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Vitaliano R. Gorospe

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Advertising in the Philippines: Some Ethical Considerations

VITALIANO R. GOROSPE

TO say that advertising has tremendous power for good or evil is an understatement. Secretary of Finance Rufino Hechanova has said recently that "advertising not only moves products but changes attitudes and habits, creates appetites, stimulates needs and affects the lives of entire societies."¹ In our modern society there is no medium that exerts so intimate an influence as advertising. Advertising is here to stay and has become part and parcel of our everyday living; it pursues us every hour of the day and far into the night. It is difficult for anyone to escape from the advertising "fall-out" from billboards and neon signs, from the press, radio, movies and television. Often, wittingly or unwittingly, we have fallen victims to the "hidden persuaders" and "image-makers", as the men who create advertisements are sometimes called.

The importance of advertising in the Philippines today is shown by the amount of money spent on it. Last year the total advertising budget was estimated to be in the neighborhood of 74 million pesos—larger than the annual budget of the City of Manila. This year the National Economic Council's estimate is about 60 million pesos, but this lower figure represents only the amount channeled through advertising agencies.

¹ Address to the 1963 Seminar on Advertising and Socio-Economic Development, held July 24 to October 4, 1963.

Advertising charges in the various mass communications media are enormous. For instance, the cost of one full-page advertisement in a daily newspaper like the *Manila Chronicle* is ₱1,344.00. The cost of Class A radio time is between ₱30.50 and ₱40.50 per minute. The cost of a television commercial is staggering: about ₱500.00 per minute plus an additional ₱50.00 if done "live". Now these huge sums of money are not paid out lightly. Advertisers feel that they are necessary if sales volume is to be maintained and increased.

The most diverse opinions have been expressed on the advertising profession. Advertising men have been extolled as "transformers of society", and condemned as "brainwashing experts" who "make blood money by inducing the poor to buy what they do not need and cannot afford".² In the March 1964 number of the *Reader's Digest* the claim is made for advertising that it gives "more goods and services of better quality for more people" and that it makes life easier, more pleasant and less expensive. But those who have read McLuhan's *The Mechanical Bride* and Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* have been warned that advertising not only prevents intelligent free choice but manipulates and degrades man.

There are those who assert that advertising stimulates economic and social growth, and those who claim that it is the cause of economic waste and an obstacle to the development of a mature society. The advocates of advertising say that it protects freedom of the press and is one of the most powerful weapons of counter-propaganda against totalitarianism, while the critics of advertising counter this by saying that advertising interferes with the free expression of ideas and debases language and common cultural symbols. Some of these claims and counter-claims are true, others obviously exaggerated, and much of what is being said in criticism of advertising offers no constructive alternatives. Since advertising is only one marketing tool in the possession of business, and business is only one aspect of man's social activities, it is unrealistic to overemphasize advertising as a force for either good or evil.

² Address of Senator Raul Manglapus to the same Seminar.

The purpose of this article is to enlarge our understanding of the nature and range of ethical problems involved in Philippine consumer advertising. There is need today to develop an ethics of advertising since this is a relatively new field giving rise to moral problems too numerous and too complex for any single man or any one group to handle adequately and competently. In this new and difficult area both moralists and advertising men have an important role to play. Those who are in the advertising profession are better equipped and more experienced than ethicists and moral theologians in making *business* decisions wherein it is often better to be wrong than to delay. Since they spend most of their time making business decisions, businessmen may not always be aware of all the moral issues involved, and thus they may be apt to forget that in making *moral* decisions, one must delay rather than be wrong. Likewise, ethicists and moral theologians are not always aware nor do they always appreciate the complex and difficult business decisions that have to be made by businessmen. Hence the need of cooperation. Both businessmen and moralists together should endeavor to explore, pinpoint, and clarify areas in Philippine advertising where there are ethical problems and try to develop by study and research answers which demand a realistic grasp of both principles and facts.

