

tion effort might be equally for the successful transfer of any new information on drugs, the achievement of appropriate behavior change in the use of the drugs in question, or improvement in compliance with therapeutic regimens which is today such a serious problem. A case in point would be the implementation of the drug-use changes warranted by the results of the coronary drug project or indeed the implementation of any new beneficial or adverse drug information.

Some of these same social marketing techniques should be applied before major fundamental procedural changes are promulgated in the drug area, such as the requirement for patient package inserts for all prescription drugs. For unless this is required, neither society or policymakers will have any way of knowing whether a desirable end is achieved by a new policy.

In summary, I have attempted to describe for you the difficulties inherent in the communication process, and the techniques necessary to bring about successful technology, and appropriate behavior change on the part of health professionals and the public.

It is clear that we are not doing this job well today. And it is equally clear that information alone, or a seminar report, or a scientific article, or a study report, or a drug bulletin, or a press release, or a regulation, or a warning alone, are not enough. The technique of social marketing does not share Government's apparent confidence that the public or health professionals care to listen, and to act on what they hear. Rather, the practitioners of social marketing assume just the opposite, that both are bombarded with a surfeit of messages day and night, and they will resolutely ignore all but the most carefully crafted and persuasively conveyed communications which attract their attention.

It is high time for all of us concerned about the health care system to acknowledge the clear truth of that assumption. There are many illustrations of the bankruptcy of a passive communications policy.

Mr. GORDON. Dr. Simmons, what you are talking about is not just the transfer of technology, as I see it, but a method of changing beliefs and values, also.

Do you see any possible dangers if the Government uses these techniques to influence the public's attitudes and behavior?

Dr. SIMMONS. There is always a potential danger, Mr. Gordon, in these techniques in the hands of all who would use them. Clearly, that has to be recognized. And that has been recognized in instances where social marketing has been used before.

In our society, where it is obvious to many groups as to what goes on. I believe that you can bring about the necessary controls and necessary watching of this kind of a system by Government. The point I wish to make is that there are some important ends that society is trying to reach through the actions of its Government. Just about every major government in the world uses communication differently than we do. The Government itself does. They use it because they feel the societal ends to be gained are appropriate to use the communication channels that way. I believe there are instances here in our society where that same exists.

Mr. GORDON. How can we guard against abuses?