

Mr. BURROWS. I cannot explain it, except I am sure that the physician is doing what he thinks is in the best interests of his patient, all things considered, including the reputation of the company that supplies the drug that he is prescribing.

Senator NELSON. Is the individual practicing physician better prepared to judge the therapeutic value and quality of the drug than the Medical Letter which does scientific research and has the advice and consultation of distinguished pharmacists, pharmacologists, clinical physicians and all of this information? Is he really better prepared to make that decision than the Medical Letter?

Mr. BURROWS. I think you will have to give to the physician the final responsibility for his patient, and he cannot and should not be expected to pass the buck for his responsibility to the Medical Letter or to any other source, and again I am not reflecting on the Medical Letter. The Medical Letter in absolute terms may be entirely accurate and correct, but in the last analysis, it is the physician that has to decide what he thinks is in the best interests of his patient.

Senator NELSON. Nobody is suggesting, as has been reported in some of the literature, that somebody is going to take away the physician's right. I think what is questioned very seriously by the facts in the Medical Letter is the physician's judgment.

U.S. Vitamin Corp. is a very distinguished drug company in this country, isn't it?

Mr. BURROWS. It certainly is.

Senator NELSON. And it meets USP standards, selling prednisone at \$2.50 a hundred. On what basis would any physician make a judgment that his patient ought to pay \$17.90? What is the basis for making the judgment?

Mr. BURROWS. Again I should not be speaking for the physician, but physicians apparently feel that the product at \$17.90 for their particular patients is worth the difference. Otherwise they would not prescribe it.

Senator NELSON. Isn't it really a fact that we are facing the same problem that Parke, Davis had in trying to get into the retail market but failed to do so? In your statement you said you tried vigorously for 2 years, and you could not meet the competition. Now, your product in your judgment is as good as any one of the other prednisones on the market, isn't it?

Mr. BURROWS. Yes.

Senator NELSON. You testified earlier that you were not aware of any information indicating that there was greater therapeutic value to any other drug than your own?

Mr. BURROWS. That is right.

Senator NELSON. Therefore on what basis does that individual physician make his judgment?

Mr. BURROWS. I would suggest that among your witnesses you will have some individual physicians here, and that they would be in a better position to answer than I would.

Senator NELSON. We have, of course, had some very distinguished physicians, pharmacologists, who say that the ordinary physician does not have any basis for making such a judgment, that he does not have the necessary information. I think this is what we are getting at, that the advertising and the promotion on the retail market is what deter-