

COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY 15485

ANN ARBOR, MICH., May 31, 1976.

Senator GAYLORD NELSON,
Chairman, Senate Subcommittee on Monopoly, Select Committee on Small Business, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR NELSON: In the May 26-27 hearing on Promotion and Labeling of Drugs in Latin America, the Warner-Lambert Company's Annual Meeting of May 1972 was frequently mentioned. Among other references to the meeting, Mr. George Squibb testified that "It would seem that as a matter of policy, if the question were effectively put, no Board of Directors of a responsible American pharmaceutical house in this day and age of sensitivity to consumer criticism would ever knowingly permit its companies' products to be marketed under double or deceptive standards or in anyway whatsoever that would involve extraordinary risk to the public in any part of the world." He was then asked how he would explain the Warner-Lambert Company's 97 percent "No" vote in the annual meeting even after Dr. Lewis and Dr. Burach had informed them of the medical realities of the issue, particularly the case of the Parke Davis Company's Chloromycetin labeling in many countries abroad which contrasted so strikingly with the United States label. As I recall, Mr. Squibb replied that he could not imagine that such a thing could happen, that it could only have happened if the Directors were not really aware of the issue and thus did not understand the problem.

Since I had attended the Annual Meeting of Warner-Lambert, spoken with Mr. Weirunga and Dr. Hodges, President and Vice President for Research for Parke Davis which is part of the Warner-Lambert Company, after the meeting, and had knowledge of the aftermath of the meeting in relation to Chloromycetin labeling abroad, I thought I could clarify the issue of what went on from the viewpoint of my own experience at least and that my account would serve as an example of United States drug company labeling and promotion abroad and of efforts to change labeling of one drug as well as shed light on some of the testimony given in this hearing.

Mr. Judah Sommer, minority counsel of the Subcommittee, suggested that I write a letter to the Subcommittee to be entered into the record of the testimony of the 27th. Dr. Myron Wegman, who testified on the 26th, had already entered into the record our—my husband's and mine—documentation of Parke-Davis Chloromycetin labeling in Spain. Attached is the list of that documentation that Dr Wegman entered into the testimony on May 26th and that also documents this account. It would be more meaningful if the documentation could immediately follow this account at the end of the May 27th testimony.

Mr. Benjamin Gordon originally asked my husband or me to testify but we decided that Dr. Wegman's testimony would be more valuable.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. ALVIN F. ZANDER.

c. to Mr. Ben Gordon.

Address until June 19: % Mr. Ed Bordin, Rte. 3 Idlewood Beach, Holland, Mich. 1-616-335-9872.

STATEMENT OF MRS. ALVIN F. ZANDER

Our daughter died of aplastic anemia in January 1972 after having been given a medicine by a physician in Spain for a minor ailment, which medicine we believe, was the most likely cause of her death.

Shortly after her death it was called to our attention that Parke Davis Chloromycetin labels in Spain and other countries did not carry warnings that possibly fatal aplastic anemia might follow its use and listed many more indications for use, some trivial than the United States label. A letter we wrote to the Parke Davis Company inquiring if this were a fact and, if so, what were the reasons justifying it, elicited no reply. When we learned that Warner-Lambert's Annual Meeting had on the agenda a proposal by the Project on Corporate Responsibility and forced onto the agenda by the Federal Trade Commission, that labels abroad should be the same as the FDA-approved labels in the United States, we decided that I should attend the meeting.

Dr. Lewis and Dr. Burach and others did speak at the meeting attended by the Board of Directors about what inadequate labeling abroad actually meant in terms of death and suffering. I recall one of these doctors stating that a recent study on incidence of fatal aplastic anemia after taking chloramphenicol