

*Competition Bill*

importance of the Canadian football survival, but not being convinced that the arrival of an American club would be prejudicial to Canadian football, I have many reservations and I surely cannot subscribe to the minister's comments as regards this matter.

I dare believe that within the next few days we will have further information. Perhaps the bill that will be put forward will indicate whether there is really an obvious danger as the minister assumes.

On the other hand, we have quite opposite views and I believe that amateur sport would seem to favour the advent of American football in this country.

As I said, I am quite willing to consider the risks which may result from such a team joining the Canadian Football League. However, if the coming of such a team could result in some motivation and compete with the existing teams, I think that it could serve as an incentive for the other teams. Canadian athletes who are in search of excellence would be very happy to see a team which offers—we must recognize this—a performance of very high caliber.

I shall be satisfied with these few remarks, Mr. Speaker. Personally, I am very eager to meet the committee of organisations who are willing to give evidence or submit grievances to the minister in connection with the exploitation they suffered at the hands of these independent merchants. I take this opportunity to ask the hon. minister to seek considerably more information on American football before advising us that the establishment of such a team would harm, let alone destroy, Canadian football.

I hope therefore that adequate information will be made available to allow us to make a better assessment of the bill to be presented by the government and to consider if it is dangerous or if it is of sufficient interest to the Canadian people.

I would believe that these few remarks will be taken under consideration by the minister and that when the bill is before the committee we will be provided with additional information enabling us to improve on this bill, which is very useful and desirable. However, I do think that there is room for improvement and believing that the minister will welcome the amendments brought forward, we all hope as members of parliament and as Canadians that we will be provided with an effective legislation capable of giving better protection to the Canadian consumer.

● (1230)

[English]

**Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, the topic we are discussing today, involvement of the public sector of government in the area of competition, is of keen interest to me when viewed in relation to the development of the industrial base over the next several years.

I suggest that competition legislation in Canada, through the Combines Investigation Act, and in the United States through the commissions that have been established there in the last 100 years, has been responsible for the development of some of the largest conglomerates that exist in the private business world today. A corporation such as IT&T has been able to extend its tentacles in the last three decades under the pretence that

[Mr. La Salle.]

legislation exists which calls for competition and the breakup of monopolies.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today is crap; it is a coverup for collusion, for the development of oligopolies, of oligop—I will have to get the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) to give me the proper word. The development of inter-related directorships in multinational corporations within our economy will continue and false advertising will continue under a government that will not establish a Combines Investigation Commission with enough employees to operate it in order to break up these monopolies.

An article in the "Report on Business" section of the *Globe and Mail* of March 28 deals with developments in agribusiness which affect the economy of western Canada. It states "Cargill Grain purchases feed farm operations". Note, Mr. Speaker, not just elevators, and not just some aspect of the industry in which Cargill has been involved since 1928; it extends its tentacles, as a multinational corporation, into all aspects of the farm and agriculture business. The article reads:

More than 280 prairie grain elevators, a retail feed business and a hog breeding farm have changed ownership in a multimillion dollar deal between Canadian subsidiaries of two large U.S. agricultural companies.

Cargill Grain Co. Ltd., of Winnipeg is purchasing the two principal operating subsidiaries of National Agri-Services Ltd., also of Winnipeg. Cargill is a unit of Cargill Inc. of Minneapolis and National Agri-Services is owned by Peavey Corp. of Minneapolis.

What we have, Mr. Speaker, is consolidation of agribusiness and the expressed purpose of that consolidation is to expand that agribusiness in the farming industry. In my view that would be to the detriment of every individual producer in the prairie region.

No government, Liberal or Conservative, has ever legislated or taken effective action to ensure that expansion of a corporate entity in our economy can be curtailed or even properly examined, to ensure that competition will exist and that the western producers and western economy will be well served. So Cargill Grain will expand and take over National. I recall that when farm-owned wheat pools bought out Federal Grain over a year ago, both Conservatives and Liberals in western Canada raised a hue and cry. I can be just as critical at times of the pool operation, but now we see the private speculators of the Grain Exchange in Winnipeg attempting to consolidate their position in order to be able to expand into the ordinary aspects of farming. We do not hear a word about that from the members of the Conservative or of the Liberal Party. Mr. Speaker, this kind of legislation will have no effect on the conglomerates, the monopolies and the large corporations which are operating in Canada today. The expansion of agribusiness will become an ever-increasing and serious problem.

It is an amazing thing about our modern economy that certain parts of it have become a planning system; that the multinational corporations and the very large corporations plan their operations on an internal basis from the time they get the raw resources out of the ground, through the processing and until they are sold on the market as finished goods. This takes in the development of General Motors and the automobile operations in this country as well as those in the United States; it takes in the steel