Competition Bill

We always save the dessert till the last, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Henry Heald, writing in the Ottawa *Journal* on November 6, had this to say:

Both Grace MacInnis (NDP Vancouver Kingsway) and James McGrath (PC St. John's East)—

Mr. McGrath: Order.

Mr. Cullen: I continue:

—said the bill proposed worth while measures in the field of consumer protection.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, if I may turn away from this Ottawa Journal column for a moment, the hon. member for Sarnia has a great deal to say about this, but it is very seldom that a Liberal is quoted favourably in the Ottawa Journal. At least, that has been my experience. If I may continue with Mr. Heald's comment, the article goes on to say:

Mr. McGrath said: "The bill offered a lot more than I expected". He called it: "an important piece of legislation..."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I do not think we have a more severe critic, and when we get praise from such a source I am almost tempted to sit down and rest my case. However, since this is such an excellent bill I do have a few more comments to make. As I have indicated, this bill is not the greatest bill that has ever come down the pipe, nor are we suggesting that it is. It is an amendment to a particular piece of legislation that is presently on the books. But it does make provision for Canadian corporations and for subsidiaries of United States corporations, or for that matter any foreign corporation, to act in Canada as good Canadian citizens.

The hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge has indicated one approach that he would like to see adopted. We have adopted the approach of making these amendments to the combines act. I am not concerned so much with the means as I am with the result, and the result is that subsidiaries operating in Canada have got to be told plainly that they have an opportunity to do business anywhere in the world and that they are going to conduct their business pursuant to Canadian foreign policy, not United States, British, French or the foreign policy of any other country. That is why these provisions are contained in this piece of legislation. If we dolled it up a little by putting it in another piece of legislation, then that would not bother me at all. I am not interested in the form; I am interested in the result.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are many others who want to speak in praise of this bill.

Mr. McGrath: Would the hon. member permit a question?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Does the hon. member agree?

Mr. Cullen: Any time.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, so far we have heard the hon. member tell us what other people have said about the

bill so far as the business community is concerned. As the learned and distinguished former chairman of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices, I should like to hear him say what this bill means to consumers. He has not yet enlightened us on that score.

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Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, now I know the hon. member has not read the bill.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cullen: I hope he does read it before he gets up to read his speech, as there are others more knowledgeable than me who will follow him and point out the error of his ways, particularly if he thinks the bill does nothing for the consumers.

An hon. Member: Let's hear what it does.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, when you have a court case you do not belabour the obvious. There are certain circumstances and situations in respect of which we say the judge can take judicial notice. It is not necessary to comment on or put something in evidence in court when it is self-evident. I do not intend to stand here and read the bill when I know the hon. member can read it for himself. The bill speaks for itself, but apparently not loud enough for the two consumer critics of the opposition.

Mr. Baker: Tell us about double-ticketing and how you are going to enforce that provision.

An hon. Member: What are you going to do about the price of meat?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, please. I am not sure whether the hon. member has answered the question, if he has decided to make another speech or to continue with this speech. However, I understand that the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) wishes to ask another question. Whatever the situation, the hon. member has lots of time left.

Mr. McGrath: I should like to ask the hon. member, who has had a wealth of experience as chairman of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices, another question. I suggest that all the recommendations of that committee have been ignored. I should like to hear the hon. member address himself to the provisions of the bill dealing with double-ticketing and explain how the government intends to enforce that provision. Perhaps he would also direct himself to the misleading advertising part of the bill about which the committee had so much to say.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order, please. Perhaps the matter was not put in the form of a question, but it was explicit enough that the hon. member might answer.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, after listening to that rather wide ranging discourse, let me say that one of the difficulties in respect of the double-ticketing system, which the hon. member may be as well aware of as I am—