

Restraint of Tobacco

They add:

There is no longer any scientific controversy regarding the risk created by cigarette smoking.

This bill takes the form of a proposed amendment to an old act respecting the sale of tobacco products to minors. The old act has been on the books since 1908. The bill which I put forward in the shape of this amendment, in its key section would empower the government to control cigarette advertising. Actually, the government has that power anyway. The Department of National Health and Welfare has been instructed by parliament to warn and to protect the public against hazards to health. I quote a former minister of that department:

As soon as we were in possession of the facts we began to warn of the hazard to health from cigarette smoking. We will continue to warn until further action is required by the public.

In my view there is now need for that further action; there is need to protect as well as to warn; there is need to eliminate cigarette advertising promotions of disease in Canada. In keeping this bill on the order paper I had three aims in mind: first, it gives me the opportunity to emphasize the dangers of smoking and disease to the country; second, it enables me to call for a new thrust in this fight against disease; third, it allows me to say a few words on the history of the struggle in our parliament to end cigarette advertising.

This bill has already been before a standing committee of the House; it went to the Standing Committee on National Health and Welfare in 1968. It went there in this way, and I commend the procedure to hon. members with bills which will be talked out in this chamber: at that time, in 1968, I had three bills of this type of the order paper, all dealing with cigarette advertising and disease. Hon. members from the two major parties had similar bills on the order paper. With the consent—I will not say encouragement—of the then minister of national health and welfare we all agreed to take our bills off the order paper on the understanding that the subject matter of those bills would be referred to the Standing Committee on National Health and Welfare. There was a Liberal, a Conservative and myself involved. This was done. As the minister stated in a speech on April 19, 1972:

The testimony—

Which was given by all the major voluntary health agencies, the tobacco industry and the advertising industry.

—was direct and pulled no punches whatsoever.

He went on to quote the Canadian Medical Association's denunciation of cigarette smoking and disease. The minister also said in his speech:

The habit is not only hurting the smoker, it's hurting all of us. It's been estimated that the cost of certain identifiable consequences of cigarette smoking in Canada in 1966 was about \$400 million. Of that amount, the loss due to lung cancer was over \$50 million, to coronary disease over \$200 million, chronic bronchitis around \$15 million, emphysema about \$7 million . . . other disabilities nearly \$100 million . . . and the loss due to fires caused by smoking was over \$12 million. These figures, moreover, do not include items such as extra costs of life insurance, disability pensions and survivor's benefits.

This bill, in my view, comes before us at a timely juncture this afternoon. I received yesterday a copy of a letter to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr.

[Mr. Mather.]

Lalonde) from the Alberta Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association which I should like to quote as follows:

The medical advisory committee of the Alberta Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association is deeply concerned with the failure of government to ban cigarette advertising. We believe that such advertising contributes to an increasing health problem. In addition to inflicting human misery by promoting disease, it is responsible for substantial, ever expanding health costs.

Recently our association has monitored printed advertising and we have observed that there is now a large amount of cigarette advertising in magazines, sometimes up to nine coloured advertisements per publication. It is alarming that many of these are women's or family publications which paradoxically try to project a wholesome image. This advertising poses a special threat since studies have shown that women have more difficulty giving up smoking than men, and of those who are successful in doing so, more return to the habit. Advertising promotes a consciousness of smoking and attempts to associate the habit with popular, pleasurable situations. It is doubtful that the public is conscious of this calculated shift in advertising policy by the tobacco industry.

If government is unwilling to ban cigarette advertising completely, then regulations should be enacted requiring the publication of anti-smoking ads of equal size in the same publication at the advertiser's expense.

The medical advisory committee would appreciate a clear public statement of the government's intentions in this regard. I am sure that you will agree that the matter is urgent.

In my opinion, the time has come for the government and the minister to go forward, in line with many other nations, in this uphill struggle against the greatest preventable cause of disease in the world, namely, cigarette smoking. I have here a report indicating what has been done in 94 countries of the world in this matter, listing their legislation. It covers ours, the British, the American, the Russian, and other countries' legislation. Some steps have been taken in this country, as I said at the outset of my remarks, to combat the cause of preventable disease, cigarette smoking. The growth of cigarette smoking has been retarded, but by no means stopped. That will take many years. In the meantime, I propose and urge that hon. members do what they can in their own caucuses and ridings.

● (1630)

I would set 1976 as the date for phasing out all remaining cigarette advertising, including newspapers, magazines and billboards. In the interval, a requirement should be imposed that in all permitted cigarette advertising a statement be included at the cost of the advertiser, to this effect, "Cigarette smoking has been determined by the Department of National Health and Welfare to be hazardous to your health and to induce lung cancer, thrombosis, emphysema and bronchitis. We advise you to consult your physician as to your own condition." That statement should be placed, and paid for by the cigarette companies, in a space one-eighth of the area of the permitted promotional advertising.

There are other suggestions that I can make. I think it is time cigarette firms were made aware of the toll of death and disease caused by smoking, and cigarette manufacturers should be made responsible in law to provide monetary compensation for the loss of life and health of those who become the victims of smoking.