

Health

Aspartame, anti-depressants and Bush

By Jerry Mazza

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"When divine power plans evil for a man, it first injures his mind." —Sophocles

August 6, 2004—First we have Dr. Justin Frank, the prominent Washington psychiatrist and author of the book, *Bush on the Couch, Inside the Mind of the President*, characterizing George W. Bush as suffering from "character pathology," including "grandiosity" and "megalomania," seeing himself, America and God as interchangeable, a truly unholy trinity. Now we have an article by Dr. Betty Martini, *Political Sanity vs. Neurotoxins: U.S. President [sic] Being Given Powerful Anti-depressants which Interact with Aspartame*, published in [U.N. Observer & International Report](#).

As Dr. Martini tells us, "The first correspondence I had with President [sic] George Bush was when he was Governor of Texas. He was about to sign into law the Dietetics Practice Act. At the time, Monsanto owned NutraSweet and I explained that the dieticians were Monsanto's media hacks and that his law granted them a monopoly, which is against most state constitutions. (They passed it anyway). I sent him a packet about aspartame, showing him that it is a deadly chemical poison and the dietitians push it and defend the manufacturer. He wrote back that he disagreed—and he also got hooked on Diet Coke."

It should be noted that Dr. Martini, while not a physician, has worked in medicine for 22 years. She's best known as the founder of [Mission Possible International](#), which works with doctors worldwide to remove aspartame from food, drinks and medicine. Dr. Martini reports that 75 percent of all the complaints to the Food and Drug Administration are about the ill effects of aspartame.

Concerning George Bush, Dr. Martini notes, "So far, the president [sic] has exhibited memory loss to such an extent that the Atlanta Journal Constitution published that he appeared to need to be coached for each word." She refers to that scene at the end of *Fahrenheit 911*, in which Bush attempts to quote an old saying, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." As Dr. Martini points out, "he couldn't remember the end of it, so after saying, 'Fool me once, shame on you, he looked around and thought and then said, 'And don't do it again.' You could see he couldn't remember." Dr. Martini points out that Bush "has also had a blackout which is notorious of aspartame and he complained of joint pain. Aspartame hardens the synovial fluids and causes agonizing joint pain."

This seems like a case of cruel but ironic justice, Bush signing a bill for a drug that puts him in danger. But the danger goes far beyond Bush's mental and physical health. As Dr. Martini says, "The phenylalanine in aspartame at 50 percent is neurotoxic and goes directly into the brain." That is, anybody's brain who uses it: men, women or children. "It lowers the seizure threshold and depletes serotonin," she adds, "and when you lower serotonin, it triggers paranoia, manic depression or bi-polar brain disorder, hallucinations, mood swings and suicidal tendencies. It also interacts with all anti-depressants and you can get a double whammy with some of these psycho drugs."

In fact, the side effects of depression, paranoia, mood swings were also noted in the article [Sullen, Depressed President Retreats into Private, Paranoid World](#)," by Capitol Hill Blue Editor Theresa Hampton and William D. McTavish, a follow-up to Hampton's article, [Bush Using Drugs to Control Depression](#),

[Erratic Behavior](#). All in all, this doesn't add up to a comforting picture of the most powerful individual on earth, George W. Bush.

Only a few White House intimates, such as Karl Rove or Karen Hughes get to speak with Bush; of cabinet members, the truly scary John Ashcroft, fellow born-again, is the leading shoulder to lean on. Can't you see them all sitting around a conference table drinking Diet Coke and forgetting what the agenda was? Perhaps that's why we lost most of our civil rights with the USA PATRIOT Act. They forgot there was a Bill of Rights. Certainly it seems so in regard to not funding the \$26 billion "No Child Left Behind Act," or Bush's campaign promise not to engage in "nation building," switching once he seized office, as if to Diet Pepsi, to the hegemony of a "A New World Order." There are so many forgotten promises: to cut taxes for working families, but the wealthiest ended up with the lion's share of the current, budget-busting cuts. And there was the announcement that the war in Iraq was over on May 1, 2003, though the death toll keeps rising as the fighting rages on with no end in sight.

Perhaps the forgetting, the paranoia, the mood swings, the depression, are infectious, above and beyond the aspartame or anti-depressants. Perhaps that's the double whammy Dr. Martini was referring to. After all, there we have the paragon of propriety, Dick Cheney, hurling an expletive at a senator who challenged his no-bid Iraq contracts to Halliburton, of which he was, and in a way, seems to continue to be, CEO, or OOC (out of control). What's more, if we have Ashcroft forgetting the entire Bill of Rights, what about W forgetting the separation of church and state embodied in the First Amendment.

In fact, we have an administration so paranoid it has given the least number of press conferences in the history of television. And we have a president [sic] whose first impulse was to reject a formal investigation into 9/11. Not that the 9/11 whitewash has produced any great revelations. That said, let's return to Dr. Martini, aspartame, and another Bush stalwart, Donald Rumsfeld, and their impact on us all.

