

Time Allocation

the NDP Party unless that individual completely misapprehends the English language.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Lewis).

Mr. Lewis: I will try to regain my train of thought. However, I must tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the sight of a socialist in a vest looking like a banker just throws me right off. That is probably why I referred to my hon. colleague as being a Member of the NDP Party.

Mr. McCurdy: It does challenge your stereotypes, doesn't it?

Mr. Lewis: A vest, Mr. Speaker, with—what is it—seven or eight buttons; I cannot believe it.

Mr. McCurdy: Yes, and none of them are in my head.

● (1320)

Mr. Lewis: The Hon. Member is in traditional banker's costume.

Having dealt with that, Mr. Speaker, I wish to refer to the editorial in today's issue of *The Gazette* of Montreal which states:

—the opposition campaign not only ignores the moral and economic justification for the drug bill . . . it also overlooks the inadequate health care resulting from the law as it now stands.

It is our job as legislators to try to find the best drugs and best cures for Canadians. We believe that the research and development which will result from this Bill will provide those cures. It is beyond me and the members of my Party why the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party are standing in the way of that research which could ultimately benefit all Canadians and which could then be sold throughout the world. For that reason we are proceeding to tidy up this debate nicely. After one more full day of debate we will be able to put the matter into committee so that everyone can be heard.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, to some it comes as a shock that the Government has chosen to impose time allocation. However, it does not come as a shock or as a surprise to me. Were I standing in the shoes of the Government and were I not an adherent of higher principles with respect to the House of Commons I would have been tempted myself as a member of Government to recommend that closure be imposed. We have heard from an hysterical Government represented in defence of this Bill by an hysterical Minister who has produced the most awful, hysterical arguments that I have ever heard in defence of anything.

It is difficult to know where to begin in an attack on the nonsense that we have heard this morning. One thing that is evident in all that we have heard is that this is a Government that wants to cut its losses. This is a Government that now knows that it has out there among the people of Canada—not

just within the ranks of the New Democratic Party or the Liberal Party—a terrible fight on its hands, because this is a Bill that Canadians recognize is not in their interests. This is a piece of legislation which is payment for extortion. This is a Bill that is not motivated in the interests of health care. It is a Bill whose vaunted contribution to research cannot be found in the Bill and therefore cannot be defended. This is a Bill that was demanded by the President of the United States. It was demanded by the Vice-President of the United States who just happens to be a former Vice-President of Eli Lilly. It is demanded by the Chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on Trade, Mr. Pratt, who happens to be the Chairman of the Board and the Chief Executive Officer of Pfizer of the United States. This is a Bill demanded by Mr. Yeutter who says that his patience is wearing thin. This is a product of concessions by a Government that lusts after a free trade deal, the virtues of which have not been demonstrated with respect to Canadian welfare.

It is no wonder that we have had such hysterical arguments from the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre). In terms of his arguments and his advocacy of this Bill I understand why the Government wants to limit his utterances, his involvement and his public exposure. A Minister who does not know the difference between copyrighting rock and roll music and jelly beans and patented products and medicines is a Minister whom I would also want to have hidden somewhere. Closure is but one way of ensuring that not too much more will be heard from him.

One must listen to the arguments of the Government with respect to this Bill. We are expected to believe—and this would be amusing if it were not so tragic in its implications for Canadians—that a bunch of multinationals before 1969 had complete patent protection and did not have those nasty little scavenging generic drug companies to foul things up. It was a virtual joy for them in Canada because Canada had among the highest drug prices in the world. My God, what a horrible tragic situation. Some three commissions and committees looked at the situation and stated that something ought to be done. Two of the committees and commissions recommended that there be no patent protection at all. That was awful, unconscious of the concerns of the Canadian people and devoid of any responsibility with respect to the needs of the people who required those patented drugs. One would have thought that those drug companies that had very nearly the highest profits in the world would have carried out fantastic amounts of research under the circumstances. The fact is that they did not do a thing.

We are now being told in 1986, after 17 years of generic competition—17 years in which Canadian drug companies have faced vigorous competition which has created among the lowest drug prices in the world—that if we go back to the pre-1969 era these drug companies will all of a sudden rush in and start doing research. If you believe that, Mr. Speaker, you believe that this Government will be re-elected next time around, and everyone knows better than that.