

million, although initially the savings will be around \$89 million. In addition, this policy would have a beneficial impact on drug pricing throughout the country.

In November 1974 the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare published its proposed Maximum Allowable Cost regulations in the Federal Register, which also provided for a 60-day period of comments from the public, a period later extended for 30 days. These comments bring to mind the book written some years ago by Richard Harris which described the efforts of the late Senator Estes Kefauver to bring order and reason into the pharmaceutical field. Mr. Harris' book was entitled "The Real Voice", a reference to a statement of President Woodrow Wilson to the effect that it is not often that the real voice of the people is heard clearly in Washington, D.C. This observation is highly relevant in considering most of the responses which were received by the Department of HEW in response to the publication of the Maximum Allowable Cost regulations in the Federal Register. While such comments are generally expected to reflect the real voice of the people, an analysis of the more than 2,300 responses by our subcommittee staff indicates that, at least in this instance, that expectation was not realized. There is little doubt that most of these responses do not represent the real voice of the people but constitute a well orchestrated, highly organized campaign by the drug industry to abort the program before it begins.

The most obvious examples were hundreds of form letters, which were prepared by various organizations to support their own position or were inspired by the industries' detail men, and were sent in by individuals, chiefly medical practitioners and pharmacists, as if they were an original contribution. This transparent tactic is, fortunately, easily recognized as not representing the independent judgment of an individual. While there were several such form letters, one in particular is worth mentioning. It seems from an organization known as the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons. This organization was established by a group of doctors who left the American Medical Association, which, they claimed, was too liberal.

Hundreds of copies of this form letter were received from all over the United States. Yet when some of the persons who had sent this form letter were contacted to discuss its content, they were unfamiliar with the substance of the letter and in some instances denied any knowledge of it. Some claimed that it was an original letter, written by them, and were crestfallen to find that their "original letter" had been received in identical form, word for word and letter for letter, from hundreds of other persons. Quite clearly, although the submission of such a form letter may significantly, in general, opposition to the proposed rules, it does not represent an independent judgment of the issues on the part of the sender and cannot be given much weight.

Many other form letters were received, and are open to the same objections. In some instances when form letters were not used, the results were more interesting, though no less nonobjective. For example, a pediatric surgeon from Fort Worth cautioned: "Your proposed rule to fix drug prices and force substitution of drugs is another example of totalitarian bureaucracy but there will be a day of