

FDA, Health Authorities Seek to Confiscate Every Thalidomide Pill

Chicago—UPI—"They're beautiful, pale blue pills, round, a bit smaller than aspirin, scored on one side, with a double circle and an 'M' on the other side.

"They're lovely. If I didn't know what they were I'd take them myself."

Mrs. Trudy Whitman happens to have a bottle of the pretty blue pills because she is an employee of the New York City Health Department. The bottle is labelled

"Kevadon" and comes from the highly reputable pharmaceutical house of William S. Merrell Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Until a month ago, most of the nation's doctors regarded "Kevadon" as a promising sedative and tranquilizer which had proved highly popular from Europe to Australia.

Today the Federal Drug Administration, together with state and city health depart-

ments and medical associations, was grimly at the job of locating and confiscating every one of the blue pills in the nation. For "Kevadon" is the American trade name for thalidomide, the sleep-inducing drug which has caused thousands of babies abroad to be born deformed.

The records of the FDA showed that William S. Merrell Co. had made the drug available to 1,231 physicians throughout the country. The doctors were asked to test the drug's effectiveness and safety. There was nothing wrong with this practice. It is routine, because testing on humans is required before a new drug can be approved by the FDA.

It was two years and eight months after the Merrell Company first asked FDA clearance to market thalidomide that the drug's tragic potential became public knowledge.

Many—perhaps most—U.S. doctors had little idea of thalidomide's cruel effect upon unborn infants until they read in the newspapers in mid-July of the dogged fight of an FDA investigator, Dr. Frances Kelsey, to keep thalidomide off the market—and why.

There was nationwide concern and even occasional hysteria when Dr. Kelsey's story was told. The fears of pregnant women were dramatized by the plight of Mrs. Sherri Finkbine, a Phoenix, Ariz., housewife and television personality who had taken thal-

idomide during the early months of her pregnancy. Mrs. Finkbine preferred an abortion to the possibility of giving birth to a deformed child.

In New York, psychiatrist Richard H. Hoffman revealed he had obtained thalidomide pills from Baden-Baden, West Germany, and given them to 10 patients. One of the patients gave birth to a deformed baby July 21. The child died 41 minutes later.

This was the only case of death caused by thalidomide obtained in the United States. But in San Antonio, Tex., a woman who had bought thalidomide in Germany had a deformed baby who lived only five days. There were six more cases of deformed births blamed on thalidomide in the New York area and two unconfirmed reports still under investigation, in Chicago.

A Gardena, Calif., housewife who had obtained thalidomide while her husband was in the Army in Germany, gave birth to a deformed child June 15. The housewife, Mrs. William J. Webb, 23, said "after I got out of the hospital and held the baby in my arms I knew everything was OK."

She said an abortion to prevent the birth would have been "entirely wrong."

Positive Factors

Barring future tragedies, that was the worst of it. Health authorities could list these positive factors in the nation's thalidomide score:

—The FDA reported that thalidomide had been distributed to 207 pregnant women in this country and nearly all of them had given birth to normal babies. The FDA estimated a total of 15,904 Americans had received thalidomide from their doctors.

—The FDA had contacted 1,097 of the 1,231 doctors who had supplies of thalidomide. A total of 74 doctors still had supplies of thalidomide on hand when FDA inspectors contacted them and 22,948 tablets were collected. The remaining doctors who had the drug were on vacation, the FDA said.

—There was not a single recorded case of a baby deformed by thalidomide which had been obtained in the United States. In all cases of deformity, the drug had been brought from abroad or had been ordered from a foreign source.

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Taken Off Market

As far back as last November, thalidomide was taken off the market in West Germany. Yet federal and state agencies in this country took no action to prevent the drug's circulation until late July.

There had been danger signals and the Merrell firm was credited by the FDA with acting "with reasonable diligence." Last December, the company warned doctors who

had received the drug not to give it to women of child-bearing age. In March, Merrell asked the doctors to return all their supplies of the drug.

Yet, last Friday, the Chicago Health Department announced it had confiscated 7,395 thalidomide pills within the previous week. The FDA said at least 87 doctors still had supplies of thalidomide in hand as late as July 27. In-

vestigators turned up a doctor in Virginia who had put a bottle containing 1,000 pills on a shelf and then forgotten about them.

Despite the precautions of the Merrell Company, the New York Health Department had no official word of thalidomide's danger until Dr. Kelsey's statement on the drug July 16. It had to wait until July 27 for the names of doctors who had the pills.

