

Senator NELSON. Are you talking about what was testified to here, or what was reported?

Dr. CONNELL. I am talking about what was testified to here, out of which came reporting. I am talking about both of these aspects.

Senator NELSON. What I am trying to clarify in my own mind is whether your criticism is that these distinguished people testified as to their view about the pill. Some of them have reservations, some of them presented scientific, accumulated scientific knowledge.

Do you think all the facts are not being presented, or that in reporting the facts in the press, some of this has been lost? That is what I am trying to get at.

Dr. CONNELL. I think that timewise and balancewise, we have seen more emphasis placed on the disturbing negative aspects of what medical evaluation has unearthed than on the positive aspects of the benefits, which have also been described here. It is a matter of balance.

Senator NELSON. Do you not think that may appear to be so, because the news for 10 years has been an almost unqualified endorsement in the lay press, and suddenly, for the first time, reports are being made by distinguished authorities expressing reservations, and therefore, it is not news to report that the pill is perfectly safe, as has been reported for several years, but it is news that distinguished scientists are expressing their reservations and concern about it? Is that not the case?

Dr. CONNELL. That may possibly appear to you to be the case, but I have heard these same distinguished scientists report precisely this same information for years. Therefore, I do not see wherein the newness necessarily arises. I have been hearing these same men and many others present similar data at meetings for many years. Therefore, to me, this does not represent anything new.

Senator NELSON. I think some of it may probably be 2 years old. It is sort of like chloramphenicol. For years, the American Medical Association warned against the misprescribing of chloramphenicol. When Dr. Goddard came in and testified that, "I am at wit's end on how to dissuade the medical profession from prescribing chloramphenicol for non-indicated cases," it became news. When Dr. Damehek appeared from Mount Sinai Hospital to testify that in his opinion, 90 percent of the patients were receiving chloramphenicol for non-indicated cases, it became news. I received all kinds of letters from doctors then, saying, you are driving a good drug off the market. You are disturbing my patients. The reason they were disturbed was that they were finding, from the best medical evidence, that 90 percent of the patients were getting chloramphenicol for non-indicated cases.

Now you have the situation where all the news has been positive and rosy about the pill, with little or no reporting on known side effects from the pills for years. But now even Dr. Hellman, chairman of the FDA committee is saying, "I have reservations." He cannot say it is perfectly safe. He says, "I am uneasy" about the pill.

I would think it ought to be news when the man who directs the report for the FDA says, I am uneasy about the pill; we cannot say