

The interval between the January and February hearings began to show the dimensions of the reaction. It is accurate to say that these hearings may not have originated the fear evidenced the past few months. Nonetheless, these hearings have amplified the doubts and uncertainties the American woman has had about oral contraceptives. Another unfortunate aspect of these hearings is that no new knowledge has been disclosed. Several witnesses have related that all of the "disclosures" made are well known by the medical profession.

The witnesses appearing at the February hearings have been less prone toward total emphasis on the dangers of oral contraceptives. The headlines have reflected this trend and perhaps some assurance has been provided to America's 8.5 million pilltaking women.

Dr. Edwards' testimony has been especially valuable in establishing a broad and balanced record. And certainly, the overview he provided brings a sense of perspective to bear on the issues and the questions we are dealing with as we conclude these hearings.

Hopefully, some of the unanswered questions may be answered quickly. I believe the American woman is entitled to know. She is perhaps frightened and confused as a result of these hearings, and hopefully, this committee will now carry on quickly through some written findings or written report as suggested by Senator Javits, and hopefully this will be of some assistance, not only to the American public, but to Dr. Edwards and the FDA.

Senator NELSON. I will not take the time to respond, except to say that although very little of the information presented here or perhaps none of it was new to the experts in the field, quite obviously a lot of it was not known to the practicing physician who prescribes the pill and the public which consumes it. And the fact that the Commissioner himself recognized the necessity for producing a package insert which I announced as one of the purposes of the hearings last year, I think amply justifies the hearings.

The people of the country are entitled to know the facts about the pill, and since two-thirds of the doctors were not informing the user, this package insert will perform that function.

I happen to be one of those who believes that the public is intelligent enough to receive and evaluate and make decisions on information that the Government has. And this was all Government information, unpublicized previously.

It is a little bit like Laos. A lot of people in the Pentagon do not want us to know what is going on in Laos because it would frighten us, but I think the public ought to know.

That concludes the hearings.

Senator DOLE. Mr. Chairman, I certainly do not have any quarrel with the public's right to know, but they could have known without sensational publicity had we held executive hearings. We would not have frightened 3 or 4 million women. There would not be a group described yesterday as "unwanted Nelson babies" down the pike about 7 or 8 months from now.

Senator NELSON. Thank you.

(The subsequent information submitted by the Food and Drug Administration follows:)