

Oral Questions

In light of the information revealed in this affidavit is the Minister still prepared to say that at no time, or by any means, has a representative of the United States Government, or its advisers, made representations to the Government concerning the Patent Act, especially in light of the statements made by Ambassador Gottlieb that Mr. Pratt was directly involved in those trade negotiations and discussions and that the drug matter was raised? Is he still prepared to stand by his words of November 19?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am. The previous Government, the Government of which the Hon. Member was a part, issued a paper in 1983 stating that the Patent Act needed to be changed in respect of pharmaceuticals because it was damaging Canada. It did not get any further than that declaration. We have taken it further because we agree with the previous Liberal Government which said that the Patent Act as amended in 1969 went too far. We put in place a package that protects consumers and provides enormous benefits to Canadians. That is why we are doing it. We do not care what Mr. Haddad has to say, what Mr. Pratt has to say, or what anybody else has to say. We are doing it because it is good for Canada.

REQUEST THAT CANADIAN AMBASSADOR APPEAR BEFORE
COMMITTEE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will direct my supplementary question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Considering the major discrepancy between the Minister's continued declarations and the sworn affidavit of the Chairman of the Generic Pharmaceutical Industry Association, is the Secretary of State prepared to authorize Ambassador Gottlieb to appear before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade to testify concerning the meetings that were held between Canadian and U.S. officials on the Patent Act to determine if in fact there was undue pressure put on by Mr. Pratt acting in his capacity as a major trade adviser to the U.S. President?

● (1450)

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member were a rookie who had just rolled in here from nowhere, a question of that kind might be accepted as being on the basis of simple innocence. However, the Hon. Member is a former Minister of the Crown. He knows that what he is asking is nonsense. He knows that on every—

Mr. Axworthy: You are afraid, Clark, to go before the committee. You are chickening out.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): I am accused of being afraid by this man who cannot even support his Leader on any one of 15 questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Axworthy: What are you afraid of?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): He does not cause me any fear but, by golly, he causes his Leader to shake and tremble.

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ENERGY

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANADIAN EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. It concerns the statement of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources in Edmonton today. I want to tell him that I generally regard the measures as positive for small oil companies. However, why did it take the Government so long to announce the program? Why was there so much squabbling associated with it? Why did the Government not use our proposal, which was to take the money raised from the one cent per litre tax on gasoline, or about \$450 million, and earmark that amount for grants for small oil companies? It would have been a greater amount, and it would have been a better amount.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's support for the announced initiatives. We believe that they will go a long way toward enhancing exploration and development, creating new energy activity and, most important, creating some jobs—anywhere between 10,000 and 15,000 direct and probably 10,000 indirect jobs. We expect some 2,000 wells to be drilled.

This policy was developed in concert and close discussions with the industry. We believe the industry will be very supportive of the initiative, as well as the producing provinces. In so far as the Hon. Member's suggestion is concerned that there was a delay, I remind him that the Government has taken firm action in the energy area since it assumed office, with the Western Accord which was signed in early 1985, plus further action on the PGRT and other very important measures. However, most of all, it is the result of the economic policies of the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister which brought down interest rates to the lowest level in 15 years. This will be most complementary to the initiative announced this morning.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister must know that the energy industry and the economy of Alberta are in disastrous circumstances. Now that we have PIP-2 today, these grants, would the Minister tell the House why we are getting an energy policy by dribs and drabs? There are already rumours that this might be it, that this might be the last initiative. Will more initiatives be taken, or is this the last one? When will the