

I asked a doctor who appeared before the committee whether he recognized a few brand names of thalidomide, none of which he recognized, none of which he would be expected to recognize. In the case of thalidomide, long after its harmful effects were known all over the world, it was still in the marketplace in South America and Spain and other places under brand names even though the profession knew it should not have been used. If it had said thalidomide, it wouldn't have been used. And many suspect that it is still on the shelves and in medicine cabinets around the world yet, simply because there is no identification.

Would you advocate the concept that the generic name be required on the label, with the doctor's choice as to whether he wants the brand name on, too?

Dr. MOSER. Yes, sir. I believe that. I think that prescriptions should be so written, unless the physician has a specific desire for the trade name product, based on his own experience or knowledge. And there are a few instances where physicians that I know, certainly feel quite strongly that they want a definite trade name; this product they feel is superior to another. I frequently challenge them to prove it, because often it proves to be more visceral than scientific. But for the most part we do order in generics. Our hospital pharmacist will notify us if someone does order by trade name and the pharmacist does not carry it. He will call the physician and notify him about substituting another drug.

My personal reaction is that we should use generic names, and if you desire to specify a company, it should be put in parentheses next to the generic name on the prescription pad.

I think this would solve the problem of trying to remember hundreds of trade names.

Senator NELSON. Well, Doctor, I want to thank you very much for your very valuable and thoughtful contribution to these hearings. We appreciate your taking time from your activities at Walter Reed Hospital to come here and testify today.

Dr. MOSER. Thank you, sir.

Senator NELSON. Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, at 11:45 a.m. the hearing was adjourned.)