

Bill C-91 because their patents have already expired or compulsory licences have been issued. They also use inaccurate patent expiry dates. So how would you expect them to come up with a valid answer? They cannot. They have carefully chosen samples of data that support the case they are trying to make.

Fourth, opponents like to say that this Bill will mean the end to the generic industry in Canada. This is not the case. As I mentioned, they have grown over 180 per cent since 1987. Our projections indicate that, in the new environment, there is no reason why they should not be able to grow at rates equal to those of the overall pharmaceutical industry.

Close to 60 per cent of generic business is now generated from drugs that are already off patent. Furthermore, there are nearly 2,000 off-patent products that are available to the generics, but have not yet been copied by them in Canada.

The U.S. generic industry operates in an environment without compulsory licences, yet it is growing and thriving -- so much so that Canadian generic companies have bought U.S. generic companies with their Canadian profits. Clearly there is no reason why this sector should not prosper in Canada.

Yesterday morning Ralph Nader said on Canada AM, on the subject of Bill C-91: "If it ain't broke, why fix it?" Mr. Speaker, such opponents ignore the changing realities of the global market place. Ralph Nader talks a great line about all of Canada's inventions. What he is really saying is that he would like to see us keep on inventing. But he would not provide the encouragement and protection to the inventors. Then he would have us hand over our inventions to countries where there is this protection so that they can commercialize these inventions for world markets and, in doing so, reap the benefits. I do not agree with him. We want to keep the jobs and benefits here in Canada. That is what this Bill is all about.

We must keep up with the times. We must make Canada a high-tech, R&D-intensive country if we want to improve our international competitiveness. An international consensus has emerged in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on world standards for intellectual property. It is critical to Canada's future prosperity that we participate in this consensus.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) carries the very same commitments as the GATT Dunkel text. And no, Mexico does not get an eight-year delay in having to comply with drug patent requirements under NAFTA, as critics have claimed. This is completely erroneous. In fact, all parties have to comply on the same basis. The eight-year transition period applies to Mexican government procurement of drugs, not to intellectual property