

## Eating Hazardous to Health, If You Believe Warning Labels

**E**ATING almost anything nowadays seems to pose some hazard to our health, according to critics of our food system.

A multifaceted campaign against foods and materials used to grow, process and preserve them involves health, cost, politics, obesity, sanitation and farm ownership.

Solutions in practically every case call for more federal regulations. Freedom is an issue, as each new rule tightens government control over an individual's choice of diet.

Foods that have been in use for centuries now are under attack. The National Dairy Council is rebutting a new book titled "Don't Drink Your Milk." The author blames milk, "the perfect food", for anemia, skin rashes, hardening of the arteries, cramps, diarrhea and acne.

Meat is another object of criti-

cism, along with bread and cereal grain products, for causing cancer and other ailments of the human race. They do head off starvation.

Critics have long denounced use of sugar, but when substitutes were developed, it turned out they didn't want those used, either. Saccharin, the only artificial sweetener left on the market, has been linked to cancer in laboratory animals.

Political involvement was made clear Sept. 16, 1977, when, on the same day, the Senate voted to delay for 18 months a proposed ban on saccharin and the U.S. Department of Agriculture set up subsidy payments of 2.5 cents a pound to sugar growers.

Food custom reformers often argue that we should eat only a few natural foods, with no chemicals used or added.

In *Lion* magazine for September, writer Paul Martin takes such an attitude. He cites as examples healthy conditions of 819 people living in a remote village in Ecuador, the isolated but healthy Hunzas of Pakistan and Eskimos before they adopted ways of modern civilization.

Production of food on such a limited, primitive basis would result in mass starvation in heavily populated areas.

The argument that natural foods are without their hazards doesn't stand up, anyway. Recently, three food faddists died after drinking "herbal teas" made with poisonous plants.

It has long been known that eating green or sprouting leaves of potatoes may poison a person, and apple seeds contain cyanide, which can kill if ingested in sufficient amounts.

Authorities also say that eating English ivy can cause breathing difficulty; sumac and Ginkgo trees can cause skin irritations, and heart failure can be caused by oleander.

Farm leaders argue that elimination of agricultural chemicals will reduce supplies, lower quality and raise prices.

An old German proverb says: "Man is what he eats." If our food supplies are as hazardous as critics claim, there may little hope for the future of the human race.