

Dr. SIMMONS. Well, I think by the very openness of the process that we work through in our society. There is a press. There are critics. There is the ability to speak out, the opportunity to comment. There are divergent views that can be brought to anybody's message. I believe those are the safeguards in this system. Clearly, it is important.

Mr. GORDON. Is there any greater danger if the Government uses these techniques than if large corporations use them?

Dr. SIMMONS. Well I think there are advantages to both entities using these techniques. Clearly, a businessman who has a product to sell has to let somebody know about that product. As you know, that is not only small business but big business has to do that. The Government also has messages that have to be made known. So, clearly, it should have use of that technology also. But they are certainly both appropriate, both warranted.

Mr. GORDON. I have a rather interesting example here. It is an example where the techniques you advocate have been used in what, I am sure, you would regard as contrary to the public interest. Here is a release from the Pontotoc and Pottawatomie County Medical and Pharmaceutical Group. It is for immediate delivery and here it is.

Generic Drug Substitution supporters are few and far between now in Oklahoma's Pontotoc and Pottawatomie Counties.

Through the month of February, local physicians and pharmacists ran an extensive advertising campaign to see if they could affect public opinion about the question and generate enough tangible evidence of this opinion to defeat a substitution bill currently pending in the Oklahoma Senate.

Wheeler reported that the first survey showed that in Shawnee * * * that is in Pottawatomie County test city—

* * * over 38 percent of those questioned had heard about generic substitution, and of these, 52 percent were for substitution, the majority of this group indicating that they thought substitution would "help the elderly and make drugs generally less expensive". The survey indicated that 32 percent were against the question and 15 percent had no opinion.

What happened was that the industry that they brought in conducted a campaign using techniques that you mentioned, and here is an official quoting.

We were surprised at the large percentage of people in both cities who had heard about substitution and had fairly definite opinions one way or the other. It would have been much easier to start with the majority being uninformed * * * we now recognized that our campaign had to not only implant an opinion but also to change existing opinions.

What are the results of this campaign?

Wheeler said that well over 2,000 cards and letters of protest were received by the legislators who represented these counties.

In addition to generating what we feel is more than enough tangible evidence of opinion, our second survey showed the campaign did an exceptional job of changing public opinion.

And it certainly did. For example, before the campaign, 54 percent heard about the problem and 89 percent afterward. There was a 35 percent change in one area after the survey. Then for substitution, 43 percent, and 38 percent against it. But after the campaign, 16 percent was for it and 84 percent against it. In other words, there was a change of 46 percent. And in another area there