

Oral Questions

States. Will the Minister, or the whole Government for that matter, stand up in the House today and admit that it is shameful to be using the deep concern and anxiety that is felt by many thousands of Canadians across the country about what—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order! Perhaps the Hon. Member could help this House and let us know just exactly what the question is.

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, what I and many thousands of Canadians across the country want to know is whether or not the Government will assure them that it will not proceed with the amendments to the Patent Act insofar as generic drugs are concerned.

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the anxiety the Hon. Member talks about is being initiated by himself and the rest of his Party.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Jewett: Shame.

Mr. Andre: In fact any impartial examination of the legislation would show that there will be absolutely no increase in drug prices as a result of this legislation.

Mr. Young: Six hundred and fifty million dollars.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): We are going to hold you to that.

Mr. Andre: I know the Hon. Member would not like to leave the misinformation before the House that this is tied to the free trade talks which are going on.

Mr. Young: The Prime Minister said it.

Mr. Andre: In fact, in 1983 the previous Government announced the change to the Patent Act. That was long before any trade talks were undertaken. We need to do this for the benefit of Canadian research and development so that Canadian scientists can have that research and development in this high-tech biotechnology area here in Canada, and that is why we are proceeding.

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[Translation]

FINANCE**REQUEST FOR EXPLANATION OF MANNER IN WHICH
GOVERNMENT FISCAL AND TAX POLICIES ANNOUNCED**

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Finance, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of State (Finance). In recent weeks, the Minister of Finance made two major public statements, one in Washington about tax reform and the other

in Toronto on the state of our public finances. My question is as follows:

Could the Minister inform the House whether in future, the Minister of Finance intends to announce the Government's economic and fiscal policies outside the House, and whether this is part of the new presidential style adopted by the Prime Minister?

[English]

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, without accepting the premise of the question, I have to answer no.

[Translation]

TAX ON COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): If the Minister of State (Finance) rejects the presidential approach taken by the Prime Minister, could he inform the House when the Minister of Finance intends to provide as many details to the House on the commercial transactions tax as he gave in Washington on September 5 of this year?

[English]

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, those details will be presented to this House very shortly.

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TRADE**CANADA-UNITED STATES NEGOTIATIONS—COMPOSITION OF
ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade. The United States Government, claiming "national security reasons", has refused to let U.S. branch plants of Canadian companies like Northern Telecom sit on their advisory committees for trade talks. In view of this, why has Canada appointed at least 15 representatives of U.S. subsidiaries here to our trade advisory committees?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, we have appointed representatives to our trade committees because we want to ensure the broadest possible consultation with all sectors of Canadian industry, Canadian provinces, and Canadians generally on the issues before the negotiators to ensure a free trade agreement which meets the concerns of all Canadians.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister in fact approve of this double standard which is hurting our subsidiaries in the United States and creating an unfairness between the two countries with respect