

protection. This is just one more example of distortion of the facts by the critics.

Critics claim that Canada can never hope to do the research to discover new medicines. They think that all research is undertaken where the parent company is headquartered and that it has nothing to do with patent protection. These comments are out of touch with the realities of modern economies, Mr. Speaker. No longer does this industry operate on a branch plant structure.

These days the pharmaceutical industry can locate its discovery research anywhere in the world. This is both an opportunity and a threat for Canada. Will we be able to hold our own? Are the companies in Canada modern enough, flexible enough and forward-thinking enough to make it in the global marketplace?

We have competitive advantages, Mr. Speaker. We have world-class biomedical scientists. We have excellent medical institutions and a reputation for high standards in the area of medicines. We have an international reputation as the best health care system in the world.

All these are important. But the single most important factor considered by pharmaceutical companies when determining where to locate a new investment is intellectual property protection. The importance of patent protection to this sector is made evident in the following quotation from the Simard study released by Health and Welfare Canada a few months ago: "No pharmaceutical multinational will risk the current high cost of overseas R&D unless it knows absolutely that its intellectual property will be protected by vigorous patent law in the country where it expects to discover new drugs."

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-91 is a cornerstone of Canada's ability to become a major player in the international drug industry. I am confident that we are on the threshold of a new era of investment and high-tech jobs.

It is time for the opponents of Bill C-91 to stop distorting the facts. It is time for Canada to join the rest of the industrialized world in protecting creativity and innovation. It is time for this House to pass this legislation so that Canadians can get on with building a modern, innovative, knowledge-driven economy.

Thank you.