

STATEMENT OF DR. WILLIAM L. HEWITT, PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

Dr. HEWITT. The purpose of my report is to describe the scientific basis for the judgments reflected in the evaluation of individual products by the drug efficacy study panels of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council and my view of the place of combinations of antibiotics in the rational therapy of infectious diseases. The discussion will consist of the organization of my panel and the characteristics of its membership, the categorical areas which provided evidence as a basis for the evaluations of drug efficacy, and an historical perspective upon the introduction, development, and present usefulness of antibiotic combinations. Some conclusions will be stated which appear justified in the present state of our knowledge as to the present position which the combinations should occupy.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PANEL

I am a professor of medicine at the University of California Medical School, Los Angeles, in charge of the division of infectious diseases. I have the responsibility for teaching medical students and young house staff physicians who for the most part will leave the University Medical Center environment well trained for private practice. The major portion of this teaching is performed at the bedside of sick patients. I also manage a clinical research and training program oriented toward infectious diseases. Lest there be any misunderstanding I would like to emphasize that I am not an ivory tower basic scientist. By training and experience as well as in my research I have been concerned with the study of disease and the methods for its treatment. I have had a practice of my own for 20 years and even to the present rely upon this type of activity for one-third of the income I derive from professional activities. The majority of patients I see result from the requests of medical colleagues who apparently regard me as sufficiently practical and competent to help them with both common as well as unusual or difficult problems of sick people and do not classify me as an isolated scientist pronouncing without benefit of experience. All of these qualifications were the basis for my selection as chairman, as well as the others, of drug efficacy panels dealing with antibacterial agents used for the treatment of infections.

The five members of my panel consisted both of internists concerned with adult medicine and a pediatrician, particularly appropriate since a large volume of antibiotic combinations is prescribed for children. These gentlemen, likewise, were not sitting in libraries writing textbooks and giving lectures to medical students but rather were daily seeing sick patients and caring for their medical and emotional needs. All of us participate liberally in local and national societies, the membership of which consists largely of "general physicians" concerned with both general and specialized medical problems.

We were concerned primarily with the evaluation of the efficacy; as Dr. Kunin has described of drugs such as streptomycin and sulfonamides. And it was these agents which occasioned the cooperation with Dr. Kunin's panel which was concerned with the evaluation of