

*Patent Act—Trade Marks Act*

The amendment I moved earlier on behalf of the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert), and which I had requested, is authorized under the law. I would like at least the minister to give us a good reason for refusing an amendment which I find so reasonable.

Therefore I ask members of the opposition to consider this amendment seriously, express their opinion and support the stand taken by the Ralliement créditiste.

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I will try to be brief in dealing with this very important subject. Everyone of us has been ill at one time in his life. Everyone wants to be in good health but from time to time, we have to resort to medicine to regain health.

The amendment moved by the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) is perfectly logical since the hon. member demands that imported medicine be equal in quality to Canadian products.

This amendment speaks by itself, as it is my opinion, and the reports and briefs which have already been tabled in Parliament will testify to this, the federal government has always been too generous in this field.

The complaints we have received indicate that this sector of industry has been poorly supervised. In fact, when a similar product is introduced under a different name, the regulations do not apply any longer.

The same situation prevails in the field of food. For instance, very often the container will bear an inscription that says the minimum weight of the product must at least be mentioned.

The federal government does not control strictly enough imported drugs or food.

Mr. Speaker, I think the amendment moved by the hon. member for Lotbinière should pass and all the more so since we can read in the report of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons, Proceedings No. 39, dated March 21, 1967, at page 3313, in a brief presented on February 7, 1967 to the Prairie Provinces Commission on cost prices by Mrs. Florence Elgaard, President of the Provincial Association of Alberta, affiliated with the Consumers Association of Canada, the following recommendation made to the Consumer Credit Committee: protect the consumers. This is our role as members of parliament. We should, therefore, begin by protecting the Canadian manufacturers, so that they do not have to meet the competition

[Mr. Dumont.]

of other products that are not of the same quality and do not offer the same protection to the consumer.

Speaking of the consumer's rights, in this brief presented on February 7, it says that the consumer is entitled to: First, security when he buys a product; then, that he must be informed on the quality of the products. He has the right to choose the quality of various products.

And here we find the following recommendations: That the consumer has the right to have proper labelling on different drugs concerning toxic substances that these drugs, imported or not contain; that the consumer has the right to demand clearer indications about the quantity of the ingredients contained in the various drugs imported or made in Canada; that the consumer has the right to know the source of these products; that he also has the right to be protected as far as to the future use of the drugs he must buy and the weight and other measures that are put on the various containers.

Later on, on page 3133, in the same submission, are quoted instances of the conditions that the committee could or could not ascertain at various stages of its enquiry and in different provinces concerning some products. The articles in question are mostly food products, and I quote from the said submission:

We refer also to Nabisco Shredded Wheat. It happens to be a timely and available example of a common practice by industries, and we review it in some detail. This product has been around for a long, long time, and packaged in quantities of 12 and 18 one-ounce biscuits. The price of this package was 43 cents, purchased in 1967. The previous 18 biscuit package was also 43 cents. However, this latest purchase contains 15½ ounces, while the previous 18 biscuits package held 18 ounces. In the 18-oz. package the product cost 2.38 cents per ounce, in the 15½ package the product costs 2.73 cents per ounce. At the earlier price rate of 2.38 cents per ounce, 15½ ounces should cost 38.64 cents or 39 cents.

What does the customer receive for this 4 cents price differential? There is, on the new package, information that the customer can obtain a handy "Space Saver" for \$2.00 and 2 boxtops, mailed to a Toronto address.

Now, all along that submission, it was demonstrated that still the Canadian consumer is not protected for quality, identification, weight and quantity of the product, and that is the reason why the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) is perfectly in order considering that we have been elected to protect the Canadian consumer rather than the importers or the Canadian or foreign manufacturers.