

Patent Act

Let me be cynical and skeptical. Moreover, I doubt very much that after a four-year period, Cabinet will have enough information to act efficiently to promote the development of our drug industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the prices of drugs will increase. Everyone seems to believe it except the Minister. The Government is granting a ten-year monopoly without any written guarantee of investments by the industry, without any commitment by the multinationals as to the manufacture of drugs in Canada, without any specific definition of what is considered as research and development, without any commitment to table cost studies in the House or in committee. I regret but the Bill is inadequate and incomplete. One has to be blind to support such a proposal. Who will pay the bill, Mr. Speaker? Our sick people, those who are not covered by social welfare and whose income is not high enough to pay the premiums for a private insurance scheme; the people on welfare who will have to buy drugs not covered by their provincial drug insurance program; the people on social welfare who will have to pay part of the costs of their medicine where they are not covered 100 per cent by the province. The provinces which will have to make cuts in their Medicare programs to pay for these drugs. The taxpayers who will have to pay higher taxes to cover the increase in costs for medicine. The Canadian men and women who have private drug insurance programs. The drug insurance companies will have no other alternative but to pass the increase on to them. It is Canada which is scuttling its generic pharmaceutical industry which was about to start innovative research, but which will not be able to do so.

In his remarks, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (M. Andre) wondered why the Official Opposition opposed this legislation. He shouted: "The opposition is asking for jobs, jobs, jobs". Yes, its true, we want jobs, but not at the expense of the weak, the poor and the sick.

This Bill is not tailored to meet the needs of our country in the area of drugs; rather, it is the culmination of a host of clumsy efforts to meet the needs of a foreign-controlled industry. This Bill, therefore, has not been conceived to meet the needs of Canada, it is not a proper instrument for research and development, and our sick people, old people and taxpayers will pay dearly for it. The Liberal Party of Canada simply cannot support this Bill in its present form. We will make every possible effort to amend this Bill at least along the lines recommended by the Eastman Report. I join with the many Canadian men and women who are totally opposed to this Bill, and I will do everything in my power to make it more responsive to the real needs of all Canadian men and women.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I will say to the Minister that my position towards this Bill will be: "Desperate ills call for desperate remedies." Therefore, I move the following amendment:

• (1620)

[English]

Therefore, I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray):

That the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the word "That" and substituting the following:

Bill C-22, An Act to amend the Patent Act and to provide for certain matters in relation thereto, be not now read a second time but that it be read a second time this day six months hence.

Mr. Speaker: We will now debate the amendment.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, since this Bill was proposed by the Government last spring it has been opposed by Hon. Members of my Party. The earlier version did not receive first reading in June, and it has been opposed by my Party since the House resumed in September. We did everything we could to prevent the introduction of the Bill and we intend to continue to oppose this Bill in every way possible, and to defeat it if we can.

The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre) in answers to questions put to him earlier this week, and even previously, has implied that the opposition to his Bill comes from opposition Members of Parliament for purely partisan reasons. He implied that other people who oppose the Bill are doing so because they do not understand the fact, or because the facts have been misrepresented by members of the Opposition. In my years in Parliament I have never encountered a proposed Bill which has brought forward such unanimous opposition as this Bill.

An Hon. Member: Do you remember the Crow Bill?

Mr. Orlikow: The Crow Bill was a disaster. It affected farmers very adversely. However, this Bill has produced resolutions, letters to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) from senior citizen organizations from one end of Canada to the other, from consumers associations, from co-operatives, labour unions and farm organizations. I have never before seen this virtually unanimous opposition which has been produced by this Bill. These organizations have been joined by newspaper editorials, by newspaper columnists.

In today's *Citizen* there is an article by Don McGillivray. The headline reads: "Don't swallow Tories' drug-bill line". He states in part:

—the Tories now have a two-year record of mismanaging the issues that arise.

A little further on he states:

The change in the law abandons Canada's unique system of keeping medical drug prices low by denying patent protection to the big multinational drug companies.

I would like to deal for a few moments with a couple of the arguments put forward by the Minister in his speech today. He stated that the Bill under which these companies have operated since 1969 really permits the theft of intellectual property. I suppose he means that the results of the research done by the multinational companies who bring forward a new drug are