

Hearing Witness Disputed

Three Drugs Off Market

WASHINGTON (AP)—Food and Drug Commissioner George P. Larrick says three drugs which had not been proven for safety "have been off the market for a long time."

And Larrick said in a statement Wednesday, the drug law passed by Congress last year will enable his agency to deal with such cases more effectively in the future.

Dr. John O. Nestor, medical officer for FDA Bureau of Medicine, told the Senate Government Operations subcommittee Wednesday that the agency had permitted sale of at least three drugs — Entoquel, Mer-29 and Altafur — although preliminary data on them did not substantiate their safety.

Nestor further testified that the FDA dragged its feet in pulling two of them—Mer-29 and Altafur—off the market following indications that they produced injurious side effects.

The subcommittee headed by Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, D-Minn., resumed its study of drug marketing safety procedures Thursday.

Larrick in his statement conceded that the original drug applications criticized by Nestor

"could have been done better." But he noted that the FDA is bound by laws passed by Congress, and the cases cited by Nestor occurred before Congress last fall passed a stricter law for handling and licensing new drugs.

An FDA spokesman said Wednesday night that some of the provisions of the new drug law are in effect and "most will become operative early in May."

Nestor, 50, a Washington pediatrician who joined the bureau two years ago as a specialist on pediatric drugs, declined comment Wednesday night when asked if he thought the new regulations would preclude cases such as he cited.

He claimed Wednesday that "nonmedical plan, including laymen, have been making medical decisions" on new drug applications. He said any questions he raised about past decisions or "past commitments to the pharmaceutical industry would be challenged with indifference, disapproval or even hostility."

And, Nestor said, when he and colleagues questioned possible side effects of a proposed vitamin "as is frequently the case in FDA we were told of the

cost to the pharmaceutical firm" of new tests or withdrawing the product.

Larrick said "we categorically deny that laymen have been making medical decisions." "The question of cost," Larrick added, "has had no part whatever in our decision."

Nestor testified that he and other pediatricians have opposed an application to include menadione (vitamin K) in a multiple purpose vitamin capsule on grounds that if given pregnant women it might lead to brain damage, spasticity and death in newborn infants.

He said he had been unable to learn the outcome of the case. Larrick said the firm has been advised that its application does not sufficiently establish the safety of the capsule and that it had until Thursday to file new evidence.

An FDA spokesman said the proposed capsule containing menadione has not been marketed.

In testimony prepared for Thursday's session, Dr. Fritz Freyhan of Washington warned indiscriminate use of tranquilizers.

Freyhan, who has charge of clinical studies at the clinical

neuropharmacology research center at the National Institute of Mental Health, said there is strong evidence of "very considerable overuse if not abuse" of some tranquilizer drugs.

He charged that "little has been done to point to the dangers which arise from simultaneous prescriptions of several psychiatric drugs."

"While the more potent of the compounds influence specific manifestations of schizophrenia or of depression or anxiety," the witness said, "they do not wipe out psychoses, neuroses or anxiety."

He added that the same drug which proves effective in treating certain symptoms of anxiety may be useless "or even harmful" for patients with different types of anxiety and of other personality structures.

Convention Plan Urged

PORTLAND (AP)—C. Girard Davidson, Democratic national committeeman, urged the Legislature to provide for selection of national committeemen and committeewomen by party conventions rather than popular vote.

In a letter to Senate President Ben Musa, Davidson said "the general electorate does not understand the role of the National Committee and has virtually no interest in it." He said only six states elect such party officials by popular vote.

He added that the choice of party leadership "should be made by those who demonstrate real interest in the party," and that the authority to elect officers would "endow state conventions with strength and prestige."

"Since elections will be upon us again before we know it," Davidson told Musa, "I trust that something can be done about this matter in the current legislative session."



(AP Wirephoto)

Solon Sojou

This unusual photo of Sen. John McClellan, D-Ark., was taken during a Capitol news conference Wednesday. The mirror-like top of a desk accounts for the reflection while the senator talked to reporters. He discussed the continuing investigation of a controversial award of a contract to General Dynamics for construction of a new fighter-bomber.

