

drug vis-a-vis a placebo. The medical department wanted it to be a research of that drug versus the efficacy of another drug versus the placebo, and the company wasn't willing to fund that. Is that normal practice in asking that research be done?

Dr. MAGEE. This happens, and judging by the literature, it happens quite often. I can remember several years ago when I was teaching pharmacology in antibiotics, in answer to a request I sent to a company which produced a new antibiotic, they sent me a reprint of an experiment or a test rather.

There were 20 patients with pneumococci pneumonia, and they were treated with the new drug. Eighteen of them got better. Now I of course wanted to know, to evaluate this, how many of them would have gotten better if they had been given penicillin instead of the new drug. Maybe all 20 of them would have recovered with penicillin.

Mr. GORDON. The study did not demonstrate its effectiveness vis-a-vis another drug?

Dr. MAGEE. No, this is very rare, very rare indeed, and of course this is what the teacher wants. It is also what the practitioner needs.

Mr. GORDON. How do you know if the patients wouldn't have gotten better if they got nothing?

Dr. MAGEE. Well, they might of untreated pneumococcal pneumonia, which is a disease which lasts 7 or 8 days. With antibiotics it can be stopped in 2 or 3 days, which is what they did.

Senator NELSON. Doesn't the fact that the comparative studies you were just referring to as to the effectiveness of one drug versus another drug, and that those studies are rare, an indication that there is a substantial gap in the type of research studies that we are doing in this country on drugs?

Dr. MAGEE. Yes, it does indicate that.

Senator NELSON. Do you have any ideas as to how that deficiency ought to be remedied so that the information can be available for the prescribing physician?

Dr. MAGEE. As was indicated this morning, I think that some organization, be it the FDA or the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association or the pharmacists ought to be interested in comparison of the worth of drugs. As I indicated earlier, I don't believe that there is any justification at all for a new drug on the market which is not as efficacious as drugs which already exist.

Senator NELSON. How is that going to be accomplished unless you have some independent organization perform tests? I don't suppose anybody would expect to rely upon any party that had an interest in the outcome.

Dr. MAGEE. No. I think it would be most reliably done if it were carried out by an independent organization, but I think it probably also could be done if let's say the drug companies themselves as a body set up some sort of testing agency, these competing companies as a body might conceivably run their own comparative testing program.

I doubt very much that this would be done, because of course it would mean that the products of some companies would go by the wayside, but I was thinking of something in the nature of a pharmaceutical better business bureau. The usual better business bureau is paid for and sponsored by the businesses in the community. Its pur-