

13702 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

"On the question of cardiovascular mortality due to tolbutamide and phenformin, we consider that the UGDP trial has raised suspicions that cannot be dismissed on the basis of other evidence presently available.

"We find most of the criticisms levelled against the UGDP findings on this point unpersuasive. The possibility that deaths may have been allocated to cardiovascular causes preferentially in the groups receiving oral therapy exists, and, in view of the 'nonsignificance' of differences in total mortality, some reservations about the conclusion that the oral hypoglycemics are toxic must remain. Nonetheless, we consider the evidence of harmfulness moderately strong. The risk is clearly seen in the group of older women * * *.

Whether it affects all subgroups of patients cannot be decided on the basis of the available data, owing to the small number of deaths involved in these subgroups."

In conclusion, we consider that in the light of the UGDP findings, it remains with the proponents of the oral hypoglycemics to conduct scientifically adequate studies to justify the continued use of such agents.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO ORAL HYPOGLYCEMIC DRUGS

In addition to the Biometric Society report, other information has become available recently.