

or a small clinic, is informed about drugs. What is the basic, handy source?

How many drugs would the average internist use? Does anybody know?

Mr. STETLER. I suppose anybody could guess on that. I would say, if you had to pick a number, no more than 50 on the average.

Senator NELSON. So depending upon how broad his practice, and what kind of a circumstance——

Mr. STETLER. An average internist would have this experience in an average type of practice.

Senator NELSON. Well, is there any reason why a somewhat limited compendium of a couple of hundred drugs could not be put together that would solve the basic problem for an ordinary practicing physician? I am not sure that the specialist in the hospital is really worrying that much about it.

Mr. STETLER. I think that is one of our points. When people talk about a compendium of 7,000 or 10,000 products, this is what concerns the doctor. He says, "You are giving me a useless book that is going to be several volumes that I cannot use effectively."

I think you are right when you say that realistically we have to think in terms of a more limited type of compendium. Now, I do know that one difficulty between AMA and the type of compendium that has been discussed by Food and Drug is that any book they put out, such as New Drugs, or the one they are contemplating now for publication in 1968, involves comparative analyses between drugs. That is a different kind of a book, and it is really not the kind of compendium that the FDA is talking about. But I think if we could talk, and get the kinks out in terms of a more limited compendium, I think it would have some utility. And I want to make sure you understand we are not adverse to a compendium, depending on what the compendium is for and what it will do.

Senator NELSON. We are in the process of preparing another bill, because I am not satisfied with the one I put in.

Did I understand you to say this morning that you thought it might be of some value to conduct some hearings so that we could afford an opportunity to the physicians practicing in the various fields, as well as others, to comment on the idea of a compendium?

Mr. STETLER. Yes, and industry, and anybody else that is interested. Now, I don't know what might evolve from that, but I think you and Senator Javits have both said if you had your preference you would rather see the doctors or the industry put out such a book. Maybe through the process of these hearings we would end up there. If we did not and ended up with a Government compendium, so be it. But I think that might be the proper forum to get all of these attitudes and opinions out where they can be observed properly.

Senator NELSON. Thank you.

I think it might be of some value, too. This would be one way to get in the record the best testimony we could from the various specialties of medicine as well as industry and government.

Go ahead.

Mr. STETLER. I am at the bottom of page 16, under "Prices."

We have heard a great deal during these hearings about allegedly "high drug prices." The fact is, however, that all available price in-