

evidence which has been presented to us on the results of the use of saccharin is at all clear. As Senator Buckwold pointed out, in the tests carried out with rats 5 per cent of the total diet of the rats consisted of saccharin, and that constitutes an overdose of anything. Humans would have to drink some 800 cans of soft drinks per day in order to have the same intake of saccharin as those poor rats. If a person drank that quantity I do not think he or she would live long enough to die of cancer. It seems to me that there are many substances in this world, many of them included in our everyday diet, that if taken in such massive doses would cause death and, I suggest to you, probably sooner than later.

● (2030)

As far as I am concerned, of all the evidence that I have heard or read, both prior to and since March 31, there is none that confuses me more than the massive amounts of saccharin that were administered to the rats in these experiments. I can only repeat that in my opinion such massive doses of anything would create conditions, in either rats or human beings, that none of us would welcome.

Senator Sullivan: You are 100 per cent right.

Senator McDonald: Thank you very much. I am glad I have one supporter—an eminent supporter at that.

Senator Smith (Colchester): You have two.

Senator McDonald: However, Senator Buckwold's motion is that our Committee on Health, Welfare and Science be authorized to inquire into this subject matter. I do not know whether the findings of the Department of National Health and Welfare are correct but, if this subject matter is referred to a Senate committee, I hope that the committee would call not only departmental witnesses but also expert witnesses from outside the Government of Canada. I am sure that witnesses from other countries, especially from our good neighbour to the south, would be ready and willing to testify.

I happen to be one of those persons who live by a needle, and I have done so for 25 years. I don't like sugar and never did, and I don't like saccharin and never did, so it matters not to me whether artificial sweeteners or sugar are outlawed. I

could not care less. However, I know of many people, not only those who suffer from diabetes but from other diseases, who will be affected if this legislation is passed, but those who will be affected most will be those who suffer from obesity. There are hundreds of thousands of these people throughout Canada and the world. On a percentage basis, perhaps more can be found on the North American continent than in any other part of the world. If an artificial sweetener is not available to those who suffer from obesity, I suggest that the medical hardships they will suffer could be far greater than any suffering that may be caused by the use of saccharin. I do not know but perhaps the committee can find the answer to that question which I, together with many Canadians and Americans, have in our minds.

The only comment I wish to make in conclusion is that I believe the Senate would be doing a service to Canada and, yes, to North America by giving further study to this problem. We can do that, and in a very short space of time, by hearing experts from both within and outside the Department of National Health and Welfare.

Senator Sullivan: Honourable senators, I had no intention whatsoever of participating in this debate, but frankly, from some of the pronouncements I have heard, I think the subject has been blown up out of all proportion. Very recent studies at Johns Hopkins University have disproved what we have been told. Why is it that the use of saccharin over 40 or 50 years has not produced carcinogenic changes in the bladder?

Although I did not want to, I am going to adjourn the debate, and my conclusion will not be dissimilar to Senator McDonald's.

On motion of Senator Sullivan, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Perrault: Honourable senators, I move that the Senate do now adjourn.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, before putting the question, I should like to invite all honourable senators to join the new senators and their guests in my chamber.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.