

does the computer, once it has registered a price change, inform the consumer of that change if the consumer is unable to read the coloured lines on the particular item?

The hon. member also said that suggested resale pricing was to be outlawed. I suggest that this practice will not be outlawed, because in another section of the bill it is stated that if a manufacturer places the price on the item or on the package, it is quite all right and that is exempt from this provision of the bill. So in fact we will not have lists of suggested resale prices; we will have the suggested prices on the item or the package.

Let me point out that the amendment would not prohibit games of chance or lotteries; it would prohibit the merchandising of products by the use of contests, games of skill and games of chance. I have mentioned before in this House that the marketplace is like a jungle and many consumers may not be as sensitive to market trends as certain members of this House who are in business themselves. Consumers are not generally in this field, and as a result they have to go into this jungle to make a selection of goods for which they must spend their hard-earned money. We are permitting, in this jungle, the predatory practices now being foisted on the consumer.

Let me refer specifically to this whole business of contests and games. As the hon. member for Northwest Territories correctly pointed out, somebody has to pay for these things. I suggest the people who do not believe in gambling or in this kind of hocus-pocus are forced to pay a share of the cost. Nothing is being given away by these stores. All consumers must pay the cost of this gambling in the prices they pay for their foodstuffs and other consumer items.

If a consumer wants to gamble, he has a myriad of lotteries and other such things. We will have the Olympic lottery with us for years to come, I suggest. If the consumer wants to play the horses, he can go to the racetrack. If he wants to participate in a provincial lottery, there are many of those around. If he wants to play bingo, I suggest there are bingo games in arenas right across this country, all being conducted under proper supervision and regulation. Why should we permit this kind of lottery in the marketplace in respect of consumer items?

Surely what is important is that the consumer knows the cost, the size, the quality and the ingredients of an article. By permitting this kind of lottery in the selling of consumer products, we are allowing stores to divert the attention of the consumer away from those things to which he should be paying attention, including quality, price and size of particular products.

We are not asking the government to interfere in the marketplace. The minister kept suggesting that this kind of thing would be an interference with the market. He suggested this would be difficult to administer. What has been tabled in this bill is the establishment of wage and price control legislation, and that is a complete intrusion in the marketplace. If the proposed board can overcome the difficulties involved in regulating prices, then surely it is not beyond reason to ask the government to legislate fairness in the marketplace so that consumers will not feel the pinch of inflation and, as a result, escalate their wage demands in order to keep pace.

Combines Investigation Act

I have mentioned only a few of the predatory practices that are allowed, but this business of contests and games of skill is really dishonest and should not be permitted in respect of the sale of consumer items. The consumer is faced with many other problems in the marketplace. In some instances he is faced with a proliferation of the size of packages. Cereal products, for example, come in 17 different sizes, and there are seven different sizes of frozen vegetable packages. There are six different sizes of instant coffee.

The consumer is therefore confronted with the necessity of making an evaluation as to the unit cost of these items. The consumer is confronted with all this gimmickry of loss leading, being led to believe he is getting something cheap when in fact the retailer is making up the difference in the price of other items in the store. We still have the operation of double-ticketing. Even now, as we spend time here talking about the establishment of a board to look into these increases, prices are going up; even now they are being changed.

By this amendment we have tried to eliminate some of these practices which this government is not prepared to outlaw. We have tried to direct attention to and focus the debate on this particular issue because it reaches right down to the grassroots level. These are the issues the consumer is faced with every single day when he or she goes out into that jungle to forage for food. We have tried to focus the debate on the specific items because they are concrete and represent the concerns the Food Prices Review Board was set up some two years ago to look into. These are the kind of complaints the review board has been receiving. What we have tried to do is eliminate some of this legerdemain and foliage. We have tried to clear the jungle of a lot of this underbrush so that the consumer can be aware of what he is buying—the size, the quality and the price.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question is on motion No. 18. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to section 11 of Standing Order 75, the recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred.