Mr. MACKASEY: At the moment that responsibility remains directly with the manufacturer in following the process from beginning to end?

Mr. WIGHTMAN: Yes.

Mr. SLOGAN: I have one further supplementary question. Do you feel it is necessary to have compulsory licensing, or could some objective be accomplished by the establishment of something in the nature of a drug specification body acceptable to the food and drug administration? It would seem to me that the medical, dental and other professions would restrict their uses to those drugs which had this brand of approval. It would be very desirable from the drug manufacturers point of view to have that approval and I am sure they would invite the food and drug administration to license or inspect them, whichever may be the case. My point is that I do not think it would necessarily have to be a compulsory system.

Mr. WIGHTMAN: I think the very fact that a drug is now sold is in some way an indication that the product has been examined by the food and drug directorate, but this does not do anything in respect of the production methods or quality control. Whether this could be accomplished without some means of continuing supervision or observation of the process of production I do not know. It would be all very well to say that this product had been produced in a way which would comply with any set of regulations but the question is, is it going to be continuously produced in this way? There is a monetary factor involved here and a need for some special mechanism which does not exist now except as a matter of voluntary introduction by some companies.

Mr. SLOGAN: Would you say that the food and drug administration is perhaps doing a great deal of work which is not evident to the average practitioner because he has no way of knowing exactly what sort of specifications these drugs have met and that, therefore, we are spending a lot of taxpayers money for the taxpayers protection in respect of which perhaps he is not getting the benefit in the way of lower prices because the drugs do not carry well known brand names?

Mr. WIGHTMAN: I am not quite sure what you mean. I think one of the things which makes it possible to sell drugs at a lower price is the omission of many of the precautions which are taken in manufacture and which are referred to as quality control. In other words production is cheapened considerably if the long lists of tests in respect of every step of the manufacturing process are not carried out. In other words the man who buys or uses the cheap drug may sort of automatically be throwing overboard this kind of protection. This may not make it different in certain circumstances, but in other circumstances it may be a very critical thing. Again I think the only way of specifying that a method of manufacture is followed which does involve these quality controls involves new regulations and new inspection methods which we do not have. I do not think the work being done by the food and drug directorate is being wasted. I think we are all extremely favourably disposed to the work being done and the attempts being made by that body, but I think it is possible this might be extended to produce more rigid control on manufacturing methods.

Mr. SLOGAN: When referring to quality control Mr. Chairman, I refer again to a point I made earlier. A lot of drug manufacturers may be selling identical drugs under various brand names at different prices, or they may be manufacturing drugs for distributors in respect of which there are exactly the same quality controls and, therefore, the drugs are sold at different prices. However, because of the fact that individuals who buy the drugs do not realize the situation they are more likely to buy the higher priced but better known product.

Mr. WIGHTMAN: That is possible.