

Dr. ANNIS. Senator, may I ask a question?

Senator NELSON. Surely.

Dr. ANNIS. If this influence is so great, and I have not counted all the antibiotics that compete with chloramphenicol or even all of the broad-spectrum antibiotics, they are all advertised, too—why is this one particular product used in a relatively small, circumscribed area, even to the extent that it is used, in proportion—

Senator NELSON. Chloramphenicol, you mean?

Dr. ANNIS. We have 200 million people in this country, so even in the proportion that they are used, why are not all these other manufacturers of antibiotics equally persuasive in being able to persuade physicians that their product is better?

Senator NELSON. We have had testimony to that effect here and we shall have more. I think you, as a doctor, are quite aware of the fact that there are plenty of your distinguished colleagues who will tell you that doctors frequently prescribe a broad-spectrum antibiotic for sore throat and other such ills.

I have had them prescribed over the phone for my own family, for my kids. The doctor did not look to see if there was an organism involved, of any kind.

There are plenty of doctors who say: Well, a sore throat, this and that, takes a broad-spectrum antibiotic. This goes on extensively and the organism has not been identified, but it is very handy, a broad-spectrum antibiotic, and ready to go.

Dr. ANNIS. Yes; patients will call you up and say I want a shot of penicillin or thus and so. They read the publications that are non-medical oriented, that are not directed to physicians, but only to the consuming public, the women's magazines, the weekly magazines, the monthly magazines and all the rest, including feature articles by science writers and newspapers.

This is not only because of the drug advertising by the drug manufacturer.

Senator NELSON. Many of the articles you talk about are induced by the manufacturers themselves, time after time after time. Some of them are already in the record.¹ The manufacturers get an article written on their drug to popularize it.

That is again part of the influence of the drug industry on the medical profession.

I do not draw any specific, direct conclusion.

Dr. ANNIS. Should we eliminate all advertising, Senator?

Senator NELSON. I think there is a serious question, under all the circumstances, whether the medical journals should accept advertising. I think there is a serious question. If they do, I think there is a very serious question about the kind of advertising they accept.

Dr. ANNIS. If we eliminate from medical journals advertising of drugs—there has been, for many years, a little joke among physicians that they have to buy the Reader's Digest in order to keep up on the latest drugs. Sure enough, a patient will walk in and ask him: How about getting me a prescription for thus and so?

Are you going to propose that such articles also be eliminated?

Senator NELSON. No; I do not think you could eliminate them. The advertising, as I read it and look at it in the journals, time after time,

¹ See article on Indocin (indomethacin) from Pageant magazine, pt. 8, pp. 3177-3181. See also app. V, "The MER-29 Case," pt. 10, pp. 4202-4296.