

Dr. STEINFELD. I have no idea, Senator Nelson. Apparently, advertising is extremely effective in this instance. I would say, though, that we did our best with the medical students to convince them to use APC. Phenacetin has been shown to cause interstitial nephritis when used for a long period of time, so aspirin by itself is probably superior to APC if the individual does not have a hemorrhagic problem, but this does happen and the question is what can we do about it.

Senator NELSON. Does not this raise the question whether or not it may be better if doctors and scientists interfered with medical practice rather than let the pharmaceutical firms, through advertising and promotion, be the ones responsible for convincing the doctor to use a drug for which there is no demonstrated therapeutic superiority over an established drug?

We have two points here. Everybody admits that advertising and promotion is what sells the drug, not proven therapeutic superiority. So every time doctors say we cannot interfere with the doctor's independent judgment, who is interfering? The advertising and promotion. And since the responsibility of the profession is to the welfare of the public, a little interference with the doctor's judgment, which may be determined by advertising and promotion, would be in the best interests of the public, would it not?

Dr. STEINFELD. Yes, I think we have to determine the appropriate amount.

Senator NELSON. I thought it was interesting, by the way, as an aside, that within the Journal of the American Medical Association, they headline the piece "Propoxyphene Hydrochloride, A Critical Review". In the article there is no mention of Darvon. If you look very carefully on the last page in fine print, and have good strong glasses, you will discover it is Darvon. I think it is interesting to note that they did not put in big parentheses up at the top, Darvon, which is the way it is promoted in the journal—in JAMA. How many doctors who are prescribing Darvon, would you guess, know what propoxyphene hydrochloride is or recognize immediately that it is Darvon?

Dr. STEINFELD. I could not guess, Senator, but I do not think in writing this article—I do not think the authors would have used the name Darvon in the title of their article. I do not think trade names are generally used.

Senator NELSON. No. This is an editorial up here. My point is that if for years a drug has been promoted in your publication, and you decide it is important to notify the profession that it should not be used, it is interesting to me to note that in the article they do not identify the drug by the brand name which is Darvon. I think it quite possible that many, many doctors who have long been prescribing Darvon as an analgesic, really do not know that it is propoxyphene hydrochloride. Incidentally, they sent this drug along with the astronauts who rode Apollo around the moon.

Dr. STEINFELD. I hope they did not check with the Public Health Service first.

Senator NELSON. Please continue.

In view of the expenses on Apollo I am sure they could afford the extra price if that is what they want.