraged to support Dental Health Month/Pet Smile Month or similar. It’s the month when pet owners are bombarded with advertisements and publicity stunts urging them to visit their vet for a ‘free’ dental check for their pets and receive a goody bag full of samples and copies of those same company-selected ‘facts’.²²

Augmenting the propaganda push, there’s a campaign to denigrate home prepared and raw food through articles strategically placed in so-called professional journals.²³ Myself, I’ve been targeted in a series of bogus disciplinary actions before the Veterinary Surgeons Board of NSW — a government regulatory body made up of AVA members. Threatened with deregistration, a year in prison or fine of \$2000, legal defence strategies became top priority. Documents on file weigh a combined 12 kilograms (26 pounds) and represent years of hard work and countless hours spent in lawyer’s offices. Fortunately the lawyers and I managed to withstand the harassment and I’m still registered as a vet.

However, in 2004, the AVA brought another bogus action before an in-house AVA disciplinary committee. After the ‘guilty’ verdict, Paul Lynch MP condemned the AVA in New South Wales State Parliament:

Tom Lonsdale was expelled from the AVA on the basis of an anonymous complaint in relation to which further particulars were not provided at a hearing at which he could not have legal representation. The whistleblower was punished. This is the action of a kangaroo court. It is a disgrace.²⁴

The price we pay

OK, so the pet-food monster’s tentacles control many facets of society. What price do we pay? The following five points provide a summary:

1. Junk food induced cruelty, ill health and suffering affects a majority of the world’s pets. Plentiful scientific evidence, common experience and common sense confirm this fact.

2. Misuse of existing scientific paradigms and bogus administrative techniques produces a body of counterfeit science in the service of the junk pet-food industry.

The current mass-poisoning of pets starts with the first lie: That processed pet food is as good as or better than the natural alternative. So-called researchers swallow the lie and then misuse existing scientific methods and compliant professional journals to perpetuate and bolster the lie.

3. Broadly three methodologies combine to form the scientific paradigm that underpins the junk pet-food enterprise:

- i.) An emphasis on treatment, not prevention, of ill health and disease.

- ii.) Dependence on the Germ Theory of disease as a fundamental axiom when in fact Pasteur, one of the originators of the Germ Theory, acknowledged that germs are secondary to other predisposing factors.
- iii.) Dependence on reductionist research methods when in fact a holistic approach taking account of all interactive forces provides much more satisfactory evidence.

Consider that a natural raw-meaty-bones based diet acts as food *and* medicine for carnivores. If we apply the lessons to be learnt from a study of the health and disease of carnivores resident at the extreme end of the nutritional spectrum we can derive information of immense medical, scientific, economic and environmental value to us all.

New attitudes and new paradigms are needed, but are blocked by the combined might of vested interests.

4. Economic consequences measure in the \$billions. Back in the 1860s Jack Spratt, assisted by Charles Cruft, opened the first processed dog-food business in London and started dog shows as a marketing tool.²⁵ Now in 2007 *BusinessWeek* estimates ‘Americans spend an astonishing \$41 billion a year on their furry friends’.²⁶ Fuelled by massive profits, the pet-food marketing machine encourages us to acquire ‘furry friends’, junk pet food and vet services:

Estimated 2007 Sales within the U.S. Market

Food	\$16.1billion
Vet Care	\$9.8billion
Supplies/OTC Medicine	\$9.9 billion
Live animal purchases	\$2.1 billion
Pet Services: grooming & boarding	\$2.9 billion ²⁷

From dog droppings on the sole of your shoe through to the ecological footprint of giant pet-food factories, there are immense environmental costs that don’t appear in the figures. Neither do the figures reveal the cost of the municipal pounds and welfare shelters needed for the millions of discarded pets. Dogs fed junk food are harder to train and more likely to bite their owners leading to increased training and medical costs.²⁸ What price the scars on a child’s face?

I don’t say that natural food comes cost free. However, producing and distributing natural food is labour intensive and good for employment and sure to create a better world. A full economic audit is long overdue.

5. Failure of democratic, administrative and legal systems — whether due to oversight, incompetence or corruption — facilitates the junk pet-food scam.

Since the time of Spratt and Cruft we’ve had endless political representatives, governments have come and gone and the legal profession has been ever present. Yet despite the moral and ethical problems associated with duping people into slowly poisoning their animals and the clear illegality of such cruel treatment, our politicians and lawyers have done little or nothing. Animal welfare groups, purporting to care for

the plight of pets, consort with the junk pet-food companies and are more a part of the problem than the solution.²⁹

The media, our watchdogs, mostly remain in their kennel too scared to comment. Journalists working for the *Australian* newspaper, the *Sydney Sun Herald* and the UK *Sunday Independent* researched and wrote extensive articles that were never published.³⁰ Other media outlets engage in self-censorship and publish tepid accounts or no accounts at all.

