

information has been published, is being published. The Newsletter service which I referred to in my testimony is one such form but there are many pamphlets they publish.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I think you indicated in your direct report that Agriculture used to do some testing and do some distributing of information, but they have suspended that.

What did they do that they no longer do?

Mr. KAPLAN. It used to be the practice—perhaps I have an example of one such publication. I did not bring them all but I brought one to show what used to be done. Excuse me, I didn't bring that one. It used to be a practice of the group which at that time was called the Home Economics Branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to test such products as refrigerators, washing machines, detergents, various items of clothing.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. They did this presumably for the information of the farmer?

Mr. KAPLAN. Yes, presumably for the information of farmers, but it was published more widely and the information included test results on particular brands of those products which were published in coded form, brand A, B, C, and D. Anybody knowledgeable in the field could easily pick out the Frigidaire from the General Electric machine but most consumers had no such way of finding this out. The object here was to make it possible for consumers to buy somewhat more intelligently; such information as the kind of agitator and the amount of water consumed and things of this sort were described in the publications so consumers who read this would be able to ask intelligent questions in the marketplace about products they were considering.

This information is by now not being made available at all and not even being obtained to the best of my knowledge and the reason, as I said, was that there was a period a few years ago when criticism from industry which reflected itself ultimately in criticism from Congressmen put enough pressure on the administrator of the agency and also on the budget so that this kind of work was discontinued or at least seriously curtailed.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. When did this suspension take place?

Mr. KAPLAN. I don't have the details. My guess would be somewhere around 3, 4, or 5 years ago.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I am looking at a list of hazardous electrical products on page 10 of the Senate hearings on establishment of a National Commission on Product Safety and it states that there are potential hazards by way of excessive leakage of current in some of the following items and I will just read them briefly: TV sets, table radios, portable phonographs, home intercoms, hobby kits, clock radios, portable radios, automobile battery chargers, toasters, clothes driers, waffle irons, blenders, coffeemakers, frying pans, griddles, saucepans, vaporizers, and so forth.

There are dozens of others: broilers, garage door openers, hair driers, oven ranges, electric toys. Do you know whether any Federal agency has information relating to safety standards on some of these types of products sold on the open market?

Mr. KAPLAN. It would seem to me that the standards—the criteria for determining whether a product does or does not have an electrical hazard, are available generally in the Federal specifications. Every Federal spec I know that deals with this kind of information requires