

and will take the lead in seeing that adequate research is undertaken to answer these questions.

In the meantime, Mr. Chairman, I am happy to learn that FDA will take action to see that the known and potential side effects and complications of these products are brought directly to the attention of potential users so that a woman will be able to make a rational decision as to whether she wants to use this or some other method of contraception.

I believe this action is a direct result of these hearings, and for this, if for no other reason, I believe the hearings have served a very worthwhile purpose.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator NELSON. Let me say that I do not think there is any question from the testimony that there has been a failure to have the kind of broad-scale studies starting back in 1960 that we should have had. Where the responsibility lies for that, I am not sure, but I do want to say Commissioner Edwards, who has only been in office for a few months, has moved vigorously in this area and has taken an historic action that no previous Commissioner before has ever taken, that it certainly required courage to do so, because I am familiar with the medical politics involved.

I think it was a sound decision and I want to commend the Commissioner for his actions on this issue, and I am satisfied from what I know of him that he understands and will lend his strong support to necessary research that I think every expert recognizes ought to be done and should have been commenced earlier.

So I commend the Commissioner and thank you for appearing here today.

Dr. EDWARDS. Thank you.

Senator DOLE. Mr. Chairman, I have a brief statement. First of all, I share the view expressed by the chairman; we certainly appreciate the aggressive interest demonstrated by Dr. Edwards.

Mr. Chairman, I assume this will be the final day of the pill hearings, is that correct?

Senator NELSON. Unless there is some vacuum in the record that ought to be filled in order to have a balanced and complete record.

Senator DOLE. That would be helpful, but we can assume that perhaps this is the final day. Perhaps some reflection is in order.

There is some difficulty in my mind in trying to place the hearings within the subcommittee's jurisdiction. The chairman has expressed his idea of the hearings' purpose. The desire to know whether the American public has been properly informed is admirable, but it lacks germaneness to the subcommittee's mandate.

Regardless of the authority under which we are pursuing this investigation, we must recognize that the impact has been substantial. We have at least belatedly seen some elements of balance established for the record, if not in the publicity surrounding the hearings. Headlines such as "Pill Takers Held More Cancer Prone" were the hallmarks of January's hearings. Testimony raising questions casting doubt dominated the hearings and the headlines. Risks predominated over benefits. Fears were emphasized over effectiveness.