

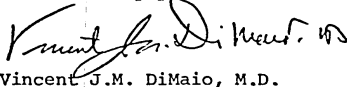
COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY 17003

Part of the "epidemic" of propoxyphene deaths being reported is that until fairly recently, many toxicology labs were deficient in their ability to detect propoxyphene. Therefore, such deaths were being missed for many years. Some of such cases, in which the propoxyphene was taken intravenously, were considered morphine deaths.

I am afraid that I also doubt your contention in Page 2 of your letter to Mr. Califano that propoxyphene was associated with more deaths than heroin-morphine in the first half of 1977. While methods of detection of propoxyphene are now readily available and used by toxicology labs, many of these labs are unable to detect morphine in the blood, thus they will miss rapid deaths from either morphine or heroin injections. If so, and some propoxyphene is found, it is possible that they may attribute such deaths to propoxyphene, rather than to morphine.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Vincent J.M. DiMaio, M.D.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vincent J.M. DiMaio, M.D.

VJMD/aw

cc/Joseph Califano