

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, I fail to understand why the Government of Canada is reluctant to initiate a judicial inquiry. In view of the circumstances surrounding the tragedy, it seems obvious that there ought to be a Canadian inquiry. I would like to direct the question again to the Prime Minister. In view of the sensitivities involved in this particular tragedy will he assume his role and order a judicial inquiry into this matter to answer all the questions which remain unanswered?

● (1120)

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should be fully aware of the fact that there is an ongoing police investigation here. The RCMP, CSIS, and others are actively looking into all aspects of the Air-India tragedy. As well, they are investigating the bombing of Narita Airport in Tokyo. It would be completely counter-productive if we were to set up some sort of parallel inquiry in competition with the police investigation currently under way. What individual Members of Parliament should be doing is not giving misinformation on the floor of the House of Commons, as the Hon. Member did yesterday, and not urging competing judicial inquiries. Rather, we should be allowing the police and CSIS to do their job.

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PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

INQUIRY CONCERNING INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Within an hour the Government will introduce a Bill which will increase drug prices for Canadians from coast to coast. Will the Prime Minister now acknowledge to the House that the reason the Government is doing this on the last sitting day before the recess is because it is part of President Reagan's agenda spelled out in his May letter to Senator Packwood?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Yesterday I allowed questions about a Bill which is not yet introduced. The Hon. Member is now saying that he wishes to ask questions about a Bill which is about to be introduced. That gets us right into the area of Orders of the Day. I ask him to phrase his question to the Government on policy matters without reference to a Bill in that sense, please.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I believe I am clearly in order but I accept your ruling. Does the Government intend to introduce a Bill as a follow-up to President Reagan's stipulation to a U.S. Senator that it was an unfulfilled agenda item to clear up this kind of irritant? Specifically, was it as a result of a request made by the Vice-President of the U.S. to the Prime Minister when he was here two weeks ago? Is that why we are

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going to have a Bill which will increase the price of drugs to Canadians?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): The Vice-President of the United States never raised any such matter with me.

Mr. Broadbent: It is interesting that he did raise it with me after he talked to the Prime Minister, and said it was one of the items on his agenda.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, the President has indicated that before there is a trade agreement there has to be a clearing up of all these irritants, among which the Americans have always included the drug industry. Why is Canada making sacrifices in the fishing, logging, and publishing sectors, and now in drugs, and the Americans get the benefits?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend's statement is of course as inaccurate as his prediction that the last Budget would cost 150,000 jobs. The last Budget created hundreds of thousands of jobs. He was wrong then and he is wrong again.

Legislation introduced in the House is designed to increase access to international markets, including American markets. We deal with specific matters from time to time, as does any Government. We deal with those items in a way consistent with the national interest. If my hon. friend disagrees with any piece of legislation, as he does from time to time, he will express his views in the House of Commons at an appropriate time and vote against it.

POSSIBLE EFFECT ON CONSUMERS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, does the Prime Minister think by introducing this legislation on the last day before the summer recess that Canadians will ignore the fact they are going to pay millions, and I will just leave it at millions, of dollars in higher drug prices? Are they going to forget that during the summer any more than pensioners forgot what the Government tried to do to them on the eve of last summer's recess?

● (1125)

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend should get out of the prediction business. He is a good Member of Parliament, but he does not do very well when he looks to the future. He is wrong nine times out of ten and he is wrong again today.

You can be sure that legislation that is brought in now or any other time, which can be criticized by my honourable friend, and perhaps improved pursuant to constructive suggestions, is designed to be helpful to job creation, to