

Seconol. The importance of this is that recognizing the dangers of Seconol and most of the other barbiturates, the Justice Department has scheduled them in schedule II, and that has resulted in a substantial decrease in the prescribing of the drugs, in the emergency room visits occasioned by the use of the drug, and a lesser but important decrease in the deaths due to some of these drugs. In comparing something like Darvon to something such as Seconol in schedule II, it really points out that schedule II is able to have an important impact by decreasing prescribing of the drug.

Senator NELSON. Did you have handy, or did you put in your petition, I do not recall it, what happened in the prescription of amphetamines, when they were put on schedule II?

Dr. WOLFE. This is in the original petition.

On page 14 of the DEA (Department of Justice) petition, we looked at amphetamines, Quaalude and Seconol, and some others, to see what happened within 1 year of their being put into schedule II.

They experienced a 50 percent, 52 percent, and 47.6 percent fall in prescriptions, respectively, and by the end of 3 years, there was a decrease of approximately 75 percent.

In other words, only about a quarter or less of the prescriptions that had been written before scheduling, were written within several years afterward, so that at least as one of the alternative proposals that we have made to the Justice Department, or the HEW for controlling the drug, moving Darvon into schedule II would cause a major decrease in prescribing, and, therefore, in emergency room visits and deaths.

All of these have gone down somewhat since they have been put on schedule II.

Senator NELSON. Let me ask a question. On page 8 of your petition, you make reference to some 1,200 deaths reported by the Drug Abuse Warning Network from July 1973, to September 1975.

Dr. WOLFE. That was a study commissioned by the Justice Department. It is page 8 of the testimony.

Senator NELSON. I am puzzled about this 26-month period. Was that a selection of that period by you, or was that the study period done by Justice?

Dr. WOLFE. You are talking about page 6 of the petition to the Justice Department?

Senator NELSON. Yes.

Dr. WOLFE. There was a study commissioned by the Justice Department looking at those drugs associated with fatalities in parts of the country, about a third of the country, related to Darvon. This is their study, not ours.

Senator NELSON. That is the 26-month period they select themselves?

Dr. WOLFE. Yes.

Senator NELSON. Do not the statistics now indicate a reduction in the deaths from use of propoxyphene, if you take it by the quarter in 1978?

Dr. WOLFE. Well, not really.

On the bottom of page 4 of the testimony today, I go into that.

Let me just read these two sentences, and then answer your question as to why it appears that there may have been a decrease.