

B 647-2      ~~Blenkarn, Don~~ (Speeches)

## Price oligarchy untouched: MP

The Federal Government's proposed Competition Bill "takes a totally wrong approach" and should be withdrawn, according to Mississauga MP Don Blenkarn.

He says "the provisions in this bill are a complete abandonment of this government's responsibility to ensure that foreign laws do not control the business ethics and attitudes of Canadian businessmen." Blenkarn made his remarks in a speech in the House of Commons.

"The reality of the 1970's is that we are in an age of oligarchy, big corporations, big labour," he said, adding that "these large organizations set prices and set the terms, and they are never really prosecuted because they combine ... they have always avoided prosecution in the

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past and they will in the future."

"The bill before us does not solve anything with respect to prices."

Blenkarn acknowledged that the bill does attempt to put controls on shady business practices, phony warranties, pyramid selling, and some aspects of double ticketing, but objected to the "omnibus" nature of the bill, saying the government "always wants to put a whole lot of things under one umbrella." If these items were introduced as a separate consumer protection bill, he predicted they would pass easily.

The Mississauga MP also objected to the proposed "way the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission is to operate."

"The commission is the judge and the jury, as well as

the policeman," but "there is no provision in the bill for a fair hearing or trial of the issue, no provision for the calling of evidence, for cross-examination of witnesses by counsel, and no provision that the commission, when adjudicating a matter, must give written reasons for its decision."

Blenkarn suggested the government introduce a "new bill covering those parts of competition that eliminate the bad practices of some business," and produce a separate bill dealing with franchise agreements, refusal to sell, territorial agreements and other trade practices.