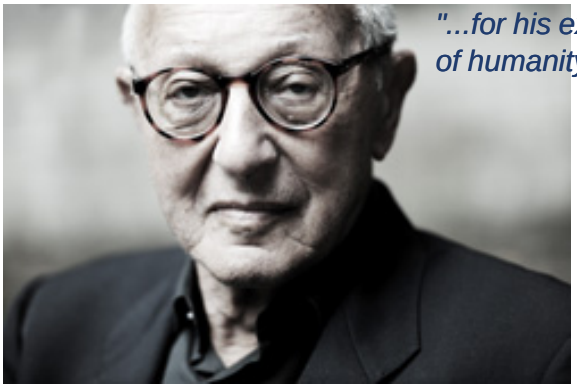
The Right Livelihood Award

for outstanding vision and work on behalf of our planet and its people

Samuel Epstein (USA)

(1998)



"...for his exemplary life of scholarship wedded to activism on behalf of humanity."

Photo: Wolfgang Schmidt

Samuel Epstein was born in England in 1926, graduated as a doctor and rose to work as a consultant pathologist at major institutions and hospitals at London University before emigrating to the US in 1960. He worked at the Children's Cancer Research Foundation and Harvard School of Public Health in Boston from 1960 to 1970, and then as "Distinguished Professor" at Case Western Reserve
University in Cleveland. In 1976 he took a position of Professor of Occupational and Environmental Medicine at the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois in Chicago, where he is now emeritus.

Epstein has emerged as a leading international authority on the causes and prevention of cancer by identifying and preventing avoidable exposures to carcinogens in consumer products, air, water, and the work place, on which he has conducted extensive basic and applied scientific research.

He has authored or co-authored 15 books and over 250 scientific articles.
His best-known book, *The Politics of Cancer* (1978), won the Notable Book and other Awards, an updated edition was published in October 1998.

Epstein has received numerous awards from academic, environmental and public policy organizations, and has frequently broadcast on radio and TV nationally and internationally. Epstein has also played a leading role in professional societies. He has also acted as a consultant and advisor on legislation to a number of leading Congressional committees.

In February 1992, he released a national policy statement "Losing the Winnable

War Against Cancer" on the 20th anniversary of President Nixon's launch of "the war against cancer". This statement, endorsed by 60 leading cancer scientists, emphasized the overall increase in incidence over previous decades, and also their avoidable causes. Out of this initiative was born the Cancer Prevention Coalition (CPC). This has a comprehensive strategy of outreach, education and advocacy to
establish prevention as the top cancer policy in the USA and internationally. In this respect, CPC has developed a variety of educational and advocacy programmes on national and international levels.

By informing consumers, through such publications as *The Safe Shopper's Bible*, co-authored by Epstein, which evaluates some 3,500 consumer products and putting pressure on legislators, CPC is seeking to remove the environmental causes of cancer and thereby prevent it. The long-term objective of CPC is to win the war against cancer by reducing modern epidemic cancer rates to their pre-1940 levels.

Quotation

"We are losing the war against cancer. The prohibition of new carcinogenic products, reduction of toxins in use, and right-to-know laws - these are among the legislative proposals which could reverse the cancer epidemic."

Samuel Epstein