

# WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF ALL ADVERTISING STOPPED?

*Stores would begin cancelling orders. Very quickly, manufacturers would close down plants and lay off millions of employees. Volume production would be a thing of the past... and so, prices would rise fast.*

*Within a week most radio and television stations would close up shop for lack of revenues. The ability of many newspapers and magazines to perform their full, vital functions would be seriously impaired! And the cost per copy would zoom for those that tried to keep running only on circulation revenue.*

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This alternative to advertising can hardly be the goal of the critics of advertising. Without advertising our national economy, our national life, would be bleak indeed. In many ways, advertising is the power plant of our society.

#### MORE CUSTOMERS FOR MORE PRODUCTS

American creative genius and wonderful ability for organization have resulted in a tremendous flow of goods of all kinds. This creates a crucial need for masses of people anxious, willing and able to buy and consume these goods. Only a society with a constantly rising standard of living can provide the customers. These customers have to be sought, taught and often persuaded to move higher in the scale of living. This is the job of advertising.

Machines produce products. Advertising produces customers. As machines produce more goods, advertising is needed to supply more customers.

Suppose all our warehouses and stores become filled with merchandise. What would happen if this merchandise remained on the shelves? There would be a glut. Everything would slow down. Sure, people would still have to buy the necessities of living—food, shelter, wearables, medicine. But that is hardly enough to keep a very small part of our factories, railroads, trucks, planes, stores in operation. Millions and millions of people would have to be laid off.

Advertising not only gives people news about the new products, but provides the urge for people to own and enjoy these products. The wider and deeper the penetration of our products into the life of America, the greater the need for more production. This means more jobs. More jobs mean more people able to enjoy what we make. More people buying means more, still more production. And so on and so on. The result is that more Americans can enjoy more of the fruits of their labor than people in any country anywhere in the world can enjoy theirs.

#### ADVERTISING LOWERS PRICES

Does advertising raise the cost of goods? On the contrary. Through newspapers, television, magazines, radio and billboards, an advertiser can talk to a prospect for a tiny fraction of a cent. Advertising is the quickest and cheapest way of reaching large numbers of people. It enables the advertiser to reach his market (customers) inexpensively and thus increase his total production, thereby reducing the cost of making and selling each unit.

#### THE CULTURAL EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING

It's because of advertising that our mass media of communication can afford to command the finest talent from all over the world and give to the American people information, stimulation and education which, in other countries, are available to very few people.

Advertising makes its cultural contribution in another way. Advertising is in large measure responsible for better living, less drudgery, more leisure for more people. This creates opportunities for intellectual and spiritual activities equaled in few, if any, other countries. While millions and millions of dollars are being spent by Americans for cars, boats, sports equipment and the paraphernalia of leisure, there is a growing hunger for improvement of the mind and for aesthetic enjoyment.

#### WHAT ARE THE "NEEDS" OF PEOPLE?

Critics of advertising sometimes indict it for creating dissatisfaction in people's minds with what they have, and persuading and cajoling them into buying what they neither need nor want. But what are "needs?" The "needs" of people in undeveloped countries are not the same as our needs. Our needs of 50 years ago are not the same as they are today. We don't actually "need" electric razors, electric refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, television sets, shampoos, beauty treatments, packaged goods, or even automobiles. But would critics of advertising stop encouraging people to want a better life? Would they have the millions of people who create, produce, and market the so-called "non-essentials" thrown out of jobs? Do they want us to go back to the more primitive living of other countries?

#### ADVERTISING—PUBLIC SERVANT

Frequently, the advertising industry is called on to do direct public-service jobs—for the Government as well as for private public-service organizations. This it does through the Advertising Council, a non-profit organization supported by American business and advertising media. Here's what President Eisenhower said to the Advertising Council in Washington several months ago:

"For eighteen years you have been stimulating the nation's conscience in areas where the voluntary work of great numbers of people has been necessary in order to promote worthwhile causes. I know you have been in such fields as conservation, organized charities, safety, prevention of accidents, and more recently in giving your efforts to the job of pointing out to our people the need for self-discipline if we are to avoid debasement of our currency and prevent inflation.

"And I think no other body has done more in this regard in trying to inform America across the board of these things than has The Advertising Council."