

members of the House the fact that we who produce tobacco for the welfare of our families and the economy in the area I represent feel very sincerely that we are being taken for a ride on what can be considered rather flimsy evidence which is built on half-truths and innuendos.

Mr. Mather: Mr. Speaker, could I ask the hon. member a question before he resumes his seat?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I understand the hon. member wishes to ask a question.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Mather: I want to ask my honourable and esteemed friend from the tobacco country of Canada this question. I know he was a member of the health and welfare committee when all the representations to which I alluded earlier were made by the cancer society, the heart foundation, the emphysema society, the bronchitis and tuberculosis representatives, all of whom said cigarettes were a great health hazard. Can he recall any representative of any organized health agency saying anything to the contrary before the committee? I do not mean one or two people whom the tobacco group put before the committee; I mean anyone speaking on behalf of an organized health agency.

Mr. Knowles (Norfolk-Haldimand): I do not think I do, Mr. Speaker. But I also think that the people who did come to speak on behalf of the groups that they represented did not know the whole truth of the story. I do not think they had ever listened to the evidence I have just put on the record, and this is what makes us so annoyed. It seems to me we hear only one side of the story. The organizations to which the hon. member referred have preconceived notions in this regard and shut their minds to other evidence which I consider to be equally authoritative.

Mr. Mather: May I ask a further question?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's time has expired and I have the impression that hon. members are anxious to hear the hon. member for Fraser Valley East (Mr. Pringle).

Mr. Jerry Pringle (Fraser Valley East): Mr. Speaker, I rise at this time to support Bill C-10 which has been moved by my hon. friend from a neighbouring riding in British Columbia, the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather). Due to the lateness of the hour I will not deliver my entire speech but will endeavour to select and dwell upon some priority items.

Regardless of the timely remarks, remarks I think we should take into consideration, of the hon. member for Norfolk-Haldimand (Mr. Knowles), there is such overwhelming evidence of the danger of cigarette smoking—I say cigarette smoking, not tobacco generally; I am referring to the way cigarettes are used by human beings—that I have no hesitation in supporting the bill, nor do I have any hesitation in personally condemning the use of cigarettes.

• (1650)

Perhaps one of the most frightening aspects is the paradoxical position taken by Canadians with regard to smoking and health. Many readily admit that cigarette smoking may be harming and indeed killing them, but they continue to puff away regardless. Somehow, some day, we must more than reach these people. Somehow we must make them respond positively, not for our sake but for their sake. Let us look at an example. A survey of students in 1968 in the Kenora region revealed that 90 per cent of non-smokers and 80 per cent of smokers believed smoking may have harmful effects on health. Yet only 60 per cent of the non-smokers and 50 per cent of the smokers said that publicity on the possible harmful effects of smoking had decreased their inclination to smoke.

Obviously, there is a great deal of work yet to be done. I suggest this should be centred on health education. I think we should pay tribute to the Canadian Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association for the information they are providing and for the films they have made, as well as for their desire to co-operate with others in providing information for health education. I wish to refer to a letter which they sent to members of parliament on March 24 in which they advised that they had a film which was used on CBC television. The film is entitled, "One way to quit". It deals with the harmful effects of smoking. I feel they should be complimented for providing this film.

It is obvious that education must play a major role in the information program on smoking and health. In 1965, Ottawa was the host city for a youth conference on smoking and health which was attended by 74 teenagers from every Canadian province. One high-school teacher who attended that three-day conference was an Ottawa who walked away from the conference convinced of its value. He made the following statement:

From what was discussed at the conference, one area of attack will most certainly be aimed at the non-smoking youngsters in our schools. If they are not smoking by the time they are 20 years of age, many of them will not start as adults.

It is understandable that this is one area in which we should start combating the use of cigarettes as quickly as possible, because we realize this is a statistic which has been proven, that is, if people do not smoke until they are 20 years of age they may not start as adults. Therefore, it is important that these young people be influenced to stay away from cigarettes. This is how our health program should be developed. It should be stressed that smoking is not a sign of manliness or sophistication even though the advertisers may hope the younger set will think this way.

I should like to switch to the economic situation in respect of the tobacco industry in Canada as mentioned both by the hon. member for Norfolk-Haldimand and the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay). I refer to the discussion which took place before the standing committee when it was suggested that we should immediately ban cigarette advertising. This was to be confined to television and radio. In effect, we were going to avoid having road signs in newspapers and periodicals. While a flash on television or radio could be banned, a full-page advertisement in a newspaper which might stay around the house day in and day out would not be banned.