

*Combines Investigation Act*

**An hon. Member:** Sit down.

**An hon. Member:** Give him a chance.

**Mr. Browne (St. John's West):** I rise on a point of order. The hon. member is quoting from a brief which was submitted to the chairman of the committee and I should like to ask if that brief was published.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the hon. member asking a question of the hon. member who has the floor?

**Mr. Browne (St. John's West):** I was asking the hon. member if it is published in the report and, if so, at what page I can find it.

**Mr. Sinclair:** Apparently the hon. member has not bothered to read the proceedings of the committee. This brief was submitted to the chairman of the committee, and, like every other brief submitted to the chairman, was printed in the proceedings of the committee and is a matter of public record.

**Mr. Fulton:** All the hon. member is asking for is the page number.

**Mr. Sinclair:** It is in the last or the second last of the day's proceedings.

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** Page 818.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there another point of order?

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** Can we not even ask questions?

**Mr. Knowles:** Merry Christmas.

**Mr. Sinclair:** You could not find a royal commission report in your own province, so how can you find anything else?

**Mr. Browne (St. John's West):** I suggest the hon. member address the chair.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Hon. members apparently have decided the point amongst themselves.

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** If I may continue now, I should like to read from the brief of the Woodward organization, to be found at page 818 of the proceedings of the committee. It reads as follows:

For many years the Woodward organization has sought by every means in its power so to conduct its business that it can offer the best merchandise to customers at the lowest possible prices. This we believe to be the major purpose of the merchandising profession. Price maintenance however has made it impossible for the merchant to reduce his prices below an arbitrarily fixed minimum, and has nullified his constant search for new techniques which will enable him to sell for less. We wish therefore wholeheartedly to endorse the recommendation of the MacQuarrie committee against resale price maintenance.

[Mr. Browne (St. John's West).]

I want hon. members to listen to this part carefully.

Experience has taught us that business interests are best served by placing first and foremost the interests of the public.

Truer words were never spoken.

**Mr. Fulton:** Every little retailer said the same.

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** It continues:

It is possible that certain manufacturers may benefit by their ability to command a predetermined price for their product, whatever its quality may be. It is possible that certain retailers may derive advantage from the restriction of effective competition. But it is also sure that the consumer is frequently denied savings he might have enjoyed through the efficiency which only competition can promote.

True again, Mr. Speaker.

The use of competitive methods in bringing merchandise to the public is a powerful weapon against inflation.

**Mr. Fulton:** May I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** Not until I am through. These people would really have us worrying about the introduction of this bill.

**Mr. Sinclair:** He has spent two and a half hours already boring us.

**Mr. Fulton:** I just wanted to ask a question. If the hon. member does not want to answer it he does not have to.

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** The Progressive Conservative group has emphasized the fact that the government is doing nothing to fight inflation, but they have fought tooth and nail the very first measure introduced that might help the situation.

**Mr. Fulton:** Does Eaton's support the same views as Woodward's?

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** It continues:

Many forms of retail outlet are to be found in Canada. There are stores where customers serve themselves in order to save, and stores where they may receive exclusive individual attention.

Our drug stores are an example.

**Mr. Fulton:** Or Eaton's or Woodward's.

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** It continues:

There are stores where they may order by telephone, have delivery, purchase at the same price for credit as for cash, and there are stores where none of these advantages are offered.

**Mr. Fulton:** Like Eaton's and Woodward's.

**Mr. Stuart (Charlotte):** Continuing:

Is it reasonable to compel them all, irrespective of the amount of service they offer and irrespective of their widely different operating costs, to sell their product at the same price—and that price the highest the market will bear?

**Mr. Fulton:** Like Eaton's and Woodward's.