

What would be your observation about that statement by Dr. Edwards?

Dr. FELDMANN. I'll ask Dr. Apple to respond to it first.

Dr. APPLE. Basically, the association supports that observation by Dr. Edwards. We went into considerable detail at the Senate Subcommittee on Health on that subject. We do recognize there are drugs that are subject to inequivalency. We are doing a great deal of work, through both our Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences and our Academy of General Practice, to try and identify actual problem drugs.

As I indicated in my testimony on February 1, we cannot support negative hypotheses with regard to this subject. There are some people who want to refer continuously to probabilities—of things that may happen. Today, it is commonly recognized among scientists that we may have, 15, 20 or some such drug entities of that magnitude that are subject to this problem. Other scientists talk about the probability of there being 70 of them, or 80 of them. We have got to deal with the real world, because our pharmacists are dispensing real drugs to real patients every day.

I recognize the value of this scientific exercise, on the part of people who are interested in this, and we encourage them to pursue that type of scientific investigation. But I do not think it can be used to characterize the present status of the Nation's drug supply, or the quality of the Nation's drug supply? In other words, Mr. Chairman, I would say that I cannot think of a pharmacist who would knowingly and wantonly dispense a bad drug to a sick person.

Senator NELSON. Well, is not the truth of the matter really that the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association is not really saying that we do not have high-quality drugs in this country; nor is the DOD. The Pharmaceutical Manufacturer's Association will say that we have got the finest drugs anyplace on earth, manufactured by our members. What they are really trying to say, or are saying, is something quite different; that you cannot trust anybody who does not make brand names.

Is that not the heart of the matter? They are not attacking the quality of the production of their members, but what they are attacking is those who do not carry a brand name, those who compete under a generic label at a much cheaper price. Is that not what they are really doing?

Dr. APPLE. Mr. Chairman, there are times when I do not know what they are attacking, because they make 95 percent of the Nation's drug supply, and I cannot think it through on the basis of brand or generic name, because some of their manufacturers—PMA members—also make generic-labeled products. Likewise, in the other 5 percent, you have a number of firms that produce products under brand names.

Now, you get on a juxtaposition here that just does not make sense, if you try to rationalize it out in any way, shape or form. On the one hand, you cannot claim to be producing 95 percent of