

Oral Questions

research and development in the pharmaceutical industry. However, I did express certain reservations with respect to the reaction to higher royalties on consumer prices and my opinion has not changed yet.

[English]

REQUEST THAT COMMITTEE BE DISBANDED

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister. Given the fact that both the multinational companies and the generic companies have expressed opposing views with regard to the recommendations of the Eastman Commission, it is obvious that the committee he has had working with his Department cannot reach any useful conclusion. Is it not time that the Minister dissolved that committee? It must be an embarrassment to him, given the fact that his Director of Combines Investigation is investigating his Department?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that our Government initiated a democratic consultation process in September. We intend to carry on with it and meet with our provincial colleagues and the various consumer associations to see how they react to the report. We will then be in a position to implement a policy which will be in the best interests of Canadian consumers, I am sure.

[English]

DRUG PRICES

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, my last supplementary question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Before 1969 when the patent laws were changed to the present system, Canadians were paying the second highest drug prices in the world. Since then we have been paying the second lowest prices. Will the Minister tell the people of Canada that he is not going to make any real changes which will destroy that favourable situation which they have enjoyed since 1969?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat that we will try to promote research and development in Canada, while at the same time making sure that consumers pay as little as possible for pharmaceutical products.

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[English]

CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National

Defence. It is nice to know the Minister is going to attend the committee, but if he is as forthcoming with information there as he has been in the House, then the Members will be better off doing something else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hopkins: I refer once again, Mr. Speaker, to an internal Department of National Defence document entitled *Canadian Forces Policy on the Employment of Women*, dated March, 1985. After reading that report one would think that it was written in 1885 instead of in 1985. The report makes shocking statements about discipline, emotional stability, unit cohesion, morale, and effectiveness, which would cause the majority of Canadian women to shudder with anger. Is the Minister prepared to dissociate himself, his Government, and his Party, from this discriminatory document?

● (1430)

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I repeat the responses which I made with respect to the question originally put by the Hon. Member for York Centre in general reply to the Member. I can tell him by way of reassurance that whatever might be in that report is not government policy. When that has been set, it will be announced in the appropriate way. However, I find it rather strange that these Hon. Members in the Official Opposition should be asking that kind of question when it was not they, when they were in office, who forced through the provision in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms with respect to women's equality rights; it was this Party which did that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: It was those Hon. Members who had to be dragged, kicking and screaming, to support women's equality rights.

WOMEN'S CAREERS

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Deputy Prime Minister is very professional—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I get the distinct impression that somehow questions and answers are not really on everybody's mind today.

Mr. Hopkins: The Deputy Prime Minister just brought another red herring on to the floor of the House; he is a pro at it. I want to remind him of a Conservative election promise, and I quote from his own document, "to ensure the full career development of members of the Canadian Armed Forces". Is the Minister willing to assure Canadians that all the distasteful and discriminatory implications of this report will not affect the careers of the thousands of competent women