

where a physician may have a special reason for requesting that it not be done?

Dr. TAUSSIG. Yes. I feel that if there really is good reason, he should have that right, and I think unless you were granted that there would be tremendous opposition, because of the few conditions where it is undesirable for the patient to know the name of the drug.

Senator NELSON. This has been precisely the same testimony that we have had from other distinguished authorities who have appeared before the committee. It still puzzles me why the AMA, the Academy of General Practice, or various professional organizations, have not taken a stand on this and advocated this kind of a practice, which is obviously in the public interest. Thus far we have heard no testimony to indicate that it would be contrary to the public interest.

Dr. TAUSSIG. I think it is in the public interest, and I think in fairness there are some physicians who specifically request it, but unless it is specifically requested when they write it, custom and tradition is such that it does not get on, and occasionally it doesn't get on then.

Senator NELSON. I might say we intend to take further testimony on this issue and hear all viewpoints.

Dr. TAUSSIG. I would back you strongly in saying that we should have the generic name on the bottle, and I say the generic name, because if it is produced under 50 different names, it is very hard to know whether you may not be changing to exactly the very same product you have had before.

Senator NELSON. After we hear further testimony, I intend to have legislation drafted which will require what your testimony and the testimony of other witnesses advocates. I hope that at that time you and many other experts in the field appear in behalf of this kind of legislation.

Dr. TAUSSIG. If I am here and able to, I certainly shall.

Senator NELSON. Now, if there had been this legal requirement that the generic name of the drug be included on the label in the case of thalidomide, is it your judgment that some of these cases of phocomelia would have been avoided?

Dr. TAUSSIG. I would hope so. I think widespread use—I say I would hope so, because we can't dictate what other countries are going to do. That is one of the difficulties, and a widespread variety of names occur in the sale of drugs in other countries as well as here.

Now, I don't know much here—they actually take the others—or they try to produce a better or a somewhat better and slightly different product in the various drug companies here, but it would then still have the basic principles on it, with the generic name on the bottle, so that you would know what it is.

Senator NELSON. As you recite in your testimony, there were 50 to 100 different brand names of thalidomide on the market.

Dr. TAUSSIG. Yes.

Senator NELSON. In South America there were five when they didn't think there were any. My question is, if the practice all over the world was to include the generic name might we have avoided tragedy?

Dr. TAUSSIG. If the practice was all over the world, yes; and even also if the people got suspicious and wished to know what they were taking when they bought drugs in other countries that they bring