

*Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*

Messrs:

Saltsman	Thomas (Moncton)
Simpson	Thomson
Skoberg	(Battleford-Kindersley)
Southam	Winch
Stanfield	Yewchuk—57.
Stewart (Marquette)	

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.  
Bill read the third time and passed.

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**CONSUMER PACKAGING AND LABELLING ACT**

PROVISIONS RESPECTING PROHIBITIONS, LABELS  
STANDARDIZATION, INSPECTION, ETC.

The House proceeded to the consideration of Bill C-180, respecting the packaging, labelling, sale, importation and advertising of prepackaged and certain other products, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.

**Mr. W. M. Howe (Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo):** I move:

That Bill C-180, an act respecting the packaging, sale, importation and advertising of prepackaged and certain other products, be amended by deleting clause 3 at page 2 thereof and substituting therefor:

“Application of Act

3. (1) The provisions of this act that by the terms of this act or the regulations are applicable to any product apply as long and as far only as they are not repugnant to or inconsistent with or do not impinge upon the provisions of any other act of the Parliament of Canada.

(2) This act does not apply where a product is neither the subject or importation into Canada nor of trade or commerce from one province into another.”

• (4:20 p.m.)

I wish to say a few words about this particular amendment, Mr. Speaker and, since this is the report stage, I wish to make a few general remarks about the bill. This bill relates to the packaging, labelling, sale, importation and advertising of prepackaged and certain other products and was introduced by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford). An examination of this measure would lead one to assume that it would warm the cockles of the consumers' hearts, thus making it possible for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to indicate he had done a great deal from them.

However, if we look at the history of this bill, we see that first reading was on November 2. It was introduced into the House for second reading on December 16 and now, on March 15, we are at the report stage. In the intervening time, hon. members saw the famous letter from the chairman of the committee which denied all interested people any opportunity to present their petitions. This caused a real uproar. I do not know whether the chairman of the committee had been told to do that or did it inadvertently. After a few days of reconsideration, the minister changed his mind and all the consumers' organizations, business people and trade organizations were allowed to present their petitions to the committee. The committee had some very good hearings.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

This particular piece of legislation follows the same pattern as other legislation presented in this House. It was introduced with a great deal of fanfare. However, what do we find? We find that the bill has been greatly amended in committee. We also remember a news story a few days ago in which it was reported that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) had petulantly indicated to a group of young people that the opposition were holding up legislation. We find that 90 per cent of the time when a bill reaches the report stage and third reading it bears little similarity to the original bill presented to this House. If it were not for the opposition discussing, questioning and in a great many cases advising this government, this country would have a great deal of very poor legislation. I am afraid this situation will continue until the government gets better draftsmen. It is extremely important for the opposition to thoroughly scan every piece of legislation introduced into this House.

We remember the great fanfare with which the minister introduced this bill. He quoted from the Bible, quoted poetic stanzas and referred to historical events to substantiate the necessity for this bill. I was reminded of the passage in the Bible which relates how our Master went into the temple with a whip and drove out the money-changers and gamblers. There has been a lot of discussion about an election being held one of these days. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs will use this election as a whip. He will go to the supermarkets and business establishments saying “Look what I did for the consumers of this country.” This is not so. This bill will not do all that for the consumers.

I sometimes wonder about the effectiveness of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The other day in Committee the minister was asked why he was not able to take action under the Combines Investigation Act against the banks of Canada which raised their service charges almost 300 per cent. When the minister was asked whether the fact that all banks acted at the same time indicated there was a combine he replied that the Combines Investigation Act does not have anything to do with services. If there is any place the Combines Investigation Act should apply, it is with regard to public services of this kind. It is not just the cost of packaged products that is increasing the cost of living. The cost of the services that people require is adding greatly to the cost of living, yet we have not seen any legislation in this regard.

If the Combines Investigation Act is inadequate, it should be amended so that banks cannot get together to do this kind of thing. The fact that one of the heads of the Bank of Canada had something to do with a big dinner in Toronto a few days ago may have something to do with this lack of action against the banks. We do not know. The Combines Investigation Act should have some effect on this kind of practice. We wonder about the importance of this legislation. In introducing this measure in committee, the minister said:

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member. In his opening remarks, the hon. member indicated he wanted to make some general com-