

I would also say that opposition members from both parties brought American so-called experts to Canada which surprised me a little bit considering we have heard a lot of denigration of Americans in general with regard to Bill C-91.

Both of these parties brought to the committee process American experts that they quoted over the facts and figures presented by our own civil service. This surprises me because the opposition is continually telling us how they are the champions of our Public Service and yet they are the ones who refuse to believe what members of our Public Service have told us as to what will be the effects and impacts of this bill on costs.

The facts are, as told to us by our Public Service in which I have a great deal of confidence, that this bill will cost approximately \$129 million accumulative over six years; about \$1 per person per year, not the billions of dollars suggested by Mr. Schondelmeyer who admitted and confessed in committee that in fact he had pulled these figures together and had come up with these outrageous and outlandish projections on a Thanksgiving weekend.

An hon. member: What does that mean?

Mrs. Dobbie: We can, I think, take from that a pretty good inference that his information was highly unreliable. As for Mr. Nader, I do not know what he knows about the cost of pharmaceuticals; obviously not very much because his prognostications were just as outlandish and ridiculous. To bring two Americans to Canada to tell us how to do our business to me is beyond the pale and an insult to our own Canadian civil service.

The facts are simple. Bill C-91 makes Canada more competitive. It will help us attract investment. Already over \$500 million worth of investment and research and development has been promised to Canadians. This is very important at a time when people are looking for jobs, not just jobs slinging hash in some café or perhaps in a repetitive manufacturing atmosphere, but value-added jobs, high technology jobs, information-based jobs.

Bill C-91 creates an atmosphere in this country that will allow us to attract those kinds of jobs to our country. I think that is important. If the opposition members would put aside some of their partisan biases, they would

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admit that this is the kind of legislation that will help Canadians become more actively employed in very important value-added jobs.

I might also mention that the U.S. study for the government accounting office, which has been broadly and quite frequently inaccurately quoted here in this House, said that there were two reasons that in Canada drug prices were lower than in the United States. They did not talk about compulsory licensing.

I must say as an aside, compulsory licensing is something I never really understood. To provide a licence to someone to break your own patent law makes absolutely no sense. Bill C-91 will remove compulsory licensing but it will not increase prices in the way they are projecting. What the government accounting office found in its report in the United States was that in Canada drug prices were lower for two reasons. One, provincial drug plans and their formularies, which means that everybody knows what drugs cost and provincial drug plans generally choose the cheaper priced drugs or recommend them to their hospitals.

• (1110)

Second, and most important, the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, the PMPRB, has been effective in Canada in the last five years. It kept patented medicine drug price increases at 2.9 per cent when the CPI was 4.4 per cent. However, it will be even more effective under Bill C-91. If members opposite are concerned about drug prices then they should certainly support the enhanced authorities of the PMPRB. This bill gives the PMPRB the ability and the authority to roll back prices if they are too high. It allows it to impose very heavy fines, up to \$100,000 per day. It even allows it to impose jail sentences. Now we have a bill and a Prices Review Board with real teeth, one that can ensure that prices will be kept lower in Canada. If we are to believe the study that was done in the United States, those two reasons alone will keep drug prices down.

As we get into the business of the motions today, I want to just repeat, in spite of all the rhetoric we might hear from the other side from time to time, this bill is in this stage and the government is determined to put it forward because it will make Canada more competitive and it will provide more jobs, more research and development for Canadians and a better future for us all.