

refers to a name approved by the FDA. Since most people still use the term "generic" I will do so in the remainder of this testimony.

Our older drugs have simple, clear, and useful generic names. These include: Morphine, codeine, insulin, barbitol, reserpine, and atropine.

Senator NELSON. May I interrupt a moment?

Dr. GARB. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. Why did the older drugs have simple, clear, and useful generic names and new drugs do not?

Dr. GARB. I will come to this subsequently, but to give a brief answer, I would say that there probably were a combination of two circumstances involved. At one point in the past, the AMA set up certain recommendations about drug names. They were only recommendations, they had no real force, and they involved some rather complicated thoughts about generic names being somewhat similar to chemical names or derivatives of chemical names. The drug manufacturers, following this, developed some very complicated generic names.

It turned out that the development of complicated names, which you can't pronounce and can't remember, tends to push doctors to the use of what I call private product names instead of generic names, and I think that when it was discovered that it worked this way, it was just too advantageous to the manufacturers for them to let it go.

Senator NELSON. What does the word morphine or codeine or insulin or barbitol or reserpine tell a physician that another more complicated generic name does not, or what does a more complicated one tell the physician?

Dr. GARB. Morphine tells the doctor enough to identify the specific drug. Morphine is morphine. Morphine is morphine in Washington, in San Francisco, in London, and Australia. It is the same identical material. Morphine was the same thing in 1900 as in 1967. If we made the name morphine longer or made a longer name for the chemical which we call morphine, it would tell us nothing further. It would tell us nothing that is more useful. It would simply confuse the issue.

Senator NELSON. But the question I am getting at is, supposing you have a chemist who never heard of morphine.

You gave him the chemical name and then you gave him the name "morphine," would he recognize what the chemical name was from reading the word morphine? Does morphine tell you anything as a chemist, or is this simply—

Dr. GARB. No, morphine does not tell a chemist what the chemical structure of morphine is. On the other hand, these long generic names also do not tell the chemist the chemical structure of the molecule.

Senator NELSON. What does any of these generic names tell a chemist or a physician that a trade or brand name doesn't tell him?

Dr. GARB. Are you speaking now of morphine, a simple one like morphine?

Senator NELSON. Any one of them. What does reserpine tell you that Serpasil does not? One is the generic name and one is the brand name.

Dr. GARB. Well, the private product name tells you less, unless you happen to know the code. In effect the private product name that you have just mentioned, Serpasil, can be thought of as a code, which includes the identity of the manufacturer and the official or generic name. But if you happen not to know the code and most people do not know the code, it tells you just about nothing.