

Moral perspectives

Tobacco poses conflict in government policy

I am slowly becoming conscious that I am part of one of those groups that suffers discrimination of civil rights. I am not talking about the feminist movement of the black, Latinos or Indian ethnic minorities or even the Appalachian poor.

I am referring to a group that is much larger than all of the above, for my group represents 66 per cent of the American public. My group is the non-smokers of America.

I wasn't even conscious that my civil rights were being denied to me until I began to hear public service announcements informing me of these infringements. Now, I am reminded of my rights when I board airplanes or hear my rights announced over the public address systems at sports events.

I have been enjoying my new-found rights. But I became somewhat angered a few weeks ago when I learned about the contrary policies of the U.S. government regarding smoking and tobacco. I believe such policies contribute to personal violence and danger and do not benefit the common good.

As a matter of fact, the continuation of the imbalance of these policies constitutes a moral evil.

IN 1964, the surgeon general of the United States officially warned the American public about the health hazard related with cancer and cigarette smoking. Since this time, the government has launched a campaign costing



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millions of tax dollars informing the public of this health danger. Last year alone, the program spent \$3 million. Such a program is morally good.

But my disturbance comes from the recently acquired knowledge that the federal government spends nearly \$70 million annually to encourage the growth and marketing of tobacco.

As a matter of fact, the present farm price support agricultural bill approved last week by the U.S. Senate calls for a one-year increase in the present price support of tobacco.

And if the price support program isn't a rank injustice, the U.S. Government buys \$30 million worth of cigarettes to ship overseas as part of the "Food for Peace" program. What a cruel joke it must be for those who are starving the world over to know that \$30 million has been spent on cigarettes instead of food.

OUR PRIORITIES in government perpetuate a moral evil. For every \$1,000 we spend on prevention and caution about health hazards of smoking, our government spends \$223,800 to insure the growth and marketing of this health evil. That's a ratio of 223 to 1.

This week marks the beginning of the bicentennial celebration with the 200th anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord — a call for liberty and justice for all.

It would be a good time for our federal legislators to respond to that call for justice by beginning to invert the priorities of spending on tobacco price supports in favor of preventive education about the physical dangers of smoking.

Meals for less topic at library

Practical tips on how to enjoy better meals for less money will be given those who attend the Wednesday, April 30, program at 10 a.m. at Bloomfield Township Public Library, Lone Pine at Telegraph in Bloomfield Hills.

A trio of experts will advise the audience regarding smart food buying, meal planning and food preservation. Bobbie Kelly, home economist and manager of consumer affairs for Chatham Food Centers, will discuss "Stretching Your Food Dollar."

Meria E. Larson, chemist for the Detroit district of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, will suggest ideas for wisely "Reading the Nutrition Label." Janet Voorheis, home economist for Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service of Michigan State University, will explain methods for "Safe and Sound Food Preservation."

Ms. Kelly, former teacher and longtime consumer advocate, has developed many consumer-oriented programs for groups and made numerous appearances on radio and TV talk shows.

MS. LARSON, formerly employed by Pittsburgh Plate Glass and Parke Davis and Co. is responsible for analyzing samples of foods, drugs and cosmetics manufactured, stored and distributed in the Detroit district.

Mrs. Voorheis has been a teacher in the junior and senior high schools of Dearborn Heights and Livonia. She has also served as assistant professor of home and consumer management at Eastern Michigan University, has supervised student teachers for Wayne State University and has been employed as extension home economist for Wayne County.

Those who attend may bring along "brown bags" and stay for lunch. Coffee and tea will be provided. The group will also have the opportunity to tour the library.

This program marks the second in the series based on "Reading the Fine Print." The series is sponsored by the New Vistas Commit-

tee for Special Library Services of the Bloomfield Township Library and Baldwin Library.

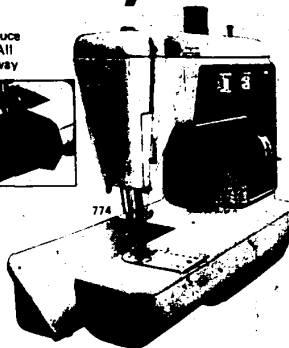
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