

different from the other witnesses and from most of what else I have read—that it would be worthwhile taking a look at his testimony and the methodology he used in reaching his conclusion.

Commissioner KENNEDY We certainly will examine that testimony when we obtain the transcript if only for the purpose of correcting the record on the point of his correspondence with the Food and Drug Administration Mr. Chairman, which hurt me a little because we were not really casual with his mail as he said we were.

Senator NELSON. Maybe the Post Office was at fault.

Commissioner KENNEDY No, no, he forgets the answers.

I would like to make one more point about the pattern of deaths, but first one thing that you said in your comments, Mr. Chairman.

There is something else about west coast data and that is although it pains me a bit to say so, suicide is more frequent on the west coast than it is on the east coast.

If you look at the large cities that report out DAWN data, the big leaders in suicides are all out there—San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles are all cities in which the suicide rates are higher than they are in eastern cities and the differences are significant—60 percent.

Anybody extrapolating accidental or intentional death data from there is going through an entire population, may be extrapolating from figures that are different from the ones that somebody on this coast would use.

Senator NELSON. But on that point, I do not know that he listed the cities he samples, but if in fact he was using west coast cities then that would support his testimony, since he concluded the largest percentage was accidental and not suicides.

Commissioner KENNEDY. Not arguing with his testimony, Mr. Chairman, just making a point that if one tries to go from DAWN data to estimates of death for the entire Nation which I took it he was doing, that is when he gave you the 3,000 or 4,000 figure, there is a reason quite independent of accidental deaths why somebody from the Pacific coast would give you 3,000 and somebody from the Atlantic coast would give you 1,600 or 2,000, that is all. It has to be factored in.

Senator NELSON. I do not know what cities he used, and I do not want to try to judge from his testimony anyway. He was, however, not coming up with statistics that supported the proposition that most of the deaths were intentional. He was coming up with statistics that argued otherwise.

Commissioner KENNEDY. I understand. There is another point about the distribution of deaths from the DAWN data and again, let me emphasize they are from the DAWN data and that has to do with an analysis by age groups and I think, Mr. Chairman, since we have covered most of the material before here in our colloquy I will move to the middle of page 9 and make two points about physicians and deaths.

Here, you have been given an age distribution both of which mention are not quite the same as prescriptions written but almost the same; that is, there are mentions by physicians of having arranged that a patient get a drug, whether they are actual prescriptions written or by the patient being told to refill or to take more, but they would be approximately proportional to the prescriptions.