

I have one further follow-up to yesterday's questioning on the same general subject but on the NAFTA dimension. I have been able to get a copy — I wonder if the leader has perhaps a better copy than I have — of the letter that Senator Pryor sent to the Honourable Mickey Kantor, the United States Trade Representative, dated March 9. I would be glad to table that, too. The last paragraph on page 2 of the letter itself — I am not, as I was yesterday, reading from an article in the newspaper — reads as follows:

It is my understanding that the USTR —

The United States Trade Representative —

— in the previous Administration exerted significant pressure on the Canadian government to abandon their system of compulsory pharmaceutical patent licensing. This system —

Namely, the compulsory licensing system that we abandoned in Bill C-22 and abolished in Bill C-91 —

— has served the Canadian citizens extremely well in reducing launch prices for new drugs, and containing drug inflation. A recent study concluded that the dismantling of this compulsory licensing system may increase drug expenditures in Canada by \$4 billion over the next 10 years. As a matter of policy, we should be sure that the NAFTA or GATT does not preclude the United States from reducing the period of the patent term as an option for containing drug prices.

I take it the negative answer that I got yesterday, about whether we would consider suggesting changes to NAFTA in order to head in the same direction as some influential persons in the United States are heading, is still negative. In the meantime, I think I should place that letter on the record, together with the international price comparison study.

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, not only do I not have a better copy or any copy of the letter to which my honourable friend refers, I had never heard of it until he raised the matter yesterday. With regard to the relationship between NAFTA and these matters, the honourable senator will surely recall that the announcement on our intentions in this regard, made by Mr. Wilson, Minister for International Trade, at Christmas 1991, was made pursuant to the Dunkel text of the Uruguay Round of the multilateral trade negotiations.

Senator Frith: I remember. He laid that groundwork for Bill C-91 very skillfully.

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP CONVENTION—ABSENCE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE COVERAGE OF DEBATES

Hon. Jean-Maurice Simard: Honourable senators, my question is directed to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Considering the refusal of the CBC's French network to televise all-candidate debates during the campaign for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada, I suspect, and I am not alone, that the network's decision is due mainly to the lack of an all-news network for the francophone community.

I think we can safely assume that *Newsworld*, which does many hours of TV broadcasting every day, will report these debates.

My question is this: Could the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us whether he will urge the government to allocate the funds required to set up this kind of service, as suggested in comments made by CBC president Gérard Veilleux sometime ago and later reported. He said that he wanted to give French-speaking Canadians an all-news network in French, like *Newsworld*.

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I am not sure where the matter stands right now, but I will get in touch with my colleague the Honourable Perrin Beatty, Minister of Communications to find out more about this question.

However, I am only going by the comments made recently by Mr. Veilleux, to which my honourable friend referred.

[English]

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES RESTRAINT BILL, 1993 NO. 2

REQUEST FOR POLLING RESULTS

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have two unrelated questions for the minister. My first question is with regard to the polls on unemployment insurance that my honourable friend had promised he would obtain for me. In view of the inordinate haste with which the government is pushing the bill through, unless I get those statistics today I am afraid they will be purely academic, because I gather the government intends to push this bill through tomorrow.