

POINT OF ORDER

TABLING OF DOCUMENT

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order to ask leave of the House. During Question Period the minister said that he had tabled all documentation regarding breast implants.

I believe the document that I referred to has not been tabled and I would ask for leave or unanimous consent to table it.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent for that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Bouchard (Roberval): I do not have any problem with that.

Madam Deputy Speaker: There seems to be consent for the document to be tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

COPYRIGHT ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Frank Oberle (for the Minister of Communications) moved that Bill C-88, an Act to amend the Copyright Act, be now read the second time and referred to a legislative committee of the Departmental envelope.

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak this afternoon on this bill to amend the Copyright Act. You know that my colleague, the Minister of Communications and myself share different responsibilities regarding intellectual property and I follow very closely this whole issue of copyright and this legislation at second reading today.

However, before discussing this bill in detail I would like to say a word about the context of this bill. Four years ago the members of this House passed a reform of the Copyright Act which had not been amended in any significant way since 1921. In so doing we confirmed the judicial recognition of the exclusive right of the author to authorize the use of his work and to profit from it, as is

Government Orders

fitting, since the very object of the legislation is to protect creative activities.

Evidently the copyright concept has changed considerably in the last 20 years. Originally it only included printed works but technology largely contributed to expand this concept. However, technical progress has not only changed the concept and the scope of copyright but also the relation between the creator and the user. It is with this reality in mind that our government undertook to revise the Copyright Act. So while having the fundamental objective of protecting creators the legislation also tries to create a fair balance between the parties.

The bill that will be read for the second time today reflects the efforts made by this government to ensure that the importance of copyright and intellectual property in general be adequately recognized. Among other things this bill changes the definition of musical work.

Under this technical change, any work of music or musical composition, with or without words, is musical work.

[*English*]

As previously defined a musical work consisted of any combination of melody and harmony, or either of them, printed, reduced to writing or otherwise graphically produced or reproduced.

This definition has a very limited scope as it could effectively reduce a musical work to a simple piece of paper. This purely technical amendment is necessary to clarify a situation that has proven to be unfair to authors and composers of musical works.

[*Translation*]

In this sense the amendments tabled by the government this morning complement the ones that were made following the signature of the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States on February 13, 1989.

• (1510)

Indeed, I remind the hon. members that under article 2006 both countries had to amend their Copyright Act regarding cable systems. This provision, as you will recall, provided for a right of remuneration for any retransmission of distant radio or television signals. This right came into effect in Canada in January 1990.