

14730 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

STATEMENT TO THE U.S. SENATE: SENATOR GAYLORD NELSON

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JOHN W.D. HENDERSON, M.D., OTTAWA, CANADA

Gentleman:

It is a pleasure to appear before you today to explain (as best I can) the history and the rationale of the changes in amphetamine controls imposed within the borders of Canada, and the effect they have had on amphetamine use in our country - at least in terms of amphetamines of legal origin.

As outlined in Table I Designated drugs in Canada: manufactured or imported 1967-1976 and Designated drugs: exported 1967-1976 you may see that amphetamine (which covers both the racemic form sometimes known as benzedrine and dextroamphetamine sometimes known as dexedrine) were previously imported into Canada in fairly large amounts. For example in 1969 nearly 750 kilograms or nearly 1630 pounds of amphetamine were imported. None of this particular group was manufactured.

In the year 1970 the amount imported had dropped to 536.7 kilograms. One would like to think that this modest drop was the result of the beginning realization among physicians- as the result of an educational program that the use of amphetamines in medicine needed some degree of discrimination, and that attempts were being made to discourage the prescribing of these substances for other than genuine medical conditions. By 1971 however the importations had risen again. Whether this was because of stock-piling in the light of "rumblings" that control measures were about to be taken, or whether because of a return to more liberal prescribing, or a combination of both, remains uncertain.

However in the Spring of the year 1972, the then Minister of National Health and Welfare Mr. John Munro rather unexpectedly declared in Parliament that amphetamines and a number of related drugs defined specifically as