

Government Orders

In terms of the substance, we do not have to go too far; just two examples of how generic drugs keep in check the cost of pharmaceuticals. One is a very popular one called Valium which is a brand name drug manufactured by Roche which sells 1,000 2mg tablets for \$63.50 and 1,000 10 mg tablets for \$144.50.

Diazepam, the generic equivalent, sells for much cheaper; 1,000 2mg tablets costs \$5.50 while 1,000 10 mg tablets only cost \$6.95. I could give many other examples of the type of comparison which is one of the reasons why I have introduced an amendment which is on the floor of the House.

This price monitoring board unfortunately I still feel is a tame tiger, a tabby cat without sharp teeth. The amendment if it carries is going to make sure that when that monitoring board comes through with a comparison of pharmaceutical prices it is also going to have to compare what has happened with the wholesale price of drugs and what happens at the retail level.

I believe you could go on and on in terms of comparing other generics with pharmaceuticals. I am all for intellectual property and the fact it has to be protected to a certain degree but I believe Bill C-22 was a happy compromise and frankly there has been growth in pharmaceuticals and generics. We talk about the jobs in pharmaceuticals. There are going to be jobs affected by the generics.

In conclusion, as I know other members want to speak, everyone has talked about this, saying conform to NAFTA and GATT. If we are going to be the Boy Scouts of the world, penalizing the Canadians we are supposed to serve—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order please.

Mr. Terry Clifford (London—Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy listening to the member from Annapolis Valley—Hants speak in this House. He makes from time to time some very good points.

I think in this case he has forgotten some of the work in Parliament that one does not see in this House. He forgets about the hours that are spent in committees. I would like to listen to his timetable and agenda for what has happened in this very House with regard to this bill. He has forgotten the problem in the institution of committees. Maybe when he was chairman he would remember these things. He knows the hours that mem-

bers of Parliament put in on committee work. One has to recognize that many aspects of this bill were covered in committee, a lot of good points were made and a lot of the views of Canadians were heard.

• (1300)

He did say there are some good things in this bill and we are certainly glad to hear him make that point. He talks about the rights of invention and the fact that creative people should be rewarded. This is something that Canadians should be proud of, that their government is taking steps to protect and encourage individual achievement and development, particularly in a field that spans the world. Everyone knows we have gone to a global marketplace today. Everyone knows that we have to be competitive as individuals, as institutions, in order that our society can survive in this day and age.

He recognizes, as does this bill, that one of the most important features is the right to invent and the right to protection for your invention. Therefore the stimulation of that will give and the reports on this bill have said that from insulin to medical lasers Canada has a long history of medical discoveries. The most important factor in keeping discoveries in Canada is the will to do so.

Canadians must be prepared to make the necessary investments and trade-offs to focus on long-term rather than short-term benefits. We are trying to focus on something long term, something of which Canadians can be proud and can see long-term benefits. We are all talking in this House about the development of our economy, not just for today but for the next millennium. We need to have entrenched in the laws that we pass things that are going to make that happen. Clearly this bill does that in this field.

The development of better medicines has the potential to ultimately save on health care costs by reducing the need for more expensive treatment such as hospitalization and surgery.

Bill C-91 will encourage the search for new cures, new treatments, and new medicines by rewarding those who assume the risks of pharmaceutical research and development. It will promote the establishment of a strong, innovative and creative pharmaceutical industry in Canada. That industry in turn will generate cures and treatments for the diseases that afflict our senior citizens as well as other Canadians.