

*Government Orders*

I would rather have myself criticized for supporting companies that do that basic research to create the new one than to be acting on behalf of the few companies, the generics, that are taking the research of somebody else and creating it at a very low price without having paid for the research. That to me does not seem right.

I believe that the balance in this bill between the legitimate pharmaceutical companies and the generics and the population at large is a proper balance and I am proud to vote for this bill.

**Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take my place in the debate on this bill as well from the opposite point of view of the member who just spoke.

In my view this bill is simply another pay-back that the Conservative Party is making to the people who have financed its election campaigns over the years and a pay-back to its friends in the multinational corporations and their United States branch plan partners who have established really the Conservative agenda over the last eight years.

There have been a number of those kind of pay-offs to the American and multinational supporters of this government party. Those pay-offs have reduced the sovereignty of this country, have virtually bankrupted this government in its ability and power to act on behalf of its citizens. This is one of the reasons for this piece of legislation.

**Mrs. Dobbie:** Nobody believes that.

**Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni):** If you are going to comment on what I am saying, madam, sit in your seat and do it like any other member.

It has also eliminated policies which the U.S. has considered trade irritants in Canadian policy so that the Conservative government has done a great service to the United States companies and to the branch plants subsidiaries that have financed its campaigns over the years. I understand that drug companies have done that to the extent of something like \$48,000 a year. What we are seeing here is essentially a pay-back to those corporations and to those supporters of the Conservative Party.

• (1640)

I am a bit concerned about one of the statements that was made by the House leader. Essentially what he said is that creators have the right to exploit their creations.

To some extent that should be true. There should be some protection for intellectual property and some protection for those scientists and researchers who do the fundamental research that ultimately results in good things being developed and in new developments being made in science and literature and other fields of human endeavour.

To suggest that patents and protection of intellectual property have been the great motivator for that kind of human endeavour misses the point of tens of thousands of years of human creativity. There were a lot of things invented before the inception of patent laws; things like the wheel, the steam engine and the automobile. There were a lot of things invented before we brought down patent legislation in order to protect this intellectual property.

I was interested in the House leader's statement because he said that creators have the right to exploit their creations. Essentially when we are looking at drug companies and companies that hold these patents we are not looking at the creators themselves, we are looking at people who have the power to deal with scientists and researchers and creators. They are able to buy up the results of those creations and exploit the results of those creations for their own profit. That is precisely what we are talking about here.

We are going beyond this because we are talking not about the right of a creator to exploit his creation, but about the right of manufacturers to exploit the people of Canada because they hold a government granted, time limited right to a patent that gives them the right, not to exploit their creation, but to exploit Canadian people in a monopolistic kind of situation.

That is what disturbs me because of the hypocrisy of this government. On the one hand it says that the telecommunications industry should be open to the rigours and the discipline of competition, that there should be many people operating in the field and that nobody should have the exclusive right because perhaps they have developed that technology or because they have the wit and the wisdom to invest in that technology first. That does not grant you any kind of exclusive right.