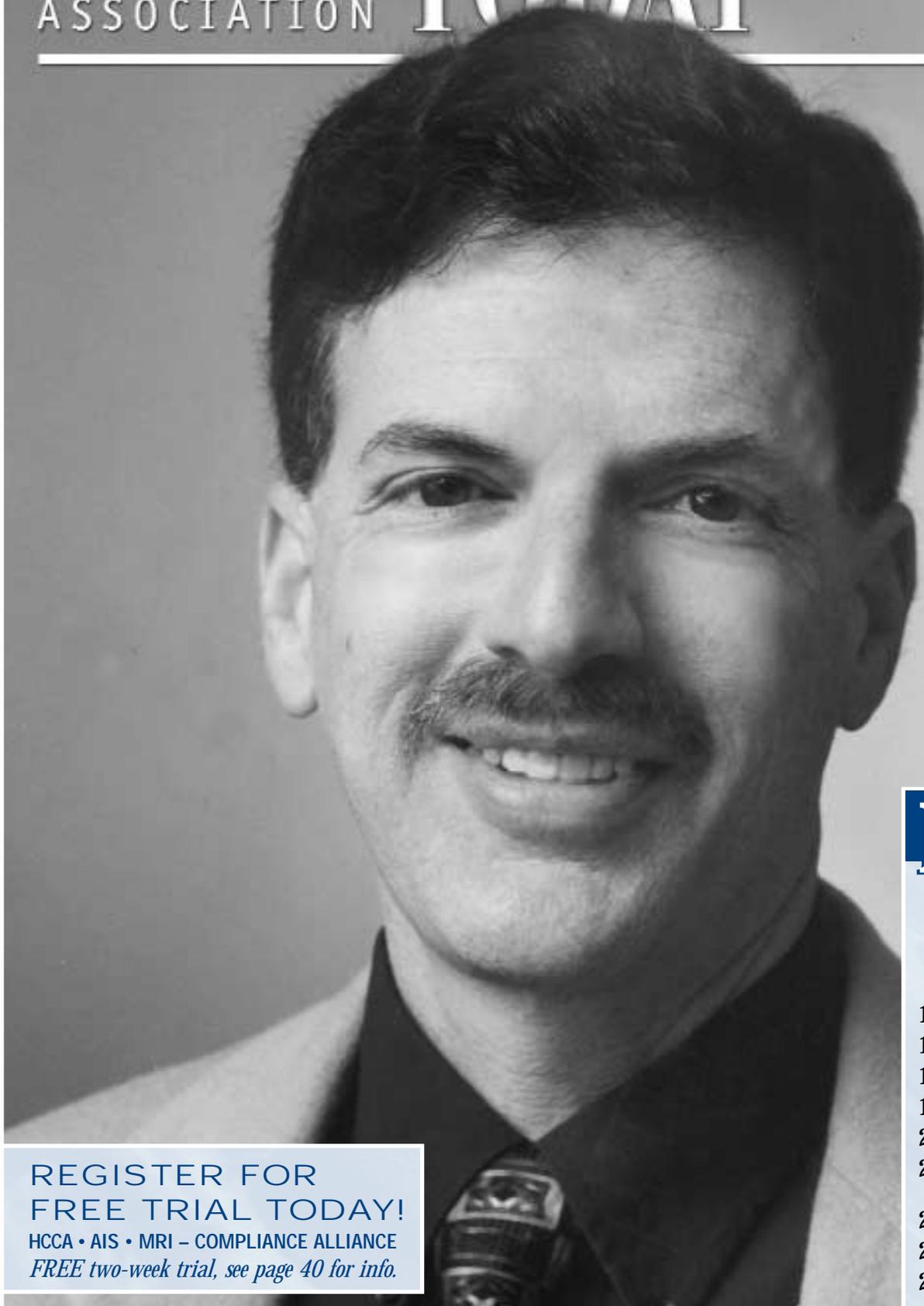


HCCA
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COMPLIANCE TODAY

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Interview
with
Rory
Jaffe



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Letter from the CEO

ROY SNELL

Another war started last night

There is endless debate about the reason why we are at war. Who is right and who is wrong? What is the root of the problem? I am going to stay away from this controversy because frankly, I like my job. As is often the case however, there are interesting regulatory and compliance stories in most everything. The root of problems in some countries may be the limited number of democratically created regulations and the lack of commitment to all elements of a compliance program. Amazingly there is an interesting lesson here on the impact of regulations and leadership's support or lack of support for each element of a compliance program.

Regulations help ensure free speech. Regulations help level the playing field for business. Regulations help ensure people are treated equally and fairly. However, there are problems with regulations. Democracy and compromise is a messy business. Regulations can sometimes be vague, numerous, and have unintended consequences—particularly when they are put together in a collaborative process. Conversely the development of regulations in an autocratic environment can result in fewer and clearer but catastrophically ineffective regulations. Even with their warts, democratically-regulated countries seem to be an attractive alter-

native to autocratically-regulated countries.

Interestingly enough, components of compliance programs can be found in all societies. Dictatorship's education programs are so effective that some would argue it borders on brainwashing. Policies and procedures that support the dictatorship are understood and obeyed by the civilian population. Dictatorships have very effective auditing and monitoring programs to look for citizens that are not following the policies. Discipline and enforcement are legendary. The key to the success is leadership's support.

One shortfall of a dictator's compliance program is the lack of independent and fair investigations of wrongdoing. The key shortfall, however, is that individuals who use the anonymous reporting mechanism often disappear. This can cause others to be reluctant to use the anonymous reporting mechanism. Compliance programs can be used for good or evil. The real valuable lesson here is that leadership's support for the compliance program can make a big difference.

Regulations can be vague, numerous, and have unintended negative consequences. Compliance programs take some effort to implement. You can argue all day about the negative impact of regulations and compliance programs, but the alternatives are not too appealing. Leadership must get behind compliance for it to be successful. Regulations are the bricks of an effective society and compliance is the mortar. They are both worth the time and effort. ■

An advertisement for HCCA's 39-minute audio-training program. The image shows a CD case, a CD, and several documents. One document is titled "Individual & Small Group Physician Compliance: What every physician should know". Another document is titled "COMPLY COMPLIANCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES".

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