

*Government Orders*

**Mr. Boudria:** That is the point. My colleague from London says that the GATT allows that and that is exactly the way we should proceed, assuming that we do it at all. Why should we sign a document with other countries notwithstanding the fact that there are provisions in there to phase in something that we would actually adopt retroactively, rather, at a date prior to the passage of the bill? I am sorry, I cannot say retroactively here, it is against the moral principles of the government across.

Clearly this clause needs to be amended. Very clearly there is no way that these kinds of windfall profits should be given to the multinationals.

The other point about all this, about retroactivity, is that the pricing structures of the products produced are already established. If a brand name company established that a particular product would be on the market for whatever, a certain number of years, and it markets it at a price to recover its costs of investment, profit and so on, to go back now and change decisions retroactively, what does it do? Where does that money go? Obviously, it is profit for the companies.

There is nothing wrong with making profits, some members across will say. Perhaps not. What social purpose, what policy purpose is achieved by the retroactive provision? Will it enhance research and development in Canada to do this retroactively on something that was already approved? How does it do that? Is there a guarantee in the bill that as it pertains to the profit generated from the retroactivity provision those moneys will be reinvested in Canada? No, as a matter of fact, there is not such a clause with regard to the profit as a whole.

• (1120)

[*Translation*]

I want to ask the hon. member opposite who was mouthing something or other: What is the point of having this provision on retroactivity? What else will it do besides taking money out of the pockets of Canadian consumers?

[*English*]

The members across finally talk about our competitiveness as a nation. I say to the members across that they are missing one point. Many times in labour contracts now we have a competitive advantage as a nation. I am thinking particularly of the large companies, the auto sector, for instance, well represented by my

colleague here. The fact is that some of our payroll burdens are lowered in other countries because we have a national health care system. That gives us a competitive advantage.

I turn the argument right around on the members across. Doing something that will damage our health care system in Canada is not going to make us more competitive. It is perhaps one of those things that in the long run and perhaps even in the short run are going to make us less competitive as a nation because it is removing from us one of those useful tools that we have now.

[*Translation*]

In concluding, I would ask all members on both sides of the House to carefully consider the motion now before the House. I am sure they will realize they can vote only in favour of the amendment moved by the hon. member for Dartmouth.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to the amendment by my colleague from Dartmouth to Bill C-91 which is really dealing with compulsory licensing and asking, in a nutshell, that it remain the same.

This is a very important piece of legislation. Over the past several months I have received numerous pieces of correspondence on this issue and have met with concerned individuals to garner their point of view.

In 1969 a Liberal government introduced compulsory licensing, giving generic drug manufacturers the right to produce generic copies of brand name drugs before the expiration of the packed life. This was done to increase competition in the pharmaceutical industry and to reduce the aggregate price of drugs sold in the Canadian market.

Figures from the industry and figures from independent bodies indicate that since compulsory licensing was implemented Canadian consumers have saved approximately \$1 billion per year in lowered drug costs.

After closely studying this bill and after listening to numerous Canadians, we on this side of the House believe that Bill C-91 is a flawed piece of legislation which will significantly increase the costs of drugs for Canadians. It will see the end of compulsory licensing or the right of generic pharmaceutical manufacturers to produce generic copies of patented medicines before the expiry of the patent life.