

by honourable senators opposite on this matter today is the product of a guilty conscience—

Some Hon. Senators: Oh, oh!

Senator Murray: —for not having passed the bill at an earlier date.

Senator Argue: What crap!

Senator Frith: First prize for bare-faced gall!

DRUG PRICE INCREASES—COMPENSATION TO PROVINCES

Hon. L. Norbert Thériault: Honourable senators, the Leader of the Government will recall that in conjunction with the discussion and implementation of Bill C-22 there was a commitment made to the provinces that a sum of \$25 million per year would be given to the provinces in compensation for the increase in drug prices based on the CPI. Now that the government knows that the drug companies did not abide by that, that the increases being imposed on the provinces and consumers will be much more than the CPI, will the Leader of the Government undertake to review that amount and increase it so that provinces can retain their drug programs for the poor, the sick and the aged?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, I will refer that question also to my colleague.

Hon. Ian Sinclair: Honourable senators, if it is no longer in the legislation, would the Leader of the Government ask the minister whether he will volunteer to put it in the legislation, because I think he will find that it was taken out?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, we are not contemplating any amendments to Bill C-22 at the moment.

DRUG PRICE INCREASES—REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE APPEARANCE OF DRUG COMPANY SPOKESMEN

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, would the Leader of the Government give us an undertaking to support a reference to a committee of the Senate—probably the Banking, Trade and Commerce Committee—to recall the spokesmen for the drug companies in order to have them try to explain why they did not keep their pledge to keep prices within the CPI?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, the committee is master of its own procedures and can do that if it wishes to do so.

Senator Olson: Then I take it that you would support that kind of action?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, it is not my habit to interfere with the work of the committees. This is perhaps not germane to the present discussion, but I would ask that some care be taken with budgetary matters if assignments are being given or new committees contemplated.

Senator Frith: The drug companies might be able to pay their own costs!

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PMAC AND UNITED STATES PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS

Hon. Charles Turner: Honourable senators, may I ask the Leader of the Government whether there is any direct connection between the pharmaceutical manufacturers in the United States and the PMAC in Canada?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, I think my honourable friend should direct that question to the parties concerned.

Senator Turner: Can the Leader of the Government answer the following question: Is the PMAC Canadian, or are all of its members American or multinational drug companies?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, that is not a circle in which I travel. I do not know those people, nor do I know very much about them.

Senator Frith: Good for you!

Senator Murray: I would therefore suggest that my honourable friend direct his inquiries to the president, if it has one, or to the executive director, if it has one, of the PMAC or its American counterpart. That is not information that comes to me. I am reminded that Mrs. Erola is their spokesperson in the capital, and she would be someone well known to my honourable friend. He could make a telephone call to her and obtain the information he is seeking.

Senator Frith: We don't travel in that circle either!

An Hon. Senator: Not any more.

Senator Frith: We are more careful about our travelling companions!

● (1450)

ACTIVITIES IN UNITED STATES OF MULTINATIONAL AND U.S. DRUG COMPANIES

Hon. Charles Turner: Honourable senators, can the honourable minister tell me what is going on in the United States of America with these multinational and American drug corporations? Let me give him a little information. I have here a quotation taken from that great magazine the *National Examiner*.

Senator Doody: We don't travel in that circle either.

Senator Turner: The article reads, in part:

Some drug companies are trying to scare consumers and doctors away from government-approved generic drugs in favor of more expensive brand names, says Democratic Senator Howard Metzenbaum, of Ohio. Some have offered doctors airline tickets in exchange for prescribing certain products, drugs, he said.

Outraged doctors are protesting the companies' policies, Metzenbaum added.

Further, I have a quotation from the United Transportation Union publication entitled *Retiree News*. I referred to this publication several times during the committee hearings. The