

Oral Questions

Just months after the brand name drug companies promised more jobs to Canadians if they were given new patent privileges, one of the giants of this drug industry, Wyeth-Ayerst, yesterday closed its factory in Windsor, cutting 219 jobs.

We have now discovered that the Canadian operations of this empire received \$4 million from the department of industry. I want to ask the minister if he will insist on getting that money back from this company given that it has broken its promise to Canadians and left long-term employees with a jobless future in a tough city in which to find a job in 1993.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I know my hon. friend did not do this deliberately, but he did neglect to say that Wyeth has merged with Ayerst, McKenna & Harrison as a result of a world-wide merger. The business of the combined companies will be concentrated in Montreal in their much larger Ayerst operations.

I am sure my hon. friend would want to correct the impression he left with the House that Wyeth was pulling out of Canada altogether. It is consolidating its operations under one roof in Montreal and creating a good number of jobs in Montreal as a result of that.

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the same minister.

When debating Bill C-91, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs said that Bill C-91 would help provide new jobs, attract new investment in R and D, and provide new export opportunities. I do not think he said that they would be in Montreal. We received a number of letters in my office from employees of Wyeth expressing support for Bill C-91.

My question to the minister is: Would he blame those employees who have lost their jobs today if they regard the promises of Wyeth, of the PMAC and of this government as nothing but lies, lies and more damn lies, or does he have any solution for these people who have lost their jobs in Windsor? They do not care how many jobs are produced in Montreal.

• (1455)

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Domm: No NDP in Montreal.

Mr. Della Noce: That's a good way to elect PCs in Montreal.

An hon. member: Montreal doesn't have a socialist government.

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the only point that I would make to my hon. friend is that I hope he regrets the statement that he just made. Montreal is a part of Canada and there is a combination of operations within Canada.

Jobs have been created in one part of the country. Yes, it is unfortunate that jobs were lost in Windsor. I am sure that my hon. friend would reflect on the fact that \$1 billion of investment has gone from Ford into Windsor and that Chrysler had put \$450 million worth of investment in the Windsor area. These are all things that are positive to the Windsor economy.

The last point I will make to my hon. friend is this. The point by him and his colleague from Windsor about this action on the part of these two companies having something to do with Bill C-91 is totally wrong. It has absolutely nothing to do with Bill C-91.

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INTERNATIONAL AID

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

Since 1989 the government has cut \$4.5 billion from international aid budgets. Besides the devastating impact that this has had on the world's poorest people, one of the key affected groups in Canada is the non-government organization committee.

For three years this community has been trying to meet with the minister to discuss the cuts. Why has the minister not met with this community? Will he meet with its people now before the minister comes down with his budget in April?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have been engaged in pre-budget consultations for the last two to three weeks.

I have had seven meetings right across the country plus a number of bilaterals. We usually have 15 or 16 groups that come before the committee. They would certainly be welcome to come before that committee. I will see them whenever I get an opportunity. Obviously they meet with the minister responsible.