This article will be divided into three main parts. First, we shall consider, on the level of facts, two of the major ethical problems in modern Philippine advertising, namely, the problem of honest and truthful advertising and the problem of Philippine advertising and socio-economic development. Secondly, we shall discuss, on the level of moral principles, the ethics of persuasion and the ethics of consumption, and try to apply these general norms to the two major problems mentioned above. Finally, we shall conclude with a clarification of the moral responsibility, both individual and social, involved in advertising.

HONEST AND TRUTHFUL ADVERTISING

We take it as a matter of course that human communication must remain trustworthy if it is to contribute to man's

development and perfection and serve the best interests of mankind. Though there is nothing as obvious as the fundamental respect for truth that all men should have, there are hidden and subtle ways of disregarding the fundamental responsibility to tell the truth. It is for this reason that the Association of Philippine Advertising Agencies (APAA), recognizing its primary responsibility to see to it that their advertising not only conforms to the law of the land but also that dishonest, deceptive or offensive material is not put before the consumer, has subscribed to a clear code of ethics condemning unethical advertising techniques and unfair competitive methods.

An examination of the APAA's Code of Ethics will show how this fundamental respect for truth can and is often violated in a number of hidden and subtle ways.

1. *False statements or misleading exaggerations.* An example would be a food product or drug advertised as containing such and such an ingredient in exact mathematical proportion when as a matter of fact scientific tests show that this is not the case. Another example would be an objectionable movie advertised as "uncut and uncensored" when in fact all the parts judged offensive to public decency have been actually excised by the Philippine Board of Censors from films intended for public viewing.

2. *Indirect misrepresentation of a product, or service, through distortion of details, or of their true perspective, either editorially or pictorially.* For instance, paperbacks abound on our newsstands with sexy covers which have absolutely nothing to do with the actual contents of the books.

3. *Statements or suggestions offensive to public decency.* Obviously, some of the movie ads in the daily newspapers and some of the previews of coming attractions in cinema theaters are the worst offenders in this respect.

4. *Statements which tend to undermine an industry by attributing to its products, generally, faults and weaknesses true only of a few.*

A case in point: A safe company tries to discredit all the products of a competitor on the basis of a newspaper

report that *one* of the competitor's models has been found to be not as fire-proof as claimed—a report that later turned out to be false.

5. *Price claims that are misleading.* How often have buyers been taken in by price tags or labels with the appealing ₱99.50 “only”, especially in installment buying, only to find out when they read the fine-print conditions-of-sale, that they really have to pay much more.

6. *Pseudoscientific advertising, including claims insufficiently supported by accepted authority, or that distort the true meaning or practical application of a statement made by professional or scientific authority.*

This is particularly true of foods, drugs, and cosmetics. There is the famous case of a popular cold tablet which became a notorious example of public fraud. The company behind it knew all along that it was a hoax, but made millions before the fraud was discovered.

7. *Testimonials which do not reflect the real choice of a competent witness.*

This subtle deception figures in advertisements depicting a famous movie actress or a prominent family using such and such a brand although the celebrity in question may have used the product casually or only once and the ad's candid shot was used without the consent of the witness.

All these are examples of how advertising can subtly violate the fundamental respect for honesty and truth and should teach the buying public to be more careful and discriminating in their day-to-day purchases.

The February 1st, 1961 issue of the *Manila Bulletin* carried an editorial in which an advertising man was the first to call the attention of the public to the danger of misbranded foods, drugs, and adulterated products posing serious hazards to public health. He sounded the first clarion call to update our Foods and Drugs Act. One of the most serious problems of Philippine advertising is precisely in this area of deceptive and misleading labeling, branding, and packaging. It is some-

what surprising that Republic Act No. 3720 (H. No. 3052)—an act to ensure the safety and purity of foods, drugs, and cosmetics—was enacted and passed only last year (June 22, 1963). It is needless to point out that this revised and strengthened remedial legislation demands strong and vigorous implementation by the Food and Drug Administration.

PHILIPPINE ADVERTISING AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The second major ethical problem in Philippine advertising concerns the very controversial question: Has Philippine advertising encouraged conspicuous consumption to the detriment of social and economic growth?

