

Senator McINTYRE. It was, of course, not necessarily indicative of the other conclusions reached by the task forces?

Dr. KISTNER. That is true.

Senator McINTYRE. There was some testimony previously, I am sure you had an opportunity to hear, Doctor, based on the colloquy between the Chairman and Dr. Hertz, indicating that there appears to be some inconsistency between the overall conclusion contained in the full committee report and some of those in the task force reports.

Moreover, while what you say may be technically true, true with respect to the overall conclusion in the committee report, I believe a careful reading will show that by the term "safe" the committee meant only that with the present state of knowledge the benefits of the pill appear to outweigh the risks and to call for further studies on many of these problems. Doctor, in view of these facts do you not feel you may be overstating the committee's conclusions somewhat.

Dr. KISTNER. I think I just stated the conclusion. I didn't try to overstate it.

Senator McINTYRE. Well, you have heard the discussion here about the phrase "safe" within the meaning of the legislation.

Dr. KISTNER. I simply adopt what the committee, what the Advisory Committee, stated, that it was safe in relationship to the other risks that one might incur. I have no reason for thinking otherwise.

Senator McINTYRE. Let me read you the first line of your statement. "Although the pill was declared safe in 1969 by a task force of the Advisory Committee, the pill," you say, "was declared safe"; you separate the word "safe" from the entire context; what we had here was a very interesting discussion of just what this word "safe," as the chairman points out, is. We apparently have moved since 1938, when this law was passed, to a new definition of "safe." Would you not agree, Mr. Chairman?

Senator NELSON. I don't know what the law is frankly. That is why I raised the question.

Senator McINTYRE. We know that. I do think that it is an overstatement to say that this committee declared the pill to be safe without qualification, because they said within the meaning and the intent of the law, the legislation.

Dr. KISTNER. I would just like to make one statement. I don't think any medication is safe. We must consider that any medication that the human ingests or takes by injection is not 100-percent safe. People have died from aspirin or from penicillin or antibiotics. As you note I have "safe" in quotes in the first line so I think we will all agree that nothing in the field of medication is safe.

Now, someone before indicated the very extensive list of contraindications, side effects, et cetera, that have to do with the pill. They are listed in the package insert and in the PDR, the Physicians' Desk Reference, and I just happened to clip out one; one of the drugs which I won't mention is a tranquilizer. It is the number one selling agent; it even out sells the pill in the United States, and the list of side effects, adverse reactions, are fantastic.

Now, the question arises in my mind, as a practitioner of medicine, that when I write a prescription for this item, as I did yesterday, to a woman, should I clip out this package insert or should I read the