

Forgetfulness in the area of birth control is particularly striking in women and is attributed to their underlying ambivalence about pregnancy. (Incidentally, leaving the pill out in the open so as not to forget it has led to numerous child poisonings.)

Senator DOLE. Do we have some evidence on how many cases you know of?

Dr. RATNER. Of accidental poisoning, child poisoning, it was the number two cause 2 years ago in Missouri, and it has a high incidence in the United States.

Senator DOLE. From the pill?

Dr. RATNER. Yes—child poisoning. Now, remember, the problem is that the woman does not want to forget to take the pill. And there are underlying psychological reasons why she has ambivalence about taking the pill, so she always keeps it where she can see it, which means the child can see it, and so this became the number two cause of child poisoning reported in the Government literature and reported in the newspapers and it came as a cause—

Senator DOLE. Not to hold you up, but have there been numerous child poisonings because of the pill? If you will just insert some evidence on that, it would be helpful.²

Dr. RATNER. 2. Presently publicized effectiveness rates are derived primarily from the original pills marketed in the early sixties. These pills are four to 10 times stronger than the reduced dosage pills. In the hope of reducing the so-called side-effects (pharmacologically speaking the so-called side effects are equally the effects of the pill as the desired effects), the antioviulatory effect of the pill has been reduced two thirds.

Mr. DUFFY. Would you supply that cite? You left it blank.

Dr. RATNER. I would be glad to tend to it.³

Obviously, the latter pill cannot be as effective a contraceptive as the former pill with the high antioviulatory effect. The British Committee on Safety of Drugs, in contrast to those promoting the pill in the United States, has alerted British physicians to the decreased effectiveness of the lower dosage pills (M.H. p. 84).

3. In field use, effectiveness of the pill is sharply reduced because of the high dropout rate associated primarily with undesirable effects and medical complications. Authoritative national surveys (M.H. p. 44) report that one out of five women who were on the pill and went off it state they will "never use it again." In the age group 30 to 34, one out of 3.6 users state they will never use the pill again. Overall studies show that because of dissatisfactions, approximately 30 percent discontinue the pill by the end of the first year and about 40 percent by the end of 2 years in this country. The notion, therefore, that the solution to population growth is the pill is fallacious. Medical complications prevent it from achieving high acceptance rates particularly in undeveloped countries. Although Dr. Guttmacher, in last week's testimony, singled out Singapore as one foreign country where "the oral contraceptive is used exclusively" by the health ministry, he was in error. With the Singapore example, he apparently was trying to make the point that the pill is necessary for world population control. The fact of the matter is that in Sin-

² See reference 2 of Bibliography.

³ See reference 3 of Bibliography.