Pet- food recall

Whilst we discuss the pet food scam, we should keep in mind that two giant chocolate manufacturers, Mars and Nestlé, jostle for supremacy of the pet-food industry. Mars was ahead with brands such as PAL, Pedigree, Waltham and Whiskas. Nestlé spent a reputed \$10 billion buying Purina and pulled ahead, but Mars regained the lead when they acquired the French company Royal Canin. Both Mars and Nestlé span the globe with vast expansion plans into India and China — it's the unacceptable face of Western capitalism, globalisation and cruelty to animals combined.^{31, 32}

In the second tier other large conglomerates — Colgate-Palmolive, Procter & Gamble, Heinz and Del Monte — compete for consumer loyalty. The companies may seek to differentiate themselves and their products; in fact we know there's a sameness about them all as was amply demonstrated in the recent Menu Foods recall. Dogs and cats in North America were ill and dying of acute renal failure traced to the output of one contract pet-food manufacturer, Menu Foods.³³ At first it was thought rat poison had contaminated batches of 'food' but as the story unfolded it turned out melamine, a chemical used for manufacturing plastic countertops, glue and fertiliser, had been added into Chinese shipments of wheat gluten affecting almost 100 different brands.³⁴

Apparently, Chinese manufacturers of wheat gluten boosted the nitrogen and thus the protein reading of their gluten by adding in nitrogen rich melamine. It's obviously wrong to adulterate foodstuffs with poisons for profit, but that differs little from the industry practice of 'Least Cost Formulation' — with little or no regard for the health of the consumers.³⁵ First derive a formula for chemical ingredients that meets the industry's artificial standard; scout around for the cheapest (mostly grain derived) chemicals; buy in bulk for maximum economy of scale; mix and cook in a vat. Seal the resultant sludge in McCans or dehydrate and extrude into McKibble. Affix brand name labels telling pet owners these are superior, unique and healthful products — the very best available.

Of course the companies are aware that by keeping their costs down they impose a massive cost burden on pet owners who first pay for the harmful products and then endure the emotional and financial costs of the inevitable veterinary treatment. Acute renal failure may be uncommon but chronic renal failure is not. Research carried out by Nestlé revealed that the mean lifespan of cats fed exclusively commercial cat food and receiving regular veterinary attention was less than 12 years-of-age, with death largely attributable to renal failure or cancer.³⁶ The Mars corporation, advertising their Pedigree *bone-shaped* chews, told vets that '80% of dogs over the age of three have gum disease' and that 'dental problems are known to increase with age and are increasingly being linked to vital organ disease — most

notably kidneys and liver'.³⁷ 'Chronic renal disease is a leading cause of death in dogs and cats' say Royal Canin.³⁸

Chronic, slowly developing kidney disease versus acute kidney disease — which would you prefer? It's a bit like the boiling frog syndrome — turn up the heat slowly and the frog quietly accepts his fate. Over many years pet owners, and by extension their politicians and lawyers, have quietly accepted the chronic dietary disease epidemics. Now in the aftermath of the pet-food recall there are recriminations and Congressional hearings.³⁹ Reportedly 75 Class Actions have been launched.⁴⁰ Let's hope that the politicians and lawyers see past the Chinese melamine scandal; see that it is only one small part of a monster issue needing urgent, thorough investigation.

Future prospects

What does the future hold? Who can tell?

Peering through my crystal ball I see a future of constant change. In a complex world of competing interests some change will be for the good and some for the bad. Let's be under no illusions; big, bad forces seek to stifle dissent, and we are merely individuals of good will. Echoing Edmund Burke: 'All that is needed for evil to prosper is for people of good will to do nothing'.⁴¹

Let's do something — *anything* — that helps the animals. Let's start today.

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About the author

Veterinarian and author Tom Lonsdale, BVetMed, MRCVS, graduated from the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, in 1972. In the 1980s he became aware of the dietary disease epidemics affecting the animals under his care. Since 1991, Tom has campaigned to bring the information to public attention. In 2001, his landmark book *Raw Meaty Bones: Promote Health* was published (reviewed in *NEXUS* 12/03), followed in 2005 by *Work Wonders: Feed Your Dog Raw Meaty Bones* (reviewed in 13/04). Dr Lonsdale can be contacted by email at tom@rawmeatybones.com or via his website, <http://www.rawmeatybones.com>.