

to explain to consumers, they should not use scouring powders with ammonia-forming compounds.

What I am trying to suggest is that it is not just your qualified products list that might be valuable. I have gone through some of your specifications on consumer-type items and, as a layman, I have extracted information which I think the average consumer would find very useful. I think a technical writer could probably perform that function a great deal more efficiently.

For example, the flexible cord is one item. This is something the consumer can visualize; whether the coffee urn they want to buy has that particular flexible cord. You also require in your coffeemaker specification that it conform to the standards of the Underwriters Laboratories. I think they have a label of some kind that is affixed to the product. This is something else that might be interesting to the consumer; you feel it is important that your product conform to the Underwriters Laboratories standards. Perhaps it would also be important for the consumer to know that.

On the subject, for example, of lawnmowers, which consumers buy all the time, you require various kinds of safety features. You require, for example, on the subject of balance, that lawnmowers shall not tip over of their own accord when placed in either direction of travel across a 30° slope. I have a 30° slope on my property. You specify in addition that the tire of the lawnmower be of a certain size because anything smaller than the size you specify would get stuck, supporting the heavy equipment, in every rut in your lawn. I mention these things because these are just a sample of the kinds of information that I have abstracted from your specifications as a layman and I am wondering whether it is, in fact, true that your specifications are valueless to the consumer.

Mr. ABERSFELLER. Well, let me respond in sequence as I recall it. Let me first explain my philosophy on this thing because I didn't intend to convey the impression that I dare say you got. I do not suggest there is not some solution to this particular problem. I tried to encourage that there is. The point I made in my statement was more directed to what the consumer needs to do today to get the information. This is not to suggest, when the committee reacts to this particular problem and if it should decide that additional information can be made available in other ways, that I would not encourage and endorse that. In fact, I do, if this makes that statement clearer.

I am simply trying to state that the consumer today must pretty much rely on brand names he has some wealth of information on, buys repetitively, or he must rely on the certification of the industry.

Secondly, with regard to the scouring powder problem as to why we have different brands and different characteristics, the glass-cleaning powder is a finer powder. In fact, it is of a somewhat substantially different composition than you notice in the regular cleaning powder. I would assume that every housewife knows that she ought not use regular scouring powder on windows. Now, the reason for this, of course, is that the regular scouring powder is generally—and I want to qualify this because we have not tested every scouring powder on the market; there may be one that does both—but anyway, as a general rule, the normal pot and pan scouring powder is more abrasive and is somewhat thicker—I guess that is the proper term—in the sieve thickness than the glass-cleaning powder would be.