

Consumer Credit Controls

the product that resulted in the issuing of the promissory note.

Therefore anybody who gets stuck with this type of promissory note should have the Judge stand up and say, "You are a dishonest company. You are a fake company. You are only a dummy corporation collecting for the original fake company. I am therefore not interested in giving you judgment". I agree with the hon. Member for Spadina that there have been many honest Judges who have said this after listening to some poor family tell the story of the abject poverty to which they have been reduced because of buying something they did not want, could not use, and were high-pressured into buying. I think this House has an obligation to the public in this regard. Without a doubt in this respect we are the most backward country in the western world; we certainly go backward faster than we go ahead.

• (5:30 p.m.)

Surely we can consider what has been done by other countries in this regard. In my bill I simply applied the copyright principle. One of the few pieces of legislation passed by Canada which has been adopted by almost every other country in the world is the copyright legislation. By the principle of that legislation all the liabilities and assets in relation to the original patent, no matter how many people purchase it, remain with the original patentee. Surely this principle could be carried through in respect of the subject matter of this bill.

I hope this bill will not be referred to a committee. We discussed this subject matter in a committee last year. I am no longer a member of that committee, but I can say that the committee last year did not refer one piece of legislation back to this House. The House would be well advised to pass this legislation at this stage, without further study by a committee.

The hon. Member for Spadina (Mr. Ryan) referred to a four day cooling off period which is included in this proposed legislation.

Mr. Ryan: That cooling off period is included in the English statute of 1957, as amended recently.

Mr. Peters: Perhaps that cooling off period is referred to in the French translation of this bill.

Mr. Ryan: It is not included in this bill.

Mr. Peters: In any event, I am sure the hon. Member for Spadina would agree to

including such a cooling off period as part of the provisions of this proposed legislation. I am sure that no one here who has considered this matter would object to such a cooling off period.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know why we are so stupid in this House, but we are stupid. We have been unable to adopt machinery to prevent certain things from happening of the kind which I am sure this bill is intended to prevent. A day or two ago a young lady came to me within an hour of the time she had signed a contract under which she would receive a free \$600 stereo set by purchasing a number of records at an exorbitant price. She was talked into signing this contract by a high pressure salesman in an office here in the House of Commons. She came to me and suggested that she had been taken. She certainly had been taken. I do not suggest that the company which this high pressure salesman represented is completely dishonest in its advertising, but I can assure you that she did not understand what she was getting into.

This young lady was high pressured into signing this contract. I got in touch with the company in question and suggested that the salesman had better come back to his office and tear up the contract, because if he did not I was going to raise an awful fuss. I do not intend to use any names regarding this case, because in the final analysis that is what took place. I asked the gentleman to whom I spoke what length of cooling off period was allowed following the signing of one of these contracts—whether it was 24 hours, two days, two hours, six hours or what. He did not understand what I was referring to. I said that I wanted the salesman back immediately so that we could dispose of this matter. Apparently this company had just commenced its campaign in Ottawa and, after some discussion with the salesman involved, it was decided that they would go along with my suggestion, because it would be less expensive to them, having set up this sales campaign, than risking a great deal of adverse publicity.

This is a rather long and complicated example, but it is typical of the kind of thing that happens every day in Canada. For this reason I suggest there should be a cooling off period of two or four days. The young lady to whom I referred did not want a stereo in Ottawa in the first place, and having signed the contract realized within an hour that she had made a mistake. When the