

Six Drug Firms Charged With Anti-Trust Violation in Sale of Two 'Wonder' Drugs

Washington — (UPI) — Senate investigators have charged that six big drug companies violated the anti-trust laws through restrictive agreements to gain "complete control" over the sale of two wonder drugs.

In reply, Francis C. Brown, president of the Schering Corp., one of the companies, protested that the inquiry into possible anti-trust viola-

tions was an "improper subject" for the Senate anti-trust subcommittee to take up in its investigation of drug prices.

Brown, whose company has been the principal subject of the inquiry thus far, said he had been placed at "great disadvantage" in the public hearing which began Monday.

Brown said Schering's general counsel, Irving H. Jurow, denied repeatedly there was anything wrong in entering into agreements involving royalty payments, contingent upon a future patent, covering the two drugs — prednisone and prednisolone.

Brown said his company "invented" the two wonder drugs used in treatment of arthritis but other firms also were seeking patents on the basis of work they had done on the compounds.

Miss Irene Till, a patent expert on the staff of the subcommittee headed by Sen. Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.), said the effect of the agreements was to deny smaller companies access to bulk supplies of the drugs.

Johnston pointed out that Railway Express had supported post office rate proposals even though the firm thought them inadequate. Railway Express "figured that half a loaf is better than none at this time in face of the great burden on the taxpayer as well as express and other private transportation enterprises attempting to compete more effectively with the government," he said.

Parcel Post Rates Claimed Too Low

Washington — (UPI) — The railway Express Agency contends that the government tends to raise parcel post rates high enough to make the service self-supporting as required by law.

The parcel post rate increase, which will average 17 per cent, was announced by Postmaster General Arthur E. Summerfield. It will go into effect Feb. 1.

However, William B. Johnston, president of Railway Express Agency, Inc., a private shipping service, said that the government will continue to lose \$1,600,000 a week after

the new rates are imposed. He asserted his firm has long faced "destructive, taxpayer-subsidized government competition."

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Sunshine

2 lb. box 49¢

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Large Size

10 for 69¢

Cauliflower

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Wrapped

2 Heads 49¢

Tangerines

2 lbs. 25¢

Asparagus

All Green Cut Spears
ARGO 300's

4 for 1.00

Green Beans

Double Luck
Short Cut—303's

8 for 1.00

Tomatoes

Blue Sky
303's

8 for 1.00

Catsup

Del Monte—12-oz.

6 for 1.00

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Marco
No. 1 Tall Tin

15 for 1.00

Tuna

Ocean Beauty
Halves

4 for 1.00

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competitors at prices nearly four times higher.

Figures collected by staff investigators showed that the Schering, Upjohn and Merck companies dominate the market for two "miracle drugs"—prednisone and prednisolone—used in the treatment of arthritis.

7,000 Per Cent Hike
These firms sell the two products for 17.9 cents a tablet to druggists, who in turn charge their customers 29.8 cents. Five smaller firms market the same drugs at wholesale prices ranging from 4.8 to 13.4 cents a tablet.

The basic cost of the tablets is about 2 cents, the subcommittee said.

John M. Blair, a staff economist, said the Schering Corp. also hiked its price of another product, a "female disorder" remedy, more than 7,000 per cent above the basic cost.

Defends Practices
Francis C. Brown, president of Schering, stoutly defended his company's pricing practices. He attacked the subcommittee figures as "misleading and valueless."

Denying there was any price fixing in the industry, Brown said "we're up to our necks in competition."

But the subcommittee chairman Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.) questioned whether the prices were reasonable and fair to persons who need drugs. He recalled Brown for more quizzing.

Pilots Over 60 To Be Retired By Next March 15

Washington — (Science Service) — Air-line pilots aged 60 or more must retire beginning March 15, 1960, according to a new government law.

There are now approximately 40 pilots of this age or older, Federal Aviation Agency Administrator E. R. Quesada reported recently.

Pilots Getting Old
Quesada pointed out that in the absence of any regulation to the contrary, the growing number of pilots aged 60 and over would substantially increase during the next five years with some reaching the 65 or 70 category. In the next eight years approximately 250 airline pilots will have reached the age of 60.

The FAA regulation is based on medical facts that clearly establish that sudden incapacitation, due primarily to heart attack and strokes resulting from deterioration of physiological and psychological functions, becomes significantly more frequent in any group reaching age 60, and such attacks cannot be predicted on an individual basis by prior medical examinations, an official statement read.

Hazards Cited
The agency stated that because of deterioration of these functions, which normally occur with age, allowing pilots in this age group to fly airplanes that carry up to 165 passengers at speeds of 550 miles per hour would be hazardous.