According to Rev. John J. Carroll, S.J. whose article on the subject appeared in the October 1963 issue of *Philippine Studies*, a twin revolution, that of rising expectations and that of increasing population, is taking place in the Philippines. The expansion of the needs and demands of the people, their desire for a better standard of living, is due to many factors, among them the intensive advertising of consumption goods. The National Economic Council gives the rate of the natural increase in population as 3.5 per cent, which is one of the highest percentages in the world today. This means that since 1903 our population has quadrupled and will have reached the 50-million mark by 1985. Socio-economic development in this country has reached a point of no return: the nation must continue to develop rapidly or else face social unrest and national disaster. To meet the needs of the expanding population the nation must increase production by means of capital formation which is a vital necessity in an under-developed and growing economy.

There can be no solution to this grave problem without national sacrifice and discipline. Now if it is recalled that about 60 to 70 million pesos, a very conservative estimate, is spent mainly on advertising consumption goods such as cigarettes, cosmetics, TV sets, and air-conditioning units, rather than on increasing production, the question arises whether or not the advertising profession is living up to its social responsibilities.

It has been often suggested that the money spent by the wealthy on luxury goods be invested rather in productive enterprises. According to this view, the sacrifice and discipline entailed in a sharp curtailment of superfluous consumption would help provide much needed capital for economic expansion. Another view, however, is that what could be saved in this way would help very little towards the accumulation of capital. Moreover, so-called conspicuous consumption could stimulate the economy in a number of ways. It could, for example, act as an incentive since one of the rewards of business enterprise is certainly the ability to buy luxury goods.

What is the climate of opinion here on this question? In the Seminar on Advertising and Socio-Economic Development (July 24 to October 4, 1963), the claim was made by the advertising profession that advertising was and would remain one of the most effective instruments of social and economic growth. Speaking on behalf of the profession, Mr. Antonio de Joya, quoting Mr. Rodolfo Romero's "Forum on Economics" (*Manila Chronicle*, July 26, 1963), stated that although some forms of advertising tended to create a propensity for superfluous consumption, nevertheless honest and sober advertising was necessary to support industry and commerce in a developing country. But here lies the crux of the question: Has Philippine consumer advertising, as a matter of fact, been a suitable economic tool for the promotion of harmonious economic growth? Does the social and economic situation in the Philippines call for an artificial stimulation of consumption?

The contention that Philippine advertising, by raising the Filipino standard of living, contributed largely to the Philippine economic growth did not remain unchallenged. In the same Seminar Mr. Sixto Roxas, former Chairman of the National Economic Council, raised the basic issue, namely that the proposal for the increased use of advertising made by the members of the profession might be incompatible with the optimum pattern of economic growth in an underdeveloped country such as the Philippines. Mr. Roxas offered very strong arguments against Philippine advertising practices. As Mr. Roxas sees it, Philippine advertising, in its present form

and spirit, is borrowed from a vastly more affluent society like the United States, where a highly developed economy has both the productive and income capacity to absorb the increased demand for consumption created by advertising. But in an underdeveloped economy like the Philippines where the vast majority of the people have to go to bed not only without the benefit of TV's Uncle Bob but without even a decent meal, and where badly needed capital should be expended not on more sun glasses and lipstick but on more agricultural production, more factories, more roads and bridges, the problem is not more effective advertising but rather continued and increased economic development. Mr. Roxas pointed out that Philippine advertising may be producing adverse effects by misdirecting national resources required for production into unnecessary consumption or, by creating a preference for foreign brands, may be developing foreign instead of local industries and enterprises to the detriment of Filipino entrepreneurs, when it could be playing a more positive and constructive role as an educational vehicle for promoting farm management, banking habits, investment in government bonds, and so forth. In short, Mr. Roxas has posed the important question of whether or not Philippine advertising is in fact pursuing goals contrary to the nation's general economic objectives.

