

the World Health Organization, particularly to the office for the Western Hemisphere Region, the Pan American Health Organization.

Fifth, the FDA should be asked to review its authorities and report to the Congress what measures, including new legislative authority, might be taken to restrict the use of critically important antibiotics, such as chloramphenicol, to those patients where its use is essential.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me join with Dr. Silverman and commend you, Senator Nelson, and other members of this committee, and the committee staff, particularly Mr. Ben Gordon, for again bringing to the attention of the Congress and the American people a serious problem related to the promotion, marketing, prescribing, dispensing and use of drugs that poses a very real hazard to our health.

Thank you.

Senator BEALL. Thank you, Dr. Lee. I appreciate your suggestions because it seems to me that your suggestions are very reasonable and very practical. This is more than just a local problem as far as we in the United States are concerned. This does appear to be something that will have to be handled through international organizations and certainly something that deserves high priority and consideration in those international organizations.

Dr. LEE. We have an expert on that on my right.

Mr. GORDON. Dr. Lee, Dr. Silverman found that the oral contraceptives were not promoted properly in Latin America and no notice was given about blood clotting and so forth. Do you have any comments to make on that?

Dr. LEE. Yes; it poses a very great problem for the women who receive those drugs. It poses a problem for the physicians who prescribe the drug who may really be unaware of the hazard. As we have learned in the United States, as physicians became aware of the hazard here, and as the general public became aware of it, thanks to, among others, this committee and Morton Mintz of the Washington Post, the use of oral contraceptives dropped dramatically, and people were able to make choices. I think the same choices ought to be available to physicians and to patients in Latin America who receive oral contraceptives, because otherwise they are exposed to undue risks.

Mr. GORDON. Well, my understanding from your testimony is that it really is not a Latin American problem, but it is a world problem because it does affect us here, too.

Dr. LEE. Absolutely.

Mr. GORDON. So the U.S. Government is concerned to some extent. Is that not right?

Dr. LEE. Yes; the Government should be concerned because any American traveler to Mexico may develop diarrhea and may go to a physician or a pharmacist and get a prescription for chloramphenicol without being aware that it is chloramphenicol. The same thing can happen in Spain, the same thing can happen in Egypt where chloramphenicol is the drug of choice for fevers of unknown origin. It can happen almost anywhere in the world.

Senator BEALL. I think you have provided an answer for this committee in that respect, Doctor. I think this committee should write a letter to the Public Health Service suggesting they publish a document—we can do that today—that warns American foreign travelers of the kind of situations they might run into if they get into a foreign