

11964 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

This program is workable, as proven in the States I have mentioned, and it is long overdue as a national policy. We have had constructive comment and we are paying the closest attention to it. We shall do our part to make the program equitable and workable. But to be sure that it is workable we need the understanding, acceptance, and support of the entire health and pharmaceutical community.

One other point might be made in closing, Mr. Chairman. Some complaints about the MAC program characterize it as totally unjustifiable Federal intrusion into matters which are none of the government's business. No one is more unsympathetic to unwarranted Federal intrusion than I am. Yet I must point out that our health programs spend a large number of Federal tax dollars on drugs. We have no choice except to see that these Federal funds are spent prudently. I believe that our MAC policy fulfills our plain public responsibility while avoiding an unjustifiable interference in medical choice and patient care.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleagues and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.