

the student actually had to make some kind of an effort to get in, even if it meant walking to the post office, but nonetheless he had to pick it up.

There is no question that many of the gifts are of significant educational value to medical students, and they consequently accept them readily. The black bags, stethoscopes, and other equipment are also accepted since they represent items which otherwise would have to be purchased by students with limited incomes—made more limited by a 8.5-percent prime rate, a failing guaranteed loan program and the imminent danger of decreased funds from Health Professions Act loan program—and rapidly increasing education and living expenditures. The vast majority of students I have spoken with do not feel they are compromising their professional ethics by accepting gifts that are educational or utilitarian in nature.

The issue of gratuities, however, has now been raised and there will be an increasing number of students who will be forced to more carefully define their own ethics in the context of the arguments being raised by their smaller number of students. There probably will be a larger number of gifts returned next year, although by no means a majority.

Senator NELSON. On the question of free drugs for the student or his family, if he has one—is it generally accepted by the students that if they need some prescription drugs, that they will go to the detail man to get them?

Mr. MARTIN. I make this point later in my testimony, but in the majority of medical schools, medical students are sequestered from detail men. In fact, this is my fourth year in medical school and I have not yet seen a pharmaceutical detail man. But what you must do; you know their names and you know the companies, you have to get a prescription signed by an intern or resident usually if it is a prescription drug, and then you leave your request at the pharmacy. Our school and most other medical schools are very negative toward “commercial influences” and protect the students from pharmaceutical representatives. So in almost every case I know of it is necessary to go through an intern or to go through a pharmacy in order to get the equipment. I never met a pharmaceutical representative. Of course, I have never requested free drugs either, but I do know the students never meet the detail men or never ask them directly, at least in the majority of the schools that we have—

Senator NELSON. The school keeps a list of companies and detail men who can be called?

Mr. MARTIN. Yes, sir. For interns and residents, of course, that is a different question.

It is SAMA's policy that it is undesirable for our profession to be receptive to promotional activity that does not contribute directly to the physician's or medical student's scientific or professional knowledge and thus has no foreseeable benefit to health care recipients. And this became our policy at the last House of Delegates by the resolution that was passed. We acknowledge not only the right, but the responsibility, of an individual physician to use his professional discretion and judgment in choosing the appropriate drug, not only in regards to quality but to cost.

We believe that, as the issues involved are rationally discussed by medical students across the country, a more discriminating approach