Older pilots now fly the largest, highest-performance air-craft, carrying the greatest number of passengers over the longest non-stop distances, operating into and out of the most congested airports near the largest cities, and traveling in flight in and through traffic lanes with the highest density of air traffic.

Probation as we understand it today began in 1841 when a Boston cobbler named John Augustus posted bail for a man convicted of habitual drunkenness. He subsequently demonstrated that the man, given an opportunity, would respond to probationary treatment, and become a good citizen.

Americans to See Bright New Star By Next Spring

Washington — (By Science Service) — Millions of Americans will be able next spring to see a big, bright star moving swiftly through the twilight sky.

The "star" will be a 100-foot plastic balloon coated with aluminum and inflated in space with four pounds of water vapor.

Successful launching of this first of three balloons will signal the start of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's "Project Echo." This experiment will be aimed at testing use of a satellite as a big reflector for radio and television waves on a global basis.

Visible Across U. S.
The balloon is to be launched at a 50-degree angle to the equator from Cape Canaveral, and NASA said it should be visible in all parts of the U. S. except Alaska.

However, there is some question as to how long the big balloon may stay in its planned 1,000-mile-high orbit. It is not known whether the balloon will circle the earth for years, as is expected of some satellites, or whether its size will make it so vulnerable to meteorites and atmospheric drag, even at that altitude, it may complete only a few 120-minute earth orbits.

Policy Broken
In this case, NASA broke its own policy of keeping silent on up-coming shots so that communications scientists would have a chance to plan their own experiments using the balloon satellite. NASA itself hopes to establish a radio link between its Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Goldstone tracking station in California and a Bell Telephone Laboratory station at Holmdel, N. J., using the balloon to bounce radio signals between the two stations.

The balloon will pass over all countries lying between 50 degrees north and 50 degrees south latitude. In the Western Hemisphere the balloon thus will sweep as far north as the U. S.-Canadian border and dip as far south as Puerto Santa Cruz near the southern tip of Argentina. In the Eastern Hemisphere, the balloon will swing over Le Havre, France; Prague, Czechoslovakia; Khar'kov, Russia (but not Moscow), and dip as far south as Tasmania, south of Australia.

The balloon will be similar to the one shot recently from Wallops Island, Va., in a test seen by hundreds of thousands along the East Coast.

Early Man's Tears Big Survival Help

Washington (Science Service)—His tears may have saved early man from a lot of disease and discomfort.

In fact, it appears that weeping was extremely important in early man's development and survival, a noted anthropologist reports here in the journal Science.

The long period during which a human child is dependent—when crying is his one way of communicating needs—was probably an important influence in the evolution of weeping, Dr. Ashley Montagu of Princeton, N.J., points out.

In man, "the only creature who weeps," terms have acted as a force in natural selection. Those infants and children that did cry tears, as opposed to dry crying, were better able to survive bacterial and viral attacks, Dr. Montagu said.

As early as 1922, researchers have known that the enzyme lysozyme, found in nasal secretions, has important bacteria-destroying powers.

Barbers Stubborn On Changing Shop's Name

Somerville, N. J. — Partners John Walker and Clyde Steeps have their own ideas about naming their barber shop and geography doesn't influence their choice one bit.

Ten years ago they opened the Maple Street Barber Shop on Maple St.

They have since moved to Oak St. but they brought their weather-worn shingle along still reading "Maple Street Barber Shop."

Bone Diseases May be Diagnosed By New Method

Los Angeles — (Science Service) — Diseases of the bone may be diagnosed through a new procedure which features the use of strontium-85, a safe relative of hazardous strontium-90, the fallout product.

The procedure, developed by Dr. Norman S. MacDonald of the University of California medical school, Los Angeles, is described in a special report just published by the university.

Known as Osteogram
The technique, known as an osteogram, employs tiny tracer amounts of strontium-85,

which is rapidly absorbed by bone when it is injected into the body.

By placing special radioactivity detecting scintillation counters over the bone area to be studied, the rate of absorption or deposition of the strontium can be measured.

In preliminary studies of patients with various bone diseases it has been demonstrated that the rates of absorption differ in diseased sites.

The golden-eye duck uses cavities in trees as a nesting site.

bone areas from those of normal bone.

Furthermore, there seem to be differences in these rates in various types of bone diseases. Thus the osteogram patterns might be useful in determining that bone disease was present and in telling what the nature of the disease is.

Bone diseases studied with the new technique to date include osteoporosis, a disease characterized by spongy fragile bone. Paget's disease, a skeletal disorder, and various types of bone cancer.

Dr. MacDonald said the osteogram is useful in following progress of repair of bone fractures and treatment of bone disease as well as in obtaining additional basic knowledge about bone chemistry.

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