

Senator DOLE. One of the points Dr. Tyler raises is the need for more funds for research. We are generally in accord on this point on the Committee.

In his rather lengthy statement, he questions whether the hearings really serve a public good. In discussing that, there is a question I would like to ask. He says that the knowledgeable physician has likely not been negligent in advising his patients of the potential hazards—some of the hazards you have discussed.

On the other hand, no one will deny that a certain percentage of doctors, although possibly a very small percentage, have not been as conscientious about their prescribing of the pills and examination of patients as they might have been. For these physicians, at least, and for their patients undoubtedly their purpose of the hearings has been accomplished. But an important question is: Has this been *over-accomplished*? It is one thing to make sure women are aware of these statistical risks of thromboembolism, but it is another to frighten millions of women into worrying about a relationship between carcinoma and use of the pills when no such relationship has as yet been established.

Do you agree with the statement that there has been a relationship established between the use of the pills and carcinoma?

Dr. CUTLER. No, I said in my testimony there has been no definite evidence of that etiological relationship.

Senator DOLE. Dr. Tyler goes on,

On the basis of comments I've heard from patients recently in our family planning clinics, I am convinced that these hearings have led many women and their husbands to believe that all contraceptive pills cause cancer. As a matter of fact, I suspect the hearings have even led many physicians to believe that pills cause cancer. The fact of the matter is that no one knows whether or not pills cause cancer and it will undoubtedly take many years before anyone does know, assuming a possible relationship can eventually be proved or disproved.

Do you agree with that statement, no one does know if there is a relationship between the use of the pill and cancer?

I want to emphasize that point, because the first headline I read about these hearings was "Pill may Cause Cancer." I assume that you agree with that headline, it may or it may conceivably cause something else. But how do we give comfort to some of the people who have been frightened because of what may have been said or not said at the hearings? Is there anyway we can, except through more research?

Dr. CUTLER. Yes, of course. I am completely concerned about the fear that can be caused and to some extent has been caused among women with respect to cancer. As I said in my testimony, there is such tremendous fear about the disease itself that the mere mention of it in a newspaper or anywhere will cause alarm. However, I do not agree that because of that we should ignore these hazards.

These hazards are very definite. They have a considerable background and there is reason for concern. I hope very much that the news media will fully appreciate the importance of accurate reporting on this sensitive subject. I would hope that they will state that there is no definite evidence of a causative relationship between the pill and breast cancer, but that there is sufficient reason for concern, and I hope that they will point out that women with a positive history of breast cancer in the family should avoid the pill.