

Senator DOLE. You have apparently done research. Are you now able to reach any strong conclusions with reference to the pill based on these 21? Or are you still in the process of more research?

Dr. CLARK. I think all of us who are interested in this problem, Senator, are in the process of a great deal more investigation. I do think, though, that the conclusions that are listed on page 9 are ones about which I feel rather strongly. I am confident that in these cases, there are strokes whose manifestations and whose apparent pathology in the surviving cases, in which it has to be revealed largely by methods such as arteriography, and whose actual pathology in fatal cases suggests that there is a rather different mechanism at work from the ordinary sort of stroke, and that this mechanism seems to be related to changes in the blood-clotting, and possibly blood vessel walls. Since both of these are known to be affected by various fractions of the oral contraceptive agents, I believe there is reason to believe that these strokes may be related to the taking of the pill.

Senator DOLE. Are you ready at this time to kill the pill?

Dr. CLARK. Senator, I am not here to kill or to revivify anything. As I told you, I am a neurologist. I am interested in these strokes. I can conceive it within my purview to try to find out as much about them as I can. The question of using various means of controlling the population is a much larger one that would have to be dealt with by experts in that field and not by me.

Senator DOLE. My point is that there has been a strong ratio of anti-pill witnesses, maybe not by design but by fact, about seven to one. I assume that there will be a balanced hearing. If not, we should try to balance it with other witnesses, because I think there are probably two sides. There must be certain advantages to the pill other than avoiding pregnancy.

I think we probably have terrified a number of women around the country. I have not talked to anyone who said they were terrified, but I have read the hearings of last week, and I would guess they may be taking two pills now—first a tranquilizer and then the regular pill—because of our erudite investigation.

Looking at the pill on balance, then, do you think the disadvantages, based on a study of 21, which is not a very large group, outweigh possible advantages? How many are going to have a stroke who do not take the pill?

Dr. CLARK. I think you are really asking a question there, Senator, which requires several answers. This would be a very simple problem if this were the only known contraceptive agent. If we were to say to the female population—and the male population, who have a certain interest in this also—if we were to say, it is either give yourself up to reckless abandon or take the pill, the question would be much simpler, then, would it not? Because then it would be the hazards of one agent against another.

This is not entirely the case. There are a very considerable number of agents which will control reproduction. One cannot, I think, take out any one of these and look at it exclusively as if it were the only means of controlling reproduction.

Unfortunately, for my sins, I have been on a fair number of panels about this problem in the last year or two. Sooner or later, there is