

I nor my organization, particularly the National Medical Committee and its capable medical staff, takes lightly.

I assume that the primary consideration for these hearings is the health of the American female. I interpret your more specific goals to be twofold—to have potential users of the pill forewarned of its risks; and to make the medical profession more cognizant of their responsibility in its prescription.

Senator NELSON. May I interrupt for just a moment to add that one of the other stated reasons is to attempt to get knowledge and understanding of the whole issue so that we may get from Congress larger appropriations for further needed research in the field of birth control devices and family planning.

Dr. GUTTMACHER. I applaud that, sir.

Unfortunately, I assume that you share my apprehension that there have been undesirable side effects from these hearings, and as you know full well, they have created a sense of great alarm. Certainly, nothing fundamentally has changed in respect to hazards from the pill since these hearings began, and well-informed physicians found nothing revealed by the hearings which was not previously recorded in a published literature or presented at scientific meetings.

The Second Report on the Oral Contraceptives, issued by the Obstetrical and Gynecological Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration was published just 6 months ago. It was based on 189 references to the current literature and covered the same data covered in the January hearings of this body.

In many instances these data were written by many of the witnesses who appeared before you.

Now, I need not extol the competence of the Food and Drug Administration Advisory Committee, because I think you know full well that it was picked from the most representative and competent people in this whole area. It is made up of very respected physicians, other scientists, and statisticians, and no doubt you know, but I would like to emphasize once more, their final statement in their recent report, which says when these potential hazards and the value of the drugs are balanced, the committee finds the ratio of benefit to risk sufficiently high to justify the designation safe within the intent of the legislation.

In mid-January, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists made the statement that it "considers that the oral contraceptives are accepted therapeutic methods," and they deplored the inaccurate and sensational reports concerning the drugs.

At the January 28th meeting of my own very distinguished medical committee, which forms the National Medical Committee of the Planned Parenthood Federation, our physicians went over the data and they came up with the report that the committee continues to recommend the prescription of oral contraceptives.

Of course, the reason I quote these authorities is not to whitewash the pill, but I have a compelling interest to place this matter in proper perspective, in the hope, which I am sure you will agree with, of stemming unwarranted and dangerous alarm.

The pill, in my opinion and that of my colleagues, is an important prophylaxis, perhaps the most important, against one of the gravest