

not understand why they would have created something called compulsory licensing.

When I first came to this particular portfolio and was being briefed one of the things that the deputy minister talked to me about was compulsory licensing. I asked: "What is that?" She explained it to me and I still could not understand it. I could not understand how a government that says it gives so much time for protection under a patent would then also be saying that it would give other people special licences to infringe on that protection.

Perhaps the hon. member who may have been here, or at least may have some sense of the history of this compulsory licensing, would like to defend that particular practice and tell me if he thinks that it is correct or if he does not believe in patent protection. Perhaps he should clear that up for us.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member knows that patent protection exists now. No right is absolute in any society.

I could engage in a long discourse with the member and explain to her, as she knows perfectly well, that the right of free speech, for instance, does not give anyone the right to scream fire in the middle of a crowded theatre. Similarly the right of patent protection is not eternal and is not all encompassing. Everything we do, every right we have and every privilege we have, is relative.

The point is that there are opposing views, there are opposing needs and conflicting needs in any society. What we do must be done in such a way as to ensure the best for society as a whole. Of course there must be patent protection. It exists now.

No right or privilege is absolute. The only question is how long it should be. Should it be absolute? Does it mean that the society that has contributed toward the whole process has no right of its own? Does it mean that the society that has trained all the people and that has paid for the education of all of them has no right of its own? Does it mean that nothing can be done in that regard?

It does not mean any such thing. That is why we have laws in this country that balance these things out.

In my opinion a system that permits the large drug manufacturers to have roughly 90 per cent of the

business has not exactly driven those manufacturers into the ground. There must have been some justice in that.

If the member opposite thinks that is totally unjust then is she repudiating her own leader and her own colleagues who enacted Bill C-22 only five years ago. If Bill C-22 is so wrong, as she has just herself suggested, then how could she have possibly been a candidate for a party that lacks any kind of judgement, as she has just described?

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, this is one of those watershed bills that we get periodically in the House of Commons which fundamentally demonstrates the difference between the insane right wing agenda of the Conservative Party and the voice of reason of the Liberal Party.

Clearly the introduction of compulsory licensing in 1968 was done by the right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra who was a former Prime Minister and former leader of my party. From 1968 until today it has served us well.

The question that I want to ask my colleague is quite important. I do not understand why, with perhaps 3.5 million people either unemployed and on unemployment insurance or collecting social assistance and with over 1.5 million kids unemployed, this government on the first day back in this place does not come in to talk about a massive job creation project. It does not talk about trying to create jobs in this country for the poorest of the poor and it does not present economic policies or a budget so that the people out there who have lost hope because of this Tory agenda can have some light at the end of the tunnel.

It comes in with a piece of legislation this afternoon that has been debated for only three hours. It is a bill that is a billion dollar bonus bill for the big multinational drug companies. It is not going to do squat for Canadian consumers. It is going to take probably in excess of \$1 billion from their pockets.

The question I have for my colleague concerns this. It is pretty interesting. I am reading from *The New York Times*, Monday, November 16:

Gerald J. Mossinghoff, president of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association in Washington, said his members would like to eliminate Canada's government price controls.

I would like to ask my colleague whether he is comfortable as a member of this House knowing that we have a government opposite, with millions unemployed, that is not responding to the agenda of Canadians but is