

The State Board of Corrections asked the Alabama Medical Association to name a committee of inquiry, and Dr. Tinsley R. Harrison of Birmingham, a nationally known cardiologist, was selected as chairman.

Even when the committee dealt with the welfare of the inmates its investigation inevitably raised broader issues, for Dr. Stough's "findings" became data and the data helped to justify public sale.

The medical association investigators concluded not only that Dr. Stough's work had been "bluntly unacceptable" but also that as one result, "the validity of the drug trials themselves must occasionally be seriously in doubt."

Because of the Food and Drug Administration's refusal to permit an inspection of its files, it is impossible to determine conclusively whether Dr. Stough ever reported unfavorably on the drugs he was paid to test.

However, he has published a number of scientific articles on his findings, and a review of those cited in the comprehensive Cumulated Index Medicus since 1960 discloses not a single critical appraisal.

It was learned from independent sources that one of the drugs Dr. Stough had tested was Indocin, a best-selling product of Merck, Sharp & Dohme that is used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

Dr. Stough's findings on Indocin are unavailable, but it went on the market after largely favorable data had been generated by company-paid investigators, and the subsequent controversy points up the broad significance of testing.

Indocin was assailed * * * the Senate Subcommittee on Monopoly. Contrary to findings of the initial data, witnesses said, careful tests had found the drug no more effective than aspirin, and it produced serious effects as well.

A careful medical examination in advance of a drug test is regarded as essential to insure that the prisoners involved do not show signs of subtle disabilities that would make the study invalid.

A member of Dr. Harrison's committee recalled during an interview that one day he and another investigator turned up at Kilby Prison to discover that 80 inmates had been examined for a new program in just four hours.

Since that meant an examination every three minutes, the investigators asked to see the records. None were found on the premises—not for a single prisoner. The records that existed were said to be at Dr. Stough's headquarters.

The committee noted in its report that prisoners about to embark on a new test had "received a rapid explanation of the purpose" that left "considerable variation in the understanding of what had been said."

NO DOCTOR PRESENT

The committee continued:

"All this had seemingly been done by technicians with no physician being present as far as could be determined. Two of the four prisoners who were interviewed indicated that they had never been examined by a physician while they were in the prison although they had been on several drug trials."

The fundamental purpose of a drug test is to spot any adverse effect and report it. There were breakdowns in Dr. Stough's operation, and Dr. Harrison's committee cited a number of examples.

First, it encountered a Mr. Howell, "a man with very little previous medical training whose experience before entering his present position had been that of a venereal disease inspector."

"It was stated with pride by this individual who functions as hospital director, that he himself was able to deal with nine out of every 10 patients who came to him so that the doctor was not bothered."

A number of qualified medical sources said that without a physician regularly on hand to look over the inmates who took drugs, it would have been "totally impossible" to gauge reactions.

PRISONER FEES VARIED

Dr. Harrison's committee took up the question of fees paid by Dr. Stough to inmates who participated in drug tests. These varied widely, but a man could usually make at least \$1 a day for taking a series of pills.

This was big money for people who otherwise received only 50 cents every three weeks for incidental spending, and it created what one investigator called "a built-in negative feedback."