

Private Members' Business

Who knows that those jurisdictions are.

—and which would include considerations of such factors as costs generated by distribution mechanisms, excessive mark-ups at various levels, differential pricing, economies of scale, interest rates, and the exchange rate of the dollar.

That is a mandate which would probably be twice as expensive as the Spicer commission on which we spent \$27 million we do not have. I say to the hon. member, who I know is listening attentively to this speech, the member for Windsor—St. Clair, who presented this motion to us, that I, as much as everyone else, want consumers to be better protected in Canada.

• (1950)

I have a solution to offer. I think that this is the kind of mandate that our own Standing Committee of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Government Operations could perhaps undertake right here in the House of Commons, but not to spend whatever it would cost, \$40 million or \$50 million, to look at this thing.

We have stacks and stacks of reports of Royal commissions in this country, some good, some not so good and some totally useless. I say to you that the three Royal commissions that we had going at the time of the deposition of the last estimates, namely the Royal commission on reproductive technology, the Spicer commission for lack of a better name, and the royal commission on reform, between the three of them there is almost \$100 million spent. I am very worried about us spending that kind of money at this time.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I think that what we need in this country is better legislation to protect consumers. We especially need, as legislators, to protect the Canadian consumer. But for goodness' sake, Mr. Speaker, the last thing we need at this time is another Royal commission which will cost us, as I said earlier, God only knows how much. Fifty million dollars or so maybe. All that, of course, to produce a report which will unfortunately end up in file nine. We simply cannot afford such an expense, Mr. Speaker. Its mandate would be much too broad. I would suggest that our colleague withdraw his motion and

move instead to refer the matter to the Committee on Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Government Operations, which could examine consumer prices in Canada, maybe comparing them to prices in the United States but certainly not with those in the rest of the world. This would be almost cost neutral. By this I mean that the costs could be borne within existing budgets instead of wasting money on another Royal Commission.

[*English*]

In closing, I hope that all members will think very seriously about establishing yet another Royal commission. It seems that we hear about Royal commissions every second week in this House and it is, upon occasion, an almost sexy thing to bring up. Well, maybe it is, but I think members will agree with me that it is time we put an end to some of these kinds of expenditures and try to favour some way of helping our constituents at lower costs to Canadians. Probably, because of the influence that we have as members in this House, in which I hope that we do have, that if a committee of this Parliament would look into this issue instead, we would actually have more influence than a Royal commission in any case in terms of getting something adopted by the government to help out the consumers in this country.

In summary, let us narrow the mandate for what is being proposed here. Let us make a reference to a committee instead and let us get away from this business of spending another \$50 million or so that we do not even have and that the taxpayers of Canada are tired of seeing us spend their money.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): No other member wishes to speak on this issue?

There being no further member rising for debate, the time allocated to consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 96(1), this item is dropped from the Order Paper.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 7.52 p.m.