

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

cent and that there is high pressure advertising in the industry. However, nothing much was done as a result of this inquiry. A member of the legislature, in speaking prior to the investigation, said that hearing aids which cost \$35 in Japan are being sold in Vancouver for upwards of \$400, and others which cost only \$77 to manufacture are being sold for \$700, and that high pressure sales tactics are being used.

I myself know an elderly couple living on Vancouver island both of whom have to use hearing aids. They are old age pensioners for whom buying these little batteries constantly is a real hardship. The hearing aids need constant repairs. I have known countless such elderly people for whom it is a constant drain to buy and repair these hearing aids.

A hearing aid for these people is a great necessity. If they have to go without it they are condemned to solitary confinement, just as if they were under a prison sentence, because unless they can use a hearing aid they are cut off from the world. Many of them do not have the means to purchase it. A correspondent of mine from Sault Ste. Marie assures me he is one of those people who has to forgo a hearing aid because his pension does not allow him to buy one.

I should like very much to hear from the department as to what is being done. I know they will probably inform me they are looking into the matter. I note that, according to one of the minister's speeches, the department is looking into it. First of all, I do not believe looking in is enough. I should like to know when the looking in is going to be finished, the scope and length of the investigation, and so on. Above all, I should like to know the kind of remedial action that is likely to be applied. Is the Combines Investigation Act going to be used to ascertain whether or not there is a combine in this industry? After all, when you have a mark-up of 306 per cent over the wholesale price, there must be some kind of control there which comes close to monopoly control. I do not want to be told that the department is looking into it and everything is under control. I want to be told something more definite which can be passed on to the elderly people of this country.

Mr. Albert Béchard (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): In the absence of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and his parliamentary assistant, I was handed the answer to be given to the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs.

MacInnis). The answer is: Yes, I have noted the allegations. The director of investigation and research under the Combines Investigation Act informs me that there is no evidence to suggest there has been an offence under that legislation, although undoubtedly prices are high. The government of Canada has no jurisdiction to control prices in the absence of an emergency, but the consumer affairs branch is looking into the hearing aid business to see if there is any other way in which my department can assist consumers. I cannot satisfy the hon. member's curiosity as to the actual stage of the study now.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION—
ALLEGED SUPPRESSION OF FILMED INTERVIEW WITH NIGERIAN OFFICIAL

Mr. J. M. Forrestal (Halifax): This evening, if I may, I should like to take some time to explain a series of events which appear to me to have occurred in connection with the publication through the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation of what I consider to be legitimate news. Earlier last week and the two weeks immediately preceding, there were four representatives in Canada of what is called the breakaway region of Nigeria or, in other terms, Biafra. At the outset, let me make it clear that in my personal opinion there is insufficient evidence upon which to base any lasting conclusions as to who is right or who is wrong in this conflict.

However, I do wish to draw to the attention of the minister or the parliamentary secretary the following points. First, when Dr. Mbadiwe was in this country he was invited to participate in a filmed interview. According to my information, this interview was done by the C.B.C. Then the C.B.C., I think quite properly, invited the point of view of the officials from Nigeria who are in our country. My understanding is that these gentlemen did not wish to give this interview, for what reasons I am not sure.

• (10:10 p.m.)

What followed, to the best of my knowledge, is that a direction was given to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation news and public affairs department to cancel the filmed interview with Dr. Mbadiwe. I just want to review one or two other points. What is it that Dr. Mbadiwe wanted to say? What message did he want to leave? I suggest that what he wanted to say constitutes hard core, legitimate news, the type of news that could not conceivably editorially be simply swept