

*Food and Drugs Act*

the newspaper, we are swamped with misleading advertisements. Moreover, that was very often said, during the meetings of the committee which presided over the creation of the present department.

Mr. Speaker, somebody already said it—it was a certain Mr. Sandback—during the study in committee. I quote:

The trade marks or the price are very seldom satisfying standards on which the consumer can rely to choose the best product that serves his purpose.

Because of the present situation which has lasted too long, the manufacturers show up the brand name, the trade mark and the price of their product, but not its contents. That is why housewives and consumers are often misled.

I wish to commend once again the mover of this bill and assure him of our full support, hoping that we will all decide that it is not necessary to put off this bill indefinitely or refer it to the committee, as the latter is already too busy. We should be able to dispose of it right away in the house. By so doing, we would make progress and we would indicate that we are ready to co-operate with the new Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, in passing measures likely to protect the Canadian consumer, an aim we should all strive to attain.

[English]

**Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, like the previous speaker from this side of the house, I should like to congratulate the proposer of this bill for bringing to our attention and to the attention of the Canadian people the extent of the problem, and the fact that inadequate labelling causes great difficulty to many Canadians, particularly sufferers from allergies. One thing he certainly has done is bring forth the allergy sufferers in this house. Like my friend, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (Mr. Allmand), I also suffer from allergies. I have examples from my own experience which lead me to support the intent of this bill. I know that inadequate labelling is a serious problem for those who suffer from one allergy or another.

This question has already led to a fair amount of discussion in the house. We have heard of the discussion there was last year before the committee on consumer affairs. This led to the bill my hon. friend from Notre-Dame-de-Grâce proposed, which will

[Mr. Fortin.]

not be discussed this session because of the lack of time. It also led to a bill which I proposed late last year and which probably will also not be discussed at this session because of lack of time. That bill deals specifically with the labelling of drugs.

I understand that a member from the major opposition party will be following me in expressing the views of that party on this matter. Therefore I believe that on both sides of the house there is general agreement that there must be better labelling of the ingredients in drugs and foods in Canada.

If I may, I should like to take a moment or two to outline the seriousness of the problem that is now faced by the allergy sufferer. There is the case that was mentioned a short time ago by my friend the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, concerning an egg derivative being used in a baby food with no indication of this on the label. There have been other cases in the past, in particular with regard to nuts which can cause an immediate and very violent reaction and indeed lead to death. There was a case in Toronto not very long ago of a child being given a chocolate which contained a walnut. The child was dead before arrival at the poison control centre.

There are many cases which involve the use of peanut oil. Many people are allergic to this product. Some of these allergies can be particularly vicious. I should like to read from a letter which was received from a doctor in Toronto who took the trouble to write on this matter. He gives information from his experience, as he is a specialist on allergies. He said:

An extreme example along this line is a patient who was attending the allergy clinic at the Hospital for Sick Children. This child was known to be sensitive to walnut. He was given a candy which contained a walnut inside of it and was dead before he arrived at the hospital. Admittedly this was an extreme case and I would not suggest that labelling on all packaged foods would eliminate such errors. Nonetheless it could quite conceivably eliminate a tragic case such as this if the child had properly observant parents.

That is one example taken from his practice. There are many other cases, and it would not be possible to go into all of them in detail. I will mention, however, a case in respect of a member of my family who is allergic to seafood. Quite inadvertently he ate a dish which contained shrimp. About an hour later he passed out at the wheel of his car, and his car ended up in the ditch. It might well have been a fatal accident. The