

*Government Orders*

responding to the agenda of Mr. Mossinghoff and the largest lobby group in the United States, the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association in Washington.

It has done its job well. It has shut debate down for its American friends down south in Washington.

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, my colleague is quite right. I want to congratulate him for this interesting observation.

What he has indicated is quite correct. The agenda of the drug manufacturers is certainly quite well known. In fact this government is following in lock-step with what they are asking. What is strange now is that while this government is listening only to the drug manufacturers rather than everyone else who also has a word to say—I do not mean that the drug manufacturers do not have a word to say—it is going to find out in just a few weeks from now that the reaction from the government in the United States is going to be more toward the protection of consumers.

To pose another interesting proposition, why is it that the government instead of bringing forward measures today to bring people back to work is going with this right wing agenda? I do not know. It is hard for me to understand Tory behaviour at the best of times. Here is what the government's agenda is going to do.

The minister of health for the province of Ontario, Francis Lankin, said that this will create another \$1 billion in health care costs in Ontario over 10 years.

The Saskatchewan health minister, Louise Simard, said:

Bill C-91 is a severe blow to health care in Saskatchewan. It will cost our consumers and the health department a substantial amount of money.

The member from western Canada who has just posed that question must surely be familiar with those comments made by provincial cabinet ministers, particularly the one made by the minister from the neighbouring province to hers, Saskatchewan.

Those concerns have been aired right across the country by provincial governments and I am quite surprised that the Conservatives have not listened to them.

I want to pay special tribute to my colleague, the member for Dartmouth, who has listened to the concerns of the provincial health minister.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** Order, please. The time for questions and comments is now over.

• (1730)

**Mrs. Dorothy Dobbie (Winnipeg South):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this very important bill today. I support Bill C-91 because it is good for Canada and it is good for Canadians despite all the rhetoric on the other side. Innovation and competitiveness are very much on the minds of everybody these days, as is the protection of the consumer. I believe that Bill C-91 serves all of these interests.

If we want to continue to be an affluent country, a nation of opportunity, we have to rely on more than just the natural resources that are out there. We must be strong in knowledge based industries and advanced technologies and that includes technologies of modern healing of which pharmaceuticals play a part.

The government has been committed to that objective since its first mandate and that was the central purpose of Bill C-22, the historic amendment to the Patent Act that was passed by this House in 1987. The government was convinced then, as it is convinced today, that pharmaceutical R and D is a sector of critical importance. It is an area in which Canada must be strong.

We said in 1987 that weakness in this field was inconsistent with the profile of a modern industrialized society. We said that the key to a stronger Canadian pharmaceutical sector was better protection for the rights of innovators, protection comparable to that of our other trading partners. As earlier speakers have reminded us, members of the opposition party took a much more dismal view at that time.

They predicted then, as they have again today, that greater protection for innovators would devastate the generic industry. They said that prices would go through the roof. They did not see any connection between weak protection for patent rights and the lag in Canadian R and D in this particular sector.