

## POLITICS & POLICY

ance. Prospects for passage this year are bright.

The computer software industry is mounting a multifront campaign to stop "softlifting," the unlawful copying of software. Future Computing Inc., a Dallas market-research firm, says softlifting cost the industry more than \$4 billion in 1984 sales. Total computer software sales that year: an estimated \$3.9 billion. The industry says it needs legislation that would prohibit the rental of computer software without the manufacturers' authorization—a protection the record industry already enjoys. With little organized opposition, the industry-backed measure has a good chance of enactment in this session.

In the meantime, U.S. Trade Representative Bill Brock has promised strict enforcement of the intellectual property provisions already enacted. The U.S. counteroffensive is making some headway. Talks are going on with a number of nations, and several—including Taiwan, Korea, China, and Singapore—claim they're moving toward providing stronger protection.

Still, no law will end foreign piracy of intellectual property so long as pirates make money at it. Admits Alice Zalik, a lawyer on Brock's staff: "We'll never stop it completely. What we can do is use our leverage to bring it within bounds." — Ann Reilly

## SUDSLESS SPORTS?

A group called Smart wants to ban beer and wine advertising on radio and TV.

**A** COALITION of unlikely allies has formed Project Smart to give Budweiser, Gallo, and other producers of beer and wine the champion hangover of 1985. Smart stands for Stop Marketing Alcohol on Radio and Television, and that is what the coalition is lobbying in Washington to do. Smart's membership is high-proof: Nader-style consumer activists, the 24,000-member National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Seventh-Day Adventist and Methodist churches, and various other religious groups.



George Hacker of Project Smart (Stop Marketing Alcohol on Radio and Television) says petitions calling for a ban on beer and wine ads over the air are starting to stack up.

Last summer Smart's members helped get Congress to withhold federal highway funds from states that don't raise their legal drinking age to 21 by late 1986. This time around, Smart is well on its way to gathering a million signatures on petitions to kick beer and wine ads off the air. Says George Hacker, a Washington public-interest lobbyist and one of Smart's organizers: "Support is coming in from everywhere." Admits Donald B. Shea, president of the U.S. Brewers Association: "We take this threat seriously."

For decades now, distillers of hard liquor have kept away from broadcast, while spending heavily on print and other types of advertising. But beer and wine companies spent over \$700 million to advertise over TV and radio last year—3.5% of total TV ad revenues, 12% of radio ad revenues. Those big bucks give other industries a stake in this battle too. If the federal government turns the spigot off on alcohol ads, advertising agencies would have to scramble to make up the drop in their billings.

Football, baseball, and other sports would probably be big losers, since networks would presumably be less willing to pay huge sums for the privilege of carrying sudsless games. In the 1984-85 season, the National Football League is getting about \$415 million from the networks.

Smart says its targets are alcohol abuse and drunken driving. The brewers counter that a 30-second TV spot isn't going to drive

someone to drink. They point out that alcoholism predated the radio and TV age by centuries, and that heavy drinking is more of a problem in countries where alcohol advertising has been banned, notably the Soviet Union, than it is in the U.S. The companies claim that their commercials may influence a consumer's preference for a particular brand but not his decision to reach for one more beer. Says Alan Eason of Miller Brewing: "We don't want our product abused any more than General Motors wants people to speed."

Within the next month or so the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms—a federal agency that regulates the beer and wine industries—is expected to propose tighter rules on the use of athletic scenes and celebrities in alcohol commercials. Still-active sports figures can't be used in such ads under present rules. Project Smart has been pushing for a broader ban, arguing that beer and wine advertising built around sports glorify drinking, particularly in the minds of impressionable young viewers.

On Capitol Hill, Smart says, it finds a growing number of lawmakers interested in the relationship between advertising and alcohol abuse, though few have made up their minds on whether legislation is needed. An outright ban on broadcast advertisements isn't likely to emerge from Congress in 1985, but on the other hand the campaign isn't going to go away. — Craig C. Carter