

*Government Orders*

recession. Personally, I think that even without the recession, prices would have stayed in line.

Bill C-91 also encourages companies to make drugs here in Canada for a North American and international market. It is very interesting to see how fast the investments are made.

I remember the debate on Bill C-22. We had demonstrations here on the Hill where unions, businessmen and all investors were on our side. Rarely is the government seen outside and photographed protesting with union people, but it happened with Bill C-22.

It happened. I would like to remind this House that the opposition has the very unenviable reputation of having delayed the patent reform beyond any reasonable deadline. In the last session, the opposition used every obstruction tactic imaginable in an effort to prevent or postpone the passage of this bill.

Remember that this bill passed first reading in the House on November 7, 1986. The Liberals and New Democrats, our colleagues opposite, obstructed the bill so much that it did not reach the other place until May 6, 1987, a delay of almost seven months. Then the ping-pong game began, as you may recall, the most incredible in all of Canada's parliamentary history. It acquainted us government members with the Senate because every evening we spent a few hours there watching the ping-pong game, the shouting matches, the vulgar language being used by those debating Bill C-22.

A month before they received the legislation, the senators created a special committee with a mandate to examine the prices of pharmaceutical products. The Liberal majority in the committee and the Senate managed to get amendments to Bill C-22 adopted by the Senate, and the bill was sent back to the House of Commons.

On September 1, 1987, we adopted a motion rejecting most of the amendments proposed by the Senate. Two days later, the Senate referred our motion to the Standing Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce. On October 21, the committee tabled its report. Again, the Liberal majority favoured amendments that were likely to upset the balance of the legislation and jeopardize its strong points.

Again, we rejected the proposals, and the bill came back to us a third time. This was November 19, 1987. Today is November 17. Two days from now it will again be November 19.

One year and 12 days after being tabled in the other place, Bill C-22 was passed and finally received Royal Assent. I remember the mood in Quebec at the time. I remember people who had investments which had to be postponed because of the bill. Postponing investments means people have to wait that much longer for a job or to invest for their company.

My point is that we can no longer afford this kind of foolishness. It is imperative to adopt this bill as soon as possible.

What bothers me is that some of the arguments I heard today are similar to what was said in the Senate when that body tried to jeopardize the government's legislation. Nothing has changed. They are using figures to scare the public. We hear all kinds of arguments. Anything goes, and the people listening wonder who is right.

As in 1987, the Liberals maintain that amendments to the Patent Act will raise the price of drugs. We have heard this argument before, and we will hear it again. At this point, I would like to quote Liberal Senator Norbert Thériault. Listen to what he had to say. It is really extraordinary. "By removing the competitive element provided by generic drugs in the industry, Bill C-22 will undoubtedly result in a huge price increase." *Debates of the Senate*, June 25, 1987, at page 1403. Another Liberal, Senator Lorne Bonnell, stated that we were encouraging research by the multinationals—we heard this again today—at the expense of Canadians, who would have to pay more for their drugs. To quote Mr. Bonnell: "For goodness sake, don't take it off the backs of the sick, the hospitalized, the infirm, and the aged by increasing drug prices". *Debates of the Senate*, August 13, 1987, page 1744.

He also said that the Canadian industry would suffer the negative impact of this bill, in terms that would have made my grandmother tremble. We heard this again today. I do not know whether anyone mentioned his grandmother, but mine is still alive. She is 98, and Bill C-91 certainly does not bother her at all.