

enforcing his law. He will find himself in court at almost every step of the way. There will be a fight over almost every regulation made.

In the article Mr. Lockwood is reported as saying:

The minister and his people think they know better than we do what the consumer wants, and that's an astonishing situation. After all we have spent years and hundreds of thousands of dollars in market research and have had tremendous exposure of our products to the marketplace.

That is perfectly true. Outfits like Lever Brothers have spent hundreds of thousands on market research and on exposing and selling their products. What is the reputation and history of companies which manufacture and peddle detergents and soaps? They introduce gimmickry, contests and prizes. Packages are partly filled. Packages contain a reduced amount of soap and in them is a tea towel worth less than one tenth of the value of the soap it displaces. Outfits like that have had to face courts because of the type of advertising they have carried on and because of the way they have presented their product to the public. This statement applies whether you are considering tooth paste, soap or what have you. These are the kinds of outfits that act in the manner characterized by Mr. Lockwood. He was asked this question in the interview:

Do you question whether this group of people know what they're doing; or do you question their motivation for doing it?

The group Mr. Lockwood refers to are, "The minister and his people—pseudo-intellectual characters," all of whom show a form of arrogance that has to be fought. Mr. Lockwood not only questions this group of people, not only questions what they are doing, but also questions their motivation for doing it. I hope that the minister will have an opportunity at some time to have a good discussion with Mr. Lockwood privately. I will even send over a pair of boxing gloves for him to use. Mr. Lockwood does not think they have the necessary data to work on because none of them have much experience with the consumer market and they tend to be influenced by a few letters addressed to Box 99 or a few intellectual friends.

• (5:30 p.m.)

As the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) said, we spent dozens of hours listening to gentlemen like Mr. Lockwood. People like him got a hearing in greater length and depth, I imagine, than they have ever received before. I shall not take the time of the House to go further into this article, but when we read it we realize what the minister and his department will be up against. If the minister thinks for one moment that he will receive co-operation, advice and help from this outfit he is labouring under a delusion. He can expect a lot more difficulty than he has envisaged so far and he will wish that more of the tools we were proposing for him in our amendments were available before another year is up. This gentleman, Mr. Lockwood, who represents the other side, uses phrases like "galloping Basfordism".

**Mr. McGrath:** Watch your language.

### *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*

**Mr. Benjamin:** I think he gives the minister too much credit. Even the minister, good though his motives are, cannot claim credit for originating the ideas in this legislation. It seems to me expressions of this kind from outfits like Lever Brothers are symptomatic of their real attitude toward the public of Canada. Their attitude is—the public is ignorant, dumb, and a bunch of suckers. To quote the head of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the manufacturers know infinitely more. Such expressions are also symptomatic of their attitude toward Members of Parliament, including members of the other place who, in a joint committee which started this work in 1966, spent months listening to the outcries of consumers across the country; everyone in public life has for 15 years been subject to the complaints and distress of consumers by the tens of thousands. Mr. Lockwood would have us believe that he knows what the consumers want; that he and people like him have been pure in the marketplace; that they have never misled consumers; that their packages are designed to give the consumer a right to choose. But he never tells us what choice the consumer is given. I submit that too often it is a choice between which package or label he would be misled by.

I am glad to hear that the spokesman for the official opposition welcomes this legislation. One is tempted to be unkind, but I will resist that temptation for fear that third reading might not be forthcoming today.

**Mr. McGrath:** Also it is St. Patrick's day, and I am Irish.

**Mr. Benjamin:** This has been a long road for the consumer and I will resist any temptation to say things about my friends in the official opposition. If I were to do so, I would have to go back a few years and quote prominent members of the Liberal party who did not think too much fuss need be made about consumer problems. They called people in the NDP and people in the Canadian Association of Consumers economic idiots, who were raising a tempest in a teapot. They concluded that these matters should be left to free enterprise, to the free market. But even they have become converted over the years.

To the minister's credit, his arrival and the arrival of some of his hon. friends in 1965 and later, speeded up this conversion. I hope that after a year or so of experience with this legislation the minister will come to this House with amendments when he finds—I did not say "if", but "when"—there are inadequacies which prevent him doing the job he wants to do. I hope he will not hesitate to persuade his colleagues that further enlargement of this legislation is necessary on the basis of his experience.

We are happy to see this legislation going through Parliament. We wish it went further in its provisions than it does, but we shall be glad to support it on third reading.

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** If I might say a word before the debate on third reading is concluded, I should like to acknowledge