

Senator BEALL. I notice on page 12 you were talking about "physicians and pharmacists"—but more importantly, physicians—"physicians are distributing these potent drugs as if they were popcorn."

Dr. SILVERMAN. Physicians and pharmacists, Mr. Chairman?

Senator BEALL. All right.

Dr. SILVERMAN. This is another factor that intensifies the problem.

Senator BEALL. I read your testimony. But is the implication that physicians are distributing them so freely because they are not aware of their effects or because they just are anxious to distribute them?

Dr. SILVERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I do not know the reasons for their actions. All I know is what their actions are. They are distributing them with or without prescriptions.

Senator BEALL. With respect to the drugs we are discussing, is the situation such that they require a prescription in the United States for some of them but do not require a prescription elsewhere? Is that right?

Dr. SILVERMAN. No, sir. They require a prescription in the United States. And in most of the Latin countries, there are laws saying that they also require a prescription. It has been the feeling of my associates and myself that with the probable exception of the morphine alkaloids and a few other drugs, you can obtain any prescription drug that you want in almost any Latin American country with or without a prescription.

Senator BEALL. You can get a prescription drug without a prescription in a Latin American country?

Dr. SILVERMAN. Yes, sir.

Senator BEALL. Would improved drug information remedy the situation?

Dr. SILVERMAN. We would hope it would, yes, sir.

Senator BEALL. Why would it? Is that the most effective way to remedy the situation in South America?

Dr. SILVERMAN. I think it is one of the requirements. The information that goes to physicians, in our mind, is inadequate. The pharmacists, who also prescribe and dispense, have even less information available.

Senator BEALL. As a practical matter, although these drugs are made in the United States, this is a marketing practice of the drug companies. Is that correct?

Dr. SILVERMAN. These drugs may or may not be made in the United States.

Senator BEALL. Well, as a practical matter, to what extent do we have the authority to require manufacturers here or elsewhere to provide information outside the United States?

Dr. SILVERMAN. To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Chairman, there are no laws in the books which would control what a drug company based in this country must say to physicians in a foreign country.

Dr. LEE. Mr. Chairman, following the hearings of this committee in 1967 and 1968 on chloramphenicol, with widespread publicity to the public, the use of chloramphenicol declined dramatically in the United States. The laws regarding the promotion of chloramphenicol were not changed. The behavior of physicians, however, changed dramatically as the information about the adverse effects of the drug was