Aspartame and Donald Rumsfeld

As reported on [NewswithViews.com](#), May 9, 2004, "aspartame is a drug, not just an additive, found in diet soft drinks and over 5,000 foods, drugs and medicine. According to top doctors and researchers, aspartame causes headache, memory loss, seizures, vision loss, coma and cancer. It worsens or mimics the symptoms of such diseases and conditions as fibromyalgia, MS, lupus, ADD, diabetes, Alzheimer's, chronic fatigue and depression." Relevant Bush and millions of other drinkers and ex-drinkers, "Further dangers highlighted are that aspartame liberates free methyl alcohol. The resulting chronic methanol poisoning affects the dopamine system of the brain causing addiction."

Curiously, in George W. Bush's "Summary of Medical History August 4th, 2001," when he was 55 years, old, the physician, Dr. Kenneth Cooper notes in the President's [sic] Social History:

"Tobacco: An occasional cigar.

"Alcohol: None.

"Caffeine: Diet sodas and coffee."

The abundant use of diet drinks can function as a kind of replacement addiction, with some of the equally dangerous side effects mentioned earlier. Now if aspartame is so dangerous, how did it ever go public? That's a matter of profit and Republican politics.

Aspartame was discovered in 1965, bringing with it a raging debate over the sugar substitute's health risks. From lab testing on rats, it was learned the drug induced brain tumors. On Sept. 30, 1980, the FDA Board of Inquiry agreed and denied the petition for approval. In 1981, as the Reagan era cranked up, Arthur Hull Hayes, the new FDA Commissioner ignored the ruling and approved aspartame for dry goods. As noted in the 1985 Congressional Record, then CEO of Searle Laboratories, Donald Rumsfeld, said that he would "call in his markers" to get the drug approved. Rummy was then on President Reagan's transition team. A day after he took office, he appointed Hayes.

As Dr. Martini tells us, "When Donald Rumsfeld was CEO of Searle, that conglomerate manufactured aspartame. For 16 years the FDA refused to approve it, not only because it's not safe, but also because they wanted the company indicted for fraud. Both U.S. prosecutors hired on with the defense team and the statute of limitations expired. They were Sam Skinner and William Conlon. Skinner went on to become Secretary of Transportation, squelching the cries of the pilots who were having seizures on this seizure-triggering drug, aspartame, and then Chief of Staff under President [sic] Bush's father . . . Even Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas is a former Monsanto attorney. (Monsanto bought Searle in 1985, and sold it a few years ago). When Ashcroft became attorney general, Thompson from King and Spalding Attorneys (another former Monsanto attorney) became deputy under Ashcroft (attorneys for Nutra Sweet and Coke).

"However, the FDA still refused to allow Nutra Sweet on the market . . . It interacts with all antidepressants, L-dopa, Coumadin, hormones, insulin, all cardiac medication, and many others. It also is a chemical hyper sensitization drug so that it interacts with vaccines, other toxins, other unsafe sweeteners like Splenda, which has a chlorinated base like DDT and cause autoimmune disease. . . . Despite the fact that the FDA has known this for a quarter of a century and done nothing even though it's against the law . . . Searle went on to build a Nutra Sweet factory and had \$9 million worth of inventory."

Rumsfeld, as Dr. Martini pointed out, was on Reagan's transition team. And the day after Reagan took office, he selected FDA Commissioner Arthur Hayes to approve aspartame. Despite the FDA setting up a Board of Inquiry of top scientists, who pointed out the drug's dangers and revoked the approval, Hayes overruled the board and then went to work for the manufacturer's PR agency, Burson-Marsteller. He's never spoken to the press since.

Despite three congressional hearings, a general outcry of "poison," Senator Orrin Hatch, also paid by Monsanto, made sure that Senator Howard Metzenbaum's bill, calling for independent studies of aspartame's toxic effects, never got out of committee. The bill, S. 1557, also would have put a moratorium on the drug. The further studies of its effects on the population would have looked at interaction with drugs, seizures, fetus health, and even behavioral problems in children, due to the depletion of serotonin caused by the phenylalanine in aspartame.

According to an April 26 news release from the National Justice League, lawsuits were filed in three California courts against a dozen companies that produce or use aspartame as a sugar substitute in their products. The companies included Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Bayer Corp., the Dannon Company, William Wrigley Jr. Company, Wal-Mart, ConAgra Foods, Wyeth, Inc., The NutraSweet Company, and Altria Corp. (parent company of Kraft Food and Phillip Morris).

Dr. Martini recommends that consumers read all labels on any food, medicine or drinks they intend to consume. That might be great advice for a president [sic] struggling to maintain his own clarity if not his office. One wishes those who voted for Bush had read his label, to find out just how deadly he could be, and will be, if elected this time.

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