

*Patent Act*

Canadian people to chuck the whole system and to have a real recognition of merit in the appointment of people. These people have taken every advantage of every Senate opening. The Prime Minister has dumped friend after friend into the Senate. We have people upset by what those who still have the majority have done in the way of trying, from their perspective, to improve the Bill. If I were to go into this matter and consider what we have before us which my good friend, the Hon. Member from Windsor—Walkerville (Mr. McCurdy), was dealing with a few minutes ago, we have a very nice question of how to regard what has come before us in this second return of the Bill from the other other place.

Editorial writers, commentators of various sorts in *The Globe and Mail* and other periodicals have written article after article. Now I do not have any particular sympathy with the New Democratic Party, no sense, I presume, of our conviction that the other place should have been got rid of a long time ago.

We have the other place sending the Bill back this time with amendments which do not weaken the Bill from the Government's perspective. I want to be very clear about the distinction I am drawing here. I am talking about Bill C-22 as the Government has put it forward, has defended it in the House, has defended it in committee and to the Canadian people. The Bill is designed to ensure that there is more research in Canada. We are told the Bill is designed to allow some increase in prices but not any exorbitant price increases. We are told by the Government that gouging of the Canadian consumer by pharmaceutical manufacturers will not happen.

● (1750)

The people in the other place have been very canny this time. They said: "There is no point in destroying the Bill with amendments, let us take the Government at its word and bring amendments forward to deal particularly with those two items". The amendments will ensure that there really will be research done in Canada. The guarantees would be provided in the Bill so that Members of both Houses and Canadian consumers can be sure that there will be some real return on this particular weakening of our licensing provisions.

There is much concern across the country about higher costs. As a matter of fact, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) has conceded that prices will go up. He offered provincial Governments a certain increase in funding to cover the increased costs they would incur in administering provincial drug plans for senior citizens and others. That concession surely was an honest admission that there would be an increase in costs about which the Canadian people had previously not had to worry.

Senators gave us amendments which provide that the Government's declarations be written into the Bill. Ultimately, as we all recognize, when votes take place to determine what will happen, the majority rules. Senators have asked the

majority, the governing caucus, to ensure that the guarantees are there for the Canadian people.

Those assurances, both on the side of research and on the side of limited price increases, are ones that we think are right. We recognize, of course, that they were offered by the Government in a desperate attempt to sell a Bill that has never been popular with the Canadian people and is not now popular.

I suppose one of the reasons the people in the other place continue to hold this Bill back is that they realize that the closer we come to the next election, the more difficult it will be for the Conservative Government, which sees itself at about 25 per cent in the public opinion polls, going down to a defeat just about as sure as the one suffered by Richard Hatfield and his colleagues, to sell this Bill. The Government will become more and more uncomfortable about what it is dumping on the Canadian people.

These proposals from the other place take the Government at its word and ask the Government to put into the law of the land that which has been promised. They ask the Government to ensure that the promises are engraved in stone in a way that will allow future Governments to work with them and in a way that will allow the people of Canada to have assurances of what they will receive in return for this particular weakening of Canadian licensing laws.

What have we been given? We have been given the Government's refusal. That brings us back to the question of why Bill C-22 was put forward in the first place. Why should promises made in the House and outside not be put into the Bill where they might actually acquire some real force?

Whether the Bill was part of the negotiations on trade or not is a nice question. If it was not, it should have been. If it was not, then why do we want to avoid confining those who will be the beneficiaries of this Bill, the pharmaceutical manufacturers? Is the Government so weak-kneed, so much in the pocket of big interests which have been pressing for this for years, is the Government so much the lackey of those interests that it cannot accept proposals that would provide some real guarantee to the Canadian people?

Of course, for this Conservative Government, those are purely rhetorical questions. It is completely the prisoner of these interests and if it did not do this because of the trade negotiations, it clearly made promises somewhere along the line. There were sacred trusts for the Canadian people uttered on the airwaves and in public meetings, but behind closed doors, the rich have done very well for a long time with the tax laws and the other laws. They continue to do well whatever the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) may say, because behind those closed doors, Conservatives were making promises. They are now acting on those promises.

The other place is the place where many of the friends of Conservative Members have been appointed and are expecting to enjoy a long life on the dole. It is a system of indoor relief for the lucky people in the Canadian patronage system. Even