

SIR,—In his letter (18 June, p. 1539) replying to Dr. S. E. Browne, Mr. J. P. Christen, Managing Director of Sandoz Products Ltd., fails to justify his company's action in withdrawing lysergic acid diethylamide from responsible practitioners who have been using this drug with the active cooperation of Sandoz for a number of years. Dr. R. A. Sandison introduced L.S.D.-25 to this hospital in 1952 (not 1954 as mentioned by Mr. Christen), and the drug has been in regular use here since that time. Messrs. Sandoz made us a research grant of £3,000, and in 1958 a purpose-built L.S.D. Unit was opened at a cost of £10,000.

At the present time I have 20 patients on treatment and I find no arguments in Mr. Christen's letter which justify the withdrawal without notice of a drug which his company has supplied to us without question for 14 years.

Mr. Christen's main argument seems to be that the good name of his company is being impugned by its association with L.S.D., while at the same time he acknowledges that very little L.S.D.-25 has been used in the United Kingdom and that its distribution has been limited essentially to psychiatrists working in recognized psychiatric institutions and to certain basic research workers. I feel that Sandoz's action in withdrawing the drug without notice and without regard to the condition of the patients on treatment is itself highly unethical. It would surely have been possible for psychiatrists, who have been using the drug for long periods, to have been afforded adequate stocks to tide them over until alternative sources of supply could be arranged. This would have enabled patients to complete their treatment and the good name of the House of Sandoz would have been preserved, whereas one feels that it has now been damaged, not perhaps in the eyes of the public but in the eyes of the profession, who have been treated in such a cavalier and surely unprecedented manner.—I am, etc.,

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