This question is a factual one which cannot be settled with a simple yes or no, involving as it does so many intangible factors as yet incapable of being scientifically tested. When one invests ₱50,000 in a house, we readily see the tangible effect of such an investment. This is not the case with the power of advertising to create needs which depend, among other factors, on social and cultural patterns of growth.³ We do not immediately see the practical results of advertising. Whether factual evidence will warrant the claim that Philippine advertising is a major contributing factor to the country's socio-economic development remains an open question and should be left to further investigation and research. But the basic moral issue is clear. If and when it can be demonstrated that, in the specific socio-economic context prevailing in the

³ Jaime Bulatao, S.J., "Value Orientations of the Filipino Consumer," *Marketing Horizons* (January 1964), pp. 66-69.

Philippines, Philippine advertising practices as a matter of fact lead to a misuse of the national resources, then it might be judged to be against the common good and therefore immoral. At present it is very difficult for the moralist to show that Philippine advertising in this particular respect is morally unacceptable.⁴

We may add that a distinction must be made between the content of an advertisement or the individual message and the advertising process in its total socio-economic framework. With respect to the advertisement, which is in the area of individual ethics, the problem of honest and truthful advertising is still primary. With regard to the process of advertising, which is in the area of social ethics, the complex process is to be judged by its relationship to the social, economic and cultural goals of Philippine society.

INFORMATIVE AND PERSUASIVE ADVERTISEMENTS

Before discussing the ethics of advertising, it might be well to recall that advertisements fall into two broad classifications. Informative advertising seeks to inform the consumer of the objective qualities of a product; its specifications, functions, price, availability. This kind of advertising is directed to the intellect and allows the consumer to make a free conscious choice; it is what advertisers refer to as "soft sell". The Philippine Air Lines' ad announcing the addition of a second all-economy-class flight to Hongkong every Sunday is an example. Persuasive advertising aims at creating a need for the product or service. It tends to be emotional and is chiefly directed to the feelings and even to the unconscious motivations of the consumer. This is what advertisers refer to as "hard sell".

Suggestive advertising seeks to by-pass the reflective powers of the consumer or to render them inoperative to a greater or lesser extent. It is not immoral because it uses emotions or feelings but because it tends to make a man less a

⁴ Space does not allow a discussion of other ethical problems in Philippine advertising. Suffice it to mention that there are moral problems involved in the relation of advertising to mass media communications and public opinion.

man, to degrade his dignity and freedom, and to invade his privacy. This type of advertising is what Packard condemns in *The Hidden Persuaders*.

It is important to note that informative and persuasive advertising, though distinct, are not often found separate, because most advertising is both informative in content and persuasive in intention. If all that an advertisement did was to give an unimaginative and factual description of a product without appealing to the emotions of the prospective buyer and without a certain amount of "puffing", the whole advertising business would collapse.

Thus, persuasion is a necessary part of advertising and in discussing its ethics, we must consider, first, the moral norms applicable to persuasion with emphasis on the advertisers, and, secondly, those applicable to consumption with stress on the consumers. These two main divisions—the ethics of persuasion and the ethics of consumption—are like two sides of one and the same coin. They are distinct but not separate.

THE ETHICS OF PERSUASION

The basic principle here may be stated as follows: Persuasion is ethical if it respects the rational nature of man and the obligation of an individual to reflect and make a free conscious choice. Since man is endowed with reason and free choice, he is expected to act reasonably and freely and not get into the habit of buying blindly and foolishly what he does not need and cannot afford. We are not of course expected to deliberate on any and every purchase we make. When we need a pair of shoes we simply go out and buy one without much thought, but we should think carefully before going out to buy a car or a house. The point is that we are expected as reasonable human beings to cultivate the *habit* of reflection in buying goods and services.

Now we depend and expect our fellowmen also to act reasonably when they persuade us to buy a product or a service, since we need correct information in order to act reasonably and freely. We do a lot of improvident and foolish buy-

ing many times, but we do this of our own accord and we have no one to blame but ourselves. But it is a different story when we spend money we cannot afford on things we do not need because we have been taken in by a deceptive advertisement or by the clever manipulation of hidden persuaders who take advantage of our weaknesses. The fact that others act unreasonably does not excuse any of us from acting reasonably. Hence the fallacy of the common excuse that "everybody is doing it". The fact that others are doing moral wrong does not excuse us from doing what is morally right. Just because many buyers act irrationally and foolishly does not give the advertiser the excuse to "give the people what they want", whether it is good for them or not, on the grounds that "the buyer should beware". Both these attitudes, no matter how prevalent today, are unethical. We are expected not only not to lead others to evil but also to help others act reasonably and morally. Justice and charity demand that we have a fundamental respect for our fellowmen as human beings and images of God.

