

ature, and for the first time there is now to be an investigation in England to find out, if possible, the number of women who have this problem. There are, undoubtedly, thousands of unreported cases of infertility following withdrawal of oral contraceptives. During the first 3 months after stopping oral contraceptives, most women have a marked decrease in their fertility; and, according to a survey which I made recently among a large group of post-partum patients, approximately 50 percent of the women failed to conceive within this 3-month period of time. This is in contrast to a survey I made 15 years ago, which was prior to the advent of the oral contraceptives, in which 53 percent of the women became pregnant within the first month in which they were exposed.

Inasmuch as it has been shown, and is universally recognized, that a large percentage of women do not menstruate for a minimum of 6 weeks following the discontinuation of the oral contraceptives, and that many patients are nonovulatory for 3 or more months following stopping the pill, it is not understandable to me how any scientific minded individual can still proclaim, in the light of these facts what I have previously stated, that fertility is not affected by the pill.

Senator NELSON. May I interrupt a moment, Doctor?

Dr. WHITELAW. Yes.

Senator NELSON. I noted a quotation in a book by Dr. Kistner, who will be testifying here tomorrow. I do not know whether these figures agree or disagree with yours, and maybe they were not measuring the exact same thing. But let me quote. He states in his book on page 85 in respect to women who stop the pill and attempt to conceive, this quotation is there, I think it is not out of context:

Only a minority of women have difficulty in conceiving within a reasonable time.

That is after stopping the pill.

Clinical studies have shown that 75 percent of women who desire pregnancy conceive within three cycles after stopping the pill, and 90 percent are pregnant within 1 year.

Dr. WHITELAW. Well, I disagree with him on the figures, but also there is one loophole. What happens to the other 10 percent who are infertile? He doesn't, nobody talks about these women. What about the 10 percent? Ninety percent conceive after they stop the pill within a year. But any woman who does not become pregnant after a year is infertile; and, second, the rate, as I said, is lower. The investigations that have been done have not been personal investigations done by physicians in interrogating a whole group.

I interrogated a thousand patients personally myself on this survey. Now, when you are going to have a group of doctors throughout the United States answer questionnaires and send them in to a central bureau, and that is going to be your statistics, it is only as good as the individual doctor who sends the report in.

So, first of all, I question it very much, just the same as, although Dr. Kistner is one of the outstanding authorities, Dr. Kistner told me at the time I first made my report, that he never saw a case of amenorrhea following it, and a short time later the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology made a survey in which 42 percent of all the physicians in the American College said that they had seen amenorrhea, but Dr. Kistner did not. So I mean, I just disagree with that.