

Senator NELSON. Well, in 1961, before the Kefauver committee, Dr. Hussey, on behalf of the AMA, had this to say:

I am proposing eventually that this is mainly a job of education and that this resolves itself into a problem of communication. The physician who has available to him on the market a drug which in extended usage turns out to be inefficacious, although originally thought to be effective, or which turns out to be dangerous, although originally thought to be safe, the physician must learn the facts about that drug. It is a matter of delivering information to him quickly and in a form that he will determine equitably. In my mind this is something that a profession, especially the American Medical Association has to do.

Would you agree or disagree with that statement?

Dr. TALBOTT. I have no disagreement.

Senator NELSON. Why has not the journal carried this story?

Dr. TALBOTT. Because we did not receive an original, publishable communication from the National Research Council.

Secondly, we have not received a communication from the Council on Drugs, which is the official authoritative body in the American Medical Association which frequently refers manuscripts to us for publication.

Senator NELSON. All right, sir. Why not, since the information is available, everybody has it, this committee has had it for months, why has not the journal at the very minimum run a very detailed and strong editorial advising the doctors that these drugs that have been advertised in the journal have been found to be inefficacious by this distinguished body and they are recommending the removal from the marketplace? I see editorials of all kinds in there. I saw one defending at great length brandname drugs. Is that more important than this event?

Dr. TALBOTT. It is a question of evaluation as to what is important.

Senator NELSON. Well, I will let the record stand as it is.

Senator HATFIELD. Mr. Chairman, in order to put this in a little more perspective, are we not really involved here, to some degree, in trying to delineate between a news magazine and a journal?

In other words, do you carry any part of your magazine primarily as news items, or is it completely and totally within the classification of a journalistic publication?

Dr. TALBOTT. This is primarily, but not exclusively, a scientific medical publication.

Senator HATFIELD. I am familiar with other journals in which I can fault the same editorial policy that I would personally try to fault your journal for. I think there is an historic rut that many journals get into. That is that they sort of feel that if they go out and solicit, that sort of demeans their journalistic stature. Therefore, they do much as you do. This is not exclusively in the medical profession. Anyone who is familiar with journals knows that there are many journals that do nothing but evaluate manuscripts, publish manuscripts.

I personally think it should be broader. I think this is an obligation that you have to the profession to carry news events of this consequence. I would agree with the chairman.

But on the other hand, within the broader framework, you could be faulted on this basis as it relates to many other events in medicine,