

Time Allocation

Mr. Andre: The most fundamental of principles governing this institution is that no matter how reprehensible or unacceptable are Bills or motions which Members of the House of Commons wish to propose, they have a right to introduce them in the House. That fundamental democratic principle is as old as democracy itself and the New Democratic Party violated that principle. That is deserving of mention. That has never happened before.

As a result of their abuse of my courtesy there are now all kinds of reasons for us not to be courteous to the Opposition. We are aware that our Standing Orders dictate the practices of the House. However, we also have a tradition of courtesy, of reasonable behaviour toward each other. Through its actions the New Democratic Party has said that it is not bound by the common practices of decency and fair play. Unfortunately, that will set a precedent for the future behaviour of Governments toward the New Democratic Party. Unfortunately, this institution is the loser as a result. Our parliamentary system has been severely damaged by the New Democratic Party and its contempt for centuries of tradition and practice.

The New Democratic Party was reluctant to have this Bill introduced for first reading, to carry on with second reading debate, and to have the Bill referred to committee. I suspect the reason for that is that down in the solar plexus they know that this is good for Canada. They do not want to be asked why they are opposed to something which will result in more research in cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Alzheimer's disease, and cancer.

Mr. McCurdy: Why don't you tell the truth?

• (1300)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order. I would appreciate if the Hon. Member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. McCurdy) would make his questions or comments through the Speaker rather than in this manner. If the Hon. Member wants to speak I will recognize him next. The Hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre).

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, during the November break I was in Vancouver and met with people from the Terry Fox Foundation.

Mr. McCurdy: Oh, come on.

Mr. Andre: The Terry Fox Foundation has gathered several millions of dollars to promote cancer research. They have, in co-operation with the Welcome Foundation, established Pacific Pharmaceuticals at the University of British Columbia. They have already acquired and are acquiring more scientists to investigate and attempt to discover cures for cancer.

Mr. Orlikow: Good.

Mr. Andre: They believe that it is absolutely essential to their activity and success that patent protection be provided in this country. Why does the New Democratic Party not believe

that is essential? If the whole world did as the New Democrats wished, and abolished patent protection, there would not be the present levels of research into cancer, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy and Alzheimer's disease. That research is going on because the rest of the western industrialized world recognizes patent protection. They recognize that the discoverer of a drug has created something of value and owns it. Apparently the New Democratic Party does not recognize that.

I heard the Member for New Westminster—Coquitlam (Ms. Jewett) talking about our obligations to the rest of the world. Why does her Party believe that Canada has no obligation to the rest of the world in terms of medical research? Why do they believe that Canada has a right to sponge off the rest of the world when it comes to medical research? Where is this sense of internationalism that they talk about? How do they justify excluding Canada from that medical research?

Let us consider the question of intellectual property. The New Democratic Party says that it is concerned about the consumers. If we were to allow generic book publishing and generic record publishing, we could probably save Canadians a few hundred million dollars. We would also have no Canadian authors, but the New Democrats may say that is all right because they read foreign authors anyway. We may not have Canadian songwriters and composers and other artists to the same extent, but they will say it is okay because they listen to foreigners anyway. Why does the New Democratic Party not be consistent and suggest that we abolish all intellectual property, including books, records, songs and everything? We certainly could save the consumers a lot of money, but in the process we would destroy Canadian creativity.

By not having patent protection for drugs we are in essence saying that Canadian scientists and Canadian researchers who search for the cures through these drugs are not really appreciated by this country and that what they do does not have much value because we will not recognize patent rights, but will sponge off the rest of the world.

Let us consider the health care of Canadians. For instance, the latest discovery is AZT, which looks like a promising treatment for Alzheimer's disease. Americans are now participating in these treatments, albeit at the research stage, and receiving significant benefits. Why is this not happening in Canada? We do not have patent protection laws. What will those Members say to the families of Alzheimer victims who are in that position? I see that you want to call it one o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I am not calling it one o'clock because we are going until 1.34. However, the Hon. Member's time has expired.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.