The CHAIRMAN: Can I make one suggestion?

Mr. ORLIKOW: I was just going to say, Mr. Chairman, that while I agree with Dr. Morrell and Mr. Nicholson that this may be a difficult objective to reach, it is a must if the department is really going to be able to do the job which is required.

The CHAIRMAN: Before Mr. Harley asks a question, I wonder if Dr. Morrell could relate to us the Liefcort incident? How was it brought to his attention, what happened and what did the department do about it? We might like to have a look at a specific case. Would that be difficult?

Dr. MORRELL: When was it brought to our attention? I am not sure I can tell you right now.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps Mr. Harley could ask his question and your assistant can think about it.

Mr. HARLEY: What I wanted to know of Dr. Morrell is whether he could give us some idea at the present time as to how much control work the food and drug directorate actually has. You mentioned that you eventually analyzed Leifcort and found its contents were such and such. I wonder if you could give the committee some actual idea of how much of that type of work you do and how much of it is strictly a quantity measurement rather than a quality measurement.

Dr. MORRELL: Mr. Chairman, the control work we do is certainly not confined to new drugs, and I presume you want me to discuss the whole of it. The number of drugs sold has been estimated from simply counting the number of items advertised or presented for sale in manufacturers' catalogues and distributors' catalogues, so you can see the basis of it. There are about 25,000 or more pharmaceutical products. These are not separate or distinct entities but are pharmaceutical products on the market. The same drug of course may be sold as a tablet, a capsule, in a solution or otherwise, but we would call all of them separate products. I have been told the Canadian pharmaceutical manufacturers association has said that they produce about 75,000 batches a year of all of their products. Then, there are those manufacturers which do not belong to the pharmaceutical manufacturers association, so I am not able to estimate how many batches there would be from them. I would estimate the number is much smaller than the one I have given. As I have said, our function is a police function, and we go to the wholesaler or manufacturer usually, but occasionally to the retail pharmacy and purchase samples of drugs. We bring them back to the laboratory and they are then analyzed. They are analyzed quantitatively.

When we do the testing of narcotics, for example for the R.C.M.P. when they want to know whether it is heroin or another narcotic, we do not have to tell them how much. However, when we analyze a solution or a capsule or a tablet, we would have to know the quantity because it is related to the strength and standard under which the drug is sold. In this case a quantitative analysis is made. There may be several ingredients contained in the drug, so of course a quantitative analysis of all of these ingredients is necessary to know whether the composition at least meets the standard.

Then, there is the second aspect which is required by the regulations: is the drug available to the patient. In other words, if the patient swallows a pill, will it eventually dissolve in his intestines or will it pass right through without solution. There are requirements for the disintegration time of various tablets. A tablet is put through this test to see if it meets the requirements. We do 2,500 to 3,000 analyses of drugs in a year. These of course are aimed at particular areas in which we have reason to be suspicious. They are not just