

*Oral Questions*

Canadians who are thinking of buying a new home today are calling the 1-800 number for information that will affect their decision to buy. The information that is being given out is incomplete and could cost a homeowner thousands of dollars.

Will the minister be honest with the people of Canada? Will he ensure that this 1-800 propaganda line will accurately tell Canadians of the thousands of dollars that they will pay for new homes because of this anti-housing tax called the GST?

**Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the hon. gentleman that the people who are answering the calls to this line are thoroughly professional civil servants. They have studied the technical papers available, something that hon. members on that side of the House have not done.

Of course we look at their answers. We receive reports every day of the questions asked. We are sure they are professional answers.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

In the last session of Parliament, veterinary drug manufacturers were literally forced into complying with the Patent Act under which the whole pharmaceutical industry is regulated and under which no differentiation is made between human and veterinary pharmaceuticals. Nor has any differentiation been made between the two under the Excise Tax Act or under the Food and Drugs Act.

Now, under the proposed GST, human pharmaceuticals are zero rated while veterinary ones will be taxed. How can the minister possibly justify these contradictions?

**Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to apologize to the hon. lady. The way she started her question, I failed to listen to the end of it.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps I can extend the minister's apologies. The hon. member could put her question again.

**Mrs. Gaffney:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It just goes to show you that the members of the government are not listening to the people.

**Mr. Andre:** They should get to their questions. Stop giving preambles and ask the questions.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Meet the new surrogate Speaker right here.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am always prepared to co-operate with hon. members if they want to change the rules, but the hon. member for Nepean has the floor.

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is necessary to go through the preamble because otherwise he is going to miss the question.

In the last parliamentary session veterinary drug manufacturers were literally forced into complying with the Patent Act under which the whole pharmaceutical industry is regulated and under which no differentiation is made between human and veterinary pharmaceuticals. Nor has any differentiation been made between the two under the Excise Tax Act or under the Food and Drugs Act.

The question is—

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. Gaffney:** —under the proposed GST human pharmaceuticals are zero rated while veterinary ones are taxed. How can the minister possibly justify these contradictions?

**Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, our decision is consistent with the decisions we have taken throughout, to make sure that our reform is very attentive to the needs of the population of Canada. Obviously, we have had to make some choices. I think the hon. member will understand why we made them.

**Mrs. Beryl Gaffney (Nepean):** Mr. Speaker, that was a non answer.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member will put her question.

**Mrs. Gaffney:** The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association estimates small animal health care costs will increase as high as 12 per cent because of the GST.

Given that animal control programs will face a dramatic setback, and given that we will see a decrease in health care provided to small animals, how can the minister possibly justify jeopardizing not only the care of animals, but ultimately humans, just because he wants to grab more money for the government kitty?