

Oral Questions

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, what we have to do is allow this process to run its course. We have said all along there should be a private sector solution and we are looking to see whether there are other bids which might in fact materialize. If that is the case, we will review them under the terms of Investment Canada, and if there are other elements of the offers which do require a Government response, we will be in a position to do that. However, these questions at this point are hypothetical. We have to allow the process to work.

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PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

AMENDMENT OF PATENT ACT—ROLES PLAYED BY MR. PRATT
AND MR. HADDAD

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The lobbying activities of a Mr. Pratt, President Reagan's chairman of the Trade Advisory Committee and chairman of the Pfizer Inc., one of the largest multinational drug manufacturing companies in the world, coupled with an affidavit submitted by Mr. Bill Haddad describing a conflict of interest and, in particular, the pressure the Canadian Government has come under from the United States, have now resulted in the United States Congress initiating an investigation of Mr. Pratt and his activities, particularly his discussions with our Canadian Ambassador in Washington.

Can the Minister explain why he said Mr. Haddad's affidavit was patently false? And if he so believes in his statement of some weeks ago, would he not do the honourable thing, drop the parliamentary immunity he now has, step outside the Chamber and repeat those allegations?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the Opposition is so preoccupied with what happens in the United States.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, Oh!

Mr. Andre: I have just come from Montreal where I participated in announcements by Burroughs Wellcome, a United Kingdom multinational, and Rhône-Poulenc, a French multinational, of \$39 million worth of research and development in this important area in Montreal.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Andre: However, that is conditional upon the passage of Bill C-22, because, like anyone with common sense, they recognize that one does not make investments in research if the law provides that someone can come along and copy the results as soon as they are discovered.

I would put to the Hon. Member that instead of being preoccupied with what Mr. Haddad or Mr. Pratt has to say,

why does he not think about Canadians, particularly those Canadian researchers who want to get to work in Montreal and other parts of this country?

Mr. Dingwall: I say to the Minister that the reason we are preoccupied with what happens in the United States is because the multinational corporations in the United States have drafted Bill C-22. That is why we are concerned.

REQUEST THAT MINISTER MEET MR. HADDAD

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister not have the intestinal fortitude to step outside into the foyer to begin some sort of discussions with Mr. Haddad, who is in the Chamber today? Does he not have the intestinal fortitude?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, apparently, after some weeks and months of examining Bill C-22, the Hon. Member is not aware that 25 of the 63 companies of PMAC are in fact European. In fact he is apparently not aware that every single one of our industrial partners has been after Canada since 1969 to get in step with the rest of the world and provide the same kind of patent protection provided by the rest of the world.

The Hon. Member may think there is some merit in participation in a debate with an American generic manufacturer. I do not. I think we should get along and do what is right for Canada, in Canada's interest. I wish the Opposition would take the same point of view.

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AGRICULTURE

MANITOBA SUGAR BEET INDUSTRY

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg—Birds Hill): Mr. Speaker, I would like to pursue the question of the future of the sugar-beet industry in Manitoba with the Deputy Prime Minister. In an earlier answer the Deputy Prime Minister went on at great length about the commitment of the Government to western Canada. However, many western Canadians know, Winnipeggers in particular, that many promises to western Canada have been broken. Why was the promise of the Government to Manitoba and, in particular, to the Government of Manitoba, that no more provincial moneys would be required for the support of the sugar-beet industry, why was that promise to Manitoba, among others, broken?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Hon. Member would like to outline some of the so-called broken promises because I think this Government has a very distinguished record. I alluded a little earlier to the fact that, out of 52 specific commitments, 43 have been fulfilled and the others are being acted upon.