

common sense calls for a change in this custom a concerted effort by the medical profession will be necessary to effect such a change.

What method or organization would you suggest be established to provide this type information internationally?

Dr. TAUSSIG. I am very happy to say that last May at the World Health Assembly they said they were attempting to set up some form of international, not necessarily monitoring but advisory system for reporting drugs and for distributing the information, especially warning of dangerous effects. I think the most one would hope to do would be to have an international authority notify health authorities in the various countries that such and such a drug had been found dangerous and had been withdrawn.

It is true of other drugs that have far less serious complications and I have heard from a number of my friends in India that they don't know of these until they are finally published in journals, and the journals reach them, which is quite a lot later, or until travel and exchange of knowledge occurs. I think World Health is working on that particular problem, and I was very happy to hear that they were.

Senator NELSON. On the question of putting the generic name on the prescription, as you state in your testimony, it is not the practice to do so in this country. We have had testimony by distinguished physicians and pharmacologists that it is very important that the generic name be put on the label of the bottle that the patient gets, so that a doctor can check and will know at a subsequent date what is in the bottle.

You said that it will require a concerted effort, as you put it, by the medical profession, to effect such a change. Do you have any opinion as to why the medical profession, through its major organizations, has not already done this, since it is so obviously in the public interest?

Dr. TAUSSIG. No, I don't; except that they are busy with many other things. It has been such a firmly established practice.

I think that I said it will require concentrated effort of the medical society only because of the feeling that it might be impossible to get a law through Congress, and there are so many more important aspects to get into the actual law of the land. Probably it stems from deficiency in the teaching in pharmacology and medical schools and lack of appreciation. Today if an M.D. writes the name of the drug and does not state specifically to have it written on the bottle, it does not appear on the label.

In former days, I think two generations ago, people were not taken into the confidence of the doctors quite as much, and the doctor thought the patients shouldn't know what they were taking. But certainly in our country today we are dealing with a sophisticated public, and in most instances the patients want to know what they are taking, and they have a right to know what they are taking.

It is only occasionally that there is some psychiatric reason why you don't want to put a name on, and it could certainly be allowed, but if it were more generally accepted, I think it still would be a very wise thing. I would be very strongly in favor of feeling that the generic name should be on every bottle of medicine that goes out.

Senator NELSON. As I understand your testimony, you feel that the generic name should appear on every bottle except in a specific case