Delegates Clear Church Merger

PORTLAND (AP)—The Congregational Conference of Oregon took the final steps Tuesday in its merger with the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

The new state organization, called the United Church of Christ, will be in business as soon as a charter is obtained from the state Corporation Department. In Oregon, the merger involves

Nuclear Defense Force

8 NATO Nations Back JFK's Plan

PARIS (AP)—Most of the Western allies lined up against France Thursday in backing President Kennedy's plan for a multi-nation nuclear defense against Communist aggression.

West Germany, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Greece and Turkey all indicated their support or active interest in the plan at Wednesday's meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) council.

With the United States and Britain already pledged to push ahead with the plan, this meant at least 8 of the 16 NATO countries were behind it in various degrees.

President Charles de Gaulle, who rejects the multi-nation concept and is building an independent nuclear force for France, ordered his foreign minister, Maurice Couve de Murville, to stay away from the council meeting and a British Embassy lunch afterwards.

The project is envisaged in three phases:

- In the first, to be launched as soon as possible, participating countries would turn over to NATO control a considerable proportion or all of their existing national nuclear forces or nuclear potential.

- In the second, Britain would add nuclear submarines carrying Polaris missiles furnished by the United States but with British-built nuclear warheads.

- In the third, on which pre-

liminary work would begin simultaneously with the other two phases, a surface fleet of some 25 merchant ships would be put together, manned by crews of mixed nationality and carrying a total 200 Polaris missiles.

The cost is estimated at \$5 billion over a 10-year period. This is what is known as the so-called "multilateral" or "mixed-manned" force.

Canteen Sold For \$20,160

LONDON (AP)—Bonnie Prince Charlie forgot his canteen in his tent when he fled a battlefield 217 years ago. Wednesday the same canteen sold for 7,200 pounds (\$20,160) at a London auction.

The defeat of the young pretender by the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden, Scotland, in 1746 marked the end of the Jacobite rebellion and doomed the house of Stuart.

The canteen was auctioned for Viscount Bury, a descendant of the aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden.

The canteen, a sort of lunch-kit, has two silver gilt beakers, two tablespoons, two forks, two knives, a condiment box and a nutmeg grater and cork-screw.

It was bought by two London silver dealers.

Six Denominations

Churches Discuss Merger

BERLIN, Ohio — A small group of churchmen were to end a three-day conference at Oberlin College Thursday in what could be an historic venture—attempting to weld six major Protestant denominations of 22 million members into a single church.

The merger proposal, still in its preliminary stage, sparked much discussion but no controversy among delegates attending the Oberlin meeting.

Involved are 54 delegates from six denominations: Methodist Church, Protestant Episcopal Church, United Presbyterian Church, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical United Brethren and the United Church of Christ.

At a general meeting Wednesday night, the Rev. James I. McCord, conference chairman, urged delegates to speak "with candor and truth."

"Nothing is to be gained by sidestepping issues that must be faced," he said.

The discussion was concerned mostly with the wording of a report on "Scripture, Tradition

and the Guardians of Tradition," prepared by Elmer J. F. Arndt, professor of historical theology at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Mo.

The Rev. George C. Beazley Jr. of Indianapolis, Ind., representing the Disciples of Christ, good-naturedly admonished the group that there should not be "so much harmony that we overlook the problems we all know exist."

The Rev. William Jackson Jarman, chairman of the consultation study committee on worship, said that until a way can be found to a unified worship service "there will be no Christian Unity."

"Unity in worship is the ultimate achievement of church unity," Jarman said. He is president of the Council of Christian Unity of the Disciples of Christ.

The Rev. Massey H. Shepherd, professor of liturgy at the Divinity School of the Pacific at Berkeley, Calif., said "the chief obstacle is the reluctance of the laity to give up familiar forms of worship."

By CLETE JONES
Of the Associated Press

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