

Could you explain to us what this means in layman's terms?

Dr. SALHANICK. Well, the problems of finding people who would be most susceptible to the metabolic effects of the agents are considerable.

Now, if one accepts this as a general principle which is generally true—namely, people who have some difficulty, say, with hypertension may be more susceptible to the pill than many others, many people who have subclinical diabetes, for example, given the pill may show up with diabetic changes. People who have had the compromises of liver function will show up with abnormalities or more abnormalities of the liver, and these are in contrast with women who are absolutely normal, and since the changes are small very often they cannot be detected in absolutely normal women. Does that answer it?

Senator MCINTYRE. Yes. Thank you very much, Doctor.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DOLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I wonder if you would want to elaborate on what you said on page 5. You indicate that you feel we should pursue a middle ground in some areas. For some couples, another type of contraception must be employed or should be employed if desirable. What is this intermediate course that you refer to? I am not certain I understand just what you may have in mind.

Dr. SALHANICK. Well, among all the alternatives which are presented to us are those ranging from discontinuing the use of all contraceptive pills to doing nothing. I certainly do not advocate discontinuing the use of all contraceptive pills. I think it is too important in our society at this time.

On the other hand, I think the point has been made that pills which have excessive dosages really do not have very many advantages over those of low dosages. So that this is one compromise that can be made.

I think another intermediate ground is to institute a program of investigation of not only the types which are going on now, but also those which would include surveillance of the people who have had the pills for long periods of time at high dosages, people with various kinds of abnormalities, to start with.

I think an educational program of both patients and physicians might be helpful in this. I think some patients are more sensitive to the effects than others, and I think those patients should be found and they, as a small group, could be eliminated from the usage of the pill.

So these are compromise measures as we learn more, and I think these courses should be taken.

Senator DOLE. Do you have any suggestions—there was testimony yesterday about the role of the FDA, and Dr. Goldzieher, I believe, indicated they were too rigid in their policies.

Do you have any suggestions on the proper role of the Food and Drug Administration and with reference to the very thing you suggest in your statement, more research?

Dr. SALHANICK. Well, it is difficult for me to answer the question as to the role of the FDA in research because I just do not know the structure or resources which they have for that.

I do think that they have responsibility of informing the patients and the physicians, such as has been cited in the letter which was