

DRUG HANDBOOK

BANNED, WITHDRAWN AND RESTRICTED DRUGS IN THE PHILIPPINES



Health Action Information Network
1988

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INTRODUCTION

This is a revised edition of a special issue of *The Drug Monitor*, first published in October 1986 and reprinted twice because of the demand. This revised edition appeared as the October 1987 issue of *The Drug Monitor*, and now has additional changes to explain technical terms. The interest reflects public concern over hazardous drugs and the needs that were mentioned in the first edition of this compilation: information and research.

People need information on drugs, especially those of questionable safety; but there is still not enough information and, instead, too much misinformation, on the issue of "banned" drugs. This compilation is based on directives issued by the Department of Health's Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) on drugs that have been *banned, withdrawn or restricted*. Also included are drugs that were voluntarily withdrawn by manufacturers. Much of the information, ironically, had to be taken from the United Nations which has published two editions (1983, 1987) of a *Consolidated List of Products Whose Consumption And/Or Sale Have Been Banned, Withdrawn, Severely Restricted or Not Approved by Governments*.

This document is also intended as a research paper, to identify some of the problems in the enforcement of government regulations on pharmaceuticals. Our research shows that a number of administrative orders are apparently not being followed, unless new orders have been issued to cancel previous ones. Unfortunately, the bureaucratic maze continues to limit access to vital regulatory documents. There is also the issue of ethics, where drug companies withdraw or reformulate products without necessarily informing the public or even the government regulatory authorities.

The status of drugs in different countries is mentioned for purposes of comparison. In some cases there are double standards, where drugs no longer used in the First World continue to be distributed in the Third World. The multinational drug companies argue that the discrepancy is due to different standards used by national regulatory authorities, which can be a problem for countries such as the Philippines where the Bureau of Food and Drugs seems to be too quick to approve new drugs and too slow to withdraw old drugs shown to have problems of safety or efficacy. In principle, the Philippines tends to follow the US Food and Drug Administration although there are drugs available locally that have been banned or withdrawn in other countries.