

• (5:00 p.m.)

RADIO ACT

AMENDMENT TO DEFINE "BROADCASTING" TO INCLUDE COMMUNITY ANTENNA TRANSMISSION

On the order:

Second reading of Bill C-20, an act to amend the Radio Act (community antenna)—Mr. Peters.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, if I could have the unanimous consent of the house I would withdraw this bill because the subject has been covered by the broadcasting bill recently passed by the house.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Does the house give unanimous consent to the hon. member to withdraw this bill?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Order discharged and motion withdrawn.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT

MEASURE TO ENSURE ACCURACY IN WEIGHTS AND MEASUREMENTS OF PACKAGED GOODS

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North) moved the second reading of Bill No. C-23, to amend the Weights and Measures Act (truth in packaging).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill which I have introduced on other occasions is to try to give the consumers of Canada the kind of information which would permit them to make meaningful and intelligent choices in the purchase of necessary merchandise. The problems of the consumer have been giving increasing concern to the people of Canada. To realize this one has only to consider that various provincial legislatures have studied the problems of consumer credit and have come forth with recommendations upon which legislation has been based. Also this parliament established a joint committee of the House of Commons and the Senate to study the problem of consumer credit and other problems of consumers. This committee held meetings which extended over a long period of time. It held close to 50 meetings and made recommendations dealing with various aspects of consumers problems.

The principle of this bill was endorsed by an organization which I am sure most members of parliament know and I think all members respect, namely the Consumers Association of Canada. At its annual meeting in

Weights and Measures Act

June, 1962, this association passed a resolution which I should like to place on the record. It reads as follows:

Whereas there appears to be an increasing number of packages on the market whose contents are stated in fractions of ounces; and

Whereas consumers are experiencing difficulty in determining readily, while shopping, the comparative values of many products, due to the varying weights of packaged goods;

Be it resolved that the Consumers Association of Canada requests the Department of Trade and Commerce and the food and drug directorate to standardize the weights of packages of food and other items weighing four ounces and over, in units of quarter pounds, half pounds and pounds.

Since that resolution was passed there have been, as I mentioned a moment ago, extensive hearings by a joint committee of parliament, as a result of which we have passed legislation establishing the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and a minister to head the department. The joint committee looked into the question of packaging which is dealt with in my bill, and in its report the committee made a number of references to the problem. Hon. members can find the report in the Proceedings of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on Consumer Credit, No. 41, of Tuesday, April 25, 1967. I wish to place on the record a few of the references made in the report to the question dealt with in my bill. On page 3452 the committee said:

Your committee perceives the need for an expert group within the department to investigate any merchandising practices which take advantage of or mislead consumers.

On page 3454 of this report recommendation (c) reads as follows:

That packaging and weights and measures be designed to inform the consumer as fully as possible;

On page 3470 of the report, dealing with the problem of consumer standards and consumer protection, the committee says:

(3) packages should be designed in terms of size, shape or dimension in a way that will not deceive or mislead retail purchasers;

(4) the net quantity of the contents in terms of weight or measure should be expressed as simply as possible and in terms which can be easily interpreted;

(5) the essential information about a packaged product and its physical contents should be stated in a prominent place on the label.

Another recommendation is that there be established a department of consumer affairs