

result of the tabling of documents by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

• (5:20 p.m.)

The technique whereby submissions are tabled with the consent of the originator is a singularly appropriate one for this sort of situation and, undoubtedly, could be considered in respect of the documents which the hon. member for Winnipeg North wishes to see. Until, however, the Council has prepared its third and fourth reports, it would be unreasonable to require the submission of these papers which might give rise to a debate on the very subject which the Council is attempting to consider in a quiet and reflective manner for the purpose of reporting to the government its considered views. It seems quite clear that the public interest would not be served by the tabling of these submissions at this time. Precedent has left to the minister responsible discretion as to whether to recommend that papers of this type be not produced if he considers it against the public interest so to do. However, once the remaining two reports have been dully completed and rendered to the government, if it is considered by members of the House that there should be production of these papers, consideration could then be given by the government to following the same technique as was followed by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs with a view to tabling the papers after consent has been obtained from each of the contributors of the briefs.

The interim report on competition policy has far-reaching effects. Its importance lies not only in the recommendations it made regarding mergers, the trade practices of industrial concerns and of certain retail and wholesale businesses. The Council also made recommendations concerning other areas which have not yet been subject to regulation by the federal government. The report suggests that instead of trade mergers, restrictions of trade and similar practices being treated as a criminal offence as we now do under the Combines Investigation Act, we should regard these offences as civil matters. In this lies a serious problem inasmuch as civil matters, as hon. members know, are the sole responsibility of the provinces under our constitution and before the recommendations in the report in this respect could be accepted there would certainly have to be agreement on the part of the provinces that the federal authorities take over responsibility for a field which would then be classified as falling into the civil section. This may be one reason why earlier action has not been taken on the report, but I am hopeful the minister will soon implement some of the recommendations made by the Council in its interim report on competition policy.

I hope that when these steps are taken they will be not only be directed at industrial practices in restriction of trade as we have come to know them; I hope that close attention will be paid to the recommendations the Council made with regard to certain courses of action which are now followed by many of the professional societies in Canada. This is referred to in the report, not at great length but sufficiently to bring to the attention of those concerned the fact that Canadians may be suffering because of restrictions imposed by professional societies

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in many provinces. This does not necessarily apply to all the provinces or to all the professional organizations but, in my opinion, the hon. member for Winnipeg North would be doing the public a service if he urged that early action be taken to curb the practices of various professional societies which restrict the number of persons who may belong to them so that the services of many skilled people are denied to those who need them at a fair price.

Some time ago I drew attention to the fact that the dental societies in Canada carry these restrictions to the extreme. I pointed out that it was very difficult for a person who received training in a country other than Canada or the United States to become licensed to practice dentistry in Canada. There was an incident which was well publicized during the Czechoslovak revolution. A number of dentists from that country came to Canada, but they were not allowed to practice here even though some of them were fluent in English and were competent in other ways. If my memory serves me correctly, there are only 33 dentists practising in Canada who have obtained their qualifications outside Canada or the United States.

On the other hand, the medical profession is very much dependent on practitioners who have received their training outside Canada. Certainly, half of those in Alberta received their training outside Canada. It seems as though we are allowing our professional societies to say: It is all right for you to do open heart surgery and major operations of that kind, but it is not all right to pull a tooth if you received your training at a university outside Canada. This is the type of restrictive practice which is causing a great deal of concern. It deprives Canadians of certain services to which they should be entitled, and this is the type of thing hon. members should urge the minister to control. I, personally, hope that when he presents a new bill to replace the existing Combines Investigation Act the minister will introduce provisions to ensure there is competition not only among industries and among retail businesses but also in the professions, because as pointed out in this interim report on competition policy this is an area in which there has been a lack of legislation.

I realize that to implement the recommendations of this report as far as the professional societies are concerned would mean stepping on the toes of the provincial governments because the regulation of professional societies, the statutes under which they were formed and under which they operate, are within the jurisdiction of the provinces. But I believe that in view of the concern felt on the subject in this country the provinces would be happy to see the federal government take a lead. I urge the hon. member for Winnipeg North and, indeed, all hon. members to encourage the minister to implement all of this report as soon as possible so that we can eliminate the unjust practices which are taking place in various aspects of the economic life of Canada.

• (5:30 p.m.)

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, the motion before the House for production of papers, moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow) asks the government to release some 40 submissions made to the