

Patent Act

Canada or what its immediate consequence will be, leading to higher prices for pharmaceuticals. The Canadian consumer will lose money, most of which we are sure will be transferred out of Canada to enrich the shareholders and owners of the pharmaceutical companies. It will do nothing for Canadians. That conviction is one about which we are absolutely convinced.

The question of where this Bill fits in as it pertains to dealing with the United States has produced some of the strangest contradictions. It has left us, the Canadian people and commentators in the media convinced that we are getting far less than the truth. I recognize that describing this situation precisely would be unparliamentary. It is one of those situations that faces us when we are told things that tempt us to unparliamentary description of what a Minister is insisting on when he says that this Bill has nothing to do with the free trade negotiations and the Mulroney trade deal. This is quite apart from pressure from the multinational corporations. Those particular assertions simply stretch the credulity of the entire Canadian population. I doubt if anyone believes those particular protestations.

Mr. McDermid: John Bulloch.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): The pharmaceutical manufacturers protested the original legislation of 1969. They have been seeking the kind of change which Bill C-22 involves. They have been seeking it for a long time. They found a Government that could be suckered into accepting it. To suggest that the Bill has nothing to do with the free trade negotiations may represent just that element of truth of which this Government should be thoroughly ashamed.

Mr. McDermid: It has absolutely nothing to do with it.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Instead of coming to the table with the Americans and approaching the U.S. Government with a proposal that we want to look at the possibility of better relations between the two countries and consider the various elements objectionable in Canada—listing items, laws, the administration of trade laws and so on—something else was done. We should decide what should be changed, and that in a more leisurely way, and then when we come to agreement come to Parliament and change the law. But we all know perfectly well that that is not what the Government did. Instead of approaching the U.S. administration in 1985 with the whole panoply of Canadian legislation relating to all sorts of things such as the way in which we governed our energy resources, the way in which we endeavoured to control foreign investment and the way in which we were ensured that pharmaceutical manufacturers did not exploit Canadian consumers indefinitely—instead of recognizing that there were various items in Canada which the Americans might well want to say something about—what did the Government begin to do? It proposed laws weakening the Foreign Investment Review Agency grievously and destroying attempts to ensure that energy resources would be in the control of the Canadian

people for their own interest. It should have ensured that the pharmaceutical manufacturers, as I have said, would not be able to go on exploiting indefinitely. But the Government put these proposals forward.

Under the rules of this House there were limits on how long we could resist measures, given the Government's majority. We sometimes face the action that we have tonight in the extension of hours. The Government has taken advantage of its majority and rammed things through. It has used the kind of power that if the Conservatives had been in Opposition, they would have screamed all over the country and would have been prepared to storm the Speaker's chair the way they did in the last Parliament. They were capable of any kind of parliamentary measure. Many of these items which should have been very, very large bargaining chips to balance those items which the Americans were determined to keep on their side, which the U.S. negotiators would not concede, were given away here in Parliament long before the negotiations went to the table. The assertion that Bill C-22 has nothing to do with the talks with the United States is not, in my opinion, true.

Mr. McDermid: It is true.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): If it were true, the Government should be ashamed of making the assertion because this measure is one the Government should have had at the table in order to extract concessions from the Americans.

Mr. McDermid: It was a campaign promise and the people supported it.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Given the way in which this bunch has run the affairs of Canada, given the way in which it has been prepared to sell out the national interest, given its readiness, as the summary of the agreement with the Reagan administration now indicates, to give up control of energy resources, given its readiness to abandon almost completely any significant way for the middle range and smaller companies in Canada to any real review on foreign investment, given its readiness in one area after another to sacrifice the national interest in the trade deal, we are here again tonight considering how to deal with Bill C-22.

We have a Bill that does pose difficulties. We have another mess of things in the way in which the Conservative dominated Commons has exploited its power. It faces a Liberal dominated other place in which Senators are able to take advantage of the dominance they have in opposition to this measure. We recognize in our caucus that that poses some very real difficulties for us.

We have a Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and Ministers who have damned the other place. It was completely unseemly the way the Conservatives have taken advantage of the patronage trough, the Senate and other places, as much as they have. The Prime Minister conceded just days ago in Halifax that he completely underestimated the desire of the