

community about misleading advertising. Noting that there are approximately 13,000 subscribers to the *Misleading Advertising Bulletin*, and as many as 800,000 small businesses in Canada, the ICA felt that there was ample room for the government to do more in this regard.⁹

Departmental officials indicated that education was a major thrust of the program of the Marketing Practices Branch. Activities in this area include conducting seminars for the business community, responding to requests for information, and publishing the *Misleading Advertising Bulletin*. The Director of the Branch noted that achieving compliance with the law through education is a cost-effective method of serving the public interest.¹⁰

The Committee places great emphasis on the need to educate and inform both consumers and the business community. In the Committee's opinion, education is essential to ensure that consumers are aware of their rights and are better able to determine whether a representation is misleading. Education is also vital for increasing compliance with the law by the business community and for reducing confusion in the marketplace. Although the MPB claims that it plays a pro-active role in the information and education area, the Committee believes that more could be done and that additional resources should be devoted to this task.

Recommendation:

- 2.1 The Committee recommends that the Director of Investigation and Research through the Marketing Practices Branch adopt a more pro-active role in establishing programs for educating consumers and the business community about misleading advertising and deceptive marketing practices and that the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs direct additional financial and human resources to such programs.**

The Committee is aware of some of the education and information work of the United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC), including its use of radio and television to disseminate information and its publication of pamphlets and brochures on particular problems in the marketplace or on specific misleading advertising issues. In addition, information programs have been directed to distinct segments of the public. The Committee also notes that the FTC has entered into joint information and education programs with a number of organizations.