

Dissolution of Marriage

Yet, the drug was not withdrawn from the market at that time, because, while having pernicious secondary effects, it could also bring considerable relief in some cases of gram-positive and gram-negative infection.

Mr. Speaker, there was, also in 1940, the introduction of penicillin, the benefits of which are not to be doubted. Yet the use of penicillin also brings about secondary reactions which in some cases have noxious and sometimes even lethal side effects.

You are surely aware of the rapid evolution of the new and modern antibiotics, among which streptomycin came out in 1946, corticosteroid and aureomycin in 1949. All those drugs belong to a modern medical service which relieves the patients and heals some of the most resistant infections and prevents death. Those drugs also considerably shorten the convalescence period and frequently prevent secondary reactions which might drag out a patient's convalescence for the rest of his days, if he had not taken those wonder drugs.

Mr. Speaker, can the government be held responsible for the effects of thalidomide? I say, like every right thinking person, that the government may not directly or indirectly be held responsible for such a situation because, as I said, those drugs have no absolute effect. Even if they are submitted to a rather rigid control, nobody is able to guarantee an absolute effect, when it is a matter of drugs.

The government may not be held morally responsible, because the required clinical tests are entrusted to responsible medical bodies, to scientists who take all the necessary precautions, and the findings of their research are submitted to the directorate of foods and drugs in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for York Centre (Mr. Walker) has shown a great deal of objectivity in his contribution to the discussion, and especially when he said:

In the present discussion, there is no room for statements based on partisanship.

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member sits in the opposition, I ask him to state unequivocally, for all those who want to hear it, that there is no room for partisanship in this unfortunate situation. That is why I have tried to be as objective as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the drug companies referred to a moment ago deserve the gratitude of the

medical and paramedical world for the efforts they have made in the field of research and development of new drugs.

In a report entitled "Facts about pharmaceutical marketing", which I suggest hon. members should read, I find the following on page 10:

(Text):

A study of mortality tables for North America over the past 20 years is indicative of the more obvious benefits of modern pharmaceuticals. For pneumonia, the mortality rate has dropped 61 per cent; rheumatic fever fatalities have declined 41 per cent; appendicitis 76 per cent and the combined mortality rate for tonsillitis and pharyngitis has gone down 66 per cent. Bacterial endocarditis, a heart infection, once inevitably meant death. Now, through massive doses of penicillin, many people who previously would have died are walking around living healthy, happy, useful lives.

(Translation):

Mr. Speaker, I would have many more remarks regarding this bill, but I agree with all previous speakers that every essential point has been covered.

I am most happy about the introduction of this bill by the Minister of National Health and Welfare and I hope it will meet with the approval of the house.

(Text):

Mr. Speaker: Shall the resolution carry?

Mr. Malcolm MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, not being familiar with the rules I am just wondering about the procedure. I should like to speak briefly for five or ten minutes on the bill, and I am wondering if we will have the opportunity to continue the debate on Monday next.

Some hon. Members: Five o'clock.

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, may I call it five o'clock, or do you prefer that I start my remarks on the bill?

Mr. Speaker: With great deference neither you nor I have any choice. It being five o'clock we shall now pass on to private members' business—public bills and then subsequently private bills.

DIVORCE**MEASURE TO MODERNIZE DISSOLUTION AND ANNULMENT OF MARRIAGE**

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming) moved the second reading of Bill No. C-12, to provide in Canada for the dissolution and the annulment of marriage.

He said: Mr. Speaker, parliament has been continually and incessantly involved in this particular matter of social reform both in a practical and philosophic way for a great number of years. Many new members may