

ponents of the branch of the service may request a type classification, is that correct?

Captain PFLAG. It means requesting standardization of the product for central procurement vis-a-vis local procurement.

Senator NELSON. That is what I do not understand. In this case we are talking about Titalac, right? Did one of the services or components of one of the services ask that Titalac become the type classification?

Captain PFLAG. Yes. In other words, the Air Force, in this instant case asked that the item be standardized so that it could be procured centrally.

Admiral ETTER. Senator, in that regard, could I add that they did this as a result of their survey, which indicated a large usage of this particular drug in their hospitals to support local practices. It had not been standardized. Therefore, they foresaw a saving to the Government—to the Air Force—if this could be type classified and standardized so that it could be bought in bulk and, therefore, the price to the user—the Air Force, in this instance—would be brought down. It is strictly an economy measure, sir.

Senator NELSON. So that I understand it correctly, the situation in this case or perhaps in many cases, is that at some various hospitals, a particular drug, in this case Titalac, is being locally procured.

Admiral ETTER. Correct.

Senator NELSON. And as you review the usage of drugs in your various installations, you see that a particular drug is being used a number of times.

Admiral ETTER. Right.

Senator NELSON. Then because of that, the service in which the drug is being used, in this case the Air Force, requests a type classification of that particular item under that particular name. At that stage, what is your procedure?

Admiral ETTER. Our procedure then——

Senator NELSON. Once you get a request from the service for a type classification, for example, in this case Titalac——

Admiral ETTER. Then the board writes the essential characteristics, which I have outlined in my statement, and forwards them to the Defense Personnel Center for technical characteristics. When these are approved, they go out on a purchase requirement to the industry.

On the other side of the coin, I can also say that we get quite a number of requests from our hospitals. Most of these—I am familiar because of my Navy connections—are requests for type classification of drugs because they think they are using a lot and it would result in a saving to them. When we canvass the rest of our hospitals, we find this is not the case. It is not in general use, and, therefore, type classification is not requested in this instance, and we ask that they continue to get it on local purchase.

Senator NELSON. In this case, as I understand it, Titalac is the brand name for an antacid.

Admiral ETTER. It is, sir.

Senator NELSON. Do you require the service to submit any clinical evidence as to the superiority of this antacid, for example, to the antacids that would be listed in the U.S. Pharmacopeia or National Formulary?