

constantly in millions of women whose physiologic margins of safety have been narrowed in a multitude of ways.

Dr. Wynn and Dr. Doar were the first to point out the significance of lipid changes and carbohydrate metabolic changes, and I think it is generally agreed by at least many of the experts on both sides of the dispute that the metabolic disease potentials are perhaps the most serious of all as a group, and that doctors are not yet told about the comprehensiveness of this worry and about the ultimate potential danger.

The chairman of this Advisory Committee perhaps with the concurrence of some of the committee, has arbitrarily presumed to decide what is safe for millions of women. He has done so knowing that his information is incomplete, that documentation of dangers of the pill has been growing steadily and cumulatively for 10 years, that the most serious problems may be emerging only now.

In making that declaration of safe, he has known that his language would be utilized to the fullest extent in further promotion of the oral contraceptive drugs. For, regardless of all else in the report, the word "safe" is all the drug companies needed out of it.

That completes my summary, Senator Nelson.

(The complete prepared statement of Dr. Williams follows:)

STATEMENT OF J. HAROLD WILLIAMS, M.D., LL.B.

For almost twenty years I have been a physician, although I have not practiced clinical medicine since 1960. In that year I was admitted to the California State Bar, and have written several books for lawyers and physicians, and have practiced law since that time. My law practice is devoted almost exclusively to representing patient-plaintiffs in malpractice cases. My chief concern is for justice in all aspects of the doctor-patient relationship. I try to perceive intrusions, from any direction and from any source, into that relationship. Trust and respect, which of course should be mutual, between doctor and patient is—or should be—the cornerstone of good medical care.

Drugs are essential to modern medicine, but the power of the doctor's prescription prerogative sometimes is a serious intrusion into the doctor-patient relationship. Indeed, that power is so awesome that, I fear, many physicians do not fully comprehend its ramifications when they put pen to pad. Sometimes the physician is unsuspectingly caught in the middle, between his conscientious desire to serve his patients and intensive promotional pressure by drug manufacturers. The sad saga of The Pill is one of the most phenomenal examples of such an entrapment.

My interest in the safety of The Pill became acute just 14 months ago. At that time, November 1968, I was associated as co-counsel in a lawsuit against a manufacturer of oral contraceptives. As I delved into the subject of The Pill's safety, I was amazed at how much information there was, already in the medical literature, about the dangers of oral contraceptives. By May 1969 the assembled facts and documents, including material not theretofore disclosed to either the medical profession or the public, impelled me to write a book. Hopefully, it might help alert physicians and the public to the Pill's dangers, and it might help avert similar disasters in the future.

As I point out some of the things that have happened in the advertising and promotion of The Pill, please bear in mind that the average practicing physician relies upon the drug companies for much, if not all, of his information about drugs. He may read some of the articles in medical journals which report adverse reactions to certain drugs, but by and large he does not have time, nor is he motivated, to read all journals, to sift the poor articles from the good, and to correlate all the information. Obviously, he cannot repeat the research that has been done. Usually he looks to the most convenient central source of information, the Physicians Desk Reference, a compendium of drug company advertising. He assumes that the drug companies are honest and that the F.D.A. has been a vigilant watchdog to protect him and his patients.