

She challenges the claim of Planned Parenthood and others, "that the Government should give highest priority to ghetto-oriented family-planning programs designed to deliver birth control services to the poor and uneducated, among whom, it is claimed, there are at least 5 million women who are in need of such federally sponsored birth-control assistance."¹⁰

This latter figure that 5 million indigent people want birth control but can't obtain it is one of the most unscientific estimates ever foisted on the American people. It becomes the excuse by which the pill is exploited among the indigent. The pill is actually a rich man's contraceptive since it needs so much medical followup and ready access to a doctor. Life for the poor is miserable enough without adding to it the miserable and depressing complications associated with the pill.

I have spoken as a public health physician who is deeply concerned about the current trend in this country to manipulate, rather than enlighten, people. Mass prescription and misleading slogans are no substitute for honest health education. I am concerned that moneyed interests play such an influential role in the whole spectrum of mass education.

This is an era of consumer protection. The woman has a right to protection from manipulation and victimization. No right is more firmly established than the right of each patient to informed consent to a prescription directed at her body. Knowledge sufficient for enlightened consent is a moral, medical, and legal right to which malpractice suits testify. The classic statement of this right is found in Plato's *Laws* where Plato distinguishes between the physician who took care of slaves, and the one who took care of freemen.

Whereas, the slave doctor prescribed "as if he had exact knowledge" and gave orders "like a tyrant," the doctor of freemen went "into discourse with the patient and friends" and would not "prescribe for him until he has first convinced him."

I, therefore, congratulate the committee for treating the American woman as a free person rather than a slave.

Senator DOLE. First, I would like to insert in the record an excerpt of a letter which appears written by you and answered by Mr. Ryder and Mr. Westoff, in the February 24, 1967, issue of *Science*.

Dr. RATNER. Yes. What about it?

Senator DOLE. I am going to put it in the record.

Dr. RATNER. Thank you very much.

Senator DOLE. You read it; in fact, you wrote it.

Dr. RATNER. I was modest about putting it in. Thank you very much.

(The document above-referred to, follows:)

[From *Science* 155, 951, Feb. 24, 1967]

LETTERS—ORAL CONTRACEPTION DROPOUT RATE

Because the Ryder-Westoff study of oral contraception usage ("Use of oral contraception in the United States, 1965," 9 Sept., p. 1199) is so widely quoted as an index of extensive pill acceptance, the following datum from their report

¹⁰ See reference 10 of Bibliography.