

Combines Investigation Act

think it illustrates very graphically what is wrong with the advertising industry in this country and why we need the amendments before the House today. With regard to lipstick, which is the biggest product in the cosmetics industry, the documentary program through its research found that a lipstick made from any one of over 400 standard formulas for lipstick came out of the factory ready for market at a cost of between 10 cents and 30 cents, depending on how fancy was the container. Then on its way to market it is taxed, distributed, advertised and then retailed, each handler taking another slice of the cost to the consumer. By the time it gets into a woman's purse, the price is seven to ten times the price at the factory pick-up door, and 100 times the cost of the material in the tube. This, of course, is a fad industry; we notice this from the kind of advertising that goes on in the cosmetics industry.

This advertising is, of course, done at great expense to the consumer. If, through advertising, the consumer has to pay more for the product, then the least he can expect is that it is honest and not misleading advertising. So far as product cost is concerned, there is 12 cents worth of processed cleansing cream in a standard four-ounce jar, and three cents of liquid make-up in a make-up container. The mascara in a tube of mascara runs from three cents to nine cents, depending on the formula; and there is about two cents worth of nail polish in the little bottle that can retail for about \$2 or more.

What the advertising industry is doing for cosmetics in terms of making them more expensive to buy, products that are already overpriced, is another serious problem. The industry does not reveal how the companies are spending the money, or the side-effects of some of the productions they have produced. For example, it is almost impossible to estimate how much the industry spends to promote or advertise its products. One company spent 30 per cent of its sales dollars on advertising, and another spent nearly three-quarters of a million dollars last year to push a single anti-wrinkle cream. Canadian radio and television networks alone last year carried \$27.5 million in cosmetics advertising. The seduction process is all glamour, because if you are selling glamour you have, of course, to be glamorous. We are concerned about this kind of cost and about the misleading aspects of advertising which push up the cost of the product to the consumer.

● (1730)

We are very concerned about the type of advertising and the fact that advertising often may cause someone to buy an item under false impressions. We have covered this in our second amendment. We would prohibit the making of representations to the public which would explicitly or implicitly arouse or intend to arouse unwarranted expectations in respect of a product's effectiveness.

We all know about the type of toothpaste advertising which refers to sex appeal. Where is the proof of that? Where is the evidence that somehow one would become more sexually appealing? There are other products, such as perfume and deodorants, in respect of which it is stated that if one uses these products, somehow one will capture a man, or a woman, as the case may be. We say that this kind of false and really silly advertising which insults our intelligence should not be on the public airways or in the newsprint media. If it should be fair advertising, then in

[Mr. Symes.]

some way perhaps we can reduce the tremendous cost of the advertising that is passed on to the consumer.

In our third amendment we want to avoid what has been going on in respect of all kinds of advertising today. Specifically, we wish to prohibit the kind of representations which make claims in respect of the effectiveness of a product which are not fully supported by substantial evidence. Again, when one looks at the kind of things we find in advertising today, one cannot help being struck by the claims that certain products will cleanse one's face better than any other, or that certain types of deodorant will protect one better than any other brand. Where are the tests to prove this? The advertiser does not produce the evidence in this regard and there is no government agency to see that these claims are in fact true.

We want to make sure that if a company states that its product will do such and such, that it has been proven to some responsible authority that this is the case. I cannot understand why any member on the other side of the House would suggest that such legislation should not be placed on the statute books of Canada. Are we serious about doing something to control such misleading advertising, or are we merely engaging in a public campaign to pass this bill, suggesting that something effective is being done when we know there are loopholes?

We also have a motion which would make it illegal to make a representation to the public containing suggestions either implicit or explicit about the effectiveness of a product in areas other than those in which the product is intended primarily to have an effect. Again, I need not go into great detail concerning the kind of products on the market today and the type of advertising which takes place. We have to pop a pill, now, for every little ache and pain. If we feel a little depressed, we take a tablet which fizzes in water, and somehow or other we are supposed to be better because of this. Again, we would like to see the proof in respect of the effectiveness of these products.

I was amazed, during the question period a few months ago, by a reply from the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) to the effect that there are many new medical products or drugs on the market which have not been tested by his department, and his department only carries out random sampling. There are many instances of drugs being on the market which have potential hazardous side-effects. We rely solely on the companies to do the testing.

It seems to me it is time we had a more responsible agency, such as a government department, which would carry out the testing in order to ensure that the advertising contains the proof. We have also moved an amendment to the effect that any advertising which uses the word "new" or any comparable word would be illegal unless it is, in fact, a new product with a qualitative change or a change in respect of its active ingredients or parts. We want the use of the word "new" to be limited to a period of six months in respect of such advertising.

Many times I have watched commercials on television where statements have been made to the effect that Sanka coffee is new, or Maxwell House coffee is new. It seems that every few months there is something new about coffee. I should like to know what chemical, qualitative or substantive changes have taken place in respect of that