

Measure to Restrain Tobacco Use

there is no doubt that each cigarette smoked shortens life by approximately 8 minutes. For instance, a 32 year-old man who smokes from 10 to 20 cigarettes a day reduces his life expectancy by an average of 5 years.

This, Mr. Speaker, is the opinion of the Minister of Health and Welfare, who points out that cigarette smokers sacrifice in effect an important part of their lives.

Now, some people are probably asking: If cigarette smoking is so harmful, why not forbid it? Here is the answer: The tobacco industry is an important sector of the Canadian economy, and abolishing it would be a disaster from the standpoint of the economy and the employment market. I again refer to the 1969 report of the House of Commons committee, where it says that cigarettes are the basis of a prosperous agricultural industry in Ontario, and a lesser one in Quebec. Tobacco growing is also an industry in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Tobacco is the second largest farm product export in Canada, wheat being the first, and this year the sales of smoke-dried cigarette tobacco yielded about \$170 million.

The tobacco industry alone employs about 50,000 full-time or part-time workers, and over another 10 million people are employed in tobacco processing. In 1968, federal and provincial taxes, including corporate tax, amounted to \$723 million. Over 75 per cent of this amount goes to the federal treasury. The economic impact does not stop there. Tobacco products are sold in 90,000 outlets—this is still according to the 1969 report of the standing committee—and by 650 bulk dealers and distributors. Cigarette advertising brings in \$25 million a year.

It is therefore evident that forbidding the manufacturing and sale of cigarettes would not only seriously affect the Canadian economy but also leave thousands of Canadians unemployed. We should, however, examine the other side of the picture and take also into consideration the damages caused to our country's economy by cigarette smoking.

The losses due to cigarettes in Canada in 1966 were estimated at \$388 million. Cancer of the lung accounts for a loss of \$56 million, coronary diseases \$201 million, chronic bronchitis, \$14 million, emphysema, \$7 million, other diseases \$96 million and finally fires due to smoking, \$13,500,000.

Evidence submitted during the committee hearings in 1968 and 1969, is probably the best proof one can give as regards such gloomy statistics.

The Canadian Medical Association were very clear in showing how the cigarette could be harmful to one's health. I quote the following from their brief:

"The most tragic result as far as diseases, disabilities and death are concerned".

Their brief points out further on that the benefits in the case of people who stop smoking are the equivalent of preventive medicine and as important as pasteurized milk, purified water, fluoridation and immunization.

The brief, as to possible medical disputes, contains the following:

We believe one needs only to point out that there are no more scientific controversies as concerns the danger of cigarette smoking. The first statistics were confirmed by clinical observations

[Mr. Guay (St. Boniface).]

and the evidence brought about is now looked upon as a fact by Canadian doctors.

The *Association des médecins de langue française du Canada*, another medical group, presented somewhat similar evidence when they appeared before the standing committee. In their report to the committee—

• (1620)

[English]

Mr. Danforth: What was that all about?

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member brought to my attention a matter that is of vital importance to him, to me and to others. Although I am speaking on this matter I thought I would give him a written answer. I hope hon. members will tolerate this procedure and allow me to continue my remarks.

[Translation]

The Association has dealt with the tremendous change that can take place when someone stops smoking cigarettes. Their brief said in part:

It is very often noted that the symptoms affecting former cigarette smokers subside when they relinquish the habit: catarrh, cough and wheezing are less evident. Daily experiences now show that surgical complications are more frequent with smokers than non smokers.

Of course, hundreds of other statements have been made at the committee's hearings warning against the dangers of cigarette smoking, many of them being of an alarming character.

Mr. Speaker, I would have more to say in this respect, but I will conclude my remarks as soon as possible.

At the 1964 conference, a young high school girl from Ottawa, Miss Hilary Lips, made a report from which I shall quote a few excerpts:

It may happen that we come across an article describing the pains besetting a person who is dying of lung cancer and we become frightened to the extent that we swear to keep at least ten feet away from any cigarette; but fright has transient effects; a week or a month later, the first scare appears ridiculous and one quickly forgets one's decision to stop smoking. The decision not to smoke is not an action taken under the effect of hysteria, but a decision arrived at calmly and reasonably after weighing the pros and cons. Many adults believe that teenagers are too immature to take such a decision and they try to exert pressures on their children either by categorically prohibiting cigarette smoking or by frightening them.

Surely, many of us could give examples of their personal experience, Mr. Speaker. I could do it myself because I gave up smoking more than four months ago and I used to be a heavy smoker. I know what it means to quit smoking and never start again.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that, in my opinion, the House should be reminded that the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers Council published an advertising code of ethics to set up officially uniform standards for cigarette advertising in Canada. Canadian tobacco manufacturers readily stick to this code.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I shall leave the floor to other members who might wish to make a brief statement on the matter.