

This was a course of action that was encouraged by the Leader of the Opposition in December 1984 when he strongly advised me to begin negotiating with Quebec with a view to bringing Quebec back into the Constitution. That is exactly what we sought to do. It was for that reason there was no economic union clause at that time. Obviously this is something we should continue to fight for and it is part and parcel of our constitutional objectives.

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• (1430)

### HEALTH CARE

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. I believe every Canadian is aware of the great crisis our health care system is in, both as we see funding cut back and increased demand.

I want to ask the Prime Minister, given that just before the Canada-U.S. trade deal this government introduced Bill C-22 limiting generic drug availability in this country, why now, just before the NAFTA talks may be concluded, this government insists on increasing the limitations on competition for generic drug companies. Why is this government introducing legislation that would undermine further the ability of provinces and territories to finance their drug plans and subsequently their universal health care system?

I want to ask the government why it has chosen once again to favour multinational corporations over the health care of citizens of this country?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade):** Mr. Speaker, I announced on January 14 of this year our intention to comply with the proposal in the Dunkel paper on the GATT talks which provided for the elimination of compulsory licences for all member states.

Canada has been out of step with the rest of the world as the only industrialized country which did have a compulsory licensing system. It was the proposal of Mr.

Dunkel to see this eliminated as part of the freedom of trade in products based on patents.

We have seen a delay in the GATT negotiations but we believe it is important, since we are in a very competitive world, to attract this type of high quality, high R and D, high value-added investment to Canada and in that way create jobs and economic growth and welfare in Canada. That is important to our country.

It is on that basis that we decided to proceed to eliminate any lack of understanding or lack of confidence that could be perceived and in that way ensure that the \$320 million worth of investments that have been committed for Canada would indeed come to Canada.

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

This country has seen cutbacks by the federal government to health care that have resulted in a loss of jobs in the health care professions across this country and in health care services.

[*Translation*]

On January 15 the minister said that if the price of drugs increased faster than the rate of inflation this would kill the health insurance system.

Well, that is exactly what happened. According to a report by Green Shield in Ontario, the price of drugs manufactured by multinationals has increased 11.4 per cent since 1987. My question for the minister is this: What will the minister of health do to prevent his predictions from coming true?

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I think the report to which the leader of the New Democratic Party referred, the Green Shield report, includes the salaries of pharmacists in the price of drugs. I think we should put this report in perspective like all the other reports that have been mentioned.

As for the price of drugs, the Department of Industry, Science and Technology believes that the bill tabled today represents an increase of practically zero per cent for this year and up to 2 per cent by the year 2000. I think the bill tabled today is a commitment.