

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** Perhaps I may recall once more that members shall not be identified by name in the House.

[English]

**Mr. Fontana:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry for mentioning the member's name, but perhaps I can mention the member's riding, Winnipeg South.

She is right. People are fed up with the hon. member and fed up with her government. There is absolutely no doubt about that. However, they will have their opportunity finally at election time to pay their respects or non-respects to this government by throwing it out of office. It will not be a day too soon, I can tell you that.

The process has been flawed. The Conservatives have no respect for democratic process. They did not want to hear from people who have a vested interest in this bill, the stakeholders; people in hospitals, the doctors, the consumers, the generic industry. All they allowed was three and a half or four hours. I was part of that process and I must say that it was embarrassing for me as a parliamentarian to have been part of that because it was absolutely disgusting. I do not blame people for being cynical about this whole process.

Second, I want to talk about the process of the bill. In 1987 a similar bill came before this House and it was fought long and hard by the Liberals not only here but in the Senate. The government moved toward changing the Patent Act as it relates to drugs. Some compromises were made. The government said it had to change things because the world is changing. We accepted that, reluctantly. Everybody was told that we had to move forward. What has happened?

• (1310)

Bill C-22 was supposed to be reviewed in 1996, after nine years, so that we could really find out the true consequences of it and its impact on Canada. We know what has happened, prices have gone up. We know that for a fact.

Expert witnesses have talked about the impact of Bill C-22. What does this government do? It says that it has to introduce Bill C-91 to change Bill C-22 because that was not enough. Why does it say it has to do that? Because it was thrust upon them by GATT, NAFTA or by global restructuring. What a bunch of hogwash that is.

Even GATT recognizes that countries have sovereignty and will allow a period of transition. Therefore, it is not because of GATT that we have to change our legislation, not tomorrow but retroactively to December 20, 1991. Is it because of NAFTA? We have provisions in NAFTA, as do the Mexicans and Americans, that allow a transition period of 10 years to change laws to comply with the North American free trade agreement. Why do we not seek that?

We on this side do not agree with NAFTA. We will fight it until we defeat it. You would think this government would take advantage of some opportunities it put in its own agreement.

With reference to the global restructuring in the pharmaceutical industry around the world, let us face it: even Mr. Eastman said that foreign owned companies, multinationals will, in fact, do the bulk of the research and development in their home countries. Sure Canada does research and development.

My friend from London—Middlesex said that universities do research. The University of Western Ontario does research. Let us be clear about the kind of research that is done in Canada. Not enough basic research is done. Twenty-six per cent of the research is only basic, the creative part, developing a new product. We do clinical research. That is great, but it is not the core of what Canada should be all about and that is innovation, creativity, developing our own drugs, not doing clinical trials for the pharmaceutical industries that are based outside this country. We want the positive aspects of this.

Let us review what Canada has managed to do. Canada, in many ways, always finds an accommodation or a compromise between competing interests and Canada has a unique solution. Canada has developed the compulsory licensing system. It is the only country in the world that has it. It has worked and it has worked marvellously. The President-elect of the United States wants to take a look at it. Consumer groups in the United States are taking a look at the Canadian model which, in fact, works. It balances the requirements and needs of patent protection, but at the same time the requirements for competition and new innovations that the generic industries bring forward. We have a unique Canadian solution that could be used as a model around the world, much like our supply management system in agriculture.