

or 600 who would die from rickettsial or Salmonella infection. So, I do not think there is any question but what they have done more harm than they have good with Chloromycetin just in this country, and, of course, you get outside of this country and you have an entirely different situation.

Senator NELSON. Thank you.

So, if I understand you correctly, you feel that because of the overprescription of this drug, on balance it has done more damage than it has good. Is that what you are saying?

Dr. WESTON. Well, this is a hard question to answer for this reason. If you have a real bad meningitis and a choice of giving tetracycline or Chloromycetin and you give Chloromycetin, the Chloromycetin will clear that meningitis but the tetracycline would have, too, the chances are.

Now, for me to say categorically that Chloromycetin has done more harm than good would be to eliminate the fact that in the vast majority of cases where Chloromycetin was used, it was used and it cleared up the infection, but another antibiotic could have cleared up the infection without this incidence of untoward effect, so you cannot really answer that question.

Senator NELSON. You are counting the cases where Chloromycetin, chloramphenicol, was used and did effectively clear up the infection without any untoward result.

Dr. WESTON. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. But in the same case, tetracycline or Ampicillin could have done as effective a job without the risks. So in the case where you end up with a serious blood dyscrasia, aplastic anemia, that is a negative effect of the use of chloramphenicol, correct?

Dr. WESTON. If you are going to answer that question affirmatively, yes, that would have to be considered a negative effect of chloramphenicol.

Mr. GORDON. So, on balance, considering the way it is being prescribed today, the conclusion, I think, was that it has done more harm than good; is that correct?

Dr. WESTON. It has done more harm, taking into consideration the fact that another antibiotic may have been used other than chloramphenicol and used as effectively, if not more effectively, than it has good. You cannot rule out the fact that Chloromycetin has cured thousands of cases of meningitis and thousands of strep throats and done it effectively. But, so would have a dozen other drugs.

The California legislation, in its attempt to curb the use of this drug, met with opposition from all segments of the medical community, and this, I think, is important, including public health authorities who indicated that such legislation was only seeking to control medical practice and that such a decision of judgment rested with the physician who could be controlled effectively through means already at their disposal if injudicious medical practice was established.

Now, California has probably one of the most sophisticated systems for doing this.

Such measures are resorted to only when willful gross negligence is evident, and in many States, the only means of doing this is the criminal court, I should say in most States. However, it would appear