It follows from the above that informative or truthful advertising is ethical in and of itself. Persuasive or suggestive advertising however, poses a real problem, since some of the persuasive techniques used are intended to by-pass the intellect and reduce rationality, and may, if successful, lead to improvident actions. In this connection three moral principles are applicable.

First, suggestive advertising as described, because its intent is of itself unethical, cannot be justified by alleged contributions to social and economic growth. A good end does not justify the use of immoral means. By suggestive advertising, I am referring to the use of illusions, inferences, and "atmospheres" to entice people to buy what they do not need and cannot afford.

What is the morality of such suggestive techniques? It is not easy to say whether or not this or that particular suggestive advertisement is immoral, since this is a matter of prudential judgment. What is unethical is the general attitude, tendency or spirit; the deliberate intention to mani-

pulate people's desires and needs and to exploit their human weaknesses and foibles. Suggestive advertising that does not respect the privacy, dignity and freedom of the human person, that treats human beings as if they were robots and shows a complete lack of social responsibility, is morally objectionable.

Secondly, advertising which creates or re-inforces an atmosphere of pseudo-values cannot be morally acceptable. Again I refer in general to an over-all advertising process which creates a phony world of hollow men seeking to build a false image of themselves, which infects men with the "get-rich-quick" mentality at the cost of self-respect and moral integrity, which treats sex as a plaything and lowers the moral climate of a country. Advertising which seriously disturbs the psychic balance of the individual, and creates and preserves an ethos in which material goods and services are prized as the highest and *only* values, is unethical.

Thirdly, mass-media owners have the moral responsibility to protest such techniques and where possible to promote the free flow of necessary information. Since advertising pays largely for the cost of our newspapers, radio and TV programs, mass media owners are vulnerable to pressures from advertisers and this could be a potential threat to the freedom of the press. Advertisers should not influence mass media owners directly or indirectly in such a way that the public is insulated from a serious discussion of important national issues or that the people are prevented from knowing about a harmful food or drug.

THE ETHICS OF CONSUMPTION

The basic principle relevant to consumer advertising may be stated as follows: Man is to use material goods for the development and perfection of himself and his fellowmen in order to attain his goal in life—the possession of God hereafter. This principle demands of advertising a respect for the real needs of the individual and society.

There are three questions which should be considered when one tries to determine the morality of consumer adver-

tising. Two have to do with the personal aspect of consumption, the third with the social. First, does advertising lead to a misuse of individual resources relative to the real needs of the individual? A person should satisfy all his needs, the essential before the non-essential, in relation to the development of his whole personality. Advertising should not induce a person to indulge in luxuries before he acquires the necessities. A housewife should not be led to squander money needed for the family's food and clothing on a piece of jewelry. A great number of advertisements selling TV sets and air-conditioning units on an installment basis often entice a low-income family to unreasonable spending on credit far beyond its needs and savings. Advertising which causes improvident spending and buying, which goes against right order and distorts the individual's hierarchy of values is morally objectionable.

The second question is: Does advertising lead to an illegitimate expansion of an individual's needs and to an immoderate use of any particular product? There are three kinds of material goods which should be considered. First, there are luxury goods such as stereo sets, long-playing records, and tourism. Though they have a limited utility, they nevertheless satisfy some real needs and can contribute to human development. It should of course be noted that luxury goods are relative to persons, time, place and circumstances. For instance, electrification, telephones and cars may be considered impractical luxuries in some remote barrio in the Philippines, but they have become necessities in Manila. Second, there are goods of low utility such as liquor and cigarettes. They also satisfy human needs but they can easily be misused or abused. Moderate drinking may help a tired business executive to relax after a hard day's work, but excessive drinking may lead to drunkenness and alcoholism to the ruin of one's name, fortune and family life. Moderate smoking may help relax one's nerves and reduce tension, but excessive smoking may also lead to cancer and an early death. Third, there are goods which promise intangible qualities such as glamour, allure, and status. A cosmetic ad which sells glamour instead of lanolin, allure instead of an eye-shadow, may

