

Senator LONG. Here is one other thing that major drug companies just love to use as part of their standard selling pitch, and that is if you buy from a small manufacturer, that these small manufacturers have been known to compress their ingredients into tablets so hard that they go right through the body without ever dissolving at all. Do you have information on this subject? How can we know when we are buying an aspirin or some other tablet whether it is going to dissolve in the body?

Dr. ADRIANI. I have seen tablets of inferior grade drugs go through a patient and not be absorbed. But if you license every pharmaceutical firm, and every drug, you will obviate this. And I also advocate in this statement, that if a drug is made by another firm, the packaging firm should label from whom they bought it. Some big manufacturers buy drugs from someone else and then put a brand name on it, and say "we make our own." They may import it from Europe. If you require them to indicate where the drug was made, and who made it, then the patients will know it was repackaged and they gave it a fancy name. Let's take an example and—this is just an example—Equanil. They could import the drug in bulk from some place and give it the name Equanil. If you made them say it was manufactured by such and such a firm or manufactured by the laboratory that dispenses it—Wyeth, I guess—then you will know that that company made it. But you do not know they tell you, "we have factories," when actually they do not have and they may be buying the stuff in other parts of the world.

Senator LONG. So if you make it mandatory that the actual manufacturer be identified, then the person buying the product is much better informed than when he merely knows who put the drug inside the bottle?

Dr. ADRIANI. Yes. For instance, the aspirin in this tablet is USP. If they have in parentheses what company made it, this would tell me where it came from, from Germany or Russia or Czechoslovakia or elsewhere.

I know a doctor that was giving his mother Cortisone for an allergy. She shopped around, and found a product that was being shipped in from Mexico that cost less. She broke out in a rash. This was supposed to relieve her allergy.

He finally said, "what are you taking?"

She said, "I bought this cheaper drug." It was an impure drug imported into the country and she did not know it because the label did not indicate the source.

I am not saying that there isn't such a thing as cheaper drugs at all. But some of these firms that say that I am holier than thou, are not as holy as they tell you. If you make them indicate where and by whom the drug was made, then they could say, I am holier than thou if this be the case.

Senator LONG. Like APC from Russia with love, I would be careful about taking that one, if it is all the same I might prefer to try something else. I wouldn't want to reflect on those people particularly. But people would like to know.

Dr. ADRIANI. I generally feel that people should know.

Senator LONG. I don't know of anybody that would argue much against that.