

if, instead of repeating what they have already said so well, I try to draw your attention to an area of equal importance; perhaps even of greater importance.

The relationship that exists between the medical profession and the drug industry is an unhealthy one and in many ways a corrupt one. It is important to remember, however, that it is not only money that has the power to corrupt. Having spent more than six years in the business of influencing doctors and investigators, and some five years as a member of Fellowships and Grants Committee, I can assure you that while large grants and other monetary rewards play an important role, that role is minor relative to other inducements and techniques that can be used to destroy objectivity. An incident that will always remain fresh in my memory will perhaps illustrate the point I wish to make.

Sometime in 1956, when I was still a Medical Director, the lagging sales of one of our products led management to decide that the product needed a boost. The boost took the form of obtaining an endorsement from a physician who was a prominent authority in the field. We knew that the particular physician was being subsidized by another drug company and so management decided that it would be simple for me as Medical Director to "buy" him. I objected since I felt that the doctor was incorruptible and because I felt the product did not deserve endorsement. My business colleagues overruled me and I was left with a blank check to win his favor. I was free to offer him a large grant to support any research of his choice "without strings" or to retain him as a consultant with generous annual compensation. I was quite certain that the doctor would throw me out of his office if I approached him with any of the techniques suggested by my colleagues. They all had the obvious odor of a bribe. I decided, therefore, to use a stratagem that was more likely to be effective and that I thought (at the time) would be easier on my own conscience.

I took the doctor to lunch, and after the usual two Martinis, I told him exactly what had been going on and of my disagreement with my colleagues. In this manner we established a physician-to-physician relationship in which we were both deploring the questionable tactics used by the drug industry. Conversation gradually shifted to the product and, to make a long story short, we got our endorsement almost as a personal favor. My travel expenses and the price of the lunch made up the entire cost to the company.

I recall this out of a hundred similar incidents only because the doctor was, and still is, a highly respected authority. My attitude toward him still is one of profound respect and admiration, since I must confess that the device that gulled him would have fooled me had I been in his place.

We are still human in spite of being physicians. As humans, we are vulnerable to all forms of flattery, cajolery, and blandishments, subtle or otherwise. The drug industry has learned to manipulate this vulnerability with techniques whose sophistication approaches perfection. It was this knowledge that led me to write a letter that appears in the record of the "Humphrey Hearing" (p. 2289). Referring to the methods that can be used to destroy objectivity I said, "Any employee of a drug firm who is worth his salt has an expert's appreciation of their power, a gourmet's taste for their subtleties, and the deft delicate touch that leads the doctor to hang himself." These techniques are used not only by physicians employed by a drug company but also by more experienced detailmen.

I know of no effective way to deal with this type of hanky-panky that goes on every day between the medical profession and the drug industry. It seems impossible to convince my medical brethren that drug company executives and detailmen are either shrewd businessmen or shrewd salesmen, never philanthropists. They make investments, not gifts.

As further evidence of this manipulation of the physician's vulnerability, let me quote from the literature that was uncovered during the thalidomide scandal. A document written by the William S. Merrell Company was sent to "special representatives" before Kevadon (thalidomide) was approved for marketing. It set up minimum goals and objectives, including contacting teaching hospitals and the chiefs and senior members of hospital departments "for the purpose of selling them on Kevadon and providing them with a clinical supply." In the instructions the representatives were told: "Appeal to the doctor's ego—we think he is important enough to be selected as one of the first doctors to use Kevadon in that part of the country" ("Humphrey Hearings," p. 1918). I can assure you that even this simple device will open many doctor's doors.

Let me hasten to add that during my time as Medical Director I worked with many physicians who were incorruptible. Many of them received large