

The "resale price maintenance" clause of the Act is possibly one of the most explicit in the field of restrictive practices. The suggested list price for goods offered for resale at the wholesale or retail level can be only that — a suggested price. No supplier of goods for resale may prescribe the final price at which the goods must be sold, nor can he cut off supplies if a merchant refuses to abide by the suggested prices. Some relief to the supplier is offered by the qualifications that no one can be automatically considered to have practised resale price maintenance if the goods are withheld because there is sound reason to believe that the merchant was making a practice of using the products of the supplier as "loss-leaders" or as bait advertising, or engaging in misleading advertising or failing to provide the service that the final purchaser had a right to expect.

The Director of Investigation and Research is responsible for investigating combines and other restrictive practices, and the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission is responsible for appraising the evidence submitted to it by the Director and the parties under investigation, and for making a report to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. When there are reasonable grounds for believing that a forbidden practice is engaged in, the Director may obtain from the Commission authorization to examine witnesses, search premises, or require written returns. After examining all the information available, if the Director believes that it proves the existence of a forbidden practice, he submits a statement of the evidence to the Commission and to the parties believed to be responsible for the practice. The Commission then sets a time and place for a hearing at which both sides are represented. The Commission prepares and submits a report to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs; such reports are ordinarily required to be published within 30 days.

Under the provisions of the Act, general inquiries may be made into restraints of trade which, although not forbidden or punishable, may affect the public interest. The courts, including the Federal Court of Canada, in addition to imposing punishment for a contravention of the legislation, may issue an order restraining persons from further contravention or directing the dissolution of a merger or monopoly as the case may be. Application also may be made to the courts for such an order in lieu of prosecuting and convicting for a contravention of the legislation. Prosecutions for offences against the substantive provisions of the legislation (other than the section dealing with price misrepresentation which is punishable only on summary conviction) may be taken either in the provincial courts or with the consent of the accused in the Federal Court of Canada.

Nine reports of inquiries under the legislation were published between January 1, 1968 and June 30, 1971 and are listed in the *1972 Canada Year Book*. Since then the report of inquiry into draught beer in Metropolitan Toronto has become available. Copies of all reports are available from Information Canada or the Office of the Director of Investigation and Research.

On June 29, 1971, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs introduced Bill C-256 to replace the Combines Investigation Act with a new Competition Act. The Bill embodied many of the basic suggestions made in the Report of the Economic Council in July 1969. It was introduced to enable members of Parliament and interested individuals, corporations and associations to study and comment on it. The Bill, as presented, was allowed to expire on the Parliamentary Order Paper. It is expected that a number of the recommendations received will be incorporated in a revised Competition Bill.

Patents. Patents for inventions are issued under the provisions of the Patent Act (RSC 1970, c.P-4) and Patent Regulations have been proclaimed to carry into effect the objectives of the Act. Applications for patents for inventions and requests for information about such patents should be addressed to the Commissioner of Patents, Bureau of Intellectual Property, Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

In the year ended March 31, 1972, 29,242 patents were granted. Of these, 5.4% resulted from inventions made by residents of Canada, 6.9% by residents of the United Kingdom and 61.6% by residents of the United States.

Printed copies of Canadian patents issued from January 1, 1948 to date are available at \$1 each. The *Patent Office Record*, issued weekly, contains a list of patents issued during the week covered, information about services in the Patent Office and information of concern to the patent profession.

Canadian and foreign patents may be consulted at the Patent Office Library. British