

### Competition Tribunal Act

2. Are private firms hired under contract to do research and, if so, in (a) 1984, how many firms were hired and what were the names of the firms and, in each case, the amount of the contracts (b) 1985 (i) how many firms will be hired and what are their names if known (ii) what type of research will they undertake (iii) was the research bureau of Tourism Canada considered for the complete research and, if not, for what reason?

3. Were Camp Advertising, Foster Advertising and Hayhurst Advertising invited to submit to the Cabinet Committee on Communications a tender for advertising contracts from Tourism Canada and, if so, were other firms also invited?

4. Did the Cabinet Committee select Camp Advertising and, if so, on what basis and for what reasons were the other firms not selected?

Return tabled.

[Translation]

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### COMPETITION TRIBUNAL ACT

MEASURE TO ENACT

**Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Canada Post)** moved that Bill C-91, an Act to establish the Competition Tribunal and to amend the Combines Investigation Act and the Bank Act and other Acts in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am quite pleased to rise in the House today to acquaint Hon. Members with a very important piece of legislation in the eyes of this Government, which I would even describe as a major economic policy measure.

Bill C-91 to amend the Combines Investigation Act will also give Canada a market charter, a new charter better suited to current conditions. Mr. Speaker, the view of the Government is that the private sector or the market place must be the real driving force behind the most equitable sharing of resources, economic growth and job creation. We do know that the market system within a competitive framework paves the way for a dynamic and flourishing economy. We also know that a sound economy is absolutely essential if we are to maintain and improve the social programs which are the hallmark of Canadian society. To sustain and spur our economy, we have to revamp our major economic statutes and gear them to the requirements of a modern market place. They must also reflect an economy which is and will be ever more closely linked to international trade of goods and services.

When legislation on competition was first drafted in 1889, Mr. Speaker, Canada was barely entering the industrial age.

With the passage of time, however, we became leading players on the international scene in such sectors as raw materials, energy, aluminum, newsprint and telecommunications. Our exports now account for about 30 per cent of our Gross National Product.

The report of the Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada underlined the importance of international trade for the Canadian economy by saying that, as much as possible, Canada should use international trade to ensure a continued and aggressive competition on the domestic market.

Mr. Speaker, economically oriented major statutes, such as the laws on competition, bankruptcy, corporations, copyright and trademarks provide the essential tools for orderly trade as they establish the basic rules for a competitive and fair market-based economy. However, most of these instruments are old, inoperative and out of date. Our rules are obsolete, inadequate, and in some cases, more an obstacle than an incentive to productivity. Canadian businesses will have difficulty in taking up the challenge to claim their fair share of international markets and facing the impact of international competition on the domestic market if they are paralyzed by inadequate legislation. Moreover, if our businesses are disadvantaged, all Canadians will suffer.

I therefore believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Members of this House have a clear and pressing responsibility. They must update these statutes, eliminate such obstacles to growth and economic prosperity and see to it that businesses and consumers are treated fairly on the market.

• (1110)

[English]

Hon. Members of this House are well aware that Parliament has tried several times before to enact amendments to the Combines Investigation Act. Each attempt has ended in failure. This time the proposed Competition Act enjoys an unprecedented degree of support throughout the business community, especially with small businesses, consumers and labour interests. The *Financial Post*, for one, in its editorial of February 1, 1986, stated, and I quote:

This is, after all, the best opportunity yet after 16 years of seemingly endless debate to bring in much needed reform. The chief virtue of Bill C-91 is that it's a sensible, pragmatic document that will do the job without going overboard . . . like highway speed limits, it simply sets a reasonably clear and enforceable standard of conduct that reflects a broad social consensus.

[Translation]

As for the publication *Les Affaires*, Mr. Speaker, it concluded that Bill C-91 maintains a fair balance between free competition and the need for businesses to re-organize to become competitive on international markets.

Some interested parties will probably want to express specific concerns to the committee responsible for considering this bill. Nevertheless, they accept both the need for change and the main thrust of the bill. What is important, Mr.