

When the former Bill S-22 was before the Senate a year ago, the question was raised as to whether this type of legislation was really necessary, in view of the fact that when emergencies have arisen in the past through poisonous products getting on the market the problem seems to have been dealt with satisfactorily through publicity and persuasion. In reply to this argument, I would refer honourable senators to the brief presented to the Banking and Commerce Committee on December 6, 1967 in connection with Bill S-22. On this particular point, Mr. Copeland had this to say:

The association, though preferring a voluntary industry approach to the elimination of deficiencies which the bill is designed to offset, appreciates that it has been unable to obtain the voluntary adherence to the labelling code of all household products manufacturers in Canada who are not members of the association.

The association, therefore, appreciates the need for legislation which will enable the establishment of regulations covering the proper labelling of hazardous household products; and also the authority to remove from sale those hazardous products which are improperly labelled according to regulations, providing that there be a right of appeal.

He then went on to point out that legislation alone will not be sufficient to solve the problem completely and that a program of consumer education will also be required. Such a program, I understand, is already in the process of being developed by the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Honourable senators will appreciate, however, that there is only so much the Government can do in this area because in the final analysis much will depend on the good judgment, carefulness and common sense exercised by each individual.

In his evidence before the Committee on Banking and Commerce on November 22, 1967, Dr. Crawford, Deputy Minister of National Health and Welfare, stated that the former Bill S-22 had been discussed with the members of the Dominion Council of Health on November 16 and 17, 1967. He went on to say, and I read:

I do want to report to you that those members, consisting of the deputy ministers of health of all provinces, were

unanimous in their opinion that such legislation was in fact desirable and required.

At that same committee meeting Dr. Crawford was asked how his department had dealt with the emergencies that had resulted from the appearance on the market of necklaces made from the poisonous jequirity beans and the plastic ice balls from Hong Kong which contained contaminated water. In reply to that question Dr. Crawford stated as follows:

Well, we had to deal with the provincial departments on this. We telephoned and telegraphed and told them of the hazard which was in their shops and they dealt with it provincially. This is how we had to handle that situation. Of course it was a pretty time-consuming process.

Here, honourable senators, it should be stressed that this bill is not limited to hazardous products imported into this country, which are relatively few, but that its main purpose is to safeguard the public from all sorts of hazardous products now on the market, many of which are already manufactured in this country, and also to protect the public from those new hazardous products which will be manufactured in the future. It is therefore necessary for the authorities to be able to act swiftly whenever the necessity arises.

In my presentation of Bill S-22, I pointed out that in 1964 there were 720 cases of poisoning from a common bleaching preparation and 217 more attributable to a household drain and pipe cleaner. The latest grim statistics for accidents in the home in 1966 show that 757 resulted from falls, 561 from fires and explosions, 327 from suffocation, 275 from poisoning and 264 from firearms and other causes.

Honourable senators, the principle of this bill is to extend public safety. This principle is already embodied in the Food and Drugs Act, the Pest Control Products Act, the Explosives Act and the Atomic Energy Control Act. The bill before us is an extension of that principle in that it applies to products not yet covered by other legislation.

Since I introduced Bill S-22 a year ago, there have been a number of fatalities among young children due to glue sniffing. Glue is one of the products listed in Part II of the schedule, and will be controlled by this legislation; but this present bill is broad enough to include also such articles as defective electri-