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— *The Editor comments* —

SELECTION OF ADVISORS FOR FDA

Considerable support has come from various quarters to the recommendation embodied in the 1962 Citizens Advisory Committee report on the federal Food and Drug Administration which suggested that the agency should have the benefit of outside advisory committees. Such panels of experts would provide counsel to FDA on the highly complex scientific questions which arise from time to time in the course of administering its responsibilities as defined under pertinent sections of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, its amendments and regulations.

We endorse and support this view and urge its early and wide implementation. However, we have noted with some concern that most, if not all, discussion and consideration of this recommendation have been solely in terms of completely medically-oriented advisory bodies which would consider medical questions and problems. Our concern is that—as in the case of the *Commission on Drug Safety* about which we commented in the August issue of THIS JOURNAL—the FDA may overlook the fact that many of the problems which it now faces and will be facing in the immediate future, have pharmaceutical ramifications of major significance.

Consequently, we feel that adequate recognition of this situation is also necessary on the part of FDA officials in order that knowledgeable pharmaceutical scientists might be appointed to the committees considering medical questions. Furthermore, it is our opinion that separate committees, composed *primarily* of scientists from various appropriate disciplines, should be established to study and advise specifically on those medically-related problems about which such panels would most properly be concerned. *The fact must be recognized that many of the present complex questions concerning the safety, efficacy, and quality of drugs are basically concerned with the pharmaceutical sciences, and are only indirectly or incidentally of a medical nature.*

Edward G. Feldmann