

15416 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Statement, Robert J. Ledogar, 5/27/76 - 2

to say does not rest on any information obtained as a U.N. staff member, nor does it reflect the official views of the United Nations.

There are two sets of problems besetting Latin America with respect to pharmaceutical products. The first affects the urban middle and upper classes for the most part, and it is a problem of excessive consumption of pharmaceutical products under unnecessarily hazardous conditions. Those who can afford it may buy almost any non-narcotic drug without prescription (despite a statement on the label which says that the drug is for sale by prescription only), and the labelling and advertising of such products, generally speaking, carry fewer warnings and claim more extensive healing powers than is permitted for the same product in the United States or Western Europe. Examples of such labelling and advertising are given in my book, as well as in the works of Drs. Silverman and Lee.

The second and more serious problem is that of the low-income majority of Latin Americans who, for the most part, do not consume pharmaceuticals in great quantity because those products which are available are too expensive and/or unsuited to their needs. 72% of Brazilians, for example, die before the age of 50; 10% of them die before their first birthday. Communicable and endemic diseases aggravated by malnutrition are the main causes of such deaths. What Brazil, like most other countries of Latin