

Measure to Restrain Tobacco Use

bills put forward by hon. members on the government side and the official opposition, the subject matter of the three bills was referred in 1969 to the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs. Together with the representations of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) they provided the basis of the committee's hearings into smoking and disease.

This discussion resulted in the report of the committee under the chairmanship of the hon. member for Hull (Mr. Isabelle), which report in turn agreed to the recommendation that all cigarette advertising should be phased out over a period of three or four years, and to that extent charted a course of action similar to that taken in many other countries to reduce the promotion of cigarette-induced diseases, including lung cancer, heart attacks, emphysema and bronchitis.

This bill is in two parts, Mr. Speaker. The first part has been law since, I believe, 1909 and deals with the prohibition on sale and provision of tobacco products to juveniles. The second part of the bill is my own, and it recommends an addition or amendment to the first part and would give the government power over the packaging, labelling and advertising of tobacco products, the precise target in this particular bill being to protect the health of the public from deception as to the character, toxicity or safety of tobacco products.

It is, frankly, not with any hope of having this bill passed or referred to a committee again—it has already been there—that I left it on the order paper. My thinking was that the government has not yet proceeded with the proposed cigarette products act which came out of the health and welfare committee's report on cigarettes, which in turn came out of this and similar bills and the representations of various health agencies in Canada who appeared before that committee in 1969.

Mr. Speaker, no one was more pleased than I when the Minister of National Health and Welfare introduced that bill last year, and nobody was more fearful than myself that the government would not proceed with what the minister proposed, which was to end all cigarette advertising by January 1, 1972. That is why my bill is again before us this afternoon. My purpose in bringing it forward is to urge that action be taken along the lines proposed by this bill but, better still, that action be taken by the government on the more far reaching proposal of the Minister of National Health and Welfare, namely, that all cigarette advertising in this country should end.

One reason for the government not having acted on the proposals of its minister to end all cigarette advertising as of January 1 last is, without doubt, the step taken by the tobacco industry in the meantime of ending all cigarette advertising on the air, whether radio or television, and undertaking to print a rather harmless or even deceptive health warning label on its products and stop giving away coupons or prizes to encourage the sale of cigarettes.

These steps have been or are being taken by industry. But, Mr. Speaker, while some \$8 million of cigarette advertising has been ended—that is, the part that used to go to radio and television—the cigarette firms are keeping up the roar of publicity in the print media, inducing people, particularly young people, to start smoking cigarettes and thereby to get hooked on this sickly and dan-

gerous habit. We still have the type of good life, open-air fun and games cigarette advertisement illustrations, the same idea that cigarette smoking is a flesh-coloured, simple pleasure and not the grey killer that it is. There are never any hospital ward, operating room or funeral parlour scenes in cigarette ads. They are not in line with reality at all. Cowboys are still puffing away on cigarettes and they are never identified as coming from "emphysema county."

Mr. Speaker, this and my other bills and those of other hon. members of both the major parties all have one thing in common, as indeed does the minister's bill, that is, that the private profit of the tobacco, advertising and media industries cannot be allowed to stand much longer in the way of protection of public health. If chewing gum or pizza pie had been associated with one-tenth of the sickness and death that cigarettes have, then chewing gum and pizza pie would have been off the market many years ago. At this point I say that I am quite ready to take this bill and my other bills on the same subject off the order paper if someone on the government side will rise and indicate when we may expect the government to proceed with the minister's legislation to end cigarette advertising.

There is mounting need in the country for action such as is proposed in this bill and in the government's legislation. I have in my hand a letter received just this morning from the Canadian Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association. I think it is particularly timely that I received this letter today. I quote one paragraph as follows:

—we ask you to take immediate action on the cigarette products act. As you know, the bill was introduced last June and we in the health field feel it is imperative we get that legislation through to effectively ban cigarette advertising. This association views with alarm the present rapid increase in the incidence of chronic chest disease. We indict the cigarette as the principal factor in this man-made epidemic. I ask you on behalf of our association, on behalf of our thousands of volunteers, on behalf of the health of Canadians, to enact the cigarette products act now.

Our association concerned as it is with tuberculosis and respiratory disease, had adopted a slogan we ask you to consider with great care, especially as it relates so dramatically to the smoking problem—"It's a matter of life and breath."

This is over the signature of the medical director of the association. In Great Britain the Royal College of Physicians estimates that 50,000 deaths a year are attributable to cigarette smoking, approximately 1,000 per week. In that country the number of doctors who used to smoke had dropped from a majority to just one-third. In the same period, the incidence of lung cancer increased by 25 per cent but it dropped among doctors by 30 per cent. In the United States, the number of cigarette smoking doctors has decreased to about one-third while in this country it is down to less than one-half.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Medical Association, whose representatives appeared before the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs in 1969, put it this way:

The story of the health hazard created by cigarette smoking represents an unrivalled tale of illness, disability and death. The potential benefits to be derived from a cessation of smoking place it at a level of importance in preventive medicine with pasteurization of milk, purification and chlorination of water and immunization.

[Mr. Mather.]