

3848 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Fifteen of them in eleven nations were selected by the Task Force for special study--Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, West Germany, and the provincial programs of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Saskatchewan in Canada. Less intensive studies were conducted on the programs in Italy and Switzerland.

All of these nations show wide variations in demographic characteristics, government operations, industrial development, social philosophy, local tradition, and even medical tradition, and certain portions of their health insurance programs may not be suitable for use in the United States. Nevertheless, most of the procedures considered for prescription drug insurance programs in this country have already been tried in one form or another in these foreign programs.

In all of the countries included in the Task Force study--which represent nearly all of the major prescription drug programs in the world--the program is financed by employee or employer contributions, or by voluntary or compulsory participation in various "sickness funds" and insurance plans.