

*Oral Questions*

## REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF AMENDING LEGISLATION

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, when will the Minister stand up to protect the elderly in this country as opposed to the multinational corporations? The Minister knows that drug prices will rise dramatically in this country. Is he prepared to withdraw this unfair and unjust legislation in view of the evidence which has been submitted by affidavit and proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Canada was lobbied by multinationals and undue pressure was put on the Canadian Government? Will he not do that?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I have a letter that a colleague received from a 35-year-old physician who has two children and was just diagnosed as having leukemia. He wrote:

—please do not oppose the new drug Patent Act for soon forgotten political points and newspaper coverage.

Please remember that to oppose this legislation will deny the hope of new treatment and cures for patients like myself . . . . Please give the hope of new drugs—

**Some Hon. Members:** Sit down.

**Mr. Andre:** I am listening to that person.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River.

\* \* \*

## ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

## FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, after more than five years of negotiation, countless meetings and boatloads of promises, the Prime Minister will chair the First Ministers' Conference on Aboriginal Rights tomorrow. In echoing the voices of hundreds of thousands of native people in Canada, will the Minister of Justice tell us what success the Government believes is possible in these talks if the Government is not prepared to move from its position that the right to self-government should be contingent rather than inherent?

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for asking this question, which is very appropriate on the eve of most important meetings between aboriginal leaders and the leaders of Governments of our country. I must say, though, that the premise to his question is not correct. The fact is that it is not the federal Government that has been inflexible in terms of positions it has been putting forward with respect to constitutional amendment. We have been giving leadership and, according to independent impartial observers, the Prime Minister has been recognized as doing more in moving this debate toward a positive conclusion in the interest of the aboriginal people than any other Prime Minister. We are going into these discussions with the determination that we will do

everything possible in order to achieve the amendment within the constitutional period set down, in the interest of aboriginal people and, indeed, in the interest of all Canadians.

**Mr. Parry:** If the Minister of Justice seriously believes that he can put that message out unchallenged, he had better buy some commercial time.

## SELF-GOVERNMENT—ABORIGINAL PEOPLE'S CLAIM OF INHERENT RIGHT

**Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows that the aboriginal people of this country are looking for a recognition of their inherent right to self-government. Is the Government prepared to sacrifice these talks on the legalism of contingent right in the face of the fact that the aboriginal people of this country have never, through treaty or otherwise, renounced their right to self-government?

• (1430)

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, I hope the Hon. Member and his Party will not resort to partisanship with respect to an issue which I believe should transcend partisanship. I think this is far too important to try to achieve cheap political points. I say to the Hon. Member that when he is making these kinds of allegations with respect to positions which have been put forward, he should be mindful of the fact that we have been working tirelessly—the Prime Minister has given this a very high priority—in order to achieve an explicit recognition of the right to self-government, and we want to find the wording which will be appropriate to all the participants.

I remind the Hon. Member that it requires the co-operation of provincial Governments. We need seven provinces representing 50 per cent of the population of this country in order to have a constitutional amendment. I say to the Hon. Member that he should go to some of his political friends and tell them what he thinks about this matter and ask them to be a little more flexible in this area.

**Mr. Parry:** We will soon find out whose political friends are found wanting in this matter.

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

**Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, since the Prime Minister is so committed to finding a formula to which all can agree, would the Minister of Justice tell this House why his telex read that the first part of the conference will focus neither on the specific language nor on specific proposals? How do we get a constitutional amendment in this country without specific language?

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member by his question indicates he does not know what this meeting will be dealing with. The telex is clear. If the Hon. Member were fair he would know that the telex indicates we will use as a basis, or what we are proposing to put forward as a basis for some