

some of the experts who have appeared before our committee. But again, yours is based on a statistical study of some magnitude. Can you elaborate on this one point? This is the one area where we have found some general agreement among witnesses.

Dr. MEIER. Yes, I am sorry to disturb the general unanimity of all parties, but I must stick to my conviction that on these retrospective studies, although important, and as I say, prudence may require us to assume that they mean what they appear to mean, still for the reasons I detailed in the letter and alluded to earlier are not considered by me to be convincing evidence that the relationship exists. In this statement, I have said that the pill has not been shown to be associated with unacceptable risks, and that incorporates what I have just said, that it has not in my mind been proved that the pill causes thromboembolic disease. It also embodies some assessment of judgment that I read on the part of many people that if, as has been estimated, there are three thromboembolic deaths per hundred thousand women on the pill for a year, this rate, although regrettable, is low compared to many other risks and comparable or lower than some risks, which we take for comparable reasons of convenience, even if that risk is real, it is not necessarily an unacceptable risk.

Mr. GORDON. How about the morbidity rate of one in 2,000? Would you consider that—

Dr. MEIER. That certainly would have to be weighed, and here, although I have been ready to state opinions on almost everything, I must admit that I am not ready to state an opinion on that, whether that is or is not an unacceptable risk.

Mr. GORDON. Well, whether it is acceptable or unacceptable would depend on the patient, would it not? Is not the patient entitled to know that one in 2,000 women develop blood clots serious enough to be hospitalized?

Dr. MEIER. Emphatically, as I tried to indicate in my testimony, I feel very strongly that the patient has a right to know and I would like to see further steps taken to insure that that right is accommodated.

Senator DOLE. Thank you very much. The bell indicates that we have to go. We appreciate very much your testimony.

The hearing is recessed until 9:30 tomorrow morning in this room.

(Whereupon, at 4:15 p.m., the committee adjourned until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, February 25, 1970.)