cause a woman to waste badly needed money on beauty treatments or lead her to believe that the only thing that counts in life is a mascara. Ads which sell status or a feeling of superiority instead of a car or a home, may cause a man to spend money he can ill afford on a sports car or a split-level ranch house in some exclusive subdivision, or lead him to believe that what one has is far more important than what one really is. It is morally inadvisable to create a need for such intangibles, especially by suggestive advertising, because this often leads to irresponsible spending harmful to the good of the whole person.

The third question deals with the social aspect of consumption: Does advertising lead to a misuse of national resources? This question is concerned not only with the possibility that a large percentage of the national income should be misspent on luxuries and superfluities. Advertising could also condition the individual consumer into disregarding his social responsibilities.

Some wealthy people think that it is nobody's business how they waste or squander their money since they have earned it. However, one does have social responsibilities towards one's fellowmen and one's country. If it is true that in the Philippines five per cent of the population own eighty-five per cent of the nation's wealth, then it cannot be denied that what the wealthy do with their money is going to affect considerably the economic condition of the country. It is difficult to see how anyone can say that there is absolutely nothing wrong about spending ₱5,000 for a wedding gown which would probably be used only once when so many of the people go to bed at night hungry and three families have to live in a tin and carboard shanty for the rest of their lives. The wealthy may live and spend according to their social status, but social justice and charity demand that they do not squander their superfluous wealth on highly extravagant weddings and parties while some of the people lack the necessities of life. Such grave irresponsibility on the part of the wealthy few could lead to social unrest and to national disaster.

In summary, the three moral norms for determining the ethics of consumption are: First, advertising is ethical if it encourages the consumption of products and services which have a real, though perhaps limited, utility. Second, advertising which aims at promoting the sale of products of little worth, or intangible qualities, may be ethical so long as it does not encourage an immoderate or dangerous use of these goods. Third, advertising must not lead to a pattern of consumption harmful to the actual social and economic condition of the country.⁵

Questions of principle fall readily within the moralist's field of competence; on questions of fact, however, he has to rely on other disciplines. The single most important moral question concerning advertising in the Philippines does not lend itself easily to resolution because, though the relevant principle is clear, the facts have not yet been fully ascertained. The question may be stated as follows: Given the actual socio-economic conditions in the Philippines, is consumer advertising, as it is practised today, morally permissible?

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. John McMillin, the editor of a magazine for advertisers, suggests a four-fold basic responsibility for professional advertisers. The first may be termed "responsibility to multiple neighbors." The ad man is responsible to a large number of people—to his competitors, to the agency, to the advertisers, to the mass media owner, to the millions of consumers, to the community, to society. It is gravely irresponsible to "give what the people want", whether or not it is good for them or for the country, just to make a short-term profit. The second is "responsibility for objective truth." Enough has been said earlier about honest and truthful advertising. In addition, a strict interpretation and enforcement of the APAA's Code of Ethics will be a step in the right direction. This demands personal honesty and integrity on the part of the individual advertising man. The third is "responsibility

⁵ This entire section is based on Thomas M. Garrett, S.J., *An Introduction to some Ethical Problems of Modern American Advertising* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1961).

to speak the truth with love." This means a fundamental respect for every individual consumer who is a human being made to the image and likeness of God. It is irresponsible to manipulate and exploit our fellow human beings as if they were mere robots or treat them as if all of them had a fourteen-year-old mentality. The fourth is the "responsibility to seek constant product improvement." One cannot foist a bad or inferior product on the public; it might succeed the first time, but only once. The quickest way to kill a brand of poor quality is to advertise it aggressively. People find out about its poor quality that much more quickly. The most powerful single factor in successful advertising is a genuinely superior product.

