

Patent Act

The savings there would far more than compensate for any loss of savings because of that one single drug.

Let us talk about that one single drug because it is an important drug. Cimetidine, its brand name being Tagamet, was discovered by Smith Kline & French. It has been very useful in treating peptic ulcers. Introduction of that drug saved \$130 million a year in hospitalization costs because people with peptic ulcers are not required to go to hospital as frequently, not to mention lost time and comfort and so on. SKF made a lot of money on that drug, no question, but it saved Canadians a lot of money. The generic competitor came along and drove SKF out of business, basically. They were the third or fourth largest drug manufacturer in Canada and now they are way down the list. They shut down their facilities and laid off I do not know how many people. They shut down their research activities. That cost has not been factored in here anywhere.

Before the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition rants on about his billions in costs he ought to look at the facts. He ought to pick up the Eastman Report and read it. He would find that those 32 drugs would be generic competitors under our scheme as well. He ought to ask the people of Montreal if they said "bye, bye, and good riddance" to Smith Kline and French when they shut down their plant and laid off those people.

● (1430)

Let us talk about what Dr. Eastman said or did not say. Dr. Eastman wrote a letter to *The Globe and Mail* which reads as follows:

Mr. Andre says that the changes will not cause the prices of the new branded drugs to rise above the levels at which they are introduced in the market. I agree.

Those are Dr. Eastman's words. He agreed. He goes on to point out a fact that no one has mentioned here. He says:

I would emphasize the importance of the Drug Prices Review Board. I would not have agreed to the chairman of the Board if I had thought that it would be ineffective.

Why has no one mentioned that? What about that research?

The Leader of the Opposition seems to think that it does not matter that generic competition will cause a few jobs in research to be lost because it will save so much money which will create other opportunities. Let us suppose we allowed generic book publishing in Canada, that anyone could publish any author they wanted to, provided they paid a 4 per cent royalty. Undoubtedly we would save hundreds of millions of dollars. Using the arithmetic of the Leader of the Opposition, those hundreds of millions of dollars would be generating jobs and there would be a tremendous boom. There would be no Canadian authors, but I suppose some would say that most of our authors are foreign anyway. We would be saving hundreds of millions of dollars, but we would be stealing the creations of our authors and that would be wrong.

It is just as wrong to tell people who have discovered cures for peptic ulcers, treatments for arthritis, or heart drugs which will save thousands of lives, that we are going to encourage

people to copy their discoveries and prevent them from earning substantial amounts of money because, although we are grateful to have the drugs, we think it is horrible that they want to make a profit on their discovery and we will not allow them to do that. I defy anyone in the House to say that that is a stand of strong moral principle. That is a corrupt stand.

I do not know how many people involved in the medical field I have talked or written to. However, I know that they wonder about a country which is grateful for research done on cancer, Alzheimer's disease, or heart disease, but will not give them the same legal protection given someone who develops a new camera or a better mouse trap, who writes a book, or puts a trademark on a product. They wonder about a country which will not do the same for someone who has discovered a life-saving drug as it does for those who make other discoveries. How can we in all honesty deny scientists patent protection?

I visited UBC where the Terry Fox Foundation and the Welcome Foundation have jointly set up Pacific Pharmaceuticals. That is in the constituency of the Leader of the Opposition. That business has been established at UBC to do research into cancer. They believe it is essential to have patent protection to justify that expenditure. They have hired some staff and are getting letters from Canadian scientists living in California, Massachusetts, France and Britain who are delighted to hear that this research will be undertaken in Canada. They want to return to Canada to do research in this facility because they want to do research in these important areas and would like to do it in Canada.

That is an example of the exciting things which are happening as a result of the Patent Act changes we are proposing. On his next trip to Vancouver the Leader of the Opposition should go to UBC and talk to the scientists at Pacific Pharmaceutical who are actually looking for the cure for cancer. He should tell them what he just told the House and watch their reaction. He should tell them that he does not value their work and that their work does not deserve the patent protection which is given to the inventor of a mechanical device. I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to do that.

Someone just handed me a letter from H.B. Knuchel, Ciba-Geigy Canada Ltd., Mississauga, Ontario, which says in part:

I wish you continued courage in your fight against a "two-faced" opposition; considering that the leader of the opposition, Mr. John Turner, not so long ago was Chairman of another Swiss pharmaceutical company (when he was a partner at McMillan, Binch) and declared on many occasions his opposition to the present compulsory licence legislation.

That company wouldn't be Sandoz, would it? However, I guess we are entitled to change our minds given the exigencies. I do not know whether resolutions were passed to this effect at the last convention. I am not sure whether this is one of the issues on which the Liberal caucus is united. I do not want to betray confidential information, but I suspect that some people, not too many seats away laterally from the Leader of the Opposition, would privately admit we are doing the right thing.

Mr. Nystrom: Never.