

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre on a point of order.

Mr. Osler: Now that the House leader is back in his seat I wonder if he can answer the question I put to him a moment ago. It was a serious question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that it was more in the form of representation than a question. I also detected that it had overtones of argument.

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DRUGS

ACCURACY OF INFORMATION IN GOVERNMENT
PAMPHLET DISTRIBUTED TO PENSIONERS AND FAMILY
ALLOWANCE RECIPIENTS

Mr. P. B. Rynard (Simcoe North): I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In view of the Quebec College of Pharmacists' statement that a pamphlet produced recently for pensioners and family allowance recipients under the government's new drug quality assurance program may be dangerous to public health as it lists drugs which might have harmful side effects and certainly encourages self-medication, is the minister going to review, with the provinces and the medical profession, the accuracy of the scientific information contained in this pamphlet?

Hon. John C. Munro (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, this action was taken on our part as a further step in a series of actions we have taken in terms of reducing the cost of drugs. We are satisfied it is accurate information. We are also satisfied it is useful information and that people receiving old age pension cheques and family allowance cheques should have it. I would also point out that the leader of my hon. friend's own party has indicated that steps of this kind should be taken in terms of reducing the cost of drugs.

Mr. Rynard: Has the minister conferred with the Quebec College of Pharmacists on the statement they made that they are not safe?

Mr. Munro: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated that we have checked the information and we are satisfied that our information is accurate.

Mr. Rynard: You still did not answer the question.

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): I have a supplementary question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. I should like to ask the minister if he was not accused by the College of Pharmacists of the province of Quebec of contravening the law by telling people how to buy drugs without prescriptions and influencing people to use, on their own initiative, some drugs that should be left to the doctors to prescribe?

Mr. Munro: We were not advertising or promoting drugs, Mr. Speaker. We were simply indicating to the people of Canada what the comparative prices of various drugs were in various regions throughout the country and that there are variations in prices. There is then some motive

on their part to shop around to get the lowest price. I might also indicate that this type of information went to people whose incomes are not great and who cannot afford to pay excessive prices.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

INQUIRY AS TO MEETING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF
DECISION RESPECTING HYDROFOIL

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): I have a question for the Minister of National Defence who has been neglected somewhat lately. In light of current suggestions floating about that he will be having a meeting some time this week to settle the future of the hydrofoil, can he confirm this? If so, could the minister give the House some indication when the decision by the government will be made public?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence): I should like to thank the hon. member for notice of this question, Mr. Speaker. I can assure him that, depending on the length of this question period, I shall be meeting at an early date on the question of the hydrofoil.

Mr. Forrestall: If there should be a \$50 million saving I would hope it would go to the services in the form of pay increases. Would the minister answer the other part of my question and advise the House when he anticipates he will be in a position to make the decision known to the general public?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): That is a little difficult to say, not yet having had a full analysis, Mr. Speaker. I would hope, however, to be able to do so within the coming month.

REPLACEMENTS FOR ARGUS MARITIME PATROL
AIRCRAFT AND CENTURION TANK

Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk): My question is also for the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister inform the House whether the government has yet decided on a replacement for the Argus maritime patrol aircraft and the Centurion tank? If so, will they be produced in Canada?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of National Defence): No decision has been taken yet with regard to the long-range patrol aircraft, Mr. Speaker. I should remind the hon. member that as well as the option of replacing the Argus there is the option of refitting it for future use. It is correct to say that the Centurion tank will be retired from service about 1974 and we are now in the process of bargaining for a replacement.

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BANK OF CANADA

ISSUE OF NEXT BILL IN SERIES OF COLOURFUL
CURRENCY

Mr. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Can the minister inform