

comply with any order made by the Treasury Board in that regard. I cannot be more clear than that.

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PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF PATENT AMENDING LEGISLATION

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I am sure he will know that a poll published on Saturday indicated that a very substantial majority of Canadians from every region, and supporters of every Party including the Conservative Party, are opposed to the prescription drug legislation. Given the fact that the Government has already been made unpopular as a result of decisions such as the one on lumber and the agreement with France on fish, is it not time that the Government faced up to reality and withdrew a Bill which is so unpopular?

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the House has already decided on that issue and supports the Bill in principle, and rightfully so. It will lead to improvement in the health care to Canadians. It will lead to thousands of research jobs. It will enable Canada to participate in the exciting biotechnologies. Frankly I cannot understand how responsible Members of Parliament could in fact say that Canada should opt out of this technology and let the rest of the world do that research. That is just irresponsible and something I would never concur with.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, despite everything the Minister and his supporters have said, does he not realize that according to the poll Canadians believe that they will have to pay higher prices for prescription drugs, that the companies will make much higher profits, and that there will be very little new research done? Given those facts is the Government going ahead with the Bill because it has made a commitment to President Reagan and the United States and it is part of trying to get a free trade agreement? Isn't that the real reason that the Government is going ahead?

● (1500)

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons there might be concern is that the Hon. Member and his Leader have been talking about a Coopers & Lybrand study of \$650 million. Coopers & Lybrand wrote to me to say that they had nothing to do with that study and they disavow any claim to it. I can understand why. It is simply a false, phoney figure which the New Democrats, for reasons of their own—and the reasons

Oral Questions

have nothing to do with informing the public—keep publicizing. If the Hon. Member believes in polls, let him wait a few days for another poll which will show that we are on the right track, exactly where we should be, according to the people of Canada.

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[Translation]

THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

NUMBER OF FRANCOPHONES—REQUEST THAT MINISTER MAKE INQUIRY

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, I would like to come back to the Solicitor General concerning the way french-speaking members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are treated. The minister keeps repeating that the RCMP must abide by government guidelines regarding Francophone participation. However, we know through certain documents that some high ranking RCMP officials are attempting to reduce Francophone participation from 20 to 12 or 15 per cent. Can the Minister tell us whether or not he has enquired to find out who is promoting such a pigheaded policy within the RCMP?

[English]

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I can certainly advise the hon. gentleman that I have discussed this matter with the commissioner, that a new plan is in preparation and will be presented shortly to the Treasury Board for its perusal and hopefully its approval.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: That will be the last question. The Hon. Member may ask his question.

REQUEST FOR RESIGNATION OF COMMISSIONER SIMMONDS

Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Minister intends to raise the issue with Commissioner Simmonds. I am hardly comforted. This situation is going on while he is in charge. While raising the issue with Commissioner Simmonds, could the Minister also ask for his resignation?

[English]

Hon. James Kelleher (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I am quite satisfied that Commissioner Simmonds has been doing an excellent job for the RCMP and has led the RCMP well during the past 10 years. I can only repeat that a new plan is being prepared and will be presented shortly to Treasury Board, hopefully for Treasury Board's perusal and approval.