

Patent Act

by some ideological dictate which says this kind of Patent Act is necessary.

A couple of years ago the Government brought forward a policy of deindexing senior citizens' pensions because Conservative philosophy dictates—

An Hon. Member: Socialists.

Mr. Tobin: You see, Mr. Speaker, when one talks about helping seniors, those Hon. Members call it socialism. Those Hon. Members see "socialism" as a foul, dirty word, a shocking thing. It is a warped, twisted and bent thing for Hon. Members on this side of the House to be concerned about the senior citizens of Canada.

Two years ago the Government put forward a proposal to which all Conservative Members who came to their places like trained animals in a zoo, bowed and said: "Aye, aye, Sir" to deindexing senior citizens' pensions. Notwithstanding the power of the majority, the power of the 210 Members in a 282-seat House, notwithstanding the power of the Prime Minister in effect, an elected dictator if he wanted to be that in a parliamentary system—and notwithstanding the power of the 40-member Cabinet, public opinion was heard. Public opinion said that this kind of regressive measure to take money out of the pockets of Canada's least protected citizens was not acceptable in the 1980s, and Government swallowed itself whole. The Prime Minister came to his feet after debate, demonstrations on Parliament Hill and literally tens of thousands of petitions, and swallowed himself whole. He said his Government was sensitive, caring and was listening. He said it made a mistake.

Having swallowed itself whole once, the Government now seeks with Bill C-22 to repeat the act, except this time it sent us as chief spokesman not the Prime Minister, who we know changes his mind whenever the wind shifts direction, but its pet bull-terrier. The Government sent a bull terrier as the chief government spokesman, the Hon. Member from Alberta, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andre). He has his teeth locked into Bill C-22. He has his jaws wrapped around the fragile ankles of Canada's most exposed citizens, and he is determined to come away with a piece of meat. He has reached in, grabbed hold, and intends to take a very painful bite out of those people in Canada who are least able to protect themselves. The citizens will need more than generic drugs to recover from the festering wounds which are about to be inflicted on the exposed ankles of Canada's poorest citizens when the Minister sinks his teeth in, past the bone, into the marrow and sucks the life's blood out of Canada's poorer citizens with Bill C-22.

What does the Bill do? What net return does the Bill give to the people of Canada? What net return does it give to the average Canadian no matter where he lives, no matter what his occupation? I will tell you what it does, Mr. Speaker. It makes relations between Canada and the United States just a little bit more harmonious. It enraptures the environment so that the next time the so-called Shamrock Summit is held, they might

sing *When Irish Eyes are Smiling* once more. That is all it does. It is a Bill which gives everything to foreign drug companies which record enormous profits, as well they might. They are tremendously healthy, as well they should be. It gives these drug companies a 10-year guarantee that they can join the Minister in sinking his teeth into people who buy drugs, not as a luxury item, not as something which is put on the shelf as a placebo to make one feel better, and not as something one puts on the shelf to convince oneself that one has a whole assortment of items and therefore at one's disposal lies the means to make oneself better. It is not there for any of those reasons, Mr. Speaker; rather, it allows these companies to have a 10-year free "go" at those who need access to prescription drugs, and it is a "free go" sanctioned by the Government of Canada.

• (1640)

I see Members opposite laughing; I see Members opposite chuckling. With their Conservative doctrinaire philosophy that says, "Let the free market determine what the price should be, and the senior citizens of Canada be damned", they find this kind of speech amusing. They have not spent enough time out of the cocktail circuit; they have not spent enough time away from the Tory 500 Club, a club which, at \$500 a shot, permits one access to a Tory front-bencher; and at \$1,000 a shot, access to a Tory front-bencher, a Minister. They have not spent enough time in the households of the people of this country. These people do not balk at the notion of paying an extra \$10 or \$20 a month for drugs—they nearly pass away, Mr. Speaker. They do not know where the extra \$10 or \$20 a month for drugs is going to come from.

That is the problem in this place, Mr. Speaker. Too many Members in this place have been caught up in the glitter of the chandeliers, in the beautiful colours that float from the stained glass windows. They are caught up in the richness of the ornate wood that appoints every desk, and they are caught up in the luxury—

An Hon. Member: That is crap, Tobin, and you know it!

Mr. Tobin: —and they are caught up in the deep rich carpeting that covers the floor of the Chamber. Somehow, they have made the mistake of believing that the finely appointed Chamber which surrounds Hon. Members, that their finely appointed offices and their large salaries reflect the realities of this country.

Mr. Speaker, what is sad and what is tragic is that nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Speaker, my riding, Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe, has a population of some 90,000 people and extends over 500 miles of the Newfoundland coastline. In my riding, 60 per cent of the people live in communities of under 500, and 35 per cent, according to Statistics Canada, are unemployed—though the number is much higher. These people, too, want their voices heard in this debate, and to those people, Bill C-22 is a