

Senator DOLE. I agree with Senator Nelson that the little booklet called "So Close to Nature" leaves something to be desired. It may not be very realistic at least in the first few sentences that the Chairman read from that document.

Dr. GUTTMACHER. Of course, this testimony of mine has been so interrupted, I really do not know where to take it up, but we have not discussed two things, I believe.

One is that for certain individuals, particularly certain married couples, the pill has emancipated them from the onus and chore of contraception. I think that, I trust that you gentlemen have read these excerpts from this letter which I received, which moved me very much, because I think this woman puts in rather simple English statements which I would have difficulty putting in more complicated English.

To them, to her marriage, the pill is almost a saving factor.

Senator NELSON. I want to just finish the discussion of this pamphlet. One of the issues we are concerned about is informed consent. The question raised here is, as a matter of public policy, are we entitled to withhold information that is known about a prescription drug which gets the stamp of approval of the Federal agency under a statute passed by Congress? There are all kinds of complicated questions.

We debated on the floor of the Senate at great length the antibalistic missile, which is an incredibly complicated mechanical device, which probably nobody in the Congress could explain from a technical standpoint. Should that be discussed although it is complicated and the public may not be able to understand it, or should it not?

This is the kind of question we are dealing with here. Do we have a right not to have public hearings and not to make the information available on the ground that all the press may not carry it the way some people think they ought to carry it? Or that it is too complicated for the public to understand? Is this the kind of decision that we have a right to make, to withhold knowledge developed by the Federal Government itself through research and studies and conferences like the NIH, or should these matters be made a matter of public knowledge, counting, as it seems we always have to do, upon the ultimate good judgment of the public to come to a reasonable conclusion?

Very frequently, in a free country, people do not come to reasonable conclusions. That is no reason for substituting an arbitrary system such as you have in other countries, where you tell them what you want them to know, no more and no less. This is one of the risks, it seems to me of having a free society in which there are many risks.

This is the fundamental question raised here from time to time. I am one of those who happens to favor planned parenthood. I would like to see the perfect pill. I think the rapidly multiplying intrusion of human beings upon the limited resources of the planet is a catastrophe already. And I think there is not any question but what, with our present situation, the United States is overpopulated now with 200 million people, because we have demonstrated our incapacity to dispose of the waste of 200 million people. What will happen when we have 300 million?