

Nestlé War Continues But Tactics Are Subtler

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The war with the Nestle Corporation over their marketing of infant formula in Third World Countries is still on.

The boycott of Nestle products has hurt Nestle product sales in North America and Nestle is fighting back by offering discounts to wholesalers which, to the consumer means a bargain that he can't ignore when shopping for food.

After the World Health Organization passed a marketing code for the promotion of infant feeding products in 1980, Nestle claims to have been abiding by this code. Nestle is still marketing their products in the Third World but their techniques are a little more subtle.

Nestle claims that it is not actively marketing infant formula. Their statement to that effect was: "Nestle does not aggressively market its infant formula products in the Third World, nor has it contributed to the decline of breast feeding." However, by using representatives to approach the medical profession, offering them samples of their products for the midwives and new mothers, and expecting in return an endorsement of Nestle products by the medical profession, Nestle is still marketing against the code adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The marketing code passed

by the WHO, called the 'International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes' does recognize that more developed countries have enough of an education system, enough money, and sanitary enough preparation facilities that infant formula can be used safely, except in poverty stricken and isolated areas of the developed world. The code recommends that any promotion of infant feeding products be accompanied by a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of breast feeding, and by information about the dangers and possible benefits to the mother, very specific directions about the use of infant formula and the possible ramifications if directions are not followed.

Another of Nestle's claims that "We wholeheartedly agree that breast milk is the ideal food for infants. Quantity, not quality is the major problem facing Third World mothers," has been clearly refuted by several medical studies, one of which reported that "Unsupplemented human milk is all that is required to sustain growth and good nutrition for the first six months of life in the babies of well nourished mothers." They found that even poorly nourished mothers produced a surprising volume of milk and concluded that it would be better to supplement the mother's diet so she will be better able to feed her child than to supplement the baby's diet.

At the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 1980, the marketing code was drafted and passed. The WHA is the governing body of the WHO and recommendations from the WHA are passed on to the WHO for implementation. Response was positive from most of the delegates. When it came to a vote on the marketing code, only the American delegation voted against it.

The WHA of May 1980 was not without its problems though. Food industry representatives hosted luncheons for the delegates and undoubtedly made their presence known at the assembly.

A letter was circulated by industry lobbyists at the assembly claiming that the International Pediatrics Association (IPA) was opposed to the code of marketing. The President of the IPA and another Executive member, both present as delegates to the WHA, repudiated this claim. It was later found out that the group making this claim had been set up only a few days before the assembly and was "privately funded".

A Guatemalan, posing as a member of the Guatemalan delegation was not listed as a delegate and when his credentials were challenged he left. Later information indicated that he was actually a lawyer employed by Nestle.

Groups endorsing the Nestle Boycott are asking for the boycott to continue, since

Nestle is resisting changing its marketing strategies of infant formula products in Third World countries.

Two groups at the Mount

which have expressed their endorsement of the Nestle boycott are the Sisters of Charity and the Student Christian Movement.

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rent-a-disc jockey service initiated by Council

Coming soon to Dalhousie will be a rent-a-disc jockey service, initiated last Sunday by the Students' Council. The service can be rented for \$100 from the Student Council's offices in the SUB.

Manager of the service, Neal McCarney, a Dalhousie student, said he already has booked one

A wide selection of music from new wave to rock'n roll is available. The service will also supply specially selected music

function at Shirreff Hall. Application forms for the jobs of disc-jockey and assistants are available from the student council office.

on request.

Student council approved the service at last Sunday's meeting. The system will cost \$2,000 for equipment and with other expenses will total \$3,300. Council will make up this amount after the service is used approximately 53 times.



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