

*Government Orders*

you justify to Canadian taxpayers and Canadian patients a dramatic increase in drug costs over the last few years?

**Mr. Della Noce:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know if it was a question or a speech, but let me answer my hon. colleague. I wish all the numbers he gave were dollar bills in my bank account. I would be a millionaire. If I start to go into these numbers, I will need a preparation of at least five minutes to make sure that the numbers he gave were the correct numbers.

What I can say to my hon. colleague is when we control the prices, we control the patent drugs. We do not control the whole world with this bill. When we speak about the increase and rising, we are speaking of zero this year and 2 per cent by the year 2000.

**Mr. Karpoff:** Baloney. Mulroney or baloney, it's about the same.

**Mr. Della Noce:** Well, if it is baloney I usually do not eat baloney. My hon. colleague says it is baloney. His numbers must be mortadella. When my hon. colleague asks questions, I wonder if he is not making a political speech to mix up people.

To answer regarding such big numbers is a little bit out of my context. People listening to us wonder if all these numbers can be retained in the memory. If they are really interested in these numbers, what is important is to protect the consumer. We have somebody there. We have a board and we have a control which did a good job this year. If they did a good job, we should not say it is because of the recession or inflation. If they did a good job, let us give them credit. If they did not do a good job, we will there to remind them.

**Mr. Karpoff:** Well, get rid of them.

**Mr. Della Noce:** We will get rid of them when they are no good. We do not get rid of them if they are successful. My hon. colleague said: "Get rid of them".

We do not get rid of people who produce. There are enough people who do not produce. When we have a good formation, we must keep it. I do not agree with either of my hon. colleagues who said it is because of the recession if the prices stayed low. It is because we have a board. We have some control and the job was well done.

**Mr. Karpoff:** Mr. Speaker, I asked three specific questions and my hon. friend declined to answer any of them.

What does he say when the dean of law at Osgoode Hall says the whole of the Prices Review Board is probably unconstitutional? We are passing legislation that they know they can throw out. The member has not dealt with the whole issue. The price increase since patent protection has been brought in has been documented time and time again by independent organizations to be at 6.4 per cent or much higher. That is for existing patent drugs. This is not all of the other things.

Even their own government document showed that 40 per cent of the drugs came on the market over the guidelines of the Prices Review Board. They had no power to roll them back and he calls that effective.

I wish he would also answer the question about when Canada is going to catch up with the rate of research that is standard in every other country. Why did they not look at what happened before they brought in patent protection? We actually had faster increases in research and development before than we have since.

**Mr. Della Noce:** Mr. Speaker, I love to answer my hon. colleague because sometimes I think it is more than funny when he asks me to decide when the judge did not even decide. Let us wait until the judge decides and then see if he has got a problem with lawyers. I must tell my hon. colleague that I asked for advice from seven different lawyers and they came with seven different answers. Maybe he should do like me, change lawyers and wait until the judges of the Supreme Court decide.

I must admit this is the first time I have seen a Prices Review Board which, having been established for only a few years, already has achieved some positive results. Some say it is not the board, it is because of the recession. Some say it is inflation. Until new things happen, I must say I would like to see the Prices Review Board stay and I will wait to see what the court will say.

I suggest to my hon. colleague that if he has problems with lawyers that he should do like I did, change all of them.