

*Oral Questions*

price of drugs to Canadians. They have persuaded the Government to increase the price of lumber to Canadians. I ask the Prime Minister if the Government does not now agree that the cost of satisfying the Americans is too high a price for Canadians to pay?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the Hon. Member again of what the Government he supported in June of 1983 said: "To generate further growth in this industry, the Government of Canada has decided to change the Patent Act to rebalance the 1969 policy". We are balancing the 1969 policy, carrying forward on the decision his Government had made.

**Mr. Gauthier:** That's a set-up.

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## ENERGY

## ALBERTA OIL COMPANIES

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister who said the other day in western Canada in response to cries for economic health: "Canada is much more important, much bigger than a cheque". It seems to me that westerners do not want a blank cheque, they want a pay cheque. Will the Prime Minister tell the House what he meant by that and what concrete action he proposes to take to help, for example, the small Canadian oil companies which are now going under in Alberta?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, for example, an indication of—

**Mr. de Jong:** No!

**Mr. Mulroney:** Is that against the law, Mr. Speaker, what is going on over there?

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**An Hon. Member:** They are strong arming. They are not the odd couple.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members will agree that much goes on that is not against the law.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Mulroney:** If it is legal, so be it.

**Mr. Blackburn (Brant):** He is getting adjusted, that is all.

**Mr. Mulroney:** In response to my hon. friend, what was intended was simply that, of course, the value of Canadian citizenship ought not to be measured by what Edmonton or Victoria "did for me yesterday". Canada is much more important than simply a balance sheet added up at the end of

any given week. It is a question of our heritage and what we mean to one another and what regions can do for one another.

However, regarding illustrations of the kinds of actions on behalf of national unity, I think the position adopted by the Government of Canada, which was so strongly supported by the Government of British Columbia on Friday, is a clear indication, and getting rid of the PGRT in close co-operation with the Government of Alberta is also an indication of what we can do together.

## SITUATION OF SMALL OIL COMPANIES

**Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway):** Mr. Speaker, getting rid of the PGRT really only helped the big American multinational oil companies, not the small Canadian companies. Will the Prime Minister tell us why it is Government policy, according to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, that financially troubled Canadian oil companies are up for sale to foreign buyers? Is that not a step backwards and not really of any particular help to Canadian small oil producers?

**Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do, in concert with the Government of Alberta and the industry, is try to deal with the new situation—new this year—brought about by the calamitous decline, from a producing point of view, of prices in energy. That is a situation which did not obtain in 1984. It is a situation which did not obtain when we put together the Western Accord. The Western Accord was clearly beneficial because 1985 was a great year in terms of energy in western Canada.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Tell that to the folks in P.E.I.

**Mr. Mulroney:** We now have new dimensions of a problem which we are going to have to work with very closely. I am hopeful we will be as successful in dealing with the new problem as we were when we came in and were able to negotiate the Western Accord.

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## LABOUR CONDITIONS

## ENGAGEMENT OF MONTREAL COMPANY TO STUDY YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

**Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment. Why was an untendered contract in the amount of \$124,000 granted to Secor Inc. of Montreal to study youth unemployment when Claude Forget was a partner in that firm and had already been given a similar mandate as chairman of the Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance? And how was Secor able to produce its report on September 5, 1986, three days after it signed the contract? Who in Government approved of this wasteful and bizarre deal?