

Association and Medical News, their weekly publication, they have been very cooperative with us. The response we have gotten from the profession per se has been rather limited but I must be very frank to say that most of the response has not been particularly complimentary to the Food and Drug Administration.

I think there has been an unwillingness, at least by some of the profession, to accept these findings of the National Academy of Sciences and the Food and Drug Administration as being final and as authoritative.

Senator NELSON. I am sure you saw the December 21 article from the New York Times with the heading: "Many Doctors Ignore U.S. List of Hazardous or Useless Drugs".¹ It states:

A list of 369 drug products considered ineffective or hazardous by the FDA apparently is being ignored by a large number of doctors and their patients across the country. Some doctors go so far as to say they consider the Federal agency's action in issuing the list unethical.

Reports from 18 cities one month after the list was issued, also indicate that most people are unaware of the list's existence and are continuing to rely on the advice of private physicians on which drugs to take.

Dr. William Limberger, President of the Pennsylvania Medical Association, commented that:

However, this at times injudicious release by the FDA does not enhance the confidence in the medical profession.

I am curious about this reaction, not being a doctor myself. I wonder whether this is a typical reaction of the medical profession to the judgment of the most distinguished clinicians in the country on the use of drugs. Do you have any comments as to why the profession would not enthusiastically follow the lead of their most distinguished authorities in the field rather than, as apparently many do, take the attitude that there is something wrong with what the FDA is doing?

Dr. EDWARDS. Unfortunately—

Senator NELSON. May I interrupt? There is something wrong either with the communication of the information to the doctors or their understanding of it or the medical profession's effectiveness in telling doctors:

For heaven's sake, follow the advice of the most distinguished scientists on this matter.

What do you think about that, Doctor?

Dr. EDWARDS. I think all the points you just made are very real ones, very legitimate ones. I think in addition to that we have to appreciate or at least hope that the opinion the doctor in Pennsylvania expresses is not necessarily the opinion of the majority of the medical profession. But I certainly would find his statement a very difficult thing to explain and as I say, I just hope that it is not the unanimous opinion of the medical profession.

Senator NELSON. It seems to me, if the President of the Pennsylvania Medical Association is accurately quoted, that it would have an unfortunate effect on the rest of the doctors of the State since he is elected by the profession.

¹ See p. 7993.