

Patent Act—Trade Marks Act

five years, in order to get on with the job one thing we do not need is more studies.

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the minister on his cool.

Mr. Basford: On what?

Mr. Rynard: On your cool. Actually, the minister was so cool that we never got him to the point where we could thaw him out. Not an amendment was agreed to by the minister. He was so nice about refusing them all that we could not even just get up and walk out. I also congratulate hon. members who have contributed to this debate. I am sure this is a matter of great concern to everybody in the house. I am sure it is also of great concern to the minister. All hon. members have tried to do the best they can in presenting their views in this respect. Parliament must accept responsibility for passing this bill. We are responsible for seeing that it is a bill that does some good for the people of Canada, who are paying the shot.

We are also responsible for seeing that the bill does no harm. This is what bothers me, because certain fundamental principles have been forgotten. In fact, the very principle that drug safety must be paramount, as emphasized by the Harley Committee, was negated when this bill was brought forward by the minister. I have a high regard for him, but here we have a food and drugs bill that is concerned with clinical equivalency and safety and it is brought in by the department of consumer affairs. I do not blame the minister for this. However, the No. 1 priority is to make sure that the drugs we are using are safe.

I shall not dwell on those matters which have been so ably dealt with by my confrere, the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Monteith). He spoke about the harm that might occur to the pharmacological industry, the people who would find themselves out of a job and the research people who would be going south of the border. The hon. member spoke about all the other things that might happen as a result of the passage of this bill.

I think the minister will remember that some friends from his own party pointed out the unfortunate economic effects of such legislation. This question was argued in committee. The minister will remember that very well. Members of his own party argued these things in the committee. I compliment them

[Mr. Rose.]

for putting up such a good fight in this respect. As a matter of fact, they put up as good a fight as any of us. I wonder what has happened to those boys.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Rynard: What has happened to them would make an interesting story. There was the hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson), the hon. member for Lachine (Mr. Rock), the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) and the hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto), who challenged his own minister's statement that the economic effects cannot be measured. The minister will recall the statement that it is possible to project the economic effects of such legislation on drug prices and manufacturing in Canada. It is to the government's discredit that this has not been done.

I asked the minister about the economic report. He was quite frank and honest, as I think he has tried to be throughout this debate, and told me that the economic report would not be available until the fall. We are being asked to buy a pig-in-a-poke, because the minister does not know the answer. He could not answer the hon. member for York East when he said he could get a feasibility report that would be accurate within 2 per cent. However, Mr. Speaker, I will leave that aspect of this matter.

The minister says that the industry will look after itself. He did not agree to having a tribunal of the industry consider this question. He did not agree to having a tribunal of the Food and Drug Directorate consider it. He said that if the question had to be referred to a tribunal, he would not put in the legislation a provision to cover it. In other words, as the provision is now, the Patent Commissioner could send a note to the Food and Drug Directorate and it could be forgotten there, left lying on his desk.

There is nothing mandatory in this respect. I wonder why not. The minister said that he has slept on the question. I think he did, because we have not had any answer. But I did not sleep on it; I thought about it. I thought: What in heck is wrong with this minister, that he cannot make a concession on a procedure he said is going to occur anyway? Is this arrogance? Is it stubbornness? I cannot imagine the minister being arrogant or stubborn, but he said he slept on it and did not come up with the answer.

I shall now deal with a few other points, Mr. Speaker. The point that concerns us most,