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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
HEALTH POLICY PROGRAM
1326 THIRD AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94143

February 28, 1977

Senator Gaylord Nelson
Chairman, U.S. Senate
Small Business Committee
424 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

I am sure you will recall that, with a number of my colleagues, I was pleased to respond to your invitation and to testify before the Subcommittee on Monopoly in May of 1976 on the manner in which global pharmaceutical companies were labeling and promoting their products to physicians in Latin America.

As based on what many of these companies were stating to Latin American physicians in 1973 editions of standard reference volumes, this was the situation:

1. In most instances, the Latin American claims for the values of these products were grossly exaggerated.

2. In most instances, the warnings, contraindications, and potential serious or lethal adverse reactions were minimized, glossed over, or totally ignored.

3. Regardless of the protestations of the companies that they were fulfilling their ethical and moral responsibilities, and were not violating any laws in the Latin American countries involved, most were actually breaking national laws in at least four of those countries.

I am now glad to respond to your request to bring this information up to date.

Within the first three weeks after your hearings, the findings of our study were extensively reported in major newspapers, radio, and television throughout Latin America. Various Latin American embassies in Washington, D.C., requested additional information, which we were happy to furnish. On June 16, in London, the United States delegation to the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Associations (IFPMA) urged standardized labeling and promotion of drug products, worldwide, with disclosure of hazards.