

tect the abuser and those whom he might harm. What should we do? What kind of social policy should we have?

Senator NELSON. Did I understand you to say——

Mr. BARBER. I should have said child mortality. Accidental ingestion. Aspirin is the largest single cause of child mortality.

Senator NELSON. It is?

Mr. BARBER. Yes.

Senator NELSON. I have never heard that before.

Mr. BARBER. I will try to get the evidence for that if you would like.¹

Senator NELSON. Yes; if you would submit evidence for the record that aspirin is the most frequent cause of child mortality.

Mr. BARBER. That is right. Yes. The drug industry at the present time is working on all kinds of devices for safety; that is, bottles that are extremely hard to remove the caps on, single-dose packaging, things of that sort.

I am not competent at this point to speak to the details of a social policy in this field, but I do wish to say something about its general characteristics. As strongly as I can, I wish to urge that we continue to pursue the present *social-medical policy* that we have toward psychotropic drug abuse and that we avoid turning to the *police-punitive policy* which has been so ineffective, perhaps I might even say so disastrous, with regard to other "dangerous drugs" such as marihuana and heroin.

People who abuse the psychotropic drugs, like those who abuse marihuana and heroin, are sick people, disturbed in their social and psychological functioning, as well as in their physiological functioning. They need the kind of treatment that various kinds of physicians and other socially rehabilitative agencies can give them. We know, of course, that the treatments that are available to them are far from being as effective as we should like them to be. Often, too often, the best they can do is to prevent further harm. But, nonetheless, they are much better than the consequences of a police-punitive policy. A police-punitive policy has little beneficial effect on the disturbed social and psychological functioning of the abusers. And worse, it is a policy that leads to a whole set of harmful secondary consequences for society. Without helping the abusers, we heap on ourselves a new set of troubles.

We get racketeering; we get police brutality and corruption; we often get prostitution and petty crime to acquire money to pay the racketeers their exorbitant prices for the banned drugs; and we get disrespect for the law and for a society which obviously enforces ineffective and unnecessarily harsh laws. If we should mistakenly move to a police-punitive policy with regard to the psychotropic drug abuse, we shall bring upon ourselves the troubles that we had under prohibition and that we now have with our heroin and our marihuana laws.

Please note that a social-medical policy toward abuse of the psychotropic drugs or any other kind of drugs does not mean the abandonment of all controls. Because the psychotropic drugs are dangerous in some measure, as is the abuse of alcohol in probably a greater meas-

¹ Material not received at time of going to press.