

million a year that Canadians spend on car insurance by way of premiums, according to the latest figures I have they recover only about 67 cents on the dollar.

I think one of the very first matters which the newly created department of consumer and corporate affairs should take up is service to Canadian motorists in the car insurance field. A national publication, the Toronto *Star Weekly*, earlier this month ran a feature article on car insurance in Canada, and it introduced the subject by saying that everybody who owns or drives a car knows something of the statistical witchhunts, dubious moralizing, high handedness and general hugger-mugger that affect what he pays to insure himself.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, this is a subject that commends itself for attention at the federal level, just as much as those other aspects of travel safety the federal government has already entered into. I appreciate having these few moments to bring the matter up again tonight and I ask the question once more: Would the newly formed department of consumer and corporate affairs undertake to consider giving further attention to this problem?

Hon. John N. Turner (Registrar General): Mr. Speaker, it pleases me a good deal that the hon. member for New Westminster has put the first question to me about consumer affairs, the house having just accorded third reading to the bill to set up this department.

The combines branch has looked into the matter of automobile insurance under the terms of a general inquiry under section 42 of the Combines Investigation Act, on which the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission reported as long ago as May 16, 1960.

At that time, Mr. Speaker, the commission expressed the opinion that some of the rules, methods and activities of the board's organizations—that is to say, the Canadian Underwriters Association and some of its affiliated territorial associations across the country—and insurance companies, had features which in some circumstances might bring them within the kind of actions, defined by the act, and there was a possibility that they might be held to infringe upon the law.

It was suggested to the C.U.A. at the time, and to other associations, that they should review the situation particularly with regard to the character of premium and commission rates. After a reasonable time had elapsed, in which the C.U.A. and its member associations examined the report of the commission, the

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Director of Investigation and Research made extensive preliminary inquiries to determine whether the situation warranted formal inquiry under section 8 of the Combines Investigation Act.

In his annual report for the year ending March 31, 1963 the director stated that after assessing all relevant facts he did not consider that the existing agreements among members of the C.U.A. with respect to premium rates would at that time be likely to have the effect of preventing or lessening competition unduly, contrary to section 32 (1) of the act, and therefore that formal inquiry was not warranted. The director has continued since that time to keep informed on the operations of the industry as they pertain to automobile insurance. The director's inquiry pertaining to automobile insurance is referred to in the annual report of the Director of Investigation and Research, under the Combines Investigation Act, for the year ended March 31, 1967, pages 19 and 20.

I realize that the question of the hon. member for New Westminster relates to a wider term of reference than that pursued by the Director of Investigation, and Research, and in view of the program we propose for the newly constituted department of consumer and corporate affairs, I assure him I will give his suggestion consideration as the new department's program develops. It might well be a proper term of reference for the committee of the House of Commons on consumer affairs.

• (10:10 p.m.)

[Translation]

TELEVISION—QUEBEC—INQUIRY AS TO
PROTESTS RESPECTING PROGRAM

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, on November 9 last, I asked the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh) to tell the house whether she had been informed of a petition protesting against a TV program shown on station CKRN-TV of Rouyn on October 30 last, and qualified as a torrent of filth by many and, if so, whether she could assure us that the matter would be taken into serious consideration.

Following that program, there was a general protest by all viewers served by Radio-Nord against that program in which the main characters, who claimed to be journalists, used coarse language concerning a certain public figure. That program was badly received by the entire population.