

*Combines Investigation Act*

that is, those in support of the measure other than that by the minister who introduced it and that by the chairman of the committee, which were simply stating formal ideas in support of the bill—were useful speeches. One of those speeches was by the hon. member for Wellington South (Mr. Hosking); and I think it was an extremely useful speech. He indicated why it is so important that this measure should be delayed and the members should have a chance to consult their constituents before they vote on it. On December 18 the hon. member for Wellington South had this to say, as reported at page 2170 of *Hansard*:

After I received a few telegrams from various business people in my riding I spent some time making inquiries to find out whether any of the small shopkeepers who operate their own individual businesses on the corners of my towns and cities had made any representations to have price maintenance brought into effect. I could not find an instance where one of the small shopkeepers had suggested that they wanted or had instigated price maintenance. Thus I must assume that although at the present time they are under the operation of price maintenance, it was not instigated at their request; and since it was not instigated at their request I started to figure out who wants this thing.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that he said he had explored the situation, that he had made inquiries from small shopkeepers and had not found any of them who really wanted price maintenance. I have mentioned that matter because it was a most definite statement by a member of the Liberal party that he had actually consulted his own constituents and his own small retail merchants in order to find out whether or not they liked this legislation. Many of the members in this house might well have been affected in their thinking about this subject by that strongly stated opinion. I therefore think that it is of importance that the members should know how greatly at variance that statement was with what the shopkeepers in Guelph thought. I have here a telegram, and I am glad to see that the hon. member for Wellington South has entered the house and will hear me read it. This is a telegram from the Guelph Retail Druggists Association, signed by F. E. Wagner, president. It is dated Guelph, Ontario, December 20, and reads as follows:

We resent statement by Henry Hosking that "he had made a survey of the retailers in his own constituency and found that none of the small retailers had complained about the government's bill on retail price fixing." This is deliberately misleading. Telegrams protesting the Garson legislation were sent to him by many Guelph retailers on October 16—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I doubt if a statement from outside the house is allowed to be read contradicting what a member has said in the house. See *Beauchesne's* third edition, paragraph 259.

[Mr. Drew.]

**Mr. Drew:** Mr. Speaker, if there is any objection taken to it I shall of course abide by your decision.

**Mr. Hosking:** Let him read it.

**Mr. Drew:** As the hon. member for Wellington South has indicated that he wants me to read it, perhaps you will allow me to continue, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** I do not think the hon. member would want to be out of order.

**Mr. Drew:** Oh, no. But I would be happy to comply with the wishes of the hon. member for Wellington South.

**Mr. Speaker:** I can only allow this procedure with the unanimous consent of the house. Is there unanimous consent?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** No. I do not know that, just to meet the wishes of the hon. member, the hon. gentleman should be allowed to be out of order. I know he would not want that himself.

**Mr. Drew:** Since this is a telegram of which I would assume the hon. member for Wellington South probably has a copy or has a general interpretation by another telegram, I would have thought that perhaps it might be put on *Hansard*, since he is in the house and can challenge its accuracy if it in any way misinterprets what has been put forward.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** No. If the hon. gentleman has a copy of the telegram he does not need to have it read in the house. He knows what is in it.

**Mr. Hees:** We should like to hear it.

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not think I should allow a controversy between people who are outside of the house and those who are in the house.

**Mr. Drew:** May I say that from several telegrams I have received from merchants in Guelph and in Wellington South it is quite clear that the statement made by the hon. member for Wellington South clearly failed to indicate what is the real attitude of the retail merchants in that constituency. I am raising this point now simply to indicate how desirable it is that the members have an opportunity to consult their constituents and meet the retail merchants in their home communities. I am hopeful that when they are given that opportunity after this house adjourns, whenever that may be, they will find ample occasion to meet them and find out just what they really think about this measure. That procedure will help many hon. members in forming their opinions when they are called upon, at some date in the future, to vote upon this bill.