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Johnson & Johnson

JAMES E. BURKE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY 08903

November 3, 1982

The Honorable Richard S. Schweiker
Secretary of Health & Human Services
Washington, D. C. 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I wish to again express the deep appreciation of all Johnson & Johnson employees for the manner in which your office, the Food and Drug Administration and you personally responded to the cyanide poisonings which occurred in the Chicago area on September 29th and 30th. The professionalism of your Department enabled all concerned organizations to move quickly and effectively in the public interest.

Clearly, criminal tampering with Extra-Strength TYLENOL* capsules and other over-the-counter medications has raised new issues for government and the private sector. Critical among these are the Federal policies and packaging modifications necessary to diminish the likelihood of further tampering.

McNeil Consumer Products Company is developing tamper-resistant packaging for its entire product line. Other Johnson & Johnson companies have been directed to conduct packaging evaluations and to implement changes where necessary.

In addition, we have been cooperating with the Proprietary Association and the Food and Drug Administration in their efforts to develop a uniform Federal regulation for tamper-resistant packaging. We believe that regulation is necessary to restore consumer confidence and to provide a rational framework for producing, distributing and selling over-the-counter products on a nationwide basis.

The tampering incidents raise another significant issue which goes beyond the purview of remedial regulation or legislation: Will acts of terrorism be permitted to inhibit participation in the American marketplace? If the answer is "yes," we will have relinquished a significant portion of our economic freedom.

In this context, Johnson & Johnson and McNeil are confronted by a unique challenge. If we were to abandon the TYLENOL brand name or if we were to fail to restore public confidence in TYLENOL, we would be yielding to a new form of economic terrorism. We are determined that this will not happen.

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* Trademark

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Consequently, our efforts to restore TYLENOL are motivated by three distinct, yet related factors:

1. An obligation to continue providing consumers with safe and effective over-the-counter medications which are deserving of their confidence.

2. An obligation to our employees and stockholders to restore a major segment of our over-the-counter business.

3. An obligation to demonstrate that economic terrorism may not be used to destroy the consumer marketplace.

Once again, Mr. Secretary, we express our gratitude for the professionalism of your department and, most particularly, the Food and Drug Administration. Further, we reiterate our resolve to rebuild public confidence in the TYLENOL brand name and to restore those products to their market leadership positions.

Thank you.

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