

to know if it was safe. It has been a very bitter bone of contention between the pharmaceutical houses and the FDA. They say if it is all right in other countries why is it not sold in our country? Why is it not safe? Is that not a good enough clinical test?

I think thalidomide showed it was not a very good clinical test.

Senator HATFIELD. In other words, a drug manufactured in country S cannot be imported into this country for direct distribution to a consumer?

Dr. TAUSSIG. I do not know.

Senator HATFIELD. It has to be through a drug house, a pharmaceutical house, which in turn comes under the control of FDA; is that correct?

Dr. TAUSSIG. I would have to look up the law. I do not know whether drug manufacturers can sell directly over here. He must have some company that represents him over here, and I think once he is represented here, I think so, but I would ask you to check that to be sure of the law in this problem.

Senator NELSON. You mentioned some time back the concern World Health Organization has expressed about the shipping of out-of-date drugs. Can you of your own knowledge give us any specific cases, and if not, does the World Health Organization have on file specific cases of drugs that were shipped out of our country which were out of date at the time of shipment, or because of the distance and the problem of distribution were out-of-date before they could be consumed in the receiving country?

Dr. TAUSSIG. I do not know what the World Health Assembly or Organization has on file. I do know that it was repeatedly emphasized that a lot of the countries were receiving outdated or poor medications, and I do know that we are not the worst offenders, but I dislike to think we are or even could be offenders at all.

As regards my own particular experience, I do know of a slightly different experience at the Hospital Amazonica Albert Schweitzer in Pucallpa, which is high in the Andes where Dr. Binder is taking care of a great many of the Indians. It is an extraordinary hospital, and again as most such hospitals is financed on extremely limited funds, and he requested his organization to help get some drugs.

When I was there they were trying to treat tuberculosis without any of the modern drugs at all. He told me that they had been sent a shipment of drugs which the drug houses had contributed, and that most of the antibiotics were out of date by the time they reached him. He said, he did not know whether the drugs were potent but they had a date but the expiration date had gone by, by the time that the drug actually reached him. When shipping drugs one should take into consideration the time required for the trip, plus clearing customs, let alone distributing it; in addition one does not use up all drug supplies in a couple of weeks or a month after it gets there, you hope that the drug supply is going to last some time. Dr. Binder could not possibly have offered the drug to other hospitals in the region, because he did not want to offer to other hospitals drugs that he thought were bad and that he knew were out of date.

Senator NELSON. How did he know they were out of date?

Dr. TAUSSIG. Those had an expiration date on them, and the expiration date had gone by, by the time it had reached them.