

## Foreword

### The Dental Profession: Where Is It Now...?

Since the decline of the socialist block and its legacy (there are a few countries which are still faithful to this system: Cuba, North Korea, Venezuela and partially China, but any of these do not represent an important qualitative competitor) the world is marching on the trodden path of capitalism.

In the future, **dentistry** is forced to evolve onto the direction and ascending spiral initiated by the powers that created the capitalist world.

Taking into account the near and the distant future, is the role of dentistry really important in our society? If we bear the quality of life in our mind, we can make the whole world acknowledge the quality of those who rule dentistry and the stomatognathic system.

In every country, the candidates who work to become dental students, can be classified in at least two groups:

a **minority** who has grown up in dentists' families and already knows what being a dentist means; they want to continue a tradition dedicating themselves to the profession.

a **majority** pushed to this profession by poverty; their purpose is to increase their wealth and quality of life.

For a long period of time, dental schools have appeared and developed among medical schools (this "habit" is still present in some countries). Nowadays the idea is to separate the two (medicine and dentistry), even to isolate dentistry, setting off a disadvantageous evolution for us. This „divorce" is pushing us to and almost over the edge of medicine, converting us into simple dentists – a mob of „narrow-minded" specialists.

The major differences between postgraduate evolution of dentists within the European Union and mostly between **EU** and **USA** restrict our mobility around the globe and, more important, force an uneven spread of specialists.

Reduced medicine (and even dentistry) knowledge needed to become a dentist, conside-

ring that later postgraduate courses will complete the formation of a good practitioner, has generated a new type of dentists with a weak training similar to the graduates of a 4 years dentistry school in India.

Problems in training dentists are evolving side by side with the highly increased prices of dental treatment. This issue has spread around the world, not only in the Black Sea countries. Because of these prices, we can see anterior edentulous people from Paris to Toronto. One cause of this increase in costs is the expensive technology needed, but is also due to a lack of dental insurances which instead of evolving are involving.

Dentistry students are influenced by the economical aspects of the trade and they can see that the majority of their future patients are financially handicapped.

... And Where Is It Going?

To maintain the quality of the future dentist we have to adopt the principles used in advanced countries: selection and exclusion. As the demands of nowadays students are increasing (in all domains) so the demands of dental schools have to increase. If the old system of admission through examination is obsolete, then we have to use at least minimal skill tests for specific aptitudes.

At last but not at least we should talk about the costs of training of a student in dentistry per year, which climbed from 16.000\$ in 1975 to 30.000\$ in 2000 in the advanced countries, and the quality of the teachers, modestly paid anywhere in the world.

So what should you expect from the dough if the hands that made it are shivering?

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