

PUBLIC HEALTH

Cigarette Label Battle

The tobacco industry has taken a stand against federal regulation of cigarette advertising, but Congress will probably demand a death warning on packages—By Charles A. Betts

► A NEW FEDERAL LAW requiring cigarette packages to carry labels stating that smoking may cause death from cancer is almost a certainty this year.

Not so certain is how far the Congress will go to give Federal authorities power to regulate cigarette advertising.

These premises were being drawn following the Senate Commerce Committee hearings on proposed legislation to regulate cigarette labeling and advertising.

The tobacco industry put up only a mild opposition to labeling.

In testimony prepared for the Senate Commerce Committee hearings on labeling bills, Bowman Gray, chairman of the board of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, said that the industry saw no real need for labeling but "if they (packages) must be labeled, let the Congress do it."

If the industry's position is adopted, any bill passed would have to have written in it specific language of the label instead of having this decision left to the discretion of the Federal Trade Commission or the Justice Department.

The industry's statement, made by Mr. Bowman as the spokesman for the Tobacco Institute Inc., indicated opposition to any Governmental regulation over advertising. The Institute's position is that the industry has initiated a program to regulate its own advertising and should not be subject to Federal regulation in this area.

The real battleground, therefore, is expected to be over controls on advertising.

Specifically under consideration by the committee were two bills. One is S. 559 by Sen. Warren Magnuson (D-Wash.), committee chairman.

The other is S. 547 by Sen. Maurine Neuberger (D-Oreg.), a member of the committee and long time Congressional champion of efforts to call attention to links between lung cancer and cigarettes.

Sen. Magnuson's bill would require labeling, while Sen. Neuberger's bill would require labeling and give broad power over cigarette advertising to the Federal Trade Commission.

The FTC previously has set forth rules governing such advertising but lacks effective means to enforce them.

In addition, a bill in the House of Representatives will make an impact on any law to be passed. This is a measure by Rep. Walter E. Rogers (D-Texas), which calls for labeling, but is vague on effective control over advertising. This bill is generally regarded as the measure supported by the tobacco industry as the lesser of evils, in its opinion.

Sen. Neuberger and others favoring a strong bill believe that the committee will

report out a version of the Magnuson bill. The fight is expected to be on the floor of the Senate and in the House over the language of the section regulating advertising.

The Neuberger office reported widespread popular support for the principles of her bill. Her stand was bolstered by state legislation from Washington and Utah calling for labeling and for advertising restrictions. In addition, the City of New York is on record as ready to pass local legislation on package labels if the Federal Government should fail to do so.

• Science News Letter, 87:223 April 3, 1965

MEDICINE

Study Links Cigarettes To Mouth, Throat Cancer

► MORE EVIDENCE linking cancer and tobacco was disclosed in a survey called "doubly arresting" because of the use of human subjects.

The findings show a relationship between cigarettes and cancer of the mouth and throat.

Older reports leave the impression that only cigar and pipe smokers or chewers generally get mouth cancer.

The research was reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association by Dr. Condit Moore of the University of Louisville School of Medicine.

Dr. Moore's study covered seven years and "implicates tobacco in the formation of most mouth-throat cancers."

Those subjects who are developing mouth and throat cancer, the researcher explained, smoke cigarettes, and those who continue to smoke and develop second cancers are nearly all cigarette smokers.

"It would now appear that tobacco in any form can cause cancer of the mouth and throat," Dr. Moore concluded.

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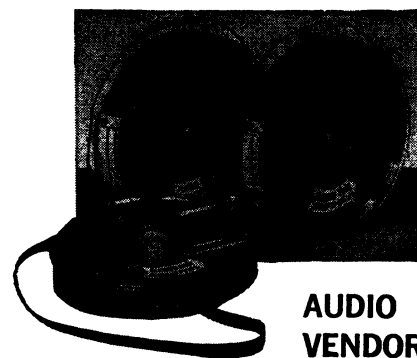
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