

TV Called 'Principal Pusher to Junkie Nation'

NOV 15 1972
1115 72 SW

By Karlyn Barker
Washington Post Staff Writer

Nicholas Johnson, maverick member of the Federal Communications Commission, said yesterday that television has become "the principal pusher to a junkie nation."

Testifying at drug advertising hearings held by the National Council of Churches, Johnson said Americans are spending at least \$2 billion a year "on our drug habit" as a result of media ads for sleep aids, cough remedies, obesity control drugs, mouth washes and stimulants.

"The unfortunate fact is that we are unable to perceive our own drug problem precisely because we have reserved the moral disapprobation associated with the term 'junkie' for those persons who are using drugs which our society has labeled illegal," Johnson said.

on the first of three days of hearings by the National Council of Churches at the National Cathedral's Hearst Hall.

The council said it is holding the drug hearings because "concerns of the religious community . . . include the effects of drug advertising."

Although "drugs have an indispensable place in mankind's fight against disease and pain," the Council said, "we are also aware of how widely drugs are misused to the detriment of health and social functioning."

Citing statistics showing there are 24 times more alcoholics than heroin addicts, Johnson complained that on television "beer and wine are pushed openly and hard."

"While little kids are being told the lie that strength comes from sugar and cereal flakes . . . their teenage brothers and sisters are being told the lie that beer will give them 'gusto' as well as sexually, acceptability and all the material things in life for which they yearn," he said.

As more subtle ways in which alcohol is pushed, Johnson said, "drunks are frequently portrayed as comedy characters . . . story lines of programs often include someone with a problem turning, almost casually, to a drink of alcohol as a solution."

Johnson said cigarette advertisers have circumvented the cigarette advertising ban "by advertising a new product

that looks like a cigarette but is called a cigar."

Attacking federal regulatory agencies, including the FCC, for "doing little or nothing" to restrict advertising, Johnson said drug reliance could be stemmed if there was a ban on all broadcast advertising of over-the-counter drugs, especially analgesics and mood-altering drugs.

He said programs viewed by large numbers of children should be free of product advertising altogether.

If such regulations cannot be established, Johnson said, "we could at least extend the fairness doctrine so that product advertising would be rebutted by counter-ads" showing the adverse consequences of using the product.

Donald L. Kanter, a psychologist from the University of Southern California, told council members drug abuse ads should be aimed at the whole family. With the exception of anti-smoking ads, he said, "public service advertis-

ing as it applies to drug abuse education is really a wasted national resource."

Charging that many anti-drug ads have boomeranged, Kanter said one survey showed that of 92 per cent of youths who said they saw anti-drug ads taped by well-known athletes, 88 per cent thought the athletes themselves were using drugs.

Another speaker, Dr. Gerhard J. Hanneman, of Drug Abuse Information Research, said ex-addicts rather than athletes should do anti-drug commercials and that drug abuse ads should be placed in rock music publications and underground newspapers "to better reach the target group."

SE Asia Said Source Of 30% of U.S. Heroin

Associated Press

Federal narcotics officials are revising sharply upward their estimates of the amount of heroin that Southeast Asian countries supply to drug traf-

fickers within the United States.

New official estimates from the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) say that 30 per cent of the 6.5 to 10 tons of illicit heroin entering the country annually originates in Southeast Asia.

In congressional testimony and in other public statements, federal officials previously have estimated that Southeast Asian countries accounted for between 5 and 15 per cent of the heroin sold to the 500,000 or more addicts in the U.S.

But in response to a series of questions by Sen. William B. Spong Jr. (D-Va.), the BNDD provided far higher estimates.

The BNDD report said its figures on the sources of heroin sold in the United States came from identification of traffickers. BNDD said 60 per cent of the heroin sold to U.S. addicts originated in the Near East and another 10 per cent in Mexico.