

the government is going to encourage serious research into this matter, we welcome it. We welcome the proposal that doctors will be permitted, encouraged and given the opportunity to submit drugs which they obtain from patients to a research institute which will be able to give information to the doctor with regard to the constitution of a particular drug. I hope the minister has discussed with his colleagues in the cabinet the possibility that the police might be able to go to the doctor concerned and insist on obtaining the name of the person who supplied the drug. If the police can do that, the whole program will immediately fall flat on its face.

An information program based on facts which have been ascertained by experts in the field will be invaluable. I hope it will be an educational program based on facts rather than the kind of exaggerated scare programs and propaganda so prevalent in the past which young people in particular have completely rejected with the result that to a large extent young people no longer listen to anyone who is not in their age group.

It is encouraging to note that the government will sponsor experimental, innovative programs such as drop-in centres where troubled people may go for help. I wish the minister had said that the officials of his department had discussed the problem with the medical profession and the hospitals. Certainly for the first year or two that this program is in effect a large majority of those who have adverse reactions to the use of drugs will go to hospitals as they have done until now. I wish the minister had stated that a program had been worked out with the doctors and hospitals so that it will not be necessary for them to make reports to the police, thereby initiating prosecutions of people who have come to them for assistance. This has happened too often in the past—I know that the minister is aware of this fact—and it ought to have ceased long ago.

We are happy that the representatives of the minister at the international conference on the use of psychotropic substances have made and will make it clear that Canada intends to maintain freedom of action regardless of the decisions or recommendations made at that conference. We are happy that the Canadian government believes that all countries should be free to follow experimental and flexible programs which may lead to new methods of dealing with this problem, because the repressive, regulatory methods used up to now have completely failed.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, the minister sent us the French version of the statement he was to make to the House, and I thank him for it. That may explain the delay in delivering a copy to the spokesmen of the various political parties.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I think we must applaud idea of launching a comprehensive program in the fight against the non-medical use of drugs.

This measure will also entail extensive research, information, treatment and drug analysis. The word "extensive" worries me a bit; having had personal experience with research, we know extensive research is a lengthy

*Research into Non-Medical Drug Use*

process. The government recognizes that information is sadly lacking in that field.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that so much has been said to date on the use of drugs, especially among the young, that there is no reason why the government should lack knowledge or information on that matter. We arrived much too late to undertake a fight against the use of drugs, and the minister says that the program will encourage research in the fields of epidemiology and sociology in order to further knowledge on the factors that lead individuals to drug abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the government took time to think about it. We know that today many young people are drug users. Why? Because they have nothing to do; they are out of work. It has been thought at one point that the use of drugs helped them forget the bad administration of which they were victims, but it is not so. We found out the use of drugs encouraged them to revolt against government measures that did nothing to help them.

Mr. Speaker, the information program will consist of four components: data retrieval, data analysis, information processing and communications. I feel that there is nothing to say against these points of the program. However, I would blame the government for neglecting to fight the underworld which gains enormously from the sale of drugs in high schools to young people of 12, 13 or 14 years of age. I think, Mr. Speaker, that if the R.C.M.P. would go to the trouble of investigating this matter, it would be easy enough to expose those who are selling drugs to youngsters. Up to now, it seems that nothing has been done and no useful recommendation to that effect is included in the program.

In his press release, the Minister states that, through such innovative programs particular effort will be made to strengthen the ability of families and communities to understand and deal with social conditions that generate youth alienation. The first thing is to prevent them from obtaining drugs illegally, as is the case at the present time.

The minister also expresses the hope that the provinces will take advantage of these shared-costs programs. I know that some provinces will cry shame because they may not have the means required to initiate other fights against such things.

The federal government introduces programs that require the co-operation of the provinces, without prior consultation. I suggest that the views of the provinces should have been asked for before this program was announced.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out to the minister that, in a related field, that of alcoholism, for example, the government collects each year millions of dollars in excise taxes and spends only \$14,000 annually to fight this scourge. If the fight against drug abuse is carried out in similar fashion to that against the abuse of alcohol, we can expect a colossal failure.