

Senator NELSON. If at the national level you have made the decision that you wouldn't purchase or stock possibly effective drugs until and unless their classification was changed, what are you doing about purchases of possibly effective drugs at the local level?

Mr. WHITWORTH. This decision was made anticipating further developments. We don't want to be caught with a lot of hoards of stock in our depots. Therefore, this is a first step. There indeed will be additional steps, I am certain, in this area.

Mr. STATLER. Obviously this passes on down to the hospital. They will cut out their supply of possibly effectives. If they find it is not being centrally procured, they will be faced with a decision whether they need it to fill prescriptions for physicians or not, and physicians will be contacted about all other alternative drugs available for use, the more effectives, and so forth having a higher classification.

Senator NELSON. But we really didn't get down to settling this question of the use of possibly effective drugs procured at the local level yet.

Dr. WELLS. I would say at this point in time, Senator Nelson, I don't believe this is settled in our own mind. We are going to have to go at this drug by drug as we face this problem of the possibly effectives and the possible alternates that will be offered.

Mr. STATLER. You see, an official listing of the possibly effectives has not been put out by FDA. As soon as that is available, it will be presented to the executive committee on therapeutic agents for a policy decision as to what restrictions, if any, will be imposed upon use of these drugs.

Senator NELSON. Reports on these drugs appeared in the Federal Register. Isn't that sufficient?

Mr. STATLER. It has been published continually in the Federal Register, different classifications but there is no single compilation of drugs only on the possibly effective list. Most of the ones we have been reviewing in the Federal Register have several classifications.

Senator NELSON. But you don't think that you can simply take them from the Federal Register and act on that?

Mr. STATLER. There is such a backlog of Federal Register publications and, of course, there are 700 more to be published by June 30th, that we feel it would duplicate a lot of efforts that are being made by different Government agencies on this, the one official agency recognized—FDA is the one to provide all Federal agencies with this single compilation. As Dr. Edwards testified the other day, he feels that they are the one source of most knowledgeable information on the relative efficacy of the drugs. We have asked him to provide this information to us and they are in the process of doing this.

Senator NELSON. Do you know of any instance of a classification by the National Academy of Science-National Research Council that has been rejected by the FDA?

Mr. STATLER. Not rejected. They have made a decision that they have published—it is either in one of the four categories of classification. However, there are some changes. By this we mean, for example, ineffective listing. We had attempted to get the ineffective