

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, have we not been hearing the same story from leaders of the Parti Québécois for many years now? I very much doubt that there is any foundation at all for Mr. Parizeau's statements in that regard, but I will obtain a statement from my Cabinet colleague Ms McDougall on the matter.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

PATENTED MEDICINE PRICES REVIEW BOARD— REQUEST FOR REPORT

Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, yesterday in Question Period we discussed the report of the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, and I take it the Leader of the Government in the Senate is not in a position to table that report yet.

The impression one might have from our exchange was that we would await the analysis that he promised us before we received the report. I see him shaking his head, so perhaps I did not give him the wrong impression, or he did not get the wrong impression.

There is no reason why we should not have the whole report in the meantime, if it is available. I hope that during any break that we have, he will consider this matter. Perhaps we can consult on how the report and the analysis could be the subject matter of an investigation by a Senate committee, and we might settle on which committee that should be.

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): To take the last part of the question first, as I said to Senator Thériault yesterday, let us take this matter in steps. The first step concerns the report itself.

I must say I do not know any reason why the report would not be available, but that is why I undertook, yesterday, to take the matter up with my Cabinet colleague Mr. Bouchard, the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Assuming it is available, I will bring it to the Senate. In the meantime, I will send a copy to my honourable friend during the recess.

Hon. Philippe Deane Gigantès: I am not sure I understand what you mean by "assuming it is available." It has been published. Other people have seen it. Why would it not be available?

Senator Murray: Honourable senators, I am not aware whether the study was published by the commission or a copy of it was obtained in some other way through the media. I am just leaving myself some latitude should I have to come back here and tell the Senate that for some reason, which I would

want to share with honourable senators, the report is not available from official sources.

Senator Gigantès: That is what worries me. Suppose it has been made available to the media. Is it proper that something is made available to the media and then not made available to the Senate?

Senator Murray: The honourable senator professes to be worried about these matters. He, perhaps better than most of us, is familiar with the technique of the plain brown envelope. There are documents and parts of documents that sometimes are leaked, or circulate over transoms and under doors.

• (0910)

I am referring here to documents that are not officially in the public domain. I have just left myself that latitude, because I have not had an opportunity to discuss the matter with Mr. Bouchard, or to ask him whether this report is ready for release to the public by his department or by the commission which reports to him. That is all.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc: Honourable senators, may I ask the Leader of the Government if people like Dr. Goyer, who was on Radio Canada last night, are wrapped in brown envelopes? I do not think you could have slid him under a door.

The reality is that the members of the commission have done their job. They have investigated. They seem to have reported, although we have not seen the report. They are certainly giving interviews.

There was a very lengthy interview on Radio Canada's *Téléjournal* last night, which I thought was very enlightening. I hope that such information might be shared with members of Parliament.

Senator Murray: The honourable senator will not be surprised to know I was long since in my bed at the time *Téléjournal* came on, so I did not see the report to which he refers.

I do not disagree with anything my friend has said. I have undertaken to speak to Mr. Bouchard to ask whether there is any reason in the world why this report has not been, or is not being, released by him or by the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board which commissioned the study.

Senator Gigantès: You mean any reason other than the fact that it is embarrassing for your government?

Senator Murray: No, honourable senators.

Senator LeBlanc: That is the brown envelope — the embarrassment.