JOINT RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL

We must be careful not to assign moral responsibility to the advertiser alone, since there are other agents in society involved in the advertising process.⁶ Moreover, until practical suggestions for reform are implemented, the individual consumer himself must, for the time being, bear much of the burden of responsibility. In the location of responsibility, account must be taken of the relationship of the advertiser, the agency, and the mass media to the consumer. An analysis of the communication triangle shows that these three agents directly share the control of, and hence the responsibility for, the advertising process. While the primary responsibility is on the advertiser who initiates the process of communication, and hopes to benefit from it, the others share the responsibility. Indeed, if the advertiser neglects his duty, the other agents in the process become more fully responsible for the advertising.

In practice, the advertiser is responsible for the quality of his product and for the truthfulness of the claims which he presents. The advertising agent is obliged to see that the claim is presented in such a way that the truth is communicated

⁶ The author is much indebted to Francis X. Quinn, S.J., (ed.) *Ethics, Advertising and Responsibility* (Westminster, Md.: Canterbury Press, 1963).

without distortion. Media owners, who provide time and space for messages, and who are the agents who can exercise more control than the advertising agents, obviously have some obligation to protect their audience.

We must recognize, however, that the words "advertisers", "agency", and "media", stand for groups of persons and not for individuals. Since ultimately an individual must make business and moral decisions, it is necessary that each member of each group have a specific obligation. In practice, company policy should assign such responsibility by including it in the job descriptions of the various individuals involved in the process of preparing, approving and publishing advertisements.

In educating individual members as to their individual responsibilities and in making practical suggestions for: (1) increasing a sense of professional responsibility, (2) increasing the truthfulness of advertising, (3) increasing the freedom of the mass media and the public and (4) discharging collective responsibility, associations like the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (PANA), the Association of Philippine Advertising Agencies (APAA), the Philippine Media Association (PMA), and allied associations like the Philippine Radio Broadcasters Corporation (PRBC), and the National Federation of Consumers, whose goals are tied up with advertising, all play a very important role. Although the codes of ethics subscribed to by these associations have a real educative effect on the members, they will continue to draw mere lip service as long as they lack really effective sanctions.

While the proper allocation of responsibility can do much to increase the observance of sound ethical principles in advertising, it will not solve all problems. The fringe operators who generally do not belong to professional groups or subscribe to any code will certainly not accept responsibility. There is need then for an industry-wide association for the discharge of collective industry responsibility. The industry in question, say the milk industry, then, has an obligation to search for ways by which offending parties can be made aware of their responsibility and forced to discharge it.

Besides the three principal agents in the advertising process, other private agencies and the government have their share of responsibility. An example of what a private association can do in this regard is the publication of a national consumer's magazine giving the correct information on products and services before they are passed on to the public. Not to be overlooked is the responsibility of pertinent government agencies for a more vigilant supervision and a more vigorous enforcement of our Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics Law. Organizational and administrative policies and solutions are beyond the competence of the moralist. Suffice it to say that a healthy balance between self-imposed regulation on the part of all the agents involved in the advertising process and minimal and necessary legislation for the sake of the common good on the part of the government is a morally desirable goal.

While advertisers, agencies, and mass media owners should increasingly face up to their responsibility in advertising within the framework of Philippine socio-economic development, the individual consumers must assume their share of responsibility by cultivating the habit of reflection and discrimination in their spending so that they are not simply taken in by any and every clever advertisement. An aroused intelligent public opinion can do much to change or remedy a bad situation by energetic representation to the proper agencies. Parents, schools, and churches probably have a greater responsibility than advertising agencies in inculcating provident habits of buying and saving in the young.

CONCLUSION

The moral problems of Philippine advertising will increase rather than diminish, and there is no simple way of finding out what is right or wrong in the more difficult areas which still demand further study and research. But it is vital for us to wrestle with these moral questions if we are honestly and sincerely committed to the truth that in the long run good ethics is good business. To be moral in advertising is a difficult job, but is it also a challenge to one's personal integrity.