

about other prescription drugs. We have had testimony from some distinguished doctors, pharmacologists, who have asserted as much as 50 or 60 percent of the drugs prescribed were unnecessarily prescribed or even, in many cases, prescribed for the wrong purpose.

Now, I have the impression that some of these witnesses on the psychotropics were simply saying, among other things, that a lot of people who are getting these drugs would, in fact, be better off without them. In other words, there is unnecessary prescribing of this type of drug also for many, many people.

Do you have any observations about that?

Dr. MEAD. I think it gets complicated. I agree with you, you know, that our evidence suggests that a great many drugs are prescribed that don't do any good, but I understand from Dr. Modell's analysis of the situation that nothing like the number of useless and poisonous drugs are used today that have been used in the past. That the whole history now of our scientific examination of drugs has been that we are to examine them with far more care, testing them more carefully, and developing drugs that have specific targets and eliminating drugs that are toxic, have dangerous cross effects or side effects, and that are useless.

Now, psychotropic drugs seem to fall in the same class as many other drugs where the purposes or efficacy attributed to them are not as great as it is believed to be, or is still claimed by advertisers at different levels after it has been demonstrated that it isn't useful.

That is a general position with all drugs as we develop and we find drugs we thought were useful are not useful or are dangerous, but if you look at the history of drug use, we are doing much better today than we have ever done before but we have just a large interconnected world with modern methods of diffusion of both the drug and the information so disasters loomed very large.

My only objection, or it isn't so much an objection as what I felt it was necessary to stress, is that in our evaluation of psychotropic drugs we are continually introducing moral judgments that are related to the fact that there is a large element in our culture that believes that whoever is in power, government or the church or a government that is controlled by a large majority of some church, should interfere with other peoples' lives and tell them how they should behave.

This has been going on since the beginning of our history. We passed laws that you couldn't kiss your wife on Sunday or couldn't take a bath in the bathtub in December, we have been systematically interfering with other peoples' lives, and where there is a difference of opinion in the country we have pressure groups which have intruded into wherever there was authoritative process.

I think the most dangerous thing where this has occurred, even more dangerous than prohibition, and prohibition began the breakdown of many of our urban controls of order, but even more than this is the breakdown over marihuana. In the past although the adults, a large number of adults, used certain things that were disapproved of by other members of the society, tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, and the children were not allowed to use them, nevertheless the children were told "When you grow up, when you are old enough, you can use them." The little boy who smoked corn silk tobacco in the barn and got a hiding for it or even got sent away to military school, nevertheless