

*Competition Tribunal Act*

this Bill offers. It upsets me that on this very important issue, we have not spent the time over the last 10 or 15 years required to see how we can effectively control the concentration of ownership and secure the diversification of financial lending institutions that is so important to Canada. Studies have been done and the House of Commons committees have looked at the matter from time to time, but there has not been the political will on the part of various Governments to make sure that we have effective legislation. The same thing is happening again today.

We know that the present legislation is favoured by many of the very powerful groups in our nation because they helped to write the legislation. The people who helped to write this legislation are the very people from whom this legislation is supposed to protect us. The fact that the consumers' associations, labour movement and farm organizations were not involved in the drafting of this legislation while those in the higher echelons of the corporate sector were is enough reason for us to be afraid about the weakness of this legislation.

Those are the types of concerns we in this Party and many Canadians have. We know that one of the reasons we have not passed adequate competition legislation is that there have been loud voices. Large institutions have had the ability to prevent the House of Commons from exercising its political will by passing the legislation that we need to protect the consumer, the farmer and our own economy.

We now have before us a piece of legislation which was drafted in the corporate boardrooms. Members of all three Parties know that it will not provide the protection necessary to prevent the Imasco takeover. We know that it would not have prevented the Genstar takeover which occurred last fall and it probably will not prevent the next takeover about which we will hear one or two months from now.

Why are we not getting the legislation we need? Why is the Minister of State for Finance (Mrs. McDougall) talking about this legislation as is the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Côté) rather than acting to protect our interests? Why are they not doing that? I realize that I am running out of time, Mr. Speaker, but let me suggest to you the reason they are not doing that. It is that too much power is being used by those in positions of power. They have the ability by themselves and through their lobbyists to control what senior bureaucrats think and what cabinet Ministers do, whether the previous Liberal Government or the present Conservative Government is in power. This is proven by the fact that there have been six attempts to get competition legislation through the House and we have only managed to pass one weak Bill so far. It is time for Canadians to realize that competition legislation is something which protects them. It is in place to protect farmers and workers. It is in place to protect the interests of consumers, whether it is people who want to deal with banks and trust companies or whether it is people who want to purchase goods such as drugs, lumber or any other product. Competition legislation which ensures adequate competition in our nation is legislation for ordinary Canadians.

It should not be the type of legislation we have now which justifies and aids corporate conglomerates in Canada.

• (1720)

**Mr. Gormley:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Member. He referred to the need to protect Canadians and I believe he said that Canadians were not consulted widely enough in the consultative process. The Consumer Association of Canada and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business were indeed involved in the consultations. Is he saying that these are the groups from which we have to protect Canadians?

**Mr. Murphy:** Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there were discussions with these groups. Those are not the groups from which we need protection, but I suggest that consumer associations and others do not really believe that this is the strongest legislation we can have to protect their interests and the interests of other Canadians.

**Mr. Nunziata:** Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Member who just asked a question seemed to indicate that somehow the Consumer Association of Canada and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business were involved in the consultative process. I do not quibble with the Hon. Member as to whether or not they were consulted, but it is important to determine the degree of consultation and the degree of input by those two organizations compared with the involvement of the so-called Gang of Five—the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the Business Council on National Issues, the Grocery Products Manufacturers of Canada and the Canadian Bar Association. It is public information that the so-called Gang of Five actually participated on a clause by clause basis, suggesting and recommending and insisting upon certain clauses being included in the new legislation. Indeed the Consumers Association of Canada and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business were consulted, but they were simply asked for their general views.

Having made that point, I should like to direct a question to the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy). Does he believe that the consultative process in respect of the drafting of Bill C-91 was a fair process in the sense that all interested parties were listened to equally? Does he believe that the submissions of the Gang of Five carried as much weight as the submissions of those organizations representing small business and consumers? I suspect that those who carried the day were members of the so-called Gang of Five and those who represent big business in Canada. It is obvious that the legislation before the House, compared with the legislation introduced by the previous administration, is more business oriented. It allows for more loopholes for those who are represented by the Gang of Five. Would the Hon. Member for Churchill comment upon the consultative process?

I was also interested in hearing his views in respect of the purpose of competition legislation. He quite rightly pointed out