The Dallas Public Health Department began investigating when it received letters from the manufacturer June 11 and June 26. Illinois health authorities said they woke up to the thalidomide danger when a newspaper story appeared July 20.

The American Medical Association put the investigation on a long-term basis, announcing it would conduct a "careful analysis" of the effects of thalidomide upon unborn babies. The AMA noted that thalidomide had been under clinical evaluation in this country for six years but there had been no reports published in scientific journals of deformities caused by the drug in the U.S.

Second Thoughts

Most health authorities said the emergency was over by the week. It had been a close call. There were second thoughts among many health

authorities on the efficiency of the nation's drug-testing procedures.

Dr. K. F. Meyer, director emeritus of the Hooper Foundation at the University of California, said testing of unlicensed drugs should be restricted to the pharmacology departments of universities.

"Giving the drugs to doctors is not the safest way to do it," he said. "Sometimes observation periods of a year are needed. And the drug houses are in such a rush."

A warning of a different nature came from Dr. Warren Weaver, dean of the School of Pharmacy of the Medical College of Virginia.

It would be unfortunate, he said, "if the thalidomide tragedy, sad as it is, were to paralyze the forward movement of research for new drugs."

★ STAR GAZER ★

By CLAY R. FOLLAN

Your Daily Activity Guide According to the Stars

To develop message for Friday, read words corresponding to numbers of your Zodiac birth sign.

ARIES	1	11	21	31	41	51	61	71	81	91	101	111	121	131	141	151	161	171	181	191	201	211	221	231	241	251	261	271	281	291	301	311	321	331	341	351	361	371	381	391	401	411	421	431	441	451	461	471	481	491	501	511	521	531	541	551	561	571	581	591	601	611	621	631	641	651	661	671	681	691	701	711	721	731	741	751	761	771	781	791	801	811	821	831	841	851	861	871	881	891	901	911	921	931	941	951	961	971	981	991
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SWEETEST THING — Miss Garon Graham, 19, thinks her fiancé, Charles Daugherty, is the "sweetest thing." Miss Graham, unknown to Daugherty, dipped into their joint bank account and spent \$509 at a public auction in St. Louis, Mo. Some of the merchandise proved to be "white elephants," like the 10 cuckoo clocks which had all the birdies broken. Daugherty apparently wasn't too angry, for the couple will be married Saturday. (UPI)

Bride-To-Be Offers Auctioned Items At Bargain Prices

St. Louis, Mo. —UPI—A queen's ransom of "white elephants" and a slender bank account today reminded a teen-age bride-to-be of her most reckless half-hour.

"I'll take half what I paid for it," said Miss Garon Graham, 19, as she surveyed her "loot."

And she shuddered to think how she behaved at a public auction last week and dipped into a joint checking account with her fiancé, Charles L. Daugherty.

In 30 minutes of bidding at a Post Office auction of unclaimed merchandise, the pretty blonde, blue-eyed Miss Graham spent \$509, leaving but \$91 left in the bank.

All Sorts of Stuff

She carted home all sorts of merchandise, including 100 pairs of cuff links, luggage, a hoard of costume jewelry, gobs of kitchen utensils and 10 cuckoo clocks.

Miss Graham was bidding for more stuff when a newspaper photographer pulled her aside to snap a picture.

Of her fiancé, Miss Graham said on leaving the auction, "He'll either murder me, refuse to marry me or everything will turn out all right."

That was 15 days ago. Now she had one complaint, some warnings for men, and an explanation of the bids.

"The birds that are supposed to come out to cuckoo the time are broken, so they can't cuckoo," she said.

In a Rage

Asked what made her bid "so recklessly," she said, "I was in a rage and furious at Charles for not coming with me."

Miss Graham explained that she had asked Daugherty to accompany her to the auction.

"But he didn't want to come," she said. "He teased me about being a bargain-hunter."

Miss Graham said she forgot about being angry with Charles and got into the swim of bidding because it was "so thrilling and exciting."

She said Daugherty was "very sweet and understanding" after recovering from the initial shock.

Miss Graham said she has learned a lesson.

Protestant misgivings about the Catholic attitude toward church-state relations also will engage the council's attention, he said. On the agenda is a proposal, submitted by Cardinal Bea's secretariat, to place the church officially on record in favor of religious liberty in all countries.

"Please note," he said, "that I do not say 'tolerance,' which is a rather negative thing, but religious liberty, which consists of positively recognizing a man's right to follow the dictates of his own conscience in matters of religion. It consists also of a recognition of the duties of the state to respect and protect in practice the citizen's inalienable right to religious liberty."

This is "... a theme of great importance for today's pluralistic society."

Encourage Collaboration

One of the most significant steps which the council could take toward Christian reunion, Cardinal Bea indicated, would be to encourage greater "collaboration" between Catholics and Protestants on practical problems of "civil and social life."

"Think of what a wonderful thing it would be," he said, "if Christians of all confessions would work in close harmony for international peace; for the achievement of human rights of minority groups and racial groups; for disarmament; for the social progress of developing nations."

"Such collaboration could do much, indeed, to further eventual union. We will never be one in faith until we become one in charity."

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Religion in America

Catholic Prelate Presents Program for Christian Reunion

By LOUIS CASSELS
UPI Correspondent

Next to Pope John himself, the Catholic prelate who has most endeared himself to Protestants is 81-year-old Augustin Cardinal Bea.

Cardinal Bea is president of the Vatican's secretariat for promoting Christian unity. He has won the esteem of Protestants by treating them with respect, understanding and brotherly love.

As one of the Pope's closest advisers, Cardinal Bea played a major role in preparing the agenda for the Vatican Council which will meet in Rome on Oct. 11. Recently, in an interview with the Catholic magazine America, he discussed some of the steps which may be taken by the council to smooth the path toward eventual reunion of the Christian family.

He said the Catholic church cannot consider "compromises" on basic doctrines which it regards as "revealed truth." But it can clarify and restate Catholic doctrines in terms that will be more meaningful, and perhaps more acceptable, to non-Catholic Christians.

Victims of Prejudices

"Both Catholics and non-Catholics are victims of prejudices and misunderstandings," he said. "The latter arise in part from the theological controversies of the Reformation, and in part from later developments. Religious thought and theology have developed differently among Catholics and non-Catholic Christians, consequently, it is most difficult, not to say impossible, for our separated brothers to understand Catholic doctrine when it is presented in traditional terminology."

"Therefore, the council could explain Catholic doctrine in a way that would take account of the changes in language that have occurred among our separated brethren from the time of separation up to now."

Cardinal Bea, a noted Biblical scholar, suggested that might be accomplished simply by tracing back to the Bible, which Protestants regard as the sole yardstick of Christian doctrine.

One irritant which the council certainly can remove, he said, is the widespread belief that Catholics do not regard Protestants as fellow Christians.

Bound to Christ

"All those who have been validly baptized in Christ, even outside the Catholic church, are organically bound to Christ, to His mystical body," said Cardinal Bea. "They belong in a true sense to the church, though not in the fullest sense. Those who, in all sincerity, accept and live the faith in which they were born and educated receive—in virtue of their baptism—the necessary aids for a truly Christian life. And they are on the road to salvation... We hope that the council will make this very clear."

Protestant misgivings about the Catholic attitude toward church-state relations also will engage the council's attention, he said. On the agenda is a proposal, submitted by Cardinal Bea's secretariat, to place the church officially on record in favor of religious liberty in all countries.

"Please note," he said, "that I do not say 'tolerance,' which is a rather negative thing, but religious liberty, which consists of positively recognizing a man's right to follow the dictates of his own conscience in matters of religion. It consists also of a recognition of the duties of the state to respect and protect in practice the citizen's inalienable right to religious liberty."

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Doctors Alerted To Contraceptive Causing Clotting

Chicago—UPI—G. D. Searle & Co. has urged physicians prescribing its oral contraceptive, Enovid, "be alert to the possible occurrence" of a form of blood clotting called thrombophlebitis.

Dr. Irwin W. Winter, vice-president—medical affairs for the Chicago-based pharmaceutical house, said there have been "23 cases of thrombophlebitis in the more than one million users of Enovid in the United States."

"Among these were 10 cases of pulmonary embolism, five of which were fatal. In addition, there are press reports of four cases, including one death, from the United Kingdom."

Relationship Unproven

Winter said "the available laboratory data neither prove nor disprove a causal relationship between Enovid administration and the occurrence of thrombophlebitis."

"Reports to a manufacturer do not reflect the accurate incidence of reactions and the available statistics are not adequate to determine whether or not there is a causal relationship, but caution requires consideration of this possibility," he said.

Winter's comments were contained in a Searle report, concurred in by officials of the Federal Food and Drug Administration, that was sent to some 350,000 physicians, pharmacists and others in the United States and Canada.

Migrant Education Bill To Be Discussed

Salem—UPI—A revised migrant education bill to remove problems in administering the law will be discussed by the State Board of Education at its meeting here Monday and Tuesday.

The board will also consider a proposed junior high school guide and school district reorganization plans for areas in Wheeler, Multnomah, Jackson and Columbia counties.

First railroad in Illinois was constructed in 1850.



CROWNED QUEEN — Margaret Ann Petty, Miss Nashville, has been crowned as the new queen of Tennessee at the 10th annual "Miss Tennessee" contest at Jackson, (UPI)

Grange Asks Court To Widen Road

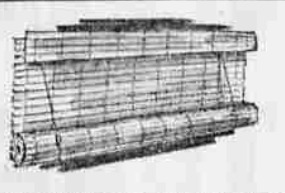
Members of the Gold Hill Grange have asked the Jackson County court to investigate the width of Sardine Creek rd. at its intersection with the railroad tracks.

A letter from Mrs. Icie Walker, Grange secretary, requesting the study, was received by the county court this week. The matter was referred to the county engineer's office for review.

Speaking for the Grange, Mrs. Walker said it was felt that the road was not wide enough at the crossing, requiring passing cars to ride on the rails themselves. She asked that the rails be "filled" about six feet wider.

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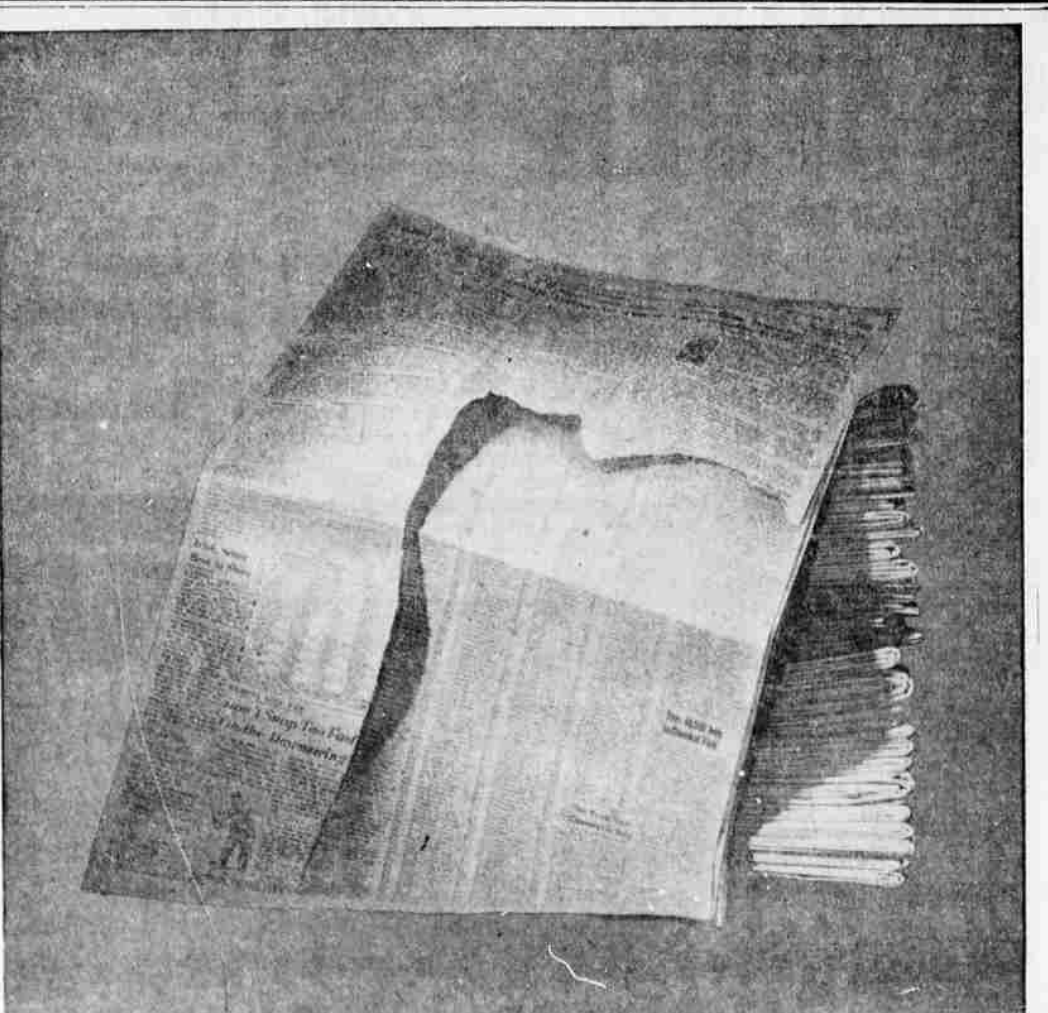
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