

area of preventive medicine, Canada, the United States and indeed most of the industrial world are lagging way behind.

I will refer to some studies that I have looked at that have been done during the past few years. One particular study was done by Senator George McGovern in the United States. In that study there is a conclusion that about seven out of ten causes of death in the United States were directly tied to diet. In other words, people are eating their way to the grave. Americans are eating far too much sugar and salt. Their intake of fats, processed and refined fabricated foods and so on, is far too high. The World Health Organization said that about 80 per cent of the causes of cancer in the world are tied to the environment. An important part of the environment includes the food that we consume.

Before the Canadian food prices review board folded up a few years ago, they said that about 40 per cent of our hospital stays were tied to diet problems. I think it was in 1975 they said that if we had proper nutrition in this country we would have saved about \$2 billion a year in hospital bills. If that figure was \$2 billion then, I am sure that figure will reach \$3 billion or more in 1978 and 1979.

I am concerned when I hear that a government wants to cut back on medical research and the provision of money in the field of medicine. I am concerned with the whole area of preventive medicine. Radical changes in our diet have occurred over the last 25 or 30 years. If one checks into diets of people before the Second World War, one will find that an overwhelming amount of food that was eaten was what we call natural food. It was unrefined or unprocessed food, or natural food that one grew in a garden. Since the end of the Second World War we have moved into the whole area of highly refined and processed food. A lot of minerals and vitamins are taken out of the food. The effect that this is having on our health is something that we are only now just beginning to realize. It is not just the refining of food or the fact that we are eating more of our meals in restaurants, perhaps even in greasy-spoon restaurants, or even at places like McDonald's.

If one has a McDonald shake, most people think it is a milk shake containing milk. However, it contains no milk at all.

There are many things in our food system now which are totally artificial. As a matter of routine there are about 1,800 chemicals in our food system that each of us consumes each and every year. The hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) consumes these chemicals as a matter of routine. It is like going into a lab and ordering about five or six pounds of chemicals and downing them. However, we do not know what effect these chemicals will have on us.

We do know, medically and technically, that roughly half of the Canadian society is obese according to the medical definition of obesity. It is well known that a lot of people suffer heart attacks now, whereas at one time there were not many heart attacks reported. People say in answer to this phenomenon that "people are living longer now." But that is not really the case. The only reason the life span is significantly longer now than at the turn of the century, is due to the fact that we have been able to combat the problem of infant mortality. However, if

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one takes a look at the life expectancy of a five or six year old child in 1900, and compare its life expectancy with a five or six year old child today, it is roughly the same. It is roughly the same despite the tremendous steps and leaps forward that we have made in modern medicine, surgery, health facilities, and the like. With all of this technology and medical aid which has helped save so many lives, and take away the question of infant mortality, the life span of North Americans has not really increased over the last 70 or 80 years.

I would like now to talk about some of the sprays and the chemicals they contain. I had a conversation with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) one day and I remember asking him, "What do you think about some of the sprays and chemicals that we are using in the production of our food?" I also mentioned the way chickens produce eggs sitting in little cages, being stuffed with hormones and antibiotics, and the way cattle are fattened in feed lots with growth hormones. I asked him what he thought this was doing to human health. The minister answered that he did not know but he was terrified at the thought of what might happen. He said he thought the scientists did not know either. That thought is even more terrifying to me.

I have talked to many scientists, biochemists, and people in related fields. They all said they did not know what effects there would be on human beings. Perhaps some of the cancer cases and heart attacks, as well as some modern diseases that are around today, are tied to our food system, and in the years to come the results of what we are doing now may show up in the health of human beings.

I plead with the government that instead of cutting back on money provisions to health care that it put more money into nutritional and biochemical research so that we may understand what our modern food processing system is doing to the human body. If that is not done, the rapid altering of our food is going to continue at an even greater escalated pace. The day will come when people will be eating very few natural foods and few foods that have not been exposed to chemicals. We will be so woefully ignorant of nutrition that we will have a very sick race.

The hon. member for Dauphin (Mr. Ritchie) interjected a few minutes ago and mentioned the comparison between a 30-year old Canadian and a 60-year old Swede. He makes a point, and it is something that we should be examining. What he says is absolutely true. If one looks at the condition of the Swedish people and their life span, or indeed if one looks at the condition of people in countries such as Israel, one will find that their food systems are different. People are more educated about the types of food they eat in their various countries.

For example, in France they allow only a few artificial food colourings in their food system. By comparison, in Canada we have dozens.

A lot of countries do not have huge supermarkets and the assembly line way of selling and buying food. Instead one finds market places where the farmers come to sell their fresh produce to the people.