

but not by New Democrats or by 400,000 jobless young Canadians.

● (1935)

There was no mention of creating jobs in agriculture. In fact, there not even a reference to agriculture in the speech from the throne. This was an incredible omission considering the recent GATT decisions in Paris and since the Minister of Agriculture, the member for Regina—Wascana, has worked so earnestly in cabinet on behalf of farmers throughout Canada. It is unbelievable there would be no reference to agriculture after all his work.

No reference was made to the natural resources sector. This is a sector that built this country. It was totally ignored in the speech. It is clear that not only western Canada was ignored in the throne speech but that unemployed and overtaxed Canadians everywhere were left wanting as well.

This speech made comments about major overhauls to the social security system but gave no details about one of the latest acts of Parliament, Bill C-91, which extended the patent on some prescription drugs for up to 20 years and guaranteed drug manufacturers monopoly prices and substantial profits at Canadians' expense.

Prescription drugs in Canada are the most expensive in the world as a result of this bill. Yet the Liberal government has taken no steps to repeal it. Repealing Bill C-91 would reduce the financial burden on health care consumers in need of prescription drugs and on provincial government drug plans which are under great stress as we speak here today.

Repealing this devastating law would also stimulate the creation of new jobs in the Canadian generic drug manufacturing sector. As long as this act remains law, Canadians will continue to suffer life-threatening hardship.

Since this bill was given royal assent, the cost of prescription drugs has dramatically increased. People using prescription drugs are being forced to decide between buying life sustaining drugs or buying life sustaining food, in particular those people on fixed or low incomes in my riding.

We cannot allow this unfair monopolistic law which allows international drug companies to charge whatever they want without competition to continue to hurt those people who through no fault of their own need help the most. Bill C-91 must be repealed and must be repealed immediately.

We in the New Democratic Party applaud the recognition by the government in the throne speech that in some countries today: "Democracy is under stress, its future uncertain". Canada is under stress too, particularly those Canadians who are

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jobless or who are worried about losing their jobs. Canadians are also anxious and under stress because of their concern for the possible loss of their social programs which provide a sense of security to them and their families.

Historically the New Democratic Party has strongly supported initiatives that build and strengthen democratic governments and promote peace. We in the New Democratic Party are Canadian nationalists. We do not believe in a regional nationalism or an ethnic nationalism. We believe both these manifestations of nationalism are destructive to our Canadian unity. We believe strongly that the government should balance the economic powers in the country to ensure that there is fairness in the programs for our people.

We have always believed in a strong central government but it has to reflect the changing realities of our times. We believe government works best when people are working. If people are not working, democracy is under stress.

It is hard to talk to people about national unity when they are unemployed or under employed. When people cannot afford to have things which they need to live, democracy will always be under stress.

I am putting this government under notice that the NDP will not permit the Canadian agenda to be set until the jobless are working. These are important issues to us and to all Canadians.

I hope the government will follow the quote I have taken from somebody who said this before with respect to organizing the government and putting together a program to rebuild our country. Somebody once said the true test of our democratic society is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much but whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

● (1940)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the speech by the hon. member from the New Democratic Party. His statement about regionalism caught my attention. He also said that he favoured a strong central government.

I just want to tell the other members that the only NDP member ever elected in a by-election in Quebec did not run again in the last election because of his party's insensitivity. I think it is worth underlining that aspect to show the insensitivity of a so-called democratic party towards people from across the country and particularly towards Quebec. In the end, I